



Board of Directors Retreat Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 7, 2023 05:45 PM

Gray Middle School - Library
6229 S. Tyler St., Tacoma, WA

The Board Retreat will not be recorded.

OBJECTIVES

WE WILL :

- Establish a team connection for our shared work to support student learning and staff engagement;
- Continue to build shared meaning around what elements of our programming are important to us;
- Focus on effective Board communication and leadership.

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1. RETREAT WELCOME

The Board of Directors of Tacoma School District No. 10 met in a Board/Superintendent Retreat on Thursday, December 7, 2023, in the Gray Middle School library, 6229 S. Tyler St., Tacoma, WA 98409. Directors Bonbright, Keating, Leon, McElroy and Strozier, as well as Superintendent Garcia, Chief Financial Officer Medina, and General Counsel Gbenro were present.

2. AGENDA REVIEW

President Bonbright reviewed the agenda.

3. TEAM BUILDING

Director McElroy led the team-building exercise, where participants were divided into two teams. Each team's members had to come up with 10 things they had in common, none of which could be physical characteristics. The groups then discussed their take-aways they learned from the exercise.

4. FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Superintendent Garcia and Chief Financial Officer Medina facilitated a broad discussion about the financial shortfalls that will need to be addressed during the next few budget years. It was emphasized that no recommendations or decisions are being put forward at this time. As has been shared during recent business meetings, some reasons we are in this place include the impacts of decisions mandated at the state and federal level that are not fully funded, escalating transportation costs, inflation of many items/services, declining enrollment numbers (occurring in districts across the state and nation), the end of COVID-related ESSER funds, etcetera.

We may need to look at things such as outdated programs that are no longer serving us, as well as looking for opportunities that may better further our goals.

Superintendent Garcia asked the Board what kinds of information they feel they would you need to know for certain decisions. The goal is to minimize the impact on our students. We also need to acknowledge that there will be detractors, no matter what decisions are made.

Immediate steps have been implemented. An immediate reduction of Central Office discretionary budgets has been reduced by 30%. Next year, budgets will also be reduced. Central Office positions will also be reduced midyear and at the end of the 2023 school year. The Superintendent will notify Board members in January the specific positions that will be eliminated. This means that we

won't have as much flexibility to cover certain things. Additionally, exempt employee's salary schedule has been frozen for the 2024/25 school year, though employees will still get the State required IPD. The Superintendent and CFO are working to have a plan to present in January 2024. They encouraged board members to come to them with any questions they may have.

5. STRETCH BREAK

No stretch break was taken.

6. SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

President Bonbright led the discussion about the results of everyone's True Colors personality test, a free online personality test found at www.idrlabs.com/true-colors/. The test is based on the hypothesis that human temperament falls into one of four broad categories, with each category having its own strengths and weaknesses: blue, gold, orange, and green. Test results for each person gave their primary and secondary temperament color. The idea of taking the test was to see what peoples' strengths are and to identify how different personalities can strengthen communication and best work together.

All but one attendee was some combination of blue and gold, with one person who was a blue/green combination, showing that the Board and Superintendent, and staff are very much in alignment. Each participant shared something they found interesting and something they were surprised by.

Discussion centered around how the test questions were very broad-based, depends on how a person views themselves, and how it captures how a person is feeling at a particular point in time. The important take-away is that activities like this help the group to have these foundational conversations and show how each team member is committed to working together to do what's best for our students.

7. CLOSING COMMENTS

Each January, the Board president works with directors on their committee assignments. Director Leon commented that they all have different work lives and may need to serve constituents in different ways besides sitting on committees. Discussion followed on whether there are ways they can be more efficient and better serve on committees. Are there committees where they should be serving that they currently are not a part of? He also wondered if they need to change every year or if they could do so less frequently.

Superintendent Garcia recommends that board members think about which are required; are there legal requirements? Before adding more, are there some that are no longer needed? Is our participation serving our TPS students? The board assistant will check to see if there are policy/regulations for how committee assignments are to be handled. For example, we know that part of the Carl Perkins Grant requires a board member to serve on the committee. Others mentioned that serving on some committees helps with important inter-agency relationships, such as with the Health Department or the Traffic Safety committee.

Board members are encouraged to send any ideas for changes to both the superintendent and the board assistant.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Board President Bonbright adjourned the retreat at 8:43PM.