

BOARD STUDY SESSION MEETING MINUTES

November 28, 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 28, 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; and Rebeca Rivera, Director.

The following topic was discussed:

District Strategic Planning Process

Presenters:

Mike VanOrden, District Academic Officer

Trish Campbell, Executive Director of Student Services

Mr. VanOrden opened the presentation by asking the Board to provide input on and guidance for a district strategic planning process. He then reviewed the purpose of a strategic plan.

- 1) **Clarity of Direction:** A strategic plan offers a well-defined, shared vision for the future, enhancing the district's ability to set clear objectives and goals.
- 2) **Efficient and Responsible Resource Allocation:** Having a plan aids in the responsible and efficient allocation of resources, allowing us to prioritize initiatives that have the greatest potential impact on student success.
- 3) **Engagement and Accountability:** Engaging stakeholders in a planning process that fosters a sense of ownership and accountability. It encourages the active participation of school staff, parents, students, and the wider community.
- 4) **Continuous Improvement:** A strategic plan promotes a culture of continuous improvement by establishing a systematic approach to assessing and refining educational practices.
- 5) **Adaptation to Change:** A strategic plan helps us anticipate and respond to changes, ensuring that we can continue to provide an excellent education for all of our students regardless of the circumstances we face.

Examples of strategic plans were shared with the Board, which included: Issaquah School District, Edmonds School District, and Bellevue School District.

There are indicators that are committed to across the entire district. Some samples were provided and a few of them are as follows:

Student Success Indicators

- Percent of K-2 students meeting end-of-year benchmark in reading
- Percent of students meeting state standards in math and English Language Arts
- Percent of students completing advanced coursework
- Percent of students graduating
- Percent of students in a post-secondary career or education within 2 years of graduation

Welcoming, Safe, Inclusive Schools Indicators

- Percent of students and families reporting they feel a sense of safety and belonging
- Percent of students reporting social awareness and emotional regulation skills
- Percent of students avoiding exclusionary discipline and chronic absenteeism
- Percent of affirmative items on annual safety audit

Family and Community Engagement Indicators

- Percent of families reporting that district provides equitable and inclusive learning environments
- Percent of families who indicate that they regularly receive useful information from district
- Percent of community members who indicate that district effectively gathers feedback on important issues

Excellent Staff Indicators

- Percentage increase in diversity of certificated, classified, and administrative applicants and hires
- Percent of teachers, administrators, and classified staff retained annually
- Percent of staff reporting professional development supports their work

Baselines can be set in a variety of ways that can be reported on annually.

The District is looking for a broad representative group to serve on the Strategic Planning Committee. The purpose of the committee will be: *“To advise the superintendent and Board on priorities and accompanying strategies and indicators, to aid in the development of a 3-5 year strategic plan for the district.”* The goal areas include: successful students; welcoming, safe and inclusive schools; excellent, caring and diverse staff; engaged families and community; and equitable, responsible and strategic resource management. The application for potential committee members includes not only categories, e.g. elementary teachers, secondary teachers, but also demographic information—race, ethnicity, gender expression, age of children in our schools, programs, a brief statement of interest regarding skills and knowledge, and a priority ranking of the goal areas.

Mr. VanOrden concluded the presentation by reviewing in detail the committee timeline, which is targeted for beginning before winter break but could possibly be moved to mid-January based on the Board’s input at this meeting. He and Ms. Campbell are recommending a two-year checkpoint plan. The plan could continue beyond two years but certain aspects could be checked and adjusted if necessary.

Ms. Campbell highlighted the work that district staff and community have done over recent years in terms of the Instructional Strategic Plan and the guiding principles around instructional inclusivity. This work should nest nicely with what’s already been done. Mr. VanOrden added that discussions had also taken place regarding guiding documents that are already in place, such as the race and equity policy and tool, ethnic studies resolution—these will be brought in as well to the committee’s work. *[Towards the end of the meeting, Director Betnel added the upcoming climate justice and sustainability resolution, which is anticipated to be adopted in April 2024.]*

The Board engaged in discussion with the presenters. Concern was expressed around ensuring that the three initiative committees don’t work in silos and that possibly they come together at some point. It is very important to understand the interconnectedness and the communication should follow that understanding. Mr. VanOrden responded that there is a document in existence that outlines and blends the work of all three. There have been thoughts around individuals serving on more than one committee and that is certainly the case with district administrators, who are doing so. The progress of the work of these committees will be shared regularly.

Director Betnel asked if, in a goal area that is about successful students, there could be one target that is singularly defined by students. And if we have a goal area that is about families, could there be one target that is singularly defined by families. Mr. VanOrden said he liked the idea and added that we would need to be sure that the one target in each of those areas was representative of a

broader group. Director Betnel also wanted to make sure that our community partners were included in this process.

President Cohen asked that there be as much quantifiable accountability included in the plan as is wise. Superintendent Reyes responded that was the plan. President Cohen also asked about the approval process, specifically as to whether or not the Board adopts a resolution. The response was yes. Mr. VanOrden added that typically, in his experience, boards haven't weighed in on the concrete strategies. They may have some input on the specific indicators; however, "they assign the superintendent to develop it and then they tell the superintendent if it's meeting their interests or not. If not, the superintendent goes back to the drawing board . . . The other area is around the data. They might say either that's not an achievable target, which is probably more rare, or that's not an ambitious enough target and we want you to come back with a more ambitious target." He shared an example of targets from one of his previous school districts. One caution was that if you have too many indicators, then you are trying to watch everything at once. It is better to narrow it down with maybe a few subsets that are reported annually with the Board and others that are monitored internally.

Mr. VanOrden also reported that, in past districts, board members have acted as observers on these committees.

Director Rivera suggested that examples of other plans be shared with the committee, and in particular, she recommended the Federal Way School District's plan, as implemented by former superintendent, Dr. Tammy Campbell. She also noticed that the various stages of that plan were shared with the community in multiple languages. Mr. VanOrden stated he would plan to have a question about translation and/or interpretation services added to the application.

Director Williams asked if there would be a website similar to the one last year for BAT [yes] and whether there would be Zoom accessibility for committee members. Mr. VanOrden responded that would be his preference, for the meetings to be open.

Director Jernigan stated that she had been involved in strategic planning processes with other organizations and she had never seen one that didn't have a landscape analysis of the external factors. Mr. VanOrden related about the plan for the first meeting to include sharing of data, e.g. academic achievement data, perception data, to describe our current conditions and then share where we want to go from here.

Superintendent Reyes reminded the Board that there had been a district-wide communication that went out last week (Wednesday before Thanksgiving) advertising this meeting as well as information about the committee's work and the application process for being a committee member. That communication also included information about the Budget Advisory Team.

Mr. VanOrden asked if there would be any interest in having a committee session on a Saturday for maybe 4 or 5 hours. Director Williams thought that was a good idea and added that a provision for floating in and out might be nice in terms of accessibility. President Cohen added that she has found that a longer, more sustained period of time together [such as 4 or 5 hours] results in getting further along in a shorter timeframe. Director Jernigan shared that in her experience as a Meridian Park parent, participation in weekend meetings had actually been better. "We were able to get different voices in the room." Director Betnel voiced her support and added child care and snacks would be nice to include.

Study Session Minutes --- November 28, 2023

Adjournment: 7:32 p.m.

Emily Williams, School Board President

Attest: January 16, 2024

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.