



Approved on October 10, 2017

**BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL
MEETING MINUTES**

Robert Miller Center, Community Room

May 2, 2017

5:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m.

In Chair Porters absence, Vice-chair Stephanie Seguino has taken on the role of acting Chair.

1. Opening Items

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

Commissioners:

Lauren Berrizbeitia X , Liz Curry X , Susanmarie Harrington X ,
Anne Judson X , David Kirk X , Kat Kleman , Mark Porter X ,
Stephanie Seguino X , Jeff Wick X , Ryan McLaren , Kathy
Olwell X , Mark Barlow X

Student Representatives:

Isabella Weston
Jacob Bucci

Administration:

Yaw Obeng, Superintendent X
Brittany Nevins, Minute Recorder, Executive Assistant X
Stephanie Phillips, Senior Director Teaching & Learning X
Nikki Fuller, Senior Director Human Resources & Equity Affairs X
Paul Irish, Senior Director Infrastructure & Technology
Nathan Lavery, Senior Director of Finance X
Marty Spaulding, Property Services Director
Erik Wells, Communications Specialist

Guest:

Michael Healy, Consultant _X_

The Board wishes to recognize, welcome and thank those that are providing language interpretation of the Board proceedings. The Board's commitment that all children receive equitable academic services must ensure that New American parents are welcome and can attend meetings, understand the process and be actively engaged. Interpretation of proceedings honors, respects and values our New American parents and students. The Board asks the public and media to respect and understand the importance of this interpretation.

2. Approval of Agenda

*Motion (Commissioner Harrington/ Commissioner Kirk) to approve agenda
Unanimously Passes*

3. Public Comment

A. Comments/Questions from the Public

Angela Smith-Dieng- Parent of 3rd grader at Sustainability Academy. - Shares support for more than a half time librarian. Believes in equitable support for librarians.

Kate Seitz- 2nd Grade Teacher at Sustainability Academy- Shares support as well for librarians.

Cara Clopton- Full time librarian at Flynn Elementary School- What date will the librarian positions be released? Shares in support for librarians as well.

Shannon Walters- Currently librarian at Integrated Arts Academy. Encourages the Board to look at the full NEASC report for the high school to understand the need for librarians across the district.

Ebony Nyoni- Co-founder and Executive Director of Black Lives Matter Vermont- The group has started a research team to get a better understanding of the disciplinary policies within the District. Ebony proposed a variety of questions to the Board regarding minority representation in the District and Board meeting location, for example.

Bob Abbey- Teacher at Flynn School. Discusses the need for librarians at the high school and believes the District should fund a full time position at the high school.

B. Board Reflection

Vice-chair Commissioner Seguíno gave the Chair role back to Chair Porter upon his arrival at the meeting.

Commissioner Judson shared that there is a need for funding at each school for a full-time librarian.

Commissioner Wick shared that he is in support for full time librarians.

Commissioner Berrizbeitia shared similar sentiments to Commissioner Wick.

Commissioner Olwell also shared that she supports full time librarians.

4. Introduction to Ends Policy Creation

Commissioner Harrington gave an introductory presentation around the Ends Policy Creation and agenda for tonight’s meeting (See boarddocs.com for presentation). The Ends policy formalizes an alignment with the strategic plan.

5. Superintendent Input

Superintendent Obeng gave a presentation on his input for the creation of the Board Ends Policy (see boarddocs.com for presentation).

The Board discussed how to take the work that has already been done and translate it into the Policy Governance structure.

6. Discuss Draft Proposal

Consultant Michael Healy transitioned to the discussion around Draft proposal.

Commissioner Barlow shared that the Strategic Plan includes “three big rocks” that are intended to represent the means to implementing the mission statement.

Chair Porter shared that if we can’t connect work back to the mission statement through the Policy Governance documents then perhaps we aren’t doing what we need to be doing.

The Board discussed the connection between the Mission and the Ends Statement. Consultant Michael Healy shared that the Ends statement is meant to represent an agreement among Board members as to the ends the Board is striving for.

Values are expressed through governance policies (Ends and Limitations). There are many ways to create an Ends Statement that incorporates the “means” to that end. Limitations function as a strategy/means to that end. What is the Board trying to accomplish?

The Board deliberated whether to use the Mission statement as the Ends statement as proposed, or i start over from scratch. Chair Porter reminded the group that a lot of community-driven work has already occurred and that the Mission/Vision/Goals went through that inclusive process already.

Michael Healy reminded the group that until the Board decides what the final Ends statement will be, the District will follow the current Ends statement.

7. Dinner/Small Group Discussion

Board members ate dinner and discussed the draft Ends Statement in small groups.

8. Report Outs from Groups

Board members reported out one by one on their specific thoughts regarding the various sections, word changes, amount of direction needed, etc. for the Ends Statement

9. Large Group Discussion

Superintendent Obeng described how he might interpret the current draft of the Ends statement. This interpretation is based on many conversations he has already had with the Board and others involved in the process. He also stated that he'd like to know what the Board's comfort level is with the interpretation process.

A discussion occurred regarding hypothetical transitions of Superintendents. Does this Ends statement adequately express what the Board wants? The Board expressed that there is good cohesion between Superintendent Obeng and the

Board, but if a transition were to occur, there might be a gap with a new Board and/or Superintendent understanding what is intended by the draft Ends statement as currently written.

Strategic Plan aligns the Ends policy with decisions and actions that are being undertaken by the Superintendent, as authorized by the Policies.. That alignment is important.

A number of board members were not satisfied with the Mission Statement standing in for an Ends policy because they felt it was too limited. A team volunteered to work further on developing a more comprehensive Ends Policy.

The driving force behind the adoption of Policy Governance was to avoid having too many policies.

Many items of concern (Financial Health of School District, for example) are already in the Policy Governance Policies. These policies will be monitored on a regular basis through a calendar, as determined by the Board.

8. Wrap Up/Next Steps

Suggestion on the table put forward by Michael Healy given conversation:

Adopt Ends at formal meeting soon and attach policies with dates on them that can be analyzed and critiqued over time as they are monitored.

For all of the policies, Superintendent Obeng would have the first shot at developing the indicators and interpretation of the policies for purposes of submitting monitoring reports to the Board. The Board's role is to indicate whether the indicators are sufficient or not, and signal this by accepting any given monitoring report or requesting further information.

Another task remaining is to develop a Board calendar for the Board use for monitoring each Policy, with monitoring reports submitted by the Superintendent according to the calendar.

The Board discussed the idea of having draft Ends indicators presented by Superintendent Obeng at the Board Summer Retreat (date TBD).

Board members asked M Healy whether it's possible to have the policies stated in a more positive manner (the policy language tends to be written in the negative)? Michael Healy explained that this is standard format, and the positive side of the policies is that they state only the limitations, so everything not embodied in the policies is open to discussion and interpretation, which offers a more positive approach to governing in general (as opposed to trying to codify every potential situation imaginable in the District, which is what current policies do now).

Possibly bring back at the May 9th Board Meeting to make a decision on the Ends Statement.

Questions to be answered:

- If Superintendent Obeng is given the go ahead, what is the timeline for receiving recommendations for indicators?
- What is the timeline for drafting indicators/monitoring report for the Ends statement if approved?
- How does this group articulate and incorporate language on inclusion and diversity in policy governance? The Board agreed that Chair Porter should charge the Diversity & Equity Committee with making recommendations for language to be incorporated into a revised Ends Policy
- Commissioners Harrington & Curry volunteered to work further on developing the Ends Policy language.

9. Adjournment

A. *Motion to adjourn at _8:47_ p.m.*

(Commissioner Kirk/ Commissioner Seguino)

Respectfully Submitted by Brittany Nevins