

BOARD STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

May 16, 2023

Call to Order

President Cohen called the Study Session of the Shoreline Board of Directors to order via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on May 16, 2023.

Roll Call

Present: Sarah Cohen, President; Emily Williams, Vice President; Sara Betnel, Director; Meghan Jernigan, Director; and Rebeca Rivera, Director.

Not present: Luke Smith, Shorecrest Student Representative; Lily Fredericks, Shorecrest Student Representative; Helen Murphy, Shorewood Student Representative; Esme Harkess, Shorewood Student Representative

The following topic was discussed:

Annual School Improvement Plan Updates

Presented by Make VanOrden, District Academic Officer

Mr. VanOrden began with an overview to provide context to what he would be presenting. There is a state requirement that school boards approve School Improvement Plans (SIP), and this is a good time to have a conversation to be sure the District is in alignment with the Board in order to make a decision in the fall while also engaging principals. When working on improvement and particularly during a budget crisis, it is important to prioritize.

Mr. VanOrden shared a PowerPoint to start the conversation around School Improvement Plans. SIPs are intended to reflect work being done in a school to assure students are learning. He emphasized the importance of having a few key priority targets that can get forward direction. We can do better being more explicit to achieve the requirements of SIPs. Math is an area that we will focus on being more explicitly called out in SIPs.

When thinking about incorporating the requirements of a school to a template, we'll also try to streamline to address the capacity needs of staff. There will be a shift in the structure of the goal area. This was explained through an example, looking at outcomes and strategies getting us to goals, as well as a timeline.

When Mr. VanOrden was asked what he meant by fidelity, he explained it is when you do what you say you're going to do to get the outcome you want. This ensures the structure and specifics of intervention are followed correctly in order to see improved outcomes.

Mr. VanOrden shared draft data for elementary schools. There is intentionality around having different structures and formats for the goal by level, as was discussed with principals. We know there are specific milestones in terms of data giving us an indication as to whether or not students are on track for the next level. Several examples of what this looks like at different grade levels were shared for the elementary level, monitoring the growth and progress of students by cohort. This gives the District key points to look at with these priority goals. The data presented will be disaggregated by gender, race, ethnicity, culture, language, and physical/mental ability.

It was suggested to add free lunch to the disaggregated components.

A question was asked if there were any midpoint data collections, or is this data just available on annual basis. Mr. VanOrden said we do have a midpoint. Part of our work to take things off peoples' plates has been consolidating the number of assessments. For a SIP, it is an annual

review. It is interesting to think about a midyear school improvement. Midyear check-ins have been done in the past and may be something to consider with principals, even as a progress check.

At middle school, the idea again, is looking at a cohort group, with the goal of seeing more and more students at or above standard by the time they exit middle school, focusing on a few priority areas. A goal added at middle school is attendance. This is where attendance, along with discipline, begins to have an impact on student success, and are really important to monitor.

For high school we move onto graduation, looking at added measures focused on the students that are on track to graduate. Ninth grade is a key pivotal year, focusing on English and math. As with middle school, priority focus areas include attendance and discipline. Those are the priority focus areas, and then each school would enter a target/goal for themselves based on the prior year's score.

Noting we are trying to be sure we are focused, Mr. VanOrden shared some other indicators being worked through and will continue to process as we go into next school year. These indicators are items being discussed, and may or may not be considered in the future.

In terms of where we are in our process, we have been working with principals, and are meeting with them this week and will share the conversation we are having today. The goal is to finalize in June so principals have a SIP template to start working with their staff.

President Cohen expressed appreciation for the framework around this important work so there is common understanding of what is being worked towards together.

Director Rivera appreciated the streamlined process and tracking numbers and improvements from year to year. She also likes the other indicators that are being considered, and some of these are important for thinking through some of our other goals. She hopes the District can implement its own survey with some essential things we're looking at, as well as the DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) data. Is this something we are keeping track of at a District level?

Mr. VanOrden answered that it is a requirement we have District and school goals. One of the principals talked about looking at DEI data in terms of staff make-up at our schools. Although principals have some say over how and who is hired at their school, the process does typically live more at the District level in terms of hiring committees, screening, interview questions. So that would fall more on a District level in terms of staff composition. In terms of training and in terms of outcomes for groups of students, that could be incorporated.

Director Rivera emphasized the importance and value of training.

Director Betnel appreciated the outcome focus. As a Board we have been talking about the desire to continue to move forward with strategic planning, and gear our whole collective vision in that way. She noted the opportunity for revision, feedback, adjustments is appreciated. Some things offered for consideration are having a benchmark at the building level of not only these specific metrics but other data such as population of building, staff of color, and free and reduced meal percentages. This will provide a clear picture of the community buildings serve, as well as how communities flex and to be able to see that throughout the year. She wondered about progress towards IEP goals as something as a common measure.

Mr. VanOrden explained there is a special education program that looks at the percent of IEPs that were met, so that we are actually doing what we say in individual education. This data is already available and it could be pulled by school. That also helps us when we do get a state review, then we actually are monitoring it.

Director Betnel asked about how the SIP gets developed overall, and wondered how that is informed by students. What about a student devised goal and/or a family devised goal for each building to consider?

Mr. VanOrden stated there is a requirement for an engagement process. It might be interesting to think about it as a goal or have it built into the strategies. Calling that out specifically as our family engagement strategies might be interesting too.

Director Betnel suggested it would be interesting to see what students would like to see if they set a goal. With the DEI data, in the other indicators that were listed, she wondered if gender 101 was one of them. The response was that it would be added.

Director Jernigan asked if gender 101 was offered. Mr. VanOrden hadn't seen it this year. Mr. VanOrden said he would check on it as he's been looking for it as well.

President Cohen asked what we see as the strategies around attendance. There are so many things outside what you do in a school that might impact students' attendance.

Mr. VanOrden said there are a whole series of them. Breakfast clubs where students can make connections. Making classrooms more engaging and see if that boosts attendance. We've done home visits and have plans with students and their families to increase attendance. Mr. VanOrden said he wanted to be careful not to do 'perfect attendance' because those kids that have barriers typically don't get those awards, and that is not really the purpose.

Superintendent Reyes shared attendance matters campaigns as an example used in Pasco. Videos were shared on the website and social media where you can see and hear staff emphasizing the importance of attendance. During open houses and other events throughout the year, keeping that at the forefront as an important aspect of a positive learning experience.

President Cohen followed up asking if there is capacity to add things we are not doing for the next year.

Mr. VanOrden said this is school by school, student by student, group by group. There are resources needed to support some of these, but by having a goal, target and data where we start to see slips, then maybe that will direct us to add more resources. This is the value of having some direct goals and targets.

President Cohen understands how stretched people are, and also hears how this is a key indicator for graduation rates and other student success measures. The fidelity piece could be powerful around resourcing these specific improvements we are trying to have in these specific goals. If there are barriers to fidelity, and a way to document them, that could be helpful. She is thinking about how to create a narrative to take to the legislature, noting the resources in schools are essential for the goals we share as a society. Any data that the Board uses on the advocacy side of our work, we should think of having a streamline storytelling approach based on that data.

Mr. VanOrden commented this could be powerful; we have to be thoughtful to being very specific on what we are looking for. It would be interesting to see if the valuable information is a year-end reflection, or if it goes into reflecting for next year as goals are being prepared. It would be as simple as adding what the barriers were to achieving goals.

Director Williams was thinking about the District's limited resources, wanting a strategic plan, and wanting to know impacts of our decisions around the budget. The explanations in terms of SIP

plans, in particular, is helpful. The disaggregated data points and program data embedded in that will be good to see.

President Cohen asked if there is anything the Board can do to help with the data-driven culture we are in.

Mr. VanOrden said goal is not to penalize schools for not hitting their goal. Our goal is to learn and figure out what the barriers are. As we analyze why we are not hitting targets, what can we do to support schools? The intention is more asset-based as opposed to taking things away or putting schools on a plan of improvement. It goes with the conversation here – maybe it becomes a shift of resources and begins to become a prioritization as we start to develop that larger District plan, which feeds into that. If we are not hitting District goals and school goals, how do we shift our resources. An annual review and an annual reallocation or adjustment would take place. The Board could help with directing that, but it’s really focusing on how to support our people to continue to do good work with our kids.

President Cohen commented that this is about supporting all schools and all the kids across the District equitably. This streamlining will be helpful for the Board to have conversations that align with a little more specificity.

Mr. VanOrden will follow up with a brief before the end of the school year to show where we are and share the actual template that will be used.

Director Jernigan appreciated the succinct stream of information and how it was shared. One area to learn a little bit more on in the future is how do we engage our community in the development of the SIP. Is it District leadership or specific to the leadership at the school?

Superintendent Reyes thanked Mr. VanOrden for the information shared and providing the ongoing framework that the Board asked to be developed. Thank you to the principals and leadership teams, who meet regularly on this important work.

Adjournment: 6:46 p.m.

Dr. Sarah Cohen, School Board President

Attest: June 6, 2023

Dr. Susana Reyes, Secretary
Shoreline Board of Directors

All documents referenced in the minutes may be viewed in the Superintendent’s Office during normal business hours.