

MINUTES OF THE  
Strategic Planning Meeting of the  
DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Carson Valley Inn  
January 31, 2014  
8:15 a.m.

**Committee Members Present:** Lisa Noonan, Superintendent; Teri Jamin, Cynthia Trigg, Karen Chessell, Sharla Hales, Thomas Moore, Ross Chichester, Board Members; Cade Baligad, Bob Been, Denise Castle, Caleb Currence, Susan Desrosiers, Jen Ellis, John Endter, Linda Fields, Mary Garcia, Nora Gastelum, Mark Ghan, Linda Gilkerson, Dave Giorgi, Lisa Grahahan, Susan Harootunian, Dwight Langdon, Leigh Luce, Susan Moore, Karen Myers, Kathryn Oxoby, Vanessa Ozolins, Lori Pasqua, Brian Rippet, Brandon Swain, Marty Swisher, Susan Van Doren, and Lisa Voss.

**District Staff Present:** Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services; Rich Alexander, Human Resources; Holly Luna, Director of Business Services; Brian Frazier, Director of Assessments, Grants, and Special Programs; Rommy Cronin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Christi Hines-Coates, Director of Special Services; Kathy Bomba-Edgerton, SRCL Grant Coordinator/Vice Principal, and Carly Strauss, NWRPDP Program Trainer

**Committee Members Absent:** Neal Freitas, Board Member; Cheryl Blomstrom, Eric Butterfield Todd Gray, Nancy Hamlett, Kindle Craig, and Marc Tompkins

**WCSD Guests:** Theresa Navarro and Media Wright

**Facilitator:** Rorie Fitzpatrick, WestEd

1. Registration, Continental Breakfast, Assigned Seating

Committee members began the day with a continental breakfast. Dr. Noonan informed the committee assigned seating allowed for a larger variety of interaction among the variety of people present.

2. Call To Order

Tom Moore, School Board President

Dr. Noonan introduced Tom Moore, President of the School Board. Mr. Moore welcomed everyone and expressed thanks on behalf of the school board for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Moore began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and called for the adoption of the Agenda by the Board.

## Adoption of Agenda

Mrs. Chessell moved to adopt the Agenda, seconded by Mr. Chichester

Motion carried, 6/0.

### First Opportunity for Public Comment

Mr. Moore called for public comment at 8:33 a.m. There was none.

Mr. Moore begged the question, "Why are we here?" Committee members were then asked to provide input on the direction of the school district to be incorporated into the Strategic Plan document. The Plan was noted as a roadmap for academic success and the next most important document to the Trustees next to the district budget. Mr. Moore added that Dr. Noonan followed the Strategic Plan to assure programs were aligned and linked to the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Moore reiterated the committee should feel comfortable to speak up and provide their input. This would support the staff and Board's commitment to provide education based on the best interest of students. The group was asked to express their reactions to the process used today to Board members at the conclusion of the retreat.

Mr. Moore introduced DCSD Superintendent, Lisa Noonan.

### 3. Welcome

Lisa Noonan, Superintendent

#### Introductions

Dr. Noonan welcomed two guests from Washoe County School District in attendance today, Theresa Navarro and Media Wright.

#### Overview

The theory of using "big rocks" as a representative of reforms and initiatives was explained. When filling a jar, the big rocks are put in, then smaller pebbles (supporting structure for larger projects) and last the sand and water to completely fill the jar, all finding their place for best organization. Big boulders were included and identified as State mandates requiring the work of district staff to implement throughout the system.

An educational acronym list was provided in the binder of information. Persons catching someone using an acronym would receive an extra raffle ticket towards a drawing for prizes later in the day.

Reference documents were provided on each of the 6 group tables that included the Strategic Plan approved June 2012; Superintendent Goals for 2013-14; and LifeTrack Postgraduate Survey data for the class of 2011.

Dr. Noonan informed the committee that Board members preferred her to participate as part of the committee; therefore Rorie Fitzpatrick of WestEd would facilitate the meeting. Ms. Fitzpatrick was introduced and noted to be well versed in current educational initiatives produced by the State of Nevada Department of Education and a very experienced facilitator.

#### 4. Part I

##### Facilitator Rorie Fitzpatrick, WestEd

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated she had been employed by West Ed for only a few months, but worked for many years at the Nevada Department of Education and for Washoe County School District. WestEd is a non-profit organization that performs research for educational purposes.

##### Defining success for the day

Ms. Fitzpatrick informed the group the Strategic Plan defined success by mapping the paths to best results. Today the committee would be provided a status update through a panel of district staff members. The group would be asked to offer thoughts that would help shape the new roadmap to determine final results desired.

##### Why should we have a Strategic Plan?

Through the interaction today, the result of information gathered today would allow for the Board to gain input and hold additional conversations regarding the strategies to align Action Steps and Goals within the Strategic Plan for the Board and Superintendent.

Rorie asked that the group write down the end of the following sentence. "Today will be meaningful if..." and provide thoughts with relation to the statement to the group at their tables.

District staff were designated as table facilitators, seated at each of the 6 tables and introduced at this time. These representatives were introduced and assisted those at each of their tables with understanding the status of the six goals within the Strategic Plan. The table groups took approximately 25 minutes for this activity.

Mrs. Luna arrived at 10:15 a.m.

#### 5. Break

A break was taken from 10:20 – 10:35 a.m.

##### 6. Panel Presentation – Lisa Noonan, Lyn Gorrindo, Rommy Cronin, Brian Frazier, and Christi Hines-Coates

Dr. Noonan set the stage by reiterating the largest rocks of importance were really boulders, or State of Nevada mandates. The Curriculum and Instruction Department continually revised Scope and Sequence documents as changes to instruction occurred. The Smarter Balanced Consortium plan was currently being piloted. New end of course exams for grades 9 -10 would soon replace the High School Proficiency Tests (HSPEs). The Nevada Education Performance Framework (NEPF), a State mandate, is a new protocol for teacher and administrator evaluations that will be implemented in the future.

Alignment of efforts was stressed as important in order to achieve goals. The District Performance Plan (DPP), work done this month, incorporated new State mandates with the goal of aligning School Improvement Plans to new programs and curriculum. The DPP goals are as follows:

- 1) To support continued implementation of Nevada Academic Content Standards

- 2) Increase rigor and differentiation through professional development and implementation of Nevada Academic Content Standards
- 3) Increase the graduation rate and College and Career Readiness (CTE)

What is on the road ahead?

The committee was informed of the increased poverty level of incoming students. Although enrollment had decreased, the percentage of students with disabilities had increased creating a need for more resources and support. The increase was seen in special education needs as well as, mental health issues for children. Environmental pressures carried over into school time on a more frequent basis.

Needs for instruction materials and resources changed in order to accommodate the new NEPF requirements. Competency revisions were necessary due to more rigorous State Standards and assessments. English Language Learners (ELL) were to be provided with more tools for learning as well.

A variety of required assessments for students were noted. The End of Course Assessments for high school would be instituted in the next school year. Donation and federal grant components for accountability and data collection supported the State performance system allowing for accountability and reporting. Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) would be input at the high school level that was currently evolving as a new instructional initiative. The Smarter Balanced Consortium would rollout reading and math assessments for grades 3-8. Career and College Readiness would see an assessment in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

A process for data based decision making resulted from Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) efforts. This method of building, identifying, verifying data and finding solutions for improved student results was explained. The SRCL grant was credited for supporting all teachers. A team was created at each school as a foundation for a common purpose of helping student's bridge curriculum gaps. The teams meet anywhere from once a week to once a month. Learning problems were explored through a process and decisions made to remediate students in the areas lacking and/or offer support through connections to adults at school.

Marty Swisher, DHS principal stated he informed his staff to be prepared for a great deal of change. Ms. Ozolins, a DHS counselor offered that flow charts provided by the district might assist staff in understanding and following new processes.

## 7. Part II

Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer

How are we spending our dollars? Are they in alignment with our priorities?

Ms. Fitzpatrick introduced Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer. Ms. Luna presented a Department of Taxation document representing the budget for the district as required by the State and shared with the Board throughout the budget approval process during the year. A difficult to read, line item specific, long report was not easy to comprehend by the Board or public in order to identify specifics when thinking in terms of district needs for overall budgeting purposes. A spreadsheet, entitled Cell Sense, Version 1.0, was handed out at the meeting as a first attempt to provide an easy to read document for tracking district expenditures. This included employee allocations by site and departments, and breakdowns of various budget categories. Ms. Luna stated she already had ideas for Version 2.0, and invited the committee to make suggestions, or

find areas missing they would like to see more clearly. At this time, the exact district budget was not 100% matching in the prototype, and in fact she was approximately \$400,000 short of the mark on this first run. Working with software representatives, Ms. Luna was achieving this easier to read version of the budget, one code at a time in a sea of hundreds of codes necessary to produce a “living” document to be referenced continually. Ultimately, the budget book would be placed online for the Board and public to reference. An explanation for how to match across the pages, employee staffing to expenses, etc. was offered.

Ms. Luna offered that a portion of the group activities would include the ability for them to provide input on the new Cell Sense format.

Sue Estes, Budget Manager, in the District Office was commended for many hours of work deciphering budget codes to accomplish the task of creating the budget book to this point.

Ms. Fitzpatrick invited comments from the committee regarding how they received and felt about the new budget format. Reactions were positive in that it was clear, easy to read and would provide the taxpayers with details not easily gained previously.

Mrs. Gilkerson and Ms. Luna left at lunch time.

## 8. Lunch Break

A break was taken for lunch from 12:00 -1:00 p.m.

## 9. Part III

Ms. Fitzpatrick shared the morning was filled with much learning and processing of information regarding where the district processes are at this time. This afternoon new thinking was encouraged and attendees asked to write down what surprised them, what might have been a show stopper and any important thoughts that had resulted from information gained earlier in the day.

The purpose was clear – the district is about kids and focusing on priorities while working for student success. The question Ms. Fitzpatrick asked was, “Are we improving and moving in the right direction?” The group was reminded their task was to move towards a great Strategic Plan.

### Small Groups – Facilitated Table Discussions

Individual groups were asked to work in pairs at their table to reflect and write notes on the High Priority Focus Areas provided in their binders. The current list and a revised list was provided for reference for the task. Committee members were invited to use the latest January 2014 version as a starting point for thoughts and concerns. Programs had been revised on the new list; an example being the deletion of T4S due to the later AAA walk-through’s now performed by administrators. This activity occurred from 1:10 – 1:21 p.m.

If you imagine a district where money is not a barrier, what are the areas that we need to include that are not included in the sample document?

Next, table facilitators were asked to engage in discussions by the whole group at their table in order to gain the information arrived at by each of the pairs who reviewed the Goals and Action Steps. Best ideas were recorded on chart paper for review by all involved and district use to be provided as a comprehensive document for the Board at a later time.

#### 10. Break

Individuals took a break as needed during the time used from 1:21 – 2:15 p.m. for discussions at tables. The committee was invited to review each other's charts of suggestions made during this time in a "Gallery Walk," prior to reporting out to the entire committee.

#### 11. Part IV

Facilitator – Rorie Fitzpatrick, WestEd

Reporting back major ideas for the Board to consider

Best ideas were recorded on chart paper for review by all involved and for district use to be provided as a comprehensive document for the Board at a later time.

Sharing the small groups' suggestions  
back out to the large group

Table leaders reported out loud to the committee suggestions, ideas and important topics for future consideration in the Strategic Plan. Approximately 30 minutes was split between the 6 tables in order to share their results. Many great ideas resulted from the variety of individual input provided. Favorite ideas were met with "snaps" from the group to show a high level of support. The charts listing suggestions and high priority topics expressed were to be combined to generate the responses as a whole for the Board to use in the next steps of the Strategic Plan process.

#### Final Opportunity for Public Comment

Public comment was called for at 3:20 p.m. A second opportunity was provided to the public to state any comments with regard to items not listed on the Agenda 3:22 p.m. There were no comments offered during either of these opportunities.

#### 12. Part V

Lisa Noonan, Superintendent

Next Steps – Synthesis for Board's next meetings on this topic

Dr. Noonan informed the committee the Board would review results of the day during either a workshop or as part of a regular monthly Board Meeting. Input provided would be used to shape the Strategic Plan for the next two years – when the Strategic Plan Committee would meet again. The quality of ideas provided through discussion today was celebrated and the group thanked for participating and giving of their time to attend.

## Committee Members evaluation of the day

Attendees were provided an evaluation sheet and asked to write down their responses regarding the discussions today. Dr. Noonan and Ms. Fitzpatrick drew raffle tickets and handed out prizes during this time.

### 13. Part VI

Tom Moore, School Board President

#### Closing comments

Mr. Moore thanked the committee for their time and participation. Dr. Noonan and her staff were thanked for conducting the meeting and their work to come from it to be presented to the Board for future planning.

Guests today were note to have left volunteer information for those interested.

Mr. Moore invited everyone to speak with a school board member and let them know their thoughts on the day prior to leaving the retreat.

#### Adjournment (For Possible Action)

At 3:25 p.m., Mrs. Trigg moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Chichester.

Motion carried, 6/0.

Submitted by,

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Carolyn Moore  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Approved:

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Clerk of the Board

Note: Upon approval by the Board of Trustees in a public meeting, these minutes become the official minutes of the meeting held on the above date. Board minutes are kept on a permanent basis and are available for public review in the office of the Superintendent.