

Summit Public Schools California Board Meeting

September 14, 2020 Open Session Transcript

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Diane: Let's see, 3:02 PM. And let's do the roll call. Valeria. Do you want to do that or would you like me to? Go for it.

Valeria: Can everyone hear me?

Diane: Yes.

Steven: Yes, we can.

Valeria: Great. Bob Oster.

Robert: Here.

Valeria: Steven Humphreys.

Steven: Here

Valeria: Diego Arambula.

Diego: Here.

Valeria: Blake Warner.

Blake: Here.

Valeria: And from the Summit staff side Diane Tavenner.

Diane: Here.

Valeria: Nnanna Obgu.

Nnanna: Here.

Valeria: Kate Gottfredson.

Kate: Here.

Diane: Thanks Valeria. Do I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Blake: So moved.

Robert: Second.

Diane: Thanks. I think that was Bob seconding, yes?

Robert: Yep.

Diane: Alright, any discussion? Okay. Let's do a roll call on that. Bob

Robert: Aye.

Diane: Steve.

Steven: Aye.

Diane: Blake.

Blake: Aye.

Diane: And Diego.

Diego: Aye.

Diane: Great, that carries unanimously. Alright, so our first item up then is the public comment on closed session items. Valeria do we have any requests to speak from the public?

Valeria: At the moment we don't have any public comment speaker forms for this section.

Diane: Great. Why don't we take a moment just to make sure everyone from the public knows how they can request to speak if they choose to. I think it's detailed in the agenda, but do you want to just give quick instructions?

Kate: I can go ahead. Yeah, this is Kate. If you'd like to make a public comment, there's a form that's linked in the chat. It's also in the agenda, but I linked it here in the chat, that you can complete. That's our equivalent of a speaker card for this meeting. So go ahead and complete that. I see that there is someone in the chat who would like to make a comment, but I don't have that person's name. So you'll need to complete that card please.

Diane: Great. We'll just wait one moment for that to come through. As a reminder right now, we do have two public comments sections. The first is on closed session items, and then the second public comment session will be item number seven and it's on the remainder of the agenda.

Valeria: We do have one public speaker form just submitted and Ona Keller would like to speak on item number four, closed session items.

Diane: Great. Do you want to come off camera and or voice and we are happy to hear you speak.

Ona: Great. So I'm making the statement on behalf of the union representatives from Unite Summit, who can't be here today due to the SPS board's practice of scheduling its meetings during the workday. The draft Learning Continuity Attendance Plan fails to include the input that our collective [inaudible 04:16] unit has been making for weeks.

The current virtual school model is not sustainable and will not best support students because it will lead to teacher burnout. Some home office has reduced site autonomy and forced adherence to a rigid standardized schedule for faculty meetings and for students who receive instruction from learning specialists. During virtual school last spring, our school sites were able to hold Wednesday faculty meetings at the time that worked best for each school site with approval from site leadership. Like meetings often occurred earlier in the day and use outcome-based agendas. This allowed teachers to efficiently accomplish what's most important, planning quality classes for students and taking care of our own wellness.

This year Summit currently enforces a rigid adherence to one schedule. This change does not add value to the student experience. The only tangible outcome is that teachers and site staff have less flexibility to care for themselves and their families. Coworkers who are parents face especially tough challenges. And this inflexible afternoon meeting schedule unnecessarily adds to those stressors.

One of the focus areas in the draft learning and continuity attendance plan is sustainability. Teachers need a sustainable virtual school model. This model must include sufficient time to prepare for class and contact students and families during our workday. Protected time to take care of our basic health and needs of our families. Stability in our working conditions and expectations. And flexibility and site autonomy to best meet the needs of our students and individual school communities. There will only be a positive impact in the quality of our teaching [inaudible 05:42] student experience in our classrooms. This [inaudible 05:45] important comments from the people who are doing the day-to-day work of engaging with our students during this incredibly difficult and unprecedented time. Thank you.

Diane: Thank you. Valeria, do we have other speakers?

Valeria: We don't have any other speakers at the moment.

Diane: Okay, great. Well I think that what we will do then is move to close this comment session. Again, we'll have another one. And we'll move to item number four, which is

closed session. And so for those who are joining the meeting, you're welcome to stay on for...the board will exit into a different meeting for closed session, and then return back to this meeting when we come back for open session. We're estimating that we'll return a few minutes after 3:30, that is an estimate. and we will do our best to meet it.

Robert: Diane, I think I may have misplaced the URL for the closed session. So can somebody send it to me please?

Diane: Sure. We can do that right now. Thanks, Bob. All right. We will sign out and return after closed session.

[inaudible 07:04-39:34]

Diane: All right. The board is returning from closed session. That was item number four on our agenda. And we are back in open session. And I would like to report that no action was taken during closed session. That's item number six. And so let's move to number seven, which is public comments on any non-closed session agenda items. Do we have any requests to speak on this item?

Valeria: At the moment, we don't have any speaker forms for people that would like to speak during this time.

Diane: Okay. Thank you, Valeria. Will you please let us know if a speaker card does come in.

Valeria: Yes.

Diane: Thanks so much. All right, let's move to item number eight then. This is a presentation and discussion of Summit Public Schools, bargaining proposal. let me give you a little bit of background here. As you all know, in March per your instruction, the Summit Bargaining Committee sunshined our initial proposal for contract bargaining. And that initial proposal we would like to add an additional provision to it that was not included in the initial proposal. And specifically what we would like to add is a provision around no strikes, no lockouts.

A little bit of context here for why we are adding this at this point as the bargaining committee. You know, we entered contract negotiations in good faith and very optimistic and very hopeful. We have a very strong track record of collaboration in the organization, and feel very good about our ability to collaborate and come to a resolution around things that are in the best interest of our students and our mission. We have...it never occurred to us that we would need a provision about no strikes and no lockouts. It never occurred to us that we ever get close to a place like that, or even have to consider such a thing. And that is why we didn't include it in our first **[inaudible 42:02]**.

We have felt compelled recently to add it because there's been a pattern and a series of some behaviors that are worrisome to us. And we are having a hard time interpreting from the Unite Summit Bargaining Unit. And that is specifically their drive towards declaring an impasse in bargaining over virtual school, which didn't actually make sense to us. And if you track the process of impasse, really the place that it ends is either in continuing to do what we're doing or the union calling a strike. And that was a little bit concerning to us and signaled that maybe we weren't on the same page around this.

And so we felt it important to add this to our negotiations. And specifically as the, the purpose here says very clearly, we think that we share our commitment to our students, and our families, and our communities. We know that students are able to develop and learn best when they are in secure relationships and have a consistent learning environment. And it's critically important now more than ever that students and families can rest assured that their lives and their education will not be further disrupted. And so they depend on us to be there for them. And we believe very strongly that anything we need to work out amongst ourselves as adults we can and should work out and we should not impact our students or our families with an action like this. And so that's why we, the bargaining committee is **[inaudible 43:54]** introducing this additional proposal. Any questions from the board? This is not an action item.

Okay, Thank you. we'll move to item number nine then. This is a recommendation for action. And specifically the recommendation is coming from our CFO, Joyce, and me.

And we are recommending that the action that the board took in the spring and approving the budgets for this year of pausing the salary increases for all employees that you un-pause that freeze at this point. And we are recommending that for a few reasons. First the reason that we recommended this pause in the spring was there was a significant amount of information that we did not have available to us and to you as a board when you had to adopt the budgets. At that point in time, based on the legislation that had been improved and passed, we believe that we would be experiencing approximately 11% cut in our funding from the state for our students. And there were significant unknowns around Federal aid and a variety of other sources of revenue.

Since then the state has acted around specific legislation. And so we feel confident at this point that we will not be experiencing those cuts that we were anticipating. And federal funding has actually materialized and come in and been made clear about how it can be used. And so as a result and as we had hoped in the spring and talked about in the spring, we feel confident that we can actually un-pause at this point responsibly, and be fiscally responsible. We know that this is meaningful, a meaningful action to all of our employees. And so we want to take this action as quickly as possible. And that's why we're bringing it to you today versus in the formal budget revise in October.

Obviously this decision will be reflected in that formal budget revise assuming that you approve it today. But we want to act at this point because what it will allow is in the September paycheck for every employee to realize their expected school year 21 compensation. And we will also be able to retroactively compensate them for the last one to two months, depending on their circumstances of the expected compensation. And we'd like to correct that as soon as possible and doing so today would allow us to do so in the September paycheck.

And so we've prepared a resolution and at this point I would love to entertain if there is a motion to approve it and then have a discussion on it.

Robert: So moved.

Blake: Second.

Diane: Thanks Bob, for the motion. Thanks Blake, for the second. Any discussion on this item?

Steven: No, I just want to comment. I think it was, you know, it was the right thing to do at the time to be careful, but I'm glad and especially glad it's retroactive to the time it would have gone into effect. You know the teachers are working so hard, in so many...I mean, you can't even say words to reflect what they're managing, what they're delivering to the students. So I think this is terrific to be able to do so thank you for recommending it.

Diane: Any other discussion? Okay. Let's take a roll call. Vote. Blake.

Blake: Aye.

Diane: Diego.

Diego: Aye.

Diane: Steve.

Steven: Aye.

Diane: Bob.

Robert: Aye.

Diane: Great, and the motion carries unanimously. That takes us to item number 10, which is a public hearing. This is a public hearing on the 2021 learning continuity and attendance plans. This public hearing will be followed by a decision on these plans in a couple of weeks. And so this is the opportunity for you to hear it from the public, if the public has comments on these plans. And also to give the staff any feedback that you might have as we continue to draft and finalize these plans. And certainly for us to answer any questions that you might have about the plans.

Some quick context on this. Given the disruption to education and learning in the state of California, the state has, Kate and Nnanna correct me if this language is wrong, but suspended the normal LCAP process, which is a little bit confusing because it's very similar letters, but is a different process that is how state funding is actually facilitated in California now and temporarily replaced that process with the learning continuity plans which have some similarities, but also some fundamental differences that recognize we're in a very different time and dealing with very different issues and whatnot. And so these plans actually seek to enable our schools to articulate what the current reality is and what that will look like for the year. That said they do serve a similar purpose. They are the plans that we'll be held accountable to, and that will trigger our state funding and revenue and some of the federal as well as I understand it. Kate and Nnanna, please correct me if I'm improperly summarizing.

Kate: No, that's a great summary. I would add that the we will return with the traditional LCAP in December, the legislation that replaced this kind of punted that down the road. So this is taking the place of what we historically would have done in June and you would have come to approve those plans. I'd also add that in addition to this period of time for public comment these plans have been developed over time with, you know, a lot of consultation. And as you see in the plans, the feedback we've received through surveys and direct feedback from a wide variety of stakeholders, they'll remain posted on the website and allow for the submission of written public comment as well until we come back the 29th for the final approval. But also happy to answer any questions.

Diane: Great.

Robert: I've noticed throughout these forums the use of the term distance learning and not always virtual school. Is distance learning taken on. Is that a legal term now or a specific language that we're supposed to use in these?

Diane: That's a good question.

Kate: But I think where you'll see, yeah. Where you'll see that distinction is typically...we still choose to call what we're doing virtual school. The state often characterizes this as

distance learning and through some of the legislative language they've used distance learning. We, as you know, intentionally have called what we're doing virtual school to bridge that distance. So there's probably some back and forth there, where it's our presentation of what we're doing discussing virtual school, but tying it to that language.

Robert: Thank you.

Diane: Any other questions or discussion on the plans? Okay, hearing none. I believe that is the final item on our agenda. Anything else that we should be doing team? Okay. With that then

Nnanna: I think Valeria mentioned that a public comment did come in.

Diane: Oh, well, okay. Well I think if the board is open to accept, you know, public comments in a different timeframe on the agenda, I think that would be fine.

Blake: Sounds good.

Diane: Okay. Great. Valeria, do you want to facilitate the comment?

Valeria: Yeah, absolutely. We received a speaker form from Ona Keller, she was like to speak on agenda item number 10, which is the learning continuity and attendance plan.

Diane: Great.

Ona: Okay. This comment is actually on behalf of Ernesto Umaña who submitted this, but wasn't sure if the board actually received it in their emails. In regards to item 10, the 2021 learning continuity and attendance plans, it should not be stated that stakeholder engagement was promoted. Specifically it is wrong to say that members of the public are able to participate in all Summit Public School meetings and hearings. As a member of the public, fourth year teacher at Summit Tam who wishes he could participate at this meeting, but the decision was made to have this meeting in direct conflict with all schools leadership team meetings. Thus making it impossible for me or any other teachers to participate. In the future I ask the board to meet at a time when teachers, an

important part of the Summit Public Schools community can actually participate. Thank you.

Diane: Thank you.

Valeria: Thank you.

Diane: Alright. Anything else? Okay. With that do I have a motion to adjourn at 3:56 PM?

Robert: So moved.

Diane: Thank you Bob.

Diego: Second.

Diane: Thank you, Diego. Blake.

Blake: Aye.

Diane: Diego.

Diego: Aye.

Diane: Steve.

Steven: Aye.

Diane: And Bob.

Robert: Aye.

Diane: Alright. And with that we are concluded. Thank you so much.

Blake: Thank you.

Steven: Thank you.

Diego: Bye all.