



DRAFT



FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY
Tuesday, June 16, 2009 • 4:00-6:00 p.m.
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
7th Floor, City Hall

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Burgess, Tim Ceis, Frances Contreras, Michael DeBell, Kris Hildebrandt, Antonio Hopson, David Okimoto, John Pehrson, Holly Ferguson and Carla Santorno (for Supt. Goodloe-Johnson)

OTHERS PRESENT: Peter Aberg (Legislative), Brad Bernatek (SPS), Bruce Bivins (SPS-WS), Janet Blanford (SPS), Wanda Brown (SPS), Carla Bryant (OFE), Mary Beth Celio (consultant), Lisa Coacher (SPS-WS), TJ Cosgrove (PHSKC), Sonja Griffin (HSD), Kathleen Groshong (HSD), Kacey Guin (OFE), Bea Kelleigh (HSD), Patricia Lee (Council staff), Holly Miller (OFE), Erica Mullen (YMCA), Huong Nguyen (SPS-WS), Susan Nyman (SPS-WS), Alan Painter (HSD), Thelma Payne (SPS), Anitra Pinchback-Jones (SPS-WS), Anne Powell (SPS/YMCA), Sue Rust (OFE), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Anne Shields (PHSKC), Kristi Skanderup (consultant)

Councilmember Tim Burgess called the meeting to order. The minutes from the April 21, 2009, Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) meeting were approved.

Mary Beth Celio presented the SPS 2006 cohort study, examining predictors of high school dropouts in Seattle Public Schools. M. Celio noted that the Seattle data is the cleanest she has worked with and expressed thanks to Brad Bernatek and his staff. M. Celio said Seattle had the highest graduation rate of all districts she had studied. Tim Burgess asked if M. Celio had studied districts comparable to Seattle. M. Celio said yes, most notably Portland. Antonio Hopson asked if there are other comparable cities use similar methods for calculating graduation rates. M. Celio said there is a small handful (Portland, Chicago, Philadelphia), but these methods were not commonly used because they are labor intensive and expensive.

A. Hopson asked if Fs could be broken out by subject area. M. Celio said yes but that analysis has not been done yet for Seattle. In Portland, the Fs were distributed across all class types. In elementary schools, the Fs were most often in reading.

J. Pehrson asked at what point in time the kids can be identified as being at risk. M. Celio said you can identify at risk students beginning in 6th grade. T. Burgess asked about risk factors and whether they are listed in order of magnitude. M. Celio said yes. J. Pehrson said that they aren't risk factors but rather are indicators that there are risk factors. F. Contreras asked whether the database could build in information about intervention programs and if they made a difference. M. Celio said that these data were not available in this data set but that this has been done in other cities.

A. Hopson asked if there are cities that use more than one calculation for the dropout rate. M. Celio said that yes, although there aren't many resources to do this work internally. D. Okimoto asked about the prediction of using sex/race/FRL alone. M. Celio said that these three variables predicted only 11% of dropouts and, while these factors are important, they are less predictive than grades or absences. M. DeBell said that graduation standards vary at different high schools in Seattle. M. Celio acknowledged these different standards but said she could use only the data she was given.

M. DeBell said that engagement is clearly a critical factor, particularly in middle school and that the school district must be able to get and keep kids engaged in school. K. Hildebrandt asked if SPS has a trigger for identifying kids who exhibit risk factors. C. Santorno said, because of the Levy work at the middle schools and high schools, teams have started to use these indicators to identify kids for services. A. Hopson said that, as a staff member, this type of data would be very useful for teams of teacher to work with in identifying and helping struggling students. D. Okimoto asked about implications for next steps. M. Celio said the longitudinal analysis is important to further hone in on tipping points. H. Miller said we are still working through the implications of this research. C. Santorno said that the principals get together to talk about this information and determine the best way to both identify and serve these kids.

M. DeBell asked about the analysis in Portland on value-added high schools and whether that kind of analysis could be done in Seattle. M. Celio said it is labor intensive and would need to determine if there were resources available. M. DeBell said the analysis is important in order to determine what programs are effective. M. Celio said she can only determine which schools are adding value, not necessarily what is creating that value.

W. Brown asked about the retention and its use as an intervention strategy. M. Celio said previous studies found that kids who were retained did not get an intervention, but got more of the same curriculum and instruction. She added that there is a need to look at other interventions when students fail.

F. Contreras touched on bilingual students having a higher graduation rate, given they have skills to function in two or more languages. She asked if you can look at the number of years in bilingual education and the graduation success rate. M. Celio said yes, the data would allow her to do this analysis.

B. Bernatek said that SPS schools just received data on incoming students in order to flag kids with indicators for dropping out. M. Celio's study will also inform the data warehouse effort in understanding what is valuable and how it should be presented to schools.

A. Hopson asked if there is a way to break out data by class size. M. Celio said that she did not have that information but if the data were available, she could do that analysis.

A. Hopson asked if the tradeoffs have been examined between Family Support Workers, after-school, etc. vs. more teachers and lower class size. M. Celio said that the current data do not allow for that level of analysis. J. Pehrson asked if the study pointed to a key intervention point. M. Celio said that middle school seems to be a key tipping point.

The Family and Community Partnership transition proposal was presented by Carla Bryant and Wanda Brown. W. Brown provided an overview of the district's Response to Intervention (RTI) model. A. Hopson asked about the scope of the interventions. W. Brown said the interventions are developed at the school level with the school intervention teams.

J. Pehrson asked about changing the split of the funding from 50/50 between community-based agencies and SPS to 30/70 and expressed his concern about keeping/maintaining a CBO voice. H. Miller said that the original idea was for CBOs to connect with families that schools could not, and we are looking for new strategies to tighten that connection/idea. As with all programs, OFE will evaluate how the new strategies work.

T. Burgess acknowledged his appreciation for this effort and said it demonstrated collaboration between the City and SPS. H. Ferguson said it shows the value of working together in advance and the benefit of challenging each other and coming to common goals and strategies. W. Brown said this will provide an opportunity to collect better data to determine effective strategies. M. DeBell echoed T. Burgess comments on good collaboration. M. DeBell acknowledged that the City has brought accountability measures to the Levy programs, and now the district is doing the same with its work. D. Okimoto asked what it means to be a transition proposal. H. Miller said we will look at data throughout this year to determine effectiveness. D. Okimoto asked if we should take this money and invest in 7th grade, after hearing M. Celio's presentation. W. Brown said there is a need for both prevention and intervention across all grades.

A. Hopson asked if they will be using M. Celio's findings. W. Brown said yes, they are already using this information. F. Contreras asked about the middle school family support worker strategy and whether this amount was adequate for this effort. She also inquired about how it will be leveraged with other programs for bilingual students. W. Brown said these strategies are being aligned with the bilingual department's work. A. Hopson asked about the feasibility of PCHP program at the elementary school level. W. Brown said the concern is valid and that we need to measure the effectiveness of this strategy during this year. K. Hildebrandt asked if the case management model helps track data. C. Bryant says that yes, this will help track data on what services kids are getting and how it relates to their academic performance. H. Miller said that this strategy is drilling down to the deeper level the Levy originally aspired to but have not yet achieved. W. Brown said that interventions are being documented at the school level, but the goal is to build this information into the district data warehouse, with the goal of building a system to provide better information to service providers in schools. M. DeBell said it demonstrates the importance of providing complementary interventions. H. Ferguson said that is the goal of district's Support, Prevention, and Intervention office — to make sure interventions are strategic and not tied to specific pots of money. J. Pehrson acknowledged the initiative and courage to do this dropout study and stressed the need to use this information in a meaningful way.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.