

1/14/16

D R A F T

Members present: E. Bonnie Silvers, Chair; Kristen Sparhawk, Francoise Lartigue and Marcella bush

Administration: David Hastings

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

The minutes of 12_9_15 were approved unanimously.

Review of Superintendent Priorities as Revised based on School Committee input

(Discussion on 1e – add technology)

Mr. distributed his latest draft of superintendent priorities which included the new significant addition of progress towards creating vocational programs. He noted that any traditional vocational program would involve a significant capital outlay for equipment. His strategy includes trying to line up more internships and apprenticeships for students who are candidates. The first step would be to figure out what kids were good candidates for such a program.

Ms. Sparhawk supposed that one of the challenges with making a meaningful apprenticeship for a student which actually included them getting skills was a matter of scheduling. Perhaps the school needed to consider having specially scheduled academic classes (for instance at night) so students in apprenticeship programs could put in more meaningful hours at their vocation.

Ms. Sparhawk also suggested that he look at the technical area of vocational studies, because it seemed that the district already had a leg-up with its robust robotics program and the existence of the Makerspace. She suggested that planning a build-out of a technical program would probably not require as significant an up front capital cost. Ms. Lartigue added that though there was a significant cost to keeping technology up to date and outfitting the school, it was a cost that the district would likely find necessary to bear anyway simply for academics.

Ms. Silvers suggested the creation of a faculty committee to look out how already existing tech offerings could be expanded upon and look at how to provide leadership in the face of such a proposed transition. Ms. Lartigue elaborated that it would be good to inquire of existing staff who was interested in helping to meet these needs within the next couple of years.

Ms. Silvers wondered if some of the shared services funds might be available if SBRSD started to position itself as the South County Tech Center. Mr. Hastings noted at the most recent meeting of collaborating superintendents it was generally agreed that SBRSD was in the best position to do just this.

Ms. Lartigue suggested the superintendent articulate a multi-year goal in this and noted that such a plan would intersect with his transition plan.

Ms. Sparhawk noted there may be a need to start branding the technology education more forcefully.

(Discussion on 1a – adding tech-readiness to elementary program)

Ms. Lartigue said that this brought to mind the issue of bringing more tech-readiness training to elementary students. There was significant discussion about how taking standardized tests on computers would require young children to have more ease with desktop style computers than many of them have for instance in the area of keyboarding. The committee suggested as part of the superintendent's academic excellence efforts he organize a plan for getting more technology training in the elementary classrooms. The committee preferred a plan where classroom teachers were given the necessary training to integrate tech use into core subject matter rather than making it a "special". Mr. Hastings said his first step would be to work with Ms. Burgess to identify what classroom teachers were already doing in this area. Ms. Sparhawk suggested that such a survey be sure to distinguish between tech that uses keyboarding versus touchscreen use since they represented two different skill sets.

The committee further went over the language in superintendent goals #2-#5. Slight changes in wording were agreed on for #4 (to include all sub-committee chairs, not just the three listed committees) and in #5 to change the word "must" to "adds".

Motion to recommend

Ms. Sparhawk moved to recommend that the Full School Committee approve the superintendent's priorities with the changes to sections 1a, 1e 4 and 5 the committee had discussed. Ms. Lartigue seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Review of DESE Superintendent Evaluation Form and Recommendations for SC Evaluation

The committee looked over the form for superintendent evaluation made by DESE. There was discussion about its shortcoming both in a computerized and paper form.

Ms. Silvers asked for suggestions on alternatives if indeed there was no requirement to use the form (which Mr. Hastings was going to check on.) Ms. Sparhawk said one problem of the form is that it had too much unnecessary information (goal areas the committee was not supposed to be evaluating on) and not enough pertinent information (lack of a rubric on particular goals which was to be found on secondary sheets. It would be better to have only the necessary information, but to have more of it in one place. Mr. Hastings stated that the most useful information for him came from the narratives.

Ms. Lartigue suggested that a presentation be given by the superintendent to the full school committee on ways he believed he met his goals in stead of only presenting the information in written form. This would give committee members time to ask questions. There was discussion about how this sort of meeting would be set up and controlled. It was suggested in be labeled a "working meeting" and that MS. Silver be acting chair and tightly control the course of school committee discussion to only allow questions, but not bring up extraneous evidence brought forth in an anecdotal fashion by the committee. It would be necessary for it to be clear that this was not a time for the airing of grievances.

Motion to propose working meeting for purpose of superintendent evaluation

Ms. Sparhawk moved to suggest to the full school committee such a working meeting to be scheduled in late May or Jane the purpose of which would be to allow Dave to present the evidence for evaluation. This was seconded and approved unanimously.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for February 11 and 10a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30.