

BOARD STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

November 7, 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 November 7, 2023. The meeting was also streamed in the Board Room at the Shoreline Center.

Roll Call

Present: Sarah Cohen, President; Emily Williams, Vice President; Sara Betnel, Director; Meghan Jernigan, Director; Rebeca Rivera, Director, and Mitchell Ichinkhorloo, Shorewood Student Representative.

The following topic was discussed:

Proposed 2024 Legislative Priorities

Sara Betnel, School Board Legislative Representative, presented.

At the October 10 regular board meeting, Director Betnel discussed in depth the proposed 2024 legislative priorities with the Board. She began this study session with a revisit of the purpose and function of board legislative priorities, which includes:

- Represent the vision and values of our district as they relate to potential legislation and funding
- Amplify the policy and funding priorities that impact our students the most
- Provide input with legislators on key areas of concern and need for our district
- Guide advocacy actions taken by board members on behalf of the board, e.g. testimony, etc.
- Share with our school community key areas of legislative advocacy happening on behalf of the district

Director Betnel also reviewed the legislative advocacy that took place in connection with the 2023 legislative session:

- Identified and tracked 29 bills that aligned with our 2023 priorities
- Logged our position, submitted written testimony, and/or provided in-person testimony on 26 bills
- Seven of those bills passed and were included in the 2023-2025 biennium budget
- Issued a letter to the education and funding committee members in both chambers about the structural funding shortfall districts are facing and the urgent need for legislative action
- Collaborated on a data visualization tool for Special Education funding
- Attended the WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill
- Engaged in regional and statewide collaboration with other boards and WSSDA
- Met with all of our State Senators and Representatives multiple times

The 2024 legislative session will be a short 60-day session from January 8 through March 7. It will be the second year of the “biennium” (two-year legislative cycle – non budget year). There were small adjustments to the two-year state budget established in 2023:

- New capital gains revenue – first \$500 million of collection will go to early learning, all beyond that to school construction
- Unanticipated state revenue – current forecast has this at a \$1 billion increase

Items that are anticipated to return for the 2024 session include: transportation funding, elimination of isolation and restraint, tribal sovereignty education (with funding), diverse and inclusive learning standards, mastery-based education, library programs (without funding), simple majority for bonds, civil rights for students and teachers, and prejudgment interest (potential negative impact).

Possible new items include: paraeducator funding, counselor-student ratio revisit, Safety Net application/penalties changes, Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funding, electric vehicles, generative artificial intelligence (AI) regulations and training. The topic of increased insurance and substitute costs will be raised but is not currently on the legislature's radar.

Director Betnel shared the key concerns and needs used when formulating the proposed legislative priorities for 2024. Budget was first and foremost—decreased regionalization over the last five years, misalignment around staffing and building minimums, unfunded portions of curriculum and learning delivery, special education, transportation and the unfunded portions of IPD/COLA and SEBB. Also contributing to the formulation of the priorities were the following student supports and needs: mental health, universal meals, substance abuse, inclusionary practices, representative staff and materials, language access/MLL support, connection to social services, and addressing climate change.

The proposed legislative priorities for the 2024 session were as follows:

*As school districts across the state grapple with revenue shortfalls due to the intersection of decreased state funding and increasing costs, we urge our state and national representatives to **prioritize stabilizing K-12 funding in 2024 and beyond** by:*

Amplify Fund Staffing Positions and Compensation

- *Realign and fund the staffing allocations for building and support positions needed to have comprehensive learning and care for students in each building (principals, asst. principals, deans, counselors, librarians, nurses, psychologists, paras, family advocates, custodians, security, front office, and nutrition services).*
- *Update the state funding model for substitutes (minimum 12 days/\$190 per day).*
- *Fund the unfunded portions of SEBB and IPD/COLA increases for Title 1 staff.*

Realize Inclusive Special Education as Basic Education

- *Fully and amply fund IDEA and the true cost of special education services.*
- *Remove barriers to Safety Net applications and reimbursement.*

Support the Whole Child

- *Provide for universal school meals for all students.*
- *Fund additional mental health supports and substance abuse prevention.*
- *Fund the true cost of transportation: fuel, fleet, and staffing.*

Respond to Regional Costs

- *Establish district regionalization parameters based on the true cost of living and labor markets regionally; keeping neighboring districts within 2-3% of each other.*
- *Increase MSOC allocations to adjust for increasing insurance and utility costs.*

Deliver on Promises

- *Fund staffing and resources devoted to racial equity, including diverse and inclusive learning standards, Ethnic Studies K-12, and Since Time Immemorial curriculum.*
- *No unfunded mandates. Ensure all existing and new public school directives receive the necessary funding for implementation.*

Protect Our Students' Future

- *Create an ethical regulatory framework for generative AI technologies that supports innovative education approaches while providing professional development funding.*

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- *Invest in climate impact mitigation strategies to address and reverse the escalating effects of humans on the climate and the earth’s temperature. Support schools in updating our infrastructure and transportation systems to renewable options.*

Board members expressed their appreciation and approval of the proposed priorities. There was consensus for moving them forward for approval on the November 14 consent agenda. Director Betnel will work with Public Information Officer Rachel Belfield on formatting.

Adjournment: 6:37 p.m.

Emily Williams, School Board President

Attest: December 19, 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.