October 11, 2023

Regular Board Meeting

Director Questions and Staff Responses

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The following advance questions were submitted by Board Directors in preparation for the Regular Board Meeting based on the initial agenda posting. Responses were compiled by the School Board Office from staff across Seattle Public Schools divisions.

Action Items, Introduction Items, Work Sessions, and Progress Monitoring are scheduled for presentation and discussion during Board Meetings and answers may be provided at that time.

Seattle School Board

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ID	Agenda Item	Director	Director Question	Staff Response
1.	**Action Items** 1. Approval of the 2023-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement between Seattle School District No. 1 and International Union of Operating Engineers Local 302.	Rivera Smith	We often hear that Capital funds can only be used for specific (i.e. capital-related) expenditures. How were we able to apply Capital funds to the cost of this agreement?	A small portion of the Mechanical Engineers represented staff are currently funded through the Capital Fund (9.2 FTE), and some are funded through the General Fund (12.8 FTE). Cost increases related to staff funded through the Capital Fund are assumed to be covered by Capital vs General Fund. This is not a change of staffing or a shift of staffing from the General Fund to the Capital Fund.
2.	**Action Items** 1. Approval of the 2023-2025 Collective	Rivera Smith	Are there any openers built into this agreement?	There is no language in this agreement regarding re-opening certain parts of this contract for re-negotiation.

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	Bargaining Agreement between Seattle School District No. 1 and International Union of Operating Engineers Local 302.			
3.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Rivera Smith	Re: "Attendance, however, remains a headwind for our work across the system. Among Title I schools, long-term absenteeism (missing 10% or more of the school year) was roughly double pre-pandemic levels last year and we are developing strategies to support schools and families on this issue," what are scores like at Title I schools that do not have long-term absenteeism?	The data shared in the memos shows the observed correlation between student absenteeism and MAP scores at Title I schools. This association is not strictly causal, as multiple factors are likely co-associated with both attendance and achievement outcomes.
4.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Rivera Smith	Please share more about "Text replacements offer students more culturally and historically representative choices."	Over the years Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has purchased replacement texts for parts of the curriculum so that teachers can better serve students furthest from educational justice with resources that honor students lived racial and cultural experiences, elevate histories and voices often minimized or excluded, and develop students' social consciousness. The basic lesson structure and pedagogy of the curriculum remain intact, but a different text is used.
5.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Rivera Smith	Re: "A notable year-over-year increase was observed for Multilingual leaners, consistent with a positive upward trajectory since 2016-17," begs the	We plan to conduct a deeper analysis of this trend to understand possible causes of this improvement over time.

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			question, what is working for this group and are similar strategies being used for our AAM/SoCFFEJ groups?	Our overall strategy for improving Multilingual (ML) students' early literacy centers on helping them grow their oral language proficiency alongside their literacy skills through a number of inclusionary practices, such as: 1. Establishing collaborative structures for Multilingual Learner (MLL) and homeroom teachers to co-teach and support ML students during Tier 1 instruction. 2. Supporting teachers to use the MLL supports embedded within the English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. 3. Drawing connections between students' home-language and English. 4. Providing training on more effective and contextualized data analysis of MLL student outcomes such as by using WIDA data alongside other data sources. 5. Increasing the cultural and historical relevance of our materials so that students can connect the content to their lives.
6.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Rivera Smith	Re: "Kindergarteners missed the most, with 1 in 5 in Title I schools missing 30 or more days of school in 2022-23. Missing school in preschool and early elementary is associated with weaker letter recognition and lower reading scores in later elementary years (Ehrlich et al., 2013; Chang & Romero, 2008)," are the schools that fall into this category also schools where we have not aligned Head Start/Pre-K bell times with those of the home schools?	SPS has 13 schools with a Head Start program. Twelve of those 13 schools are Title 1 schools. Six of the 13 schools have Head Start bell times that don't align with the home school. All six of those schools are Title 1 schools. We would have to look more deeply to determine whether student attendance in kindergarten is connected to bell times in preschool.

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7.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	Have all these strategies been put into place?	Yes, the memo reflects strategies that are currently operational, unless otherwise noted.
8.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	How are you tracking adherence to the expectations for schools?	We track implementation through the following: • District site visits to schools • Principal collaboration in the Early Literacy Improvement Network • Principal observations of classrooms and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) • Coaching logs
9.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	During the work session, please provide more information on the "7 schools will pilot the use of DIBELS in grades 3-5." What has the district learned from its use of DIBELS in K-2 that has informed this strategy?	The pilot has just begun this year so learnings will be forthcoming in the months ahead. The goals of the pilot are to: 1. Provide schools with additional literacy data for students in grades 3-5 to support instructional decision making. 2. Learn and collaborate with schools on the development of new instructional resources. 3. Observe how students' foundational skills progress after grade 2 and consider what, if any, additional assessments might be needed. 4. Learn about the successes/challenges of assessment administration to inform future training.
10.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	How many of the 13 priority schools have a preschool? How many of the students in the 13 priority schools have attended those preschools and what do we know about their reading outcomes?	All 13 priority ELA schools have preschools. As of 10/4: Of the 4,533 K-5 students currently enrolled at one of the 13 priority ELA schools, 860 (19.0%) attended priority ELA school preschools. We are assembling some of the reading outcomes data to provide during the Oct 11 board conversation.

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11.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	Which of the 13 priority schools currently do not have high dosage tutoring i.e. Team Reading Partners, TIPS?	Eleven of the 13 Priority Schools are currently supported by Team Read, Reading Partners, and/or TIPS. The other two schools are Rainier View and Leschi.
12.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	What is needed to do more high dosage tutoring? What should the board expect in terms of needed financial investment for this? What is meant by a dedicated transportation tier? A later bus run to take kids home after tutoring?	The first priority will be to include Expanded Learning/High Dosage tutoring (HDT) as a formal strategy to support the two goals and to identify a sustainable funding source. Following evidence of the effectiveness of HDT we are exploring the use of available title funds for larger scale expansion. This year we are using Title 1 dollars to pay for out of school time supports for students.
13.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	How many reading interventionists are staffed at each of the elementary schools?	All but nine elementary and K-8 schools have some level of support from a reading interventionist, though not all interventionists are 1.0 FTE. In addition, reading interventionists may support different grade levels across K-5.
14.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	Is there uniform adoption of SIPPS for Tier 2 intervention or is this still a targeted strategy?	SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words) is the uniformly supported Tier 2 strategy for foundational reading skills.
15.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	What are your hypotheses for why some AAM students have accelerated growth and some do not? Are these students typically with higher rates of attendance? At the priority schools?	Our early hypothesis is that the supports at the 13 Priority Schools are having an impact as compared to other similar schools. However, we have not yet specifically studied the characteristics and learning conditions of African American Male students who are achieving accelerated growth in our schools. Our starting hypothesis, however, is consistent with our early literacy strategies. In short, we would expect to see that students whose growth in reading is accelerating are regularly attending school and experiencing high-quality, standards aligned, and culturally responsive instruction by teachers who cultivate strong home-

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				school connections with families, and who regularly collect and analyze student data using common assessments to differentiate instruction and respond to students' current skill levels.
16.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Song	What are your hypotheses for high absenteeism? How much is due to illness, transportation, etc?	For SPS specifically, absences are reported as either "excused" or "unexcused". There are additional sub-categories within each of those, but we are not confident in how consistently they are applied across the system. This is an important issue that we are exploring further to characterize the problem more accurately. More generally, absenteeism is up dramatically across the entire country – in suburban and city schools alike. Current analysis of why absenteeism is up in the U.S. points to a variety of factors connected to the pandemic, including ongoing Covid infections, transportation issues, declining youth mental health and frayed social relationships, parents having a lower threshold for when to keep students home with basic illnesses, and a general societal trend of being out of practice of going to school every day on time.
17.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 1	Rankin	Which strategies in the 13 priority schools are having impact?	We are not able to precisely disentangle the effects of each component of the strategy in 13 schools but are confident that each is having an impact. As discussed in the memo, targeted strategies in the 13 schools include: • Focusing all supports around 4 early literacy instructional priorities differentiated by grade level. • Monthly network of principal convenings in the Early Literacy Improvement Network. • All teachers participating in monthly PLCs on early literacy. • Job-embedded 1:1 coaching. • Family Literacy Connectors at most schools to build deeper home-to-school connections for black families.

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				• Providing focused after school tutoring options.
18.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Rivera Smith	On the Executive Summary, Bullet #3 says does not specify what is being measured/referred to – rates of proficiency or rates of decline? Please specify.	We apologize for the lack of clarity. This bullet is referring to student proficiency on the Spring 2023 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) relative to the Spring 2022 ELA SBA.
19.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Rivera Smith	For the "Strategies for Achieving the 7th Grade Math Goal & Expectations for 2023-24," are the listed strategies being deployed at all middle and K-8 schools district wide or only at 6 priority schools?	The table on page 2 shows specifically what the six priority school leaders have agreed to implement and support across their math classrooms and school communities and the district commitments to support the six schools. The July memo specifically addressed universal and targeted strategies. The universal strategies and supports have not changed whereas some of the targeted strategies have been further refined in this memo. For example, universal strategies for all middle schools have access to the adopted curriculum, the curricular assessments, *SuccessMaker* as an intervention tool, and curricular PD. In addition, all schools can offer opportunity pathways which can include Math Empowerment courses and Math 7/8 Compacted.
20	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Song	To clarify, these expectations and central office supports are all targeted at the SEMI schools? Are any universal?	The table on page 2 shows specifically what the six priority school leaders have agreed to implement and support across their math classrooms and school communities and the district commitments to support the six schools. The July memo specifically addressed universal and targeted strategies. The universal strategies and supports have not changed whereas some of the targeted strategies have been further refined in this memo. For example, universal strategies for all middle schools have access to the adopted curriculum, the curricular assessments, *SuccessMaker* as an intervention tool, and curricular PD. In addition, all schools can

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				offer opportunity pathways which can include Math Empowerment courses and Math 7/8 Compacted.
21.	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Song	What % of AAM males not meeting proficiency were enrolled in Math Empowerment?	Of the 320 7th Grade African American male students who **did not** meet proficiency, 130 (40.6%) were enrolled in Math Empowerment. Conversely, 15 of the 81 (18.5%) 7th Grade African American male students who **did** meet proficiency were enrolled in Math Empowerment.

Math Empowerment is a second math class that supports students in their Tier 1 core math class. Math Empowerment focuses on pre-teaching and building confidence and math identity. We are continuing to offer professional development for educators who teach Math Empowerment courses to increase knowledge of best practices for second dose math classes and develop these instructional practices through collaboration and workshops. |
| 22. | **Progress Monitoring** Goal 2 | Song | Who decides who is enrolled in Math Empowerment? Counselor? Student? | The guidance is for students, families, and teachers to collectively decide if Math Empowerment would be a good fit for students. |
| 23. | **Progress Monitoring** Goal 2 | Song | Have you looked at these students' historical data? Did these students meet proficiency up until a certain grade? I ask because these are middle school strategies and I am wondering if there needs to be elementary school strategies (beyond the alignment in math curriculum with enVision K-5 adoption). | This is the second academic year that we have an aligned, adopted math curriculum K-8 that incorporates Universal Design for Learning best practices, that facilitates math discourse, and has high cognitive demand tasks to increase rigor. We believe this curricular alignment and professional learning by our teachers will lead to increased proficiency for all grade levels.

For our most recent 7th grade AAM students who tested in Spring 2023, we looked back at their proficiency for 3rd-6th grade on the SBA. The pandemic has had an obvious impact for our most recently tested 7th grade AAM students. |

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				Prior Math SBA proficiency for Spring 2023 7th Grade AAM students

Year	Grade	Proficient Count	Tested Count	Proficient %
2019	3	106	270	39.3%
2020	4	--	--	--
2021	5	--	--	--
2022	6	61	354	17.2%
2023	7	81	401	20.2%

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24	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Song	0.5 coaches available to each of the 6 SEMI schools: What is this coach responsible for? Is this coach specifically tasked to lead on strategies for this Goal at each school? I.e. monitor progress on the expectations for educators?	The purpose of the instructional coach position is to plan, facilitate, lead, and model the implementation of district and school-based instruction programs in schools, and to provide professional development and professional learning for school-based teachers. Our coaches are leading common Red Wednesday PD around the *5 Practices in Practice*, leading grade level math PLCs, co-teaching/modeling enVision lessons with the *5 Practices* for orchestrating productive math discourse and providing planning/feedback coaching cycles with teachers. Our math department meets with coaches weekly in a PLC to monitor progress.
25	**Progress Monitoring** Goal 2	Song	What are your hypotheses for high absenteeism? How much is due to illness, transportation, etc?	For SPS specifically, absences are reported as either "excused" or "unexcused". There are additional sub-categories within each of those, but we are not confident in how consistently they are applied across the system. This is an important issue that we are exploring further to characterize the problem more accurately.

Absenteeism is up dramatically across the entire country – in suburban and city schools alike. Current analysis of why absenteeism is up in the U.S. points to a variety of factors connected to the pandemic, including ongoing Covid infections, |

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				transportation issues, declining youth mental health and frayed social relationships, parents having a lower threshold for when to keep students home with basic illnesses, and a general societal trend of being out of practice of going to school every day on time.

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