

January 15th Board Workshop - Proposed Focus, Process and Agenda Topics

Wilson, Jeffrey

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To: Brian Pickard <pickard4skboard@gmail.com>; Espy, Kate <espy@skschools.org>; Daily, Jeff <daily@skschools.org>; Berg, John <berg@skschools.org>; Winter, Tim <winter@skschools.org>;

Cc: Wilson, Jeffrey <wilsonj@skschools.org>;

At our next regular meeting (Jan 5th), Brian and I will be making the following proposal for our January 15th special meeting (Saturday Workshop).

MEETING FOCUS: Given the number of important (both urgent and strategic) items we need to cover as a board I suggest that we repurpose our January 15th (Saturday) working session to work through the items generated by the board (see below), plus any additional items you each individually submit by January 12th so that we can post these as potential agenda items for our session. As this is a special board working session, we will not be making any decisions on the below items but sharing details and having deep discussions about these items. I think that this will help us to establish a solid baseline of what is important to each of us and where we stand individually on a number of issues. I believe that this workshop will be invaluable in allowing us to move more expeditiously through our regular bi-monthly board meetings for the balance of this school year.

PROPOSED WORKSHOP PROCESS: Each board member (going in order from Director #1 thru #5 and then Secretary) will select an item to work (for up to 20min) from the total list of topics (selecting from their own list or from another board member). Items of the highest priority for each board member should be selected first as we may not have time to get through the complete list of items. After the discussion of the item is complete or the 20min clock expires (whichever comes FIRST). The selection of the next topic will move to the next board member. This process will continue until we run out of time. Any remaining items will be considered for discussion in future board workshops.

REGARDING ASPEN GROUP: I think that the work with Aspen has served its purpose. The prior board has spent countless hours tinkering with our policies and arguing over the minutia. The engagement with the consultants has failed to improve the board dynamics (its original purpose) and has only added fuel for arguments over various policies and how they are applied. While our policies are not perfect they are workable and adequate to get us through this school year. I propose that we postpone any discussion of changes to our policies until after the completion of the 2021-2022 school year and that the board not spend any more time navel gazing on this topic. Furthermore, I think that we should release the Aspen Group from its contract and spend the money that has been earmarked on other priorities.

Please see below for the initial list of potential topics. We will also add all items submitted by board members by Jan 12th to the discussion list. A complete list of potential topics will be sent out and published on January 13th for our January 15th Workshop.

Sincerely,

Jefé.....

WINTER ITEMS (xx).

To be submitted.

ESPY ITEMS (xx).

To be submitted.

PICKARD ITEMS (xx).

To be submitted.

WILSON ITEMS (3).

- 1> Long-term Facilities Board Vision, Community Engagement, and Next Steps for Timing on a Bond/Capital Levy Package(s) in 2022.
- 2> Restoring Capital Expenditures Credibility with our Community (Capital Levy Spend Plan, Pool Remodel, School Upgrades, ESSR, etc.)
- 3> Potential mid-cycle 21-22 budget/staffing adjustments (without state relief) for enrollment realities and 2022-2203 staffing outlook.

DAILY ITEMS (10)

1. I believe it is time to start meeting in person.

RATIONALE: We were meeting in person until we had the disruptive meeting. I won't rehash the incident but we will get no points from the community for having kids in school, all district offices operating, three kids to a seat on a bus, but we are not willing to meet in person. Big issues loom on the horizon including the pool along with the capital projects recommendations, possible school bonds, are but a few. We need to offer the public the opportunity versus look like we are restricting it. If they don't come, fine; at least they are invited. Our security folks know how to handle the mask issue now and COVID is not going away. All staff need to be vaccinated or have waivers depending on the current mandate from the Governor.

TIMELINE: I feel this needs to be addressed at the next meeting so we can start January with in person meetings. The longer we delay, the louder the rumblings and more discontent. We need them to pass a school bond issue.

PRIORITY: This should be our first priority at the next board meeting.

2. I want to discuss moving to one formal board meeting a month with the other meeting either a working meeting or a public meeting.

RATIONALE: I believe we are taxing the superintendent and the district staff by meeting bi monthly. I do not believe we will have enough "student achievement" progress to report each meeting and I do not think the intent of our new corporate governance model is to just meet to see staff made briefings to entertain the board. Meeting to meet because it makes us feel productive and good is not the goal of coherent governance. If the superintendent has student data to discuss, then we need to meet. The Aspen Group has already talked about what the content of the meeting needs to be. We just need to decide to follow it. Way too much of our agenda is on stuff that is not ours. Nice to know or see, yes; but not in our lane unless it deals with student progress; not just taking about student stuff. Meeting every two weeks is labor intensive for the district and most of the stuff is for "information only". If the law requires it to be on the agenda- fine. If not, then it is only items in our ends/results. If we have nothing, we don't meet.

TIMELINE: This should be discussed and resolved at our first work session. We will need some information from the superintendent on what is legally necessary to be in the meeting for board approval along with the law he is referencing.

PRIORITY: This should be our first priority at the January work session.

3. I recommend that we start meeting with the public on a quarterly basis.

RATIONALE: If one of our desires is to restore trust in the board, work with the community, gain voter support/confidence, and pass a school bond, then I recommend we begin now. I realize that many want the legislature to solve this by changing the law from 60% approval to 50% approval to solve the problem. That is outside our domain. However, over the last several levy's; they passed at 68%, 62%, 56%, and most recently at

51% (and by less than 900 votes). We have approximately 15K parents with kids in SK. The SK voter role is over 45K. We will need many of them regardless of what the legislature does. We will need the voters if you want to pass a bond.

TIMELINE: I recommend we have the first meeting with the public as part of a work session in January.

PRIORITY: I recommend we discuss this at the next board meeting or the first January meeting.

4. I want to discuss the vision the board has for the future of education in SK.

RATIONALE: We have a capital projects committee that is working towards some recommendations for the board. I think we need to ensure that they have the guidance necessary to help guide their discussions. None of us wants them to have worked hard for 18 months and then not like their work because we have not provided them with a vision of what we think is the model for education in SK for the out years. Thus far, only the superintendent has provided them his vision for the future which I currently support. Time is moving on as the committee meets bi monthly and is now doing their facility review and deliberations regarding prioritization of needs.

TIMELINE: This could be our first work session as the committee. It will require work from the district, superintendent, and perhaps some outside research by the district and the board.

PRIORITY: This should be done at our first work session or sooner. Perhaps at our first January meeting.

5. I propose to move the capital projects committee and the curriculum committee to the superintendent.

RATIONALE: The Aspen group along with our own OEs talk about board committees being for short term projects/needs. Since the committees are continuing, they don't fit the board requirements and they depend almost exclusively on the district for their information. If the board wants to be a part of them, then they can join the committee or have them report to the board on a quarterly basis.

TIMELINE: This should be done at a meeting in January after a short discussion with the superintendent.

PRIORITY: This could be done at a meeting in January.

6. I propose that we re-establish the citizen's financial oversight committee.

RATIONALE: This committee ran for a long time and gives the community insight into how the district budget works. The good part is that the community learns that the budget is complex and there are reasons for what is done. The better part is that, if done correctly, the community can see just exactly how their money is spent. If we want transparency, then this is a good step forward.

TIMELINE: This will take time but the process can be started in February.

PRIORITY: This can be done at a February work session.

7. I propose we hire a board clerk (or expand an existing employees duties) and contract with an outside financial auditor.

RATIONALE: The Aspen Group openly states that the coherent governance is a much more labor intensive model as well as relies on both internal and external venues to monitor performance. The State Auditor comes yearly (a WA requirement) but is only required to see if the money coming in and going out is in the correct accounts and balances. They do no real looking at specific accounts. An external auditor would do this for the board. For example, all banks and credit unions rely on outside auditors even though each is audited by bank regulators annually. As mentioned above, bank regulators only look for specific things which are not normally operationally focused.

The board clerk would do the work that Ms Bell does for the board. Her real job is to be the assistant to the superintendent and the real job of the superintendent is to run the district. If we follow the Aspen Group, then all the work Mr Winter does on the OEs is put together by the board clerk since it involves getting the “data” from the district and putting it into a format that is ready for the board to review. It is convenient for him to be the board secretary but that is just because someone thought it was a good idea; not a practical idea. Many boards do this but then the district controls the information flow to the board among other things. Back to the “trust’ but verify” we have all heard.

TIMELINE: An item to discuss at a February work session as it would require changes in the district and to roles of all involved.

PRIORITY: This could be discussed at a February or March work session.

8. I recommend we start using the end of the meeting/work sessions to build the agenda for the next meeting.

RATIONALE: The Aspen group is quite clear in that the agenda is the boards. Therefore, the board should build it. We all realize that the superintendent may have the most items on it but that is no reason for not building it ourselves. If this is the board’s meeting as some folks believe, then the board needs to build the agenda to ensure that the board’s work is being done and not relying on the superintendent to fill in the agenda. It is our job to build our agenda which is one of the tenets of our new Coherent Governance model. If there are only a few items on the agenda, so be it which is why we need to look at meeting monthly.

TIMELINE: I propose we discuss this at the next board meeting.

PRIORITY: I recommend we discuss at the next meeting or the first January meeting.

I realize all of you have your thoughts and desires on other things that you wish to accomplish. I also realize that I have probably forgotten some items that I will need to add at a later time. Please add yours to the list. What is important is that we start doing something versus talking or delaying doing anything.

9. I propose we discuss an extended school year, perhaps along with the discussion on the future of education in SK.

RATIONALE: The virus will never disappear so the “fatigue” we hear going on nationwide will not stop soon. The OSPI chief mentioned districts consider an extended school year as a way to make up lost learning. We chose to use a summer academy last year. California and several other states use year around schooling. Basically you go 9 weeks, off 3, on 9 weeks, etc. Lots of advantages to it. For those that want their “summers off”, please look at a calendar. If you get out the third week of June and teachers start about the second week of August, there is no 3 months off for most. Changing to year around school might be to scary but how about extending time after each quarter or semester. Parents will have a concern with this but some may welcome not trying to go to Disneyland during the summer. A week after each semester might stop everyone from counting down the end of school in October. If nothing else, have the district form a team to work on it. I realize there will

be a lot of nay-sayers but times are changing. It will require a change in union contracts, probably a community meeting, and some discussion with OSPI.

TIMELINE: When we discuss the future of education in SK or move to district to start looking at it at a board meeting in January. It requires union bargaining so it would need to be worked on as union negotiations are conducted at this time of year.

10. I recommend we look at the calendar for the rest of the year and make some adjustments.

RATIONALE: As we look and discuss the superintendent's interpretations of the OEs and other documents, I think need to allow more time to go through them which will probably require us to adjust some of them in the calendar. This would also be part of the discussion on how often to meet as a board and how and when to incorporate meetings with the public and other board work meetings.

TIMELINE: Probably should be done in conjunction with the discussion on meeting frequency which was proposed earlier as part of a January work session.

11. Warrants & Vouchers Plus Review of Monthly Spending Detail Report (verbal)

12. Elementary School Visit Findings (verbal)

BERG ITEMS (6) - I BELIEVE THESE WERE ALL ADDRESSED ON 12/15, BERG DOES NOT AGREE SO IN CASE WE MISSED THEM...

I have the following three agenda items and motions for the December 15th Board Agenda:

1. In lieu of a separate agenda planning meeting with limited director participation, each board agenda will provide a 15-20 minute segment near the end during which the Board can plan future agendas.
2. Future Board meetings will be held in person subject to the following conditions: (1) Online viewers will be muted and all public comment will be received only in person, (2) Any physical attendee not complying with mask mandates or requirements of decorum will be considered trespassing and in violation of RCW 9A.52.070, RCW 28A.635.030, and RCW 9A.84.040.
3. ___, ___, and ___ are each reappointed to three-year terms on the Facility Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee, effective January 1, 2022.

I plan to make the following motions at our December 15th Board meeting:

1. Under 11.02 - In Person Meetings:
Future Board meetings will be held in person subject to the following conditions: (1) Online viewers will be muted and all public comment will be received only in person, (2) Any physical attendee not complying with mask mandates or requirements of decorum will be considered trespassing and in violation of RCW 9A.52.070, RCW 28A.635.030, and RCW 9A.84.040.
2. Under 11.03 - Facility Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee Membership:
Jeremy Kallstrom, Jennifer Haro, and Steve Bonwich are each reappointed to three-year terms on the Facility Long-Range Planning Advisory Committee, effective January 1, 2022.

3. Under 12.01 - Future Board Agenda Topics:

In lieu of a separate agenda planning meeting with limited director participation, each board agenda will provide a

15-20 minute segment near the end during which the Board can plan future agendas.

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