



MINUTES

Board of Education Operations Work Group Meeting – January 23, 2017

Ed Hughes, Chair

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mary Burke, Michael Flores (via conference phone), James Howard (left at 8:06 p.m.), Ed Hughes, Dean Loumos, TJ Mertz, Anna Moffit

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STUDENT REP. PRESENT: Ameya Sanyal

STAFF PRESENT: Jen Cheatham, Nancy Hanks, Deirdre Hargrove-Kriehoff, John Harper, Zachary Herrmann, Karen Kepler, Lisa Kvistad, Ross MacPherson, Dylan Pauly, Kelly Ruppel, Andrew Statz, Rachel Strauch-Nelson, Beth Vaade, Chad Wiese, Barbara Osborn—Recording Secretary

Board action in italics (all materials provided via [BoardDocs](#))

1. Call to Order

Action: *Chairperson Ed Hughes called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.*

2. Public Appearances (Registration slips are attached to the meeting in BoardDocs.)

There were two public appearances; one in support of a transparent budget process that includes opportunities for public input across the community, and one in support of the Isthmus Montessori Academy (IMA) charter school proposal.

There was one written registration that did not indicate support or opposition to any issue before the Board.

3. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Ed Hughes and seconded by TJ Mertz to approve the minutes from the Operations Work Group meeting dated November 14, 2016. Student advisory vote was aye. Motion unanimously carried.

4. Isthmus Montessori Academy (IMA) Charter School Proposal

Discussion Item: Proposed action item for January 30, 2017 Regular Board meeting

(Documents within BoardDocs: Briefing sheet, IMA proposal, MMSD IMA rubric evaluation)

Staff: Dr. Cheatham, Superintendent; Kelly Ruppel, Chief of Staff

IMA representatives: Melissa Droessler and Carrie Marlette, Founders

Staff Overview:

- Proposed action item for January 30 depending on board discussion.
- New charter application process, including regular consulting and feedback facilitated through Chief of Staff and dedicated MMSD team using a rubric to evaluate proposals.
- Highlighted IMA charter proposal process, noted that they did not meet expectations in a few areas, and stated that the administrative team would not recommend going forward with the proposal unless all expectations are met.
- Reminders: Board would be reviewing and revising the charter policy itself towards strengthening the process and becoming stronger charter authorizer. The superintendent was not making a recommendation yet in order to get input from the board prior to anything going into the board packet for the Regular meeting.
- Issues—lack of detail about how the school would attract families and set and meet enrollment targets, staffing plan related to budget and reliance on fundraising, and goal-setting methodology. The superintendent hoped some of these would be addressed at this meeting. If the board decided to move ahead with the proposal, the superintendent would support making that happen.

Comments from Melissa Droessler:

- Only obstacle is that Montessori is not accessible in Madison.

- Described a day in the life of a Montessori school.
- Expressed appreciation for the support from the MMSD staff.
- Responded to some of the issues around recruitment strategies, academic rigor, training, profile of a 9th grade graduate, financial opportunities and concerns, attempt to make the budget look like those of other MMSD charter schools, appreciated the high expectations.

Board Member Topics--Questions/Comments:

- Student body demographics and school data--this is an area for more work. Intent is to understand goals around enrollment. Concern with lower demand in the upper grades and how the lottery would work.
- Evaluation—use of proficiency around reading and math and how it was calculated.
 - There is no baseline data but did compare with public Montessori children in Milwaukee v. traditional children in traditional classrooms.
- Enrollment—what would happen if the board authorizes the charter as an elementary school. Concerns about filling grades 4-6.
 - State statute language around using preferences for student enrollment.
 - Demographics—difficulty predicting enrollment. How families might look at it as an alternative placement for those who are not fitting in, using information from IMA's own practices.
 - Given the parent testimony in favor of the proposal, question was asked if there are other districts in the surrounding area that offer a public Montessori option; not as strong in Wisconsin or Dane County.
 - Lottery—more questions and discussion around what it means to fill open seats by referral and/or administrative transfer. Complexities within the lottery system around filling the upper grades, attrition rates, mobility, projections, and resulting impact on budgeting and staffing. Question was asked about holding a separate lottery for students who have Montessori experience from those who do not and maintaining balance for new students coming in.
- **Special education staffing—asked for definition of MRP as it relates to staffing in Montessori schools in Milwaukee.**
- Suggested a process for flagging unanswered questions and allowing another chance for IMA to respond in writing around Title I percentages and dollars per student, clarification of student achievement and gains, and special education staffing and costs.
- How the overall process for how charters will be supported by the MMSD going forward and holding people accountable.
- Confirmed that hiring would be done through MMSD Human Resources Department. Starting fresh and making sure everyone has appropriate teacher certification and then the added certification in Montessori, including use of paraprofessionals.
- If board were to approve the charter, it was suggested to require contingencies that the school submit materials that address the 'fails to meet expectations' within the rubric around budget, enrollment, and goal setting and consider starting in the 2018-19 school year instead. Contract date is March of this year for 2017/18.
- Looking for more assurance that the demographics will reflect those of the MMSD, how the lottery will work, and having someone on the administrative team whose job it is to follow charters and provide guidance and insight and bring forward our own ideas.
- **Prior to next week, please provide information around current demographic of students who are currently at IMA.**
- Confirmed that if board agrees to go forward and start IMA in 18/19, there would be no need to give direction to the administration to start the contracting process by next Monday.
- In response to a question about which charter policy would be in place given that the board is scheduled to revise the current charter policy later this school year, it will depend on what action is taken on Monday. There are options such as grandfathering or making exceptions that could be instituted.
- **There was a request to provide information on the potential enrollment impact on Lake View, Mendota, or other MMSD schools.**

5. 2017-18 Budget Development

Discussion Item: (Documents within BoardDocs: presentation, 2017-18 chart of proposed priority actions, 2017-18 priority actions narrative, Proposed K-2 accelerated strategy narrative, proposed 9th Grade on Track accelerated strategy chart)

Staff: Dr. Cheatham, Superintendent; Lisa Kvistad, Assistant Superintendent—Teaching and Learning; Nancy Hanks, Chief of Elementary Schools; Deirdre Hargrove-Krieghoff—Executive Director Human Resources.

Staff Overview:

- Budget priorities and staffing. Sought feedback on compensation and benefits to get as close to priority actions as possible and thinking around staffing plan. There would be no staffing cuts this year.
- Board calendar adjusted from normal launch in January to already trying to finalize and talk about staffing.
- Details around priority actions and introduction of accelerated areas of focus.
- How the budget labs are helping to address school allocations around Title I, Multilingual and Global Education, etc.; allocations that are not universal among the schools.

Board Member Topics--Questions/Comments:

- **Request was made for further cost breakdowns of the 9th grade on track accelerated strategy in place of the checkmarks.**
- Estimated transportation costs for bilingual students.
- UMOJA contract.
- Annual adjustments to reorganizing of Central Office, including change to role of Special Assistant to the Superintendent taking on charter schools function; no financial impact. February briefings to include reorganization plans that will come to a public meeting if there is any financial impact.
- **Provide grid of administrative decisions around resources that informed the budget proposal thus far, e.g.,** students more active in parent/teacher conferences, increases around athletics and extra-curricular activities, more resources at grade two, more focus on tutoring and monitoring, class size, asset manager system, etc.
- **Request was made to address some of the suggestions that came from the community in order to support the referendum.**
- Some items that remain of interest: class size related to staffing allocations, strategies around retention and morale, e.g., base of engagement with teachers of color advisory group, Mission 4.0, possible contribution toward East theater project, staffing strategy options around Title I funding, special education staffing, staffing for Behavior Education Plan, supplemental staffing for ELL (particularly the transfer of long-term ELLs and consistent access to testing and data.
- **Request was made for updated staffing equity charts.**
- Administration asked for feedback via e-mail prior to the next meeting and before the workbooks go out to the schools.

James Howard left at this time.

6. Long-Range Facilities Plan

Discussion Item: (Documents within BoardDocs: presentation, facility assessment, periodic table of facilities assessment, athletic facility assessment)

Staff: Andrew Statz, Executive Director of Research, Accountability, and Data; Chad Wiese, Director of Building Services

Board Member Topics--Questions/Comments:

- Targeting next referendum data for 2020 presidential election.
- No solid projections for building any new schools yet, possibility with property on Sprecher Road but not sure when at this point. Major development is starting around Olson. Watching Leopold/Fitchburg and Nuestro Mundo.
- Link has been updated with document summary on feedback sessions.
- More factors in play for determining grade criteria. Added special areas of need, accessibility and technology, site elements and aesthetics.
- Completion of all the construction upgrades.

Follow up (see items in bold).

7. Adjournment

Action: *It was moved by Ed Hughes and seconded by TJ Mertz to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Motion unanimously carried.*

bjo