

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2021

Call to Order

President Jernigan called the Study Session of the Shoreline Board of Directors to order via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. on November 9, 2021. This meeting was also available to the community via Zoom.

Roll Call

Present: Meghan Jernigan, President; Rebeca Rivera, Vice President; Sara Betnel, Member; Emily Williams, Director; Sarah Cohen, Member; and Sky Stark, Shorecrest Student Representative.

Absent: Yubi Mamiya, Shorewood Student Representative

The following topic was discussed:

Shoreline Instructional Strategic Plan

Maria Stevens, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, presented.

The Instructional Strategic Plan (ISP) has been a guiding force in Shoreline since its implementation in September 2017. Ms. Stevens provided some background for its development. When she first came to Shoreline, an ISP was not in existence. The ISP was developed as the Race and Equity policy was being created but prior to the Race and Equity Decision Making Tool and prior to the administration of the CEE (Center for Educational Effectiveness) Survey. A committee was convened with broad participation from our community, students, staff and families. At the time, it was by far, the largest committee formed in Shoreline.

Shoreline values and greatly benefits from our many stakeholders' input and expertise; therefore, we called on stakeholder voices throughout the process as we collaboratively created our ISP. The planning process included opportunities for our community to participate in the following ways:

- Steering Committee – 13 meetings from January through May, 2017
- Stakeholder Survey
- Community Visioning Event (Saturday in May at the Shoreline Center)
- Thought Exchange (District version) – feedback on ISP draft components

The role of the committee was to represent the various stakeholders with a vested interest in Shoreline School District; advocate for student learning at the highest levels; ensure the ISP addresses the interests and needs of the Shoreline community; and develop a plan that sets out instructional priorities.

The committee included 43 members:

- 6 classified staff
- 10 family/community/student representatives
- 15 certificated staff
- 6 school administrators
- 6 district administrators

An ISP is important for the following reasons:

- To bring everyone on board – to mobilize toward a common vision – Ms. Stevens shared her personal experiences during her first year in Shoreline. Her work was much like an entry plan whereby she interviewed staff, students, administrators, community and evaluated data. What she discovered was that everyone was working really hard but not necessarily in the same direction; a conclusion also reached by former Superintendent Miner. Creating an ISP would correct that and would unite the efforts. The messaging to staff and community was regarding an organized and intentional effort to indicate where we were heading as an organization and what we wanted to accomplish.
- To guide decision making at all levels

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- To improve organizational learning and capacity
- To communicate to stakeholders what is important
- To be proactive

A question in the Zoom chat feature was asked about student engagement. Students were included on the committee and student engagement occurred throughout the process, including the survey (although younger students were not surveyed). Community involvement was also included throughout the process.

Ms. Stevens outlined the committee goals:

- Explore and identify instructional priorities/drivers
- Establish common values, purpose and direction for teaching and learning in Shoreline
- Understand Shoreline's instructional strengths, opportunities and challenges
- Clearly communicate and collaborate with the Shoreline community

President Jernigan asked if demographic data was collected on the steering committee members, other than what was shown on slide 6. Ms. Stevens responded that they did not; members were not asked for their race and ethnicity. She also stated that she knew it did not fully represent the demographics of our student body. That was identified early on so there was an intentional effort to reach out. Multiple times, representatives of Natural Leaders (who didn't necessarily want to commit to the full roster of meetings) were invited and attended meetings and provided much appreciated guidance to the committee members. Additionally, Ms. Stevens assigned homework to committee members around collecting data on specific demographics who weren't in the room. Again, this was prior to the creation of the Race and Equity Decision Making Tool, but the concept was brought to the work in all they did every step of the way.

The components of a strategic plan include: shared vision, clear values and beliefs that drive actions, limited number of priorities that will drive the organization, end results or outcomes, optimal key strategies, alignment of resources and strategy for monitoring progress.

The committee's work included:

- Built a community
- Established our WHY
- Learned about strategic plans
- Provided stakeholders opportunity to inform our work
- Studied student data
- Learned about Shoreline's instructional reality
- Heard from higher education (community college level and Seattle University)
- Explored stakeholder feedback
- Held stakeholder Visioning Day (full day on Saturday in May 2017)
- Determined outcomes for the collective work
- Researched evidence-based best practices/systems/approaches
- Conducted Thought Exchanges
- Drafted Instructional Strategic Plan
- Provided a recommendation to the Superintendent and Board

The purpose of the stakeholder survey was to collect perceptions and beliefs about the Shoreline School District to help the committee understand the District's strengths and opportunities for improvement.

| Language | Total # | # of Parents | # of Students | %Taking Survey | % of District |
|----------|---------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
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|------------|------|------|------|------------|-----|
| English | 2950 | 1314 | 7867 | 17% (-65%) | 82% |
| Spanish | 38 | 38 | 491 | 8% (+3%) | 5% |
| Korean | 28 | 28 | 106 | 26% (+25%) | 1% |
| Chinese | 31 | 31 | 174 | 18% (+17%) | 1% |
| Arabic | 5 | 5 | 64 | 8% (+7%) | 1% |
| Russian | 11 | 11 | 51 | 22% (+7%) | 1% |
| Amharic | 10 | 10 | 139 | 7% (+6%) | 1% |
| Vietnamese | 4 | 4 | 88 | 5% (+4%) | 1% |

Director Betnel asked if language was the only demographic information asked about on the stakeholder survey. Ms. Stevens responded that they were also asked about participation in special programs in order to ensure there was representation from special education, multilingual learners and highly capable. Director Betnel also asked if race and ethnicity was collected and whether or not the information was still available; the response was no. At the time, the work was done manually rather than digitally and often involved posters/flip charts and printouts in the room with committee members examining the data. Ms. Stevens has the questions but not all of the data.

Student Rep Stark also asked for clarity on the availability of the stakeholder survey data in direct form and also the origin of the data on slide 11. Ms. Stevens again replied that the data was provided on posters and the information on slide 11 was provided to the committee during its work. It was also provided at the Community Visioning Event.

The Community Visioning Event was designed to capture stakeholder hopes and dreams for our students, understand stakeholder values, and build momentum for future work. The event invited engagement in the following ways:

- Student voice via videos
- Examined stakeholder survey responses
- Small group discussions with protocols to ensure all voices are heard
- Generated statements about important beliefs, values, hopes and needs

The committee then took all the feedback received at the Community Visioning Event and completed the development of the draft components of the ISP. Then it was taken to different groups and venues to gather additional feedback. These were called Thought Exchanges. Among school staff, meetings were held at each school site and all staff (certificated and classified) were invited; approximately 80% of staff reviewed the draft plan and provided input. Among community members, the community was invited to attend day and evening workshops at the Shoreline Center. Interpreters were available in Spanish, Korean and Chinese.

President Jernigan asked for a recap of the timeline. The steering committee began meeting on January 11, 2017. The survey was drafted and then finalized on March 8. The survey went out March 24 through April 10 (prior to spring break). The committee reviewed the data on April 12. The Community Visioning Event took place on May 13, after which the ISP was drafted and the Thought Exchange occurred at the end of May. The committee reviewed all the feedback on May 31 and finalized the ISP in June. The ISP was presented to the Board on June 19. Ms. Stevens reported that all of her efforts from January to June were spent on this ISP process. Jen Etter, TOSA, was her co-facilitator.

Ms. Stevens shared the numbers of participants in the different aspects of the engaging stakeholders part of the process:

- 43 committee members
- 90 (aside from the committee members) attended the Community Visioning Event
- 500+ provided input on the draft ISP
- 3,000 provided feedback in the survey

The elements of the work in developing the ISP included the following components. The committee kept the mission statement previously established by the former School Board: *“Provide a collaborative learning community which engages all students in learning the academic and work-life skills needed to achieve their individual potential and become responsible citizens.”*

- 1) Shared beliefs – primarily from feedback gathered at Saturday community event and survey feedback about hopes and dreams for Shoreline
- 2) Vision for student learners
- 3) Strategic instructional drivers
- 4) Motto – unintended but came from the work

Ms. Stevens reviewed the elements in detail that made up the ISP recommendations of the committee.

SHARED BELIEFS

All students can achieve

- All students can grow to reach their academic and personal excellence.

Equitable access to rigorous learning is essential

- All students will be provided with equitable instruction, access to innovative programs and necessary supports for success.

Diversity makes our community stronger

- We view diversity as an asset. Fostering an environment of dignity and respect, all individuals, opinions, and contributions are valued.

Curiosity sparks creativity and innovation

- Students will be encouraged to generate questions, explore topics of interest, and engage in inquiry to develop new ideas and novel ways of thinking.

Respect, empathy and collaboration are at the core of community

- Students will broaden their perspectives by seeking to understand the perspectives and experiences of others to enable them to work collaboratively. Students will understand their role and responsibilities in our local and global community.

SHORELINE VISION FOR STUDENT LEARNERS (derived from community input)

Shoreline School District will support all students in becoming persistent, effective communicators, growth oriented, critical thinkers, empathetic, creative, global citizens, knowledgeable (added by teachers), collaborative.

STRATEGIC INSTRUCTIONAL DRIVERS

We will design and implement systems of learning that honor individual student goals and dreams, while building college and career readiness in an environment that supports social, emotional and physical well being.

1. Support a **culture of ongoing learning and growth** (applied to students and staff; this was prior to the early release professional development model).
2. Embrace **equity and diversity**.
3. **Know our students** and meet their social, emotional and academic needs.
4. Foster students' ability to develop **academic, life and career skills**.
5. **Teach** in ways that are **relevant, engaging, innovative, student-driven and rigorous**.

Ms. Stevens shared some of the current outcomes of the ISP. In Shoreline, we believe in our individual and collective ability to create a system where race and ethnicity are not predictors of success. A focused direction has emerged and can be seen in the School Improvement Plans. Five

years ago, from school to school, they were all very different but now they are united, consistent and aligned in their focus.

Much work has been done around cultivating growth and an improvement culture, particularly through the professional development, focusing on how we will put in place structures, routings and rituals for creating intellectually and socially safe classrooms and school communities where all students, especially those furthest from educational justice are engaged in challenging and meaningful work.

Other current outcomes include systems coherence:

- Centering race/ethnicity and inclusion in all that we do
- Culturally responsive practices that are student centered and include student voice and student choice
- Professional learning communities – all staff collaborate, learn and improve together
- Common instructional structures – lesson structure, Pacing Guide (common units and lessons)
- Intentional focus on student story, strength and need – ongoing development of authentic relationships by truly knowing our students (students change during the course of the year and staff need to keep up with those changes)
- Ethnic Studies and social justice integration – updates to units and lessons; new text and materials with diverse authentic voices providing windows and mirrors
- Equitable grading practices (grades 6-12)
- Equitable literacy practices and systems (grades K-5) – In answer to Director Rivera’s question about what this means, Ms. Stevens replied that this involves making sure that we are providing meaningful instruction around foundational literacy skills in our K-3 classrooms and that the progression continues up until fifth grade (changes as students grow), e.g. some kids can learn how to read but they don’t necessarily learn how to sound words out effectively and they don’t know the specific strategies for decoding words—however, it is critical that every student learns these skills!

Director Rivera asked if there was any alignment between what happens in literacy education in the highly capable program vs. the general education classrooms. Ms. Stevens responded that it was all the same. The selections of reading choices may vary; there is a range of variety in all classrooms.

Director Williams asked if the professional development opportunities in the area of race and equity were optional for staff, or are there requirements for training that need to be met every year. There is a pyramid for professional learning—the base is identified as trainings that are required for all—everyone needs the training on the bottom of the pyramid, e.g. Race and Equity 101. Furthermore, any new teachers that come on board are required to take that training. Equitable literacy practices and systems are also part of that required training. There is no equity if students can’t read. The learning is ongoing. Director Williams also asked if this training was extended to staff beyond just teachers. Yes, classified staff at the building level and at the Shoreline Center are included in these training opportunities.

Student Rep Stark asked how equitable literacy practices look at the grades 6-12 level. Director Stevens shared that every teacher and administrator received the book, *Grading for Equity* as a foundational text. Teachers were asked to review grading practices, specifically around the location of the F line and the concept of allowing students to demonstrate their learning in more ways than through just one test; we want to be sure students learn the content. This really came about as a result of COVID. There used to be measures of compliance, but during remote learning when lots of screens were dark, it was difficult to measure compliance so it came down to what students were actually producing. That speared staff forward in ways that have been super impactful. The goal is to ensure that what students are learning in school is showing up in their grades.

In regard to equitable literacy practices, Student Rep Stark also asked how this was working for students who may be performing above the rest of the class. Ms. Stevens spoke about the large group instruction vs. the small group instruction. For those students who have mastered a skill, they will be working on something different during the small group instruction. The teacher is able to differentiate those skills during the small group sessions.

Next steps include measuring impact through the following:

- Alignment and coherence across schools in School Improvement Plans with connections to the Instructional Strategic Plan
- Equity audit conducted at the district level and at each school
- Student learning data – K-5 literacy and 6-12 grades, specifically grades 9 and 10
- CEE/EES survey data (cross-walked with equity audit and key indicators about how families feel about learning)
- Student and family focus groups

The plan forward includes establishing measurable goals based on measures of impact (see above); continuing to align district and school goals and improvement efforts, and measuring progress toward goals.

In terms of the current equity audit, Director Williams asked if, as a district, we are auditing ourselves. The response was yes, we are auditing ourselves; there is no outside entity doing it for us. The benefit of that is that anytime a district has to interrogate its own practices, it is a learning endeavor—asking questions such as what does this look like, how close are we, why is this a measure we have to ask about--there's a lot of unpacking that occurs during an audit as opposed to just checking things off the list. Schools must have conversations because these are not easy measurements and it goes beyond whether or not students passed the SBA. If an outside agency were to come in and audit us, they may point out gaps but the District doesn't necessarily learn anything. On the other hand, facilitating the process ourselves engages staff in meaningful and fruitful conversations about how to improve. Ms. Stevens stated that she felt that "we have worked very hard to create that culture where we are not afraid of our own data, and we can recognize where we were, where we are now and where we still need to go." An outside evaluator would not be spending the amount of time that each individual teacher spends; it is a very different experience. Being honest, Ms. Stevens surmised that if she were a principal, she would be concerned about whether or not she would be presenting the results to the Board. "How am I going to be held accountable or am I going to be allowed to use this as a growth opportunity?" She used the analogy of sharing information about dieting/losing weight but not stepping on the scales publicly. She stated it was a delicate balance between creating a culture of change and a culture of "I gotcha". Director Rivera brought up the challenge of staff fully knowing what to look for in terms of an equity audit, stating that everyone is well aware of weight issues but completely knowing about equity issues is an ongoing and relatively new learning process.

Director Rivera stated that organizations generally embark on a strategic plan process every three to five years. Since the district is in that time period with the ISP, she asked Ms. Stevens what she might do the same and what she might do differently in the next round. Ms. Stevens responded that for one thing, we wouldn't be starting from scratch, and secondly, it could be spread out over a longer period of time. The next steps are to create measurable outcomes and we want to think about the long game. Most school districts have a five to seven year plan (rather than the three to five for business organizations). And while the individual board members may not be aware of all the details of the ISP, staff members in the district are—every teacher and every administrator. "It drives our work, all the time." She had to admit that she was a bit heartbroken personally to receive questions about what the ISP was because this is what has been guiding our work. In order to scaffold to the

next step, we need to do research, find out what other organizations are doing and learn how to honor and take the next steps. Director Rivera stated she knew about the plan but not about the process.

Director Cohen stated that she sees this work reflected in her conversations with teachers she meets, including her own children's teachers, e.g., that there is challenging professional development happening and the changes in the work. She asked for more details regarding how the goal of not having race and ethnicity as predictors of student success is tracked in terms of assessments, etc. Ms. Stevens responded that elementary students took the iReady assessments, the DIBELS8 and in January will take the RAS/RAN (identifier for dyslexic services). The DIBELS can be given one on one and more frequently as a standard measure in order to monitor progress. Ms. Stevens explained a process during professional development whereby teachers are asked to identify five students in their classrooms—one Latinx and/or multilingual learner, one student with an IEP and then other students, possibly those who may be in need of growth. This allows teachers to focus in during their professional development time on those particular students and how they might be able to plan their lessons in terms of helping those students who have shown the need for intentional instruction from their teacher. This helps staff to drill down in the data most specifically around those students who are furthest from educational justice and hold themselves accountable for their growth. The DIBELS data as well as the common assessments are uploaded to the system but some of the more informal assessments by teachers are not. The system is fully aligned.

President Jernigan asked if when pacing guides are used, does that mean that all of our classrooms are within two weeks of each other. Ms. Stevens explained that the first step in the process is to lay the standards by which all students are accountable. Teachers are held accountable for following the standards progression and most, probably 80%, follow the units as laid out. For one reason or another, a teacher may decide to create their own unit, but they still have to hit the required standards. If a student were to transfer to another school in the district, the guides may be different but the standards are the same. President Jernigan expressed appreciation for the information on slide 10 about the committee's work in regard to bringing in representation from the community colleges and Seattle University. It might be helpful also to bring in additional representatives from colleges and universities as well as Historically Black Colleges and Universities regarding future opportunities for our students.

Director Betnel spoke to the substantive shift in the make-up of our community that has occurred since the establishment of the ISP. She inquired as to how the ISP has brought the district to a place where we can identify where we are in achieving the mission and vision of the ISP and what further adjustments might be necessary for improvement. Ms. Stevens responded that the equity audit would be very helpful in identifying needs. Additionally, there are many more data points for measuring impacts now than what were available in 2017 when the ISP was created. Director Betnel added that the listening sessions and other components of Superintendent Reyes' entry plan would also be helpful in this process. Ms. Stevens stated she would follow the direction of the Board and Superintendent.

In view of the District's efforts regarding racial equity and inclusion, Director Betnel asked if Ms. Stevens could speak to the ways in which students participating in special education and other special needs across the spectrum of ability and learning are being measured and evaluated this year. Ms. Stevens shared that students on IEPs have individual educational plans that drive their instructional program. Certain elements of that can be captured in a data draw of sorts but by nature, it is based on their individual needs. These students are always considered in efforts for further inclusion. Many students with an IEP are served in general education classrooms and like multilingual learners, receive additional services, (speech and language, literacy, math, etc.) in addition to their core instruction (not supplanting it). IEPs come with a list of modifications that are tracked but there are

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additional supports that are not part of the IEP that can also be measured. In terms of data, the tracking is the same this year as any other year; the students participate in the same testing as much as possible, e.g. DIBELS, iReady at elementary. Depending on their needs, they may have additional assessments. There are also some elements where we don't necessarily have access. We also know that some of our students were better served in a remote environment, and that is something that will require more discussion around future instruction. Director Betnel looks forward to learning more about the results through future updates. Ms. Stevens responded that the School Improvement Plans (to be presented to the Board on December 7) will include some of that information.

Student Rep Stark asked if the above information also applied to students with a 504 or was that different. Ms. Stevens responded that 504s can be related to academics or they could just be a result of a student breaking their leg. But yes, data can be pulled on that category just as with other demographics.

President Jernigan recommended that if any board members had further questions, they should email Superintendent Reyes.

Superintendent Reyes thanked Ms. Stevens for her presentation on this important topic as it is the driver for the instructional work of the District as we continue to maintain the vision but also revisit specific checkpoints in terms of the anticipated impacts. She looks forward to the continued work of the team and further updates to the Board.

Adjournment: 7:45 p.m.

Rebeca Rivera, School Board President

Attest: December 14, 2021

Dr. Susana Reyes, Secretary to Board of Directors