



MINUTES

Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education Board Retreat

Wednesday, July 2, 2014 • 9:00 a.m.
Professional Development Center

In attendance: Dr. Bonnie Votaw, President
Mrs. Barbara Hall, Vice President
Mr. Chuck Davis, Secretary
Dr. Connie Phillips, Member
Sra. Maria Flores, Member

Superintendent Stan Rounds was also in attendance.

The meeting began at 9:07 a.m. with Ms. Andrea Fletcher, Associate Superintendent of Turnaround Initiatives, facilitating the meeting.

The outcomes identified for the retreat are for the board to exchange views on reorganization, great conversations and information items. The Board will determine methods for ameliorating testing requirements and will understand the status of joint site planning efforts and determine future actions.

Purpose of Retreat: To establish purpose, direction and focus on student success and establish budget priorities.

I. *Planning & Development*

A. *Board and Superintendent Goals 2014-15*

A handout entitled *Children in the States: New Mexico* was distributed to Board members and administrators. A brief discussion ensued regarding the data and use within our district; and the use as a comparison to state rates. The handout addresses poverty issues within the state and interagency collaborations. Dr. Steven Sanchez stated there were 423 documented homeless children within the district in the 2013-14 school year. He will have a report on the state of children in Las Cruces providing statistics on homeless children and children at the poverty level within the district. The comparative report will be provided to the Board in August 2014 and can be used at the Administrator's Retreat.

A discussion ensued regarding NMTech and how as a district we support teachers to include classroom observations, eliminate confusion, and the value added model. Dr. Votaw suggested policy stating the District will comply with the state and the District's beliefs. She also stated the importance of that local control issue in articulating a stance.

A short exercise on what assessments can do to guide student learning developed the following from board members and administrators:

Board Members' responses:

- It can tell us where there is a lack of understanding or success in learning.

- It can help us understand what concepts are being missed generally- pacing of covered curriculum.
- It allows us to see the scope and sequence of understanding across grade levels- from PK to 12th.
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Administrators' responses:

- It allows us to monitor student trajectory in time to impact the kids.
- Assessment is best when it is not forced, but a fit emerges from teaching (teacher-led).
- It is best when it is both summative and formative.

Dr. Votaw suggested adding guiding principles language in a policy such as what the District believes is beneficial and sufficient in guiding principles; and delimitation to remove redundancies for data purposes; and teacher developed EOCs.

Goal No. 1: Student Success

The following major initiatives were discussed:

Questions by board members regarding turnaround schools were answered by Associate Superintendent of Turnaround Initiatives, Andrea Fletcher. Ms. Fletcher stated that three years of defensible data with UVA schools is needed to compare performance with other kids in the district. This is the third year for one of the cohorts. The use of defensible data for JUMP and Dual Language Framework was also discussed. There was a question regarding rapid re-set for turnaround schools- when is it turnaround vs. turnover? Ms. Fletcher responded that flexibility is the key to rapid re-set. Rapid re-set has not been used by UVA in two years. Valley View Elementary School was a considered re-set with a sense of urgency; not rapid re-set. Opening day for Valley View was discussed; 203 students were in attendance on the first day for the K-5 plus program. The JUMP and LEAP programs were discussed in how they interplay with one another; same principal- same philosophy.

A dual language career cluster for high schools was discussed. Dr. Steven Sanchez shared that it is a work in progress; with discussions with principals taking place. There was also discussion regarding a career cluster that intertwined with pathways in healthcare at Oñate High School. He stated that Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson will convene a task force. The Dual Language Multi-Age Program was birthed by three principals who saw a need. There is limited enrollment with classes at Sonoma Elementary School, Fairacres Elementary School and Desert Hills Elementary School. A framework and model has been crafted that will keep true to the Gomez & Gomez construct. Resident experts in Dual Language programs are Mari Rincon & Jennifer Haan; with Drs. Richard Gomez and Leo Gomez as mentors. Currently, discussions are ongoing regarding the logistics of setting up a dual language middle school.

There was a discussion regarding guiding principles and setting a philosophy that complies with policy - one that communicates the purpose strongly, supports student learning and articulates local control.

A discussion ensued regarding the advanced placement of teachers. Dr. Steven Sanchez will prepare a report for the Board of the placement of the teachers and a simulative report of scores as requested by Dr. Bonnie Votaw.

Dr. Steven Sanchez shared with the Board that Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson, Director of Secondary Education and Ms. Lydia Polanco, Director of Elementary Education, will oversee the counseling initiative development. They are working with Dr. Martin Greer, District Psychologist. Framework of the program has been developed and will be ready in August 2014. The program will be situated in the career and technical area.

Goal No. 2: Communication & Trust

Goal 2 Communication & Trust will change to: Communication, Trust & Human Relations.

The communication line amongst central office, board members, teachers, and the Public Education Department (“PED”) was discussed in broadcasting information in multiple capacities. A further discussion ensued with regard to adaptability with the PED and our responses to the PED. Communication conveying the district’s frustration with regard to the Public Education Department and how it affects students should be conveyed to teachers.

Board members discussed their opinions with regard to the weekly report provided to them by the Superintendent. Board members shared that the weekly report is good and informative; but not sufficient. Mr. Davis feels it is more of a press release, and would like more pro-forma information. Board members will make a weekly list of information they want to know and will convey their questions to Leslie Cervantes for response in the next weekly report to them. A specific board member’s question should be answered to every board member. The weekly will be formatted for Board members to make notes/ask questions and email back to the Superintendent’s office. Once implemented, Mr. Davis and Dr. Votaw will be trained on the procedure of noting questions on weekly and sending to Leslie Cervantes. Responses to Board member’s questions will be sent in the next scheduled weekly report. This new procedure will be revisited at the October 2014 Board retreat. A closed session will be held once a semester to discuss legal issues. Reporting on closed sessions was discussed in providing more specific information on items discussed.

Board members will continue to go through Leslie with issues or concerns from parents/community members. Tina Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, will capture action items for response in board minutes and will provide list of items in board members’ calendar of events.

Goal No. 3: Budget & Facilities Management

There was a discussion regarding technology specific funds and what budget it comes out of. Mr. Terry Dean, Associate Superintendent of Finance & Technology stated that it is not out of funds for the hiring of teachers or bond funds which included updating school security.

Board members asked questions about capital priorities. The Superintendent stated that a quarterly report constructed by Mr. Terry Dean will be provided to the Board on all things capital including grounds, athletics, Senate Bill 9, House Bill 33, and bond projects. Board members requested a bus tour of Hermosa Heights Elementary School, Loma Heights Elementary School and Arrowhead Park Medical Academy. Board members also shared concerns regarding the LCPS budget and memberships. They are concerned that money spent is not directly on the mission. Sra. Maria Flores believes membership rates are high and money is not going to the kids. There was an in depth discussion regarding membership costs with the Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce (“Chamber”) and the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Association (“MVEDA”). Superintendent Rounds stated that memberships facilitate a network for the district. Leslie Cervantes, Chief of Staff, will facilitate a meeting/conversation with MVEDA and the Chamber regarding membership fees and what the district receives from them. She will request itemized information from the Chamber and MVEDA to provide to the Board at a future work session prior to facilitating a meeting. Sra. Maria Flores and Dr. Bonnie Votaw requested to attend the meetings when scheduled.

Jo Galvan, Director of Communications and Policy Development, drafted a policy (Policy FEE) regarding school siting-safe routes to schools and circulated to the Board for review and comments. She stated that Safe Routes to School is not a part of the Facilities Master Plan and the policy is a work in progress to come before the Board at a later date for approval. Mr. Dane Kennon, Associate Superintendent of Operations, will attend the July 17, 2014, School Siting Committee meeting with Dr. Bonnie Votaw. A further discussion ensued regarding the Safe Routes to Schools grant and future ownership- possibly advertise program as a health care campaign regarding nutrition and cycling. Mr. Kennon will prepare questions for a quick survey to parents and results will be brought before the Board for discussion at a future work session.

Mr. Terry Dean shared with the Board the District is following state requirements and protocols in proper materials discard/property disposal. Surplus is stored at the warehouse for 30-45 days before going to auction. If not sold; the property is properly disposed of pursuant to procurement codes. The District currently has three warehouses full of surplus items which are offered to other districts and charter schools. Electronic items are recycled; not disposed of. Terry Dean will formalize a process in materials discard/property disposal as there is a concern regarding employees taking or disposing of materials improperly.

Goal No. 4: Human Resources Development

This goal was discussed in depth on how we can retain our teachers and support them through the NMTeach process. Areas discussed were morale, professionalism and employee assistance. There is a policy in place to provide one-on-one counseling to teachers with regard to personal and financial matters. The employee currently providing support is Kathi Becker. She services approximately 15-25 employees per month; and will provide a presentation to the Board at a future work session.

There was a discussion regarding NMAA’s difficulties in finding officials because of verbal abuse by coaches and if there is a policy in place in this regard. Ernie Viramontes, Athletic Director, will provide to the Superintendent a list of official complaints against coaches.

Superintendent Rounds will communicate the list of complaints to the Board through the weekly. The Board also requested a report on transgender athlete’s participation in sports. Superintendent Rounds stated that NMAA’s rule on transgender students is to go by the gender listed on the birth certificate in determining participation in a specified sport.

A handout was distributed regarding the notice for an incentive pay pilot from the State for teachers through a grant process. The Secretary of Education would like District to participate in pilot. The pilot would allow for a \$4-\$5 million dollar allocation to the District. Concerns amongst administration were discussed; the District does not want to destroy collaborative feeling of teachers and doesn’t want schools to be pitted against each other. Possible positive outcomes in terms of students; and encourage innovation and collaboration. Jealousy is a concern. A response to the PED is due on July 21, 2014. The District will move forward in speaking with NEA-LC and inform Board of outcome of discussion with NEA-LC; the Board will then decide whether to accept the PED’s pilot proposal.

B. Information Sharing

A. Superintendent Items

1. Administrative & School Reorganization

A report was provided to the Board regarding the current administrative changes.

2. National Teacher Certification – Valley View

See comments above.

B. Update – EOC Testing & Policy Considerations

A concern of mass confusion regarding teachers and what category they fit in as well as discovery taken out of the evaluation piece was discussed. Dr. Sanchez shared that Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson, Director of Secondary Instruction, has list of EOC assessments published by the state. He also shared that English teachers are writing EOC exams. LCPS is looking at developing its own EOC exams to be administered at the end of every semester. Dr. Votaw recommended a change to policy or adding an assessment policy to implement students taking one test-either EOC exam or PED assessment and to establish general guidelines for student assessment.

A draft of the 2014-15 LCPS assessment calendar with a glossary was provided to the Board. A final draft will be provided to the board at the August Board meeting.

C. Board Items

1. Work session calendar/topics

Safe Routes to Schools regarding school siting and the Employee Assistance Program were topics of discussion for presentations at future work sessions. Board members will report on their committees at work sessions. Board reports will be added to work session agendas.

2. 12 Month Calendar

A schedule of the 2014-15 school year regular board meetings and work sessions was provided to the Board.

3. *Board Members Personal Calendar – Summer Vacations*

- Dr. Connie Phillips - July 22-27, 2014
- Mrs. Barbara Hall - July 17-18, 2014; July 21-July 30, 2014.
- Sra. Maria Flores - July 18-July 27, 2014; Aug 6-13, 2014
- Dr. Bonnie Votaw - July 3-July 31, 2014

The following is a list of action items derived from the Board’s retreat:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Person(s) of Responsibility</u>
Report on state of children – LC	Aug 2014	Dr. Sanchez
Report on AP testing/training	Aug 2014	Dr. Sanchez
Counseling framework	Aug 2014	Dr. Sanchez
Policy: Assessment	Sept 2014	Dr. Sanchez/Jo Galvan
Weekly adjustment - interactive	July 16, 2014	Leslie Cervantes
Itemize list of actions	Aug 2014	Tina Gonzalez
Board Committees at work sessions	Aug 2014	Tina Gonzalez
Revisit Weekly report to Board	Oct 2014 Retreat	Leslie Cervantes/Board
Quarterly Capital Report to Board	Oct 2014	Terry Dean
Board tour of renovations		T. Gonzalez/L. Cervantes
Facilitate conversation w/Chamber & MVEDA		Leslie Cervantes

The Retreat adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary

Minutes taken by Tina Gonzalez.