



DRAFT



City of Seattle

**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY  
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
Tuesday, February 13, 2007 • 4:00–5:30 p.m.  
City Hall, Room 370

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Someireh Amirfaiz, Tim Ceis, Cheryl Chow, David Della, Kris Hildebrandt, Antonio Hopson, Marie Kurose, Lin Carlson for Raj Manhas, John Pehrson, Debra Sullivan

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Carla Bryant (Office for Education), Lori Chisholm (Seattle Parks), Jeff Clark (Seattle Public Schools), TJ Cosgrove (Health), Jessica de Barros (OFE), Jerry DeGriek (HSD), Karl Fields (Parks), Chris Fleming (SPS), Bob Fortner (Youth Tutoring Program), Donnie Grabowski (OFE), Michele Finnegan (Parks), Sonja Griffin (HSD), Terry Hayes (HSD), Paula Houston (YMCA), Mary Johnson (HSD), Patricia Lee (Council Central Staff), Marilyn Littlejohn (OPM), Andhra Lutz (SPS) Patricia McInturff (HSD), Ruth Medsker (SPS), Holly Miller (OFE), Erica Mullen (YMCA), Ramona Pierson (SPS), Aurora Porter (YMCA), Deeann Burtch Puffert (Child Care Resources), Princess Shareef (SPS), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Kristi Skanderup (MSSP), Tilman Smith (HSD), Josh Sutton (YMCA), Mao Svy (HSD), Viviana Ulloa (HSD), Margie Viall (HSD), Scott Washburn (YMCA), Steve Wright (SPS), Meenoo Yashar (Child Care Resources), Billie Young (HSD)

David Della called the meeting to order and asked for introductions. The minutes from the January 23, 2007 meeting were approved.

D. Della congratulated the Seattle School District on the passage of the recent Operating Levy and Capital Bond Issue. He said he was troubled by the Annual Report and felt that if the Levy was going to move the needle on academic achievement, the LOC must rethink approaches and more clearly define goals and strategies to improve academic achievement. Specifically, the LOC might want to consider the possibility of funding tutoring programs for students in elementary and middle schools as a strategy to help increase WASL success. He also said the LOC should be clear that refugee and immigrant students needed to be clearly identified and programs devised to help them achieve academically.

Tim Ceis agreed that the LOC needed to consider tutoring as a strategy for more effective academic support of students. He said the LOC needs to evaluate existing programs and look at other options for effectiveness and reprogram funds as appropriate. Today is the first step in that process. We must be honest in evaluating programs with data.

## **Early Learning**

Sonja Griffin presented a report on the Early Learning Network.

Debra Sullivan asked about the attrition rate for teachers. S. Griffin said she did not have exact numbers but would provide them at a later date. In general, the rate was low because teachers want to participate in the professional development program.

Antonio Hopson asked if funding is provided for transporting students to and from preschool programs. S. Griffin said no funding is provided for transportation and that is a barrier for some families. But, the number one reason for families leaving the Step Ahead program last year was moving out of the area.

T. Ceis asked about the student attrition rate for this year and how many students had dropped out and been replaced. S. Griffin said the rate is about 8 percent so far. D. Sullivan asked if there were any way to bring these families back into the program. S. Griffin responded that was unlikely because many of the families had moved out of the area. Last year, it appeared that the lower the family income, the more likely they would drop from the program.

A. Hopson asked why parents have to be working to participate in the program. S. Griffin said State funding that enables programs to operate full-day and full-year requires working parents. Marie Kurose asked how many full-day and how many part-day slots exist. Billie Young said most programs offered both.

John Pehrson asked if Early Learning contracts contained performance pay. S. Griffin said the contracts do contain performance pay and, while some contractors may not have taken those provisions seriously last year, they are well aware of them now. J. Pehrson said he liked the approach of using incentives as support, not just for monitoring performance.

T. Ceis asked if the goal was for Step Ahead students to achieve a Level 3 or 4. S. Griffin said the annual goal was for 75% of the students to achieve a Level 3 or 4 by the end of the year.

L. Carlson asked if resources were available for the end of the year DIAL 3 assessment and if school readiness is a factor in performance pay. S. Griffin said funds had been reallocated to assure the DIAL 3 assessments were completed and school readiness is a major factor in performance pay.

Someireh Amirfaiz asked if there is a breakdown, by ethnicity, of teachers involved in professional development. T. Smith said many classes are dual language. HSD staff agreed to provide this information to the LOC. S. Amirfaiz pointed out that many teachers are not college ready. T. Smith said pathways were available, beginning in neighborhood locations, for teachers seeking to become college ready.

## **Middle Schools**

Sid Sidorowicz presented information on middle school outcomes.

Aimee Hirabayashi said Middle School Support funding is coordinated with funding from the Nesholm Family Foundation and the School District to create an organized process for identifying students who are not meeting standard and developing student learning plans for them.

Princess Shareef said all students scoring Level I or Level II on the WASL are identified and their academic performance along with other issues, such as challenging family circumstances, analyzed in depth by a school team. Services, including academic remediation, are determined for students based on need and might include tutoring through the University of Washington or MESA and/or referrals for after school programs or other services.

Jeff Clark said he uses a variety of effective approaches at Denny Middle School including tutoring by retired math teachers, Saturday classes and summer programs.

Andhra Lutz said the Mercer Middle School Care Coordinator analyzes student achievement data to figure out which strategies will work for students. She then uses school breaks, Saturdays and summers to provide interventions.

Cheryl Chow noted the tremendous amount of hours of support being provided for these students. T. Ceis said the data shows disturbing results for middle school students, and the data needs to be displayed and analyzed so that issues can be discussed by the LOC.

Marie Kurose said at the core of the issue is whether the targets are aggressive enough. Clearly, middle schools are trying to address a lot of issues. A target of 84 students out of 1200 meeting standard is not a high enough goal. Maybe new strategies focused on academics should be tested. As the Levy progresses, consideration should be given to setting aside dollars to fund academically rigorous approaches.

Cheryl Chow reminded everyone that students come from a variety of backgrounds, including some very harsh experiences. They may need more than academic support to succeed in school.

Holly Miller asked if the LOC would like to schedule another meeting in early March. T. Ceis said yes, but the LOC needs to be better briefed on the data before getting back together. There should be an understanding of the big picture in middle schools and a willingness to consider different approaches to improving outcomes. C. Chow agreed and noted that the LOC needed a better understanding of how to move children through the WASL levels, and the resources needed to achieve that. The LOC should be open-minded about what these programs can achieve.

T. Ceis asked that the next meeting not have more presentations; he would like an opportunity for the LOC to discuss issues based on a clear presentation of data.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.