

To: Board of Education  
Laurie Heinz, Superintendent

From: Luann Kolstad, Chief School Business Official

Date: February 8, 2016

Subject: Discussion Regarding Formation of Board Finance and Building/Sites Committees

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To facilitate more streamlined Board meetings, the Administration is proposing that the Board of Education consider the formation of a Finance Committee and a Building & Sites Committee. I have attached for the Board's review a document that outlines the members, meetings, committee charter, activities and reporting.

The purpose of these committees will be to allow Board members, appointed by their fellow Board members, to dig deeper into the data and have a fuller understanding of the finances and facilities of the District. The committees are not meant to make any decisions on their own. They will make recommendations to Administration on items that will be presented to the full Board for review and/or approval.

Because this is a Board committee, minutes will need to be taken at the meetings. Typically the Board members would take the minutes, since they are the ones reporting back to the Board, but this can be discussed. Since only two Board members are on each committee, it is not subject to the Open Meetings Act so we do not need to post notification of the meeting ahead of time. Committee members should not overlap; therefore, four Board members would be needed to serve.

In terms of meeting times, I work around the Board members' schedules. I have conducted meetings at 7:00 a.m. so a Board member could catch their 8:18 a.m. train downtown. I have also conducted meetings during the day and the evening. These meetings are no longer than two hours, with Buildings & Sites usually only being up to an hour in length. An example of a Finance Committee project would be to go through the budget line item by line item, which is not possible at the monthly Board meeting due to time constraints. Board members will provide oversight and review on the committee; they will not be doing the actual work of the Administration.

Board members must have trust in each other for the committee structure to work. Typically it is ideal to have individuals with an interest in finance or facilities to serve on the committees, however, it is not a requirement. In fact, individuals with little experience in either are ideal candidates, because they will ask questions that will help Administration prepare Board reports that are understandable to the general public.

## **Proposed Board of Education Finance Committee**

### **Members of Committee:**

- Two Board Members
- Chief School Business Official
- Superintendent
- Assistant Business Manager

### **Meetings:**

No more than one time per month.

### **Committee Charter:**

The Finance Committee provides oversight to all policies and procedures related to the management of District revenues and expenditures. Areas of interest include:

- Provides Board perspective to management on the accomplishment of Board financial goals and practices.
- Provides representative Board oversight of the District's financial operations.
- Provides an open forum for discussion of critical issues related to the management of financial processes.

### **Activities:**

The Finance Committee will review more in-depth than time allows at regular Board meetings:

- Legislative/regulatory developments
- Student enrollment and impacts on staffing and budget
- TIF/impact fees
- Student fees, lunch fees, etc.
- State and federal reports, including grants
- Comparable districts surveys/benchmark data
- Budget Development – Including in-depth discussion of all revenue and expenditures being proposed. This will include meeting with the Superintendent's Cabinet members to review their area of the budget.
- Initial review of proposed new initiatives and their impact on District finances
- Review financial modeling, including financial projections as it relates to the budget, new initiatives and negotiations
- Review of annual audit with District personnel and auditor

### **Reporting:**

A Board member of the committee will give the Board a monthly update on the Finance Committee activities and any recommendations on items that will be coming before the Board for approval.

## **Proposed Board of Education Building & Sites Committee**

### **Members of Committee:**

- Two Board Members
- Chief School Business Official
- Superintendent
- Assistant Business Manager
- Director of Facility Management

### **Meetings:**

Quarterly or more often if necessary.

### **Committee Charter:**

The Building & Sites Committee provides oversight to all policies and procedures related to the management of District buildings and sites. Areas of interest include:

- Provides Board perspective to management on the accomplishment of Board financial goals and practices related to facilities.
- Provides representative Board oversight of the District's operations as they relate to building and sites.
- Provides an open forum for discussion of critical issues related to the management of District facilities.

### **Activities:**

The Building & Sites Committee will review more in-depth than time allows at regular Board meetings:

- Legislative/regulatory developments
- State and federal reports, including grants
- Building & Sites annual budget
- New initiatives brought before the committee
- Donations that impact the facilities of the District
- Construction projects
- Health Life Safety and Master Facility Plan – review District's yearly recommendations of projects and associated budgets
- District Board liaisons for safety and security program, including Traffic Safety
- Attendance at annual state-required safety meeting at beginning of school year

### **Reporting:**

A Board member of the committee will give the Board a quarterly update on the Building & Sites Committee activities and any recommendations on items that will be coming before the Board for approval.