



**DRAFT**



**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY  
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, March 10, 2015**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tim Burgess, Elise Chayet, Sandi Everlove, Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis, Marty McLaren, Larry Nyland, Kevin Washington.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Hueiling Chan (Chinese Information and Service Center), Leilani Dela Cruz (DEEL), Carmela Dellino (DEEL Consultant), Brian Goodnight (Council Central Staff), Kacey Guin (DEEL), Saadia Hamid (Seattle Housing Authority), Megan Holmes (Health), Erica Johnson (DEEL), Regina Jones (Mayor's Office), Brad Kessler (DEEL), Jonathan Knapp (Seattle Education Association), , Christy Leonard (DEEL), Pegi McAvoy (SPS), Holly Miller (DEEL), Isabel Munoz-Colon (DEEL), Long Phan (DEEL), Sara Rigel (Health), Sid Sidorowicz (DEEL), Nate Van Duzer (CM Burgess staff), Sarah Wilhelm (Health), Charles Wright (SPS).

Tim Burgess called the meeting to order. Introductions were made and minutes from the February 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> meetings were asked to be approved. A typographical error of G. Washington was requested to be corrected to K. Washington. With that correction the minutes were approved.

Holly Miller requested that the April LOC site visit to Graham Hill be moved from April 14 to April 7 due to spring break. The date change was approved by committee members who were present.

**Isabel Munoz-Colon presented on the Elementary Innovation RFI Process and the Levy Course Correction Plan**

These two issues will be presented to the Mayor based on input received from the LOC.

**Elementary Innovation RFI Process Questions:**

Jonathan Knapp asked if awarded schools have a mechanism in place that allows for educator feedback to be communicated that might inform our decisions for the next year. I. Munoz-Colon replied that once awarded, schools receive funding through the life of the levy unless they don't reach certain performance goals or other targets. Schools go through a re-authorization process and submit a new plan with rationale of why things may have changed. Every year awarded schools have an opportunity to course correct and our levy consultants help us to know ahead of time how things are working.

Sandi Everlove asked how different school applications were from year to year. Did providing feedback with strengths and challenges made it a heavy lift to re-apply or did schools just

tinker with their original plan? I. Munoz-Colon replied that we had a lot of good applications for elementary schools, and for applications that did not meet criteria, providing feedback made a big difference the second time around. There were some that still struggled with how they would make this work the second time around. H. Miller added that approximately two years ago (almost from the beginning) we recognized that we had some really good applicants that we pre-awarded for the next year in the queue so they would not have to re-apply and go through the process again, e.g. Emerson and Sand Point.

J. Knapp asked if we are able to determine why some schools have superior applications and others don't, and is the application quality based purely on the strength of a good writer? I. Munoz-Colon replied that it is a combination of both the application and the interview. The interview helps us to determine the reality of their full team. Some applicants looked good on paper and appeared to have a strong application but the interview revealed that they were not clearly on board as a team and that the application was written by one person. We want to make sure that the school community as a whole really believes in the plan. Some applications that were borderline on paper filled in the gap at the interview and we were able to see a very coherent team.

Saadia Hamid asked what is the community member's involvement in the RFI plan process? I. Munoz-Colon replied that it's up to the schools to decide on who they will bring to the table. Schools look at their data for students that need to be focused on and from there determine who are the right community members and staff who should participate in building their levy plan. We have increasingly seen more parents at levy interviews who have participated in planning and interventions that they helped design, for example, the Graham Hill Somali mothers group intervention.

Kevin Washington stated that in the old process you were able to generate a lot of information about the school building and although painful, the process generated a lot of information for the schools to work with. Revising the process will cut the process short and the schools will no longer have the information that the schools can work with. The old process forced schools to do a deep dive in identifying students that really needed work and to put together a plan for dealing with that. By cutting the process short you will miss some of the students that need to be identified and some of the building work will not take place because the schools will no longer be incentivized to continue to keep the pedal to the metal.

J. Knapp asked about the composition of school-based teams and actual educator engagement in the plan? I. Munoz-Colon replied that one of the criteria in the RFI is the kind of engagement they had at the school level and who was consulted as well as who was part of the decision making and planning process. Carmela Dellino added that there were nineteen schools that were eligible this year, seven of the schools had brand new principals and five had principals that were only in their second year. Principal landscape had a significant impact this year. K. Washington stated that part of what we wanted to do with the levy was to target funds and resources for schools that needed them most and to some degree we expected churn at the leadership level. He asked Carmela if she could tell him about the amount of churn she has seen in schools that have been awarded levy funding. Carmela replied that there has been a significant number of new principals in awarded schools and overall it has been successful and they are now adopting the work of the levy. However a

couple of schools are experiencing more challenges involving other factors that have impacted the school. K. Washington asked if we need to be considering additional support/resources for schools experiencing leadership change that are already part of the levy process. Carmela replied that she believes it's not just a matter of more resources but the guidance and support of how to utilize those resources.

S. Everlove stated that there have been a number of initiatives that have come down to teachers (e.g. Common Core, Next Gen, etc.) that have produced fatigue in teachers. She has recognized some savvy principals that excel at change management and wondered if we could build in the idea of change management in some of these workshops. We need to look at the degree of change that is being asked and ask if we are ensuring the plan is a realistic approach. C. Dellino replied that one of the keys and most important things that we do is help teachers, administrators, etc. to see that the work of the levy is very aligned with the work that they do every day in the school, while supporting them with being a little more focused, strategic and intentional. She believes that levy work is work that any school can do.

### **Levy Course Correction Plan Questions:**

Marty McLaren asked how much time will be allowed for this revised process to kick in. I. Munoz-Colon replied that for some elementary schools it will be a bigger shift and it could be a couple of years before seeing significant improvement. After 2-3 years of not seeing significant change we would step in and do a deeper dive. Presently there are at least two schools we would bring forward for course correction.

K. Washington asked if there were extenuating circumstances that caused the schools to fall into this category. S. Sidorowicz replied that during the 2004 levy, there were two major programs that discontinued, and at least three schools were dropped from funding or had a significant change in funding. One advantage of adopting the process right now is we didn't have criteria then that were explicit to everyone and now we have a lot more schools and twice the funding.

Elise Chayet asked how you get answers to considerations on the first criteria for course corrections and inquired how the information is gathered for something that might not be seen in the data. I. Munoz-Colon replied that her team has a close partnership with SPS leadership and data teams who often provide the information. The DEEL and SPS data teams work closely and in terms of looking at cohort data we look at shifting and the district as a whole. K. Washington asked if the proposed plan has also been shown to current program participants. I. Munoz-Colon replied that it has not but it is a good suggestion.

L. Gaskill-Gaddis asked for clarification around DEEL consultant staff, if the consultants are city employees. H. Miller replied that the consultants are hired by DEEL and they are not city employees.

### **Sid Sidorowicz presented on the Seattle Preschool Program**

S. Sidorowicz discussed how we can improve the administrative process for providers, the challenge of multiple sources of funding and the charge from the Mayor and City Council to

simplify, braid and blend funds resulting in a reduced administrative burden. He discussed the plan of using Step Ahead funding to help build capacity for providers to move into Seattle Preschool Program.

### **Seattle Preschool Program Questions:**

L. Gaskill-Gaddis asked for clarification regarding the funding that will be used to bring up the preschools. S. Sidorowicz replied that it would be Step Ahead funding from the Families and Education Levy.

E. Chayet asked if there are any programs that are apart from Step Ahead and SPP. S. Sidorowicz replied that there are ECEAP and Head Start programs. Current Step Ahead providers will be allowed to remain Step Ahead providers for the rest of the levy if they choose to. For current ECEAP providers we will look at the income requirements for children in SPP classrooms, try to enroll close to the same number of low income slots they contracted for ECEAP, and blend the funds into one contract.

L. Gaskill-Gaddis noted that in summary you have sixty-four new slots for next year which you will use for capacity building. S. Sidorowicz replied that it could also be used for adding additional SPP slots by funding some of the low income children in those classes.

S. Everlove asked if DEEL is talking with the state Department of Early Learning. H. Miller replied that they meet frequently and are currently in the process of drafting an MOU with them. We work hard to align our standards with them to avoid duplication and are talking with them about collaborating around training as well. S. Everlove asked if some of the Professional Development monies they are looking at for preschool providers could be used for this as well. H. Miller replied that it effectively will and as we convert our programs into SPP, a lot of them come with some baseline funding from those sources, such as ECEAP. We are in the process of testing out the financial model with Dr. Nyland and Cashel Toner to look at how the model will blend different sources of funding.

S. Hamid stated that there was some ECEAP funding awarded last year, and some programs are still having issues with finishing buildings and recruiting. S. Sidorowicz replied that when we first started Step Ahead in 2004-05 we had a lot of providers that did not have space, could not recruit children, or had a back-log. We started developing requirements of space, leases, waiting lists, community demand, etc. If we can provide capacity for organizations before getting them in to SPP it might help them be more successful with these types of capacity issues.

K. Washington stated that we had some concerns on the SPP project being able to provide slots for training teachers. Has there been any more conversation or partnerships on how we will provide training and capacity for preschool teachers?

Erica Johnson replied that DEEL staff continue to work with representatives from DEL and Seattle Colleges to increase higher education's capacity to serve the early learning workforce.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm