

CORDOVA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

WORK SESSION MEETING: NOVEMBER 17-18, 2017

Notes of Work Session on Board Self-Evaluation and Goal-Setting Process

A Work Session on the Cordova School Board Self-Evaluation and Goal Setting process was held Friday, November 17, 2017 beginning at 5:30 pm in the District Office Conference Room. The meeting resumed Saturday, November 18, 2017 at 9:00 am in the same location.

Board Members Barb Jewell, Tammy Altermott, Pete Hoepfner, and Bret Bradford were present. Superintendent Alex Russin and facilitator Doug Penn from Chugach School District were also present.

The meeting began with introductions to Mr. Penn and an overview of his experiences as an educator and administrator in Alaska. He is currently an area-wide administrator for Chugach School District and directs the Voyage to Excellence Program for the district in Anchorage. It was noted that Cordova has sent students to this variable term residence program in recent years and hopes to continue sending students in years to come. Mr. Penn is a colleague of Mr. Russin, and they have collaborated on a number of projects, programs, and system developments over the past 15 years.

Mr. Russin next led an icebreaker activity during a working dinner related to a session he participated in during the recent Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) Annual Conference. The activity focused on using music as a strategy in the classroom to increase brain activity; to carry information, lessons, and values; to shift self-talk and mindset; and to reinforce concepts, principles, and learning. The group discussed various music that influenced their mindset and developed short “playlists” in the areas of motivation, positivity, and encouragement.

Following the icebreaker, the Board identified “take-aways,” or outcomes, that members hoped to accomplish during the work session. These included:

- Refocusing and rejuvenating the Board’s work and efforts
- Gaining a clear consensus on short- and long-term goals
- Defining and differentiating board goals and goals/expectations for the Superintendent
- Engaging in collegial conversations
- Identifying Board and District strengths and weaknesses based on the self-evaluation tool

Moving forward, the Board reviewed indicators from the self-evaluation tool and shared their individual responses and an explanation of their ratings for each indicator.

CATEGORIES

- Board Meeting/Operations and Board Performance
- Board/Superintendent
- Student Achievement/Instruction
- Board and Staff
- Budget
- Planning/Goals/Strategic Planning
- Board Development/Team Dynamics
- Community Engagement and Communication
- Policy

KEY WORD SYNTHESIS

- Purpose
- Relationship
- Opportunity
- Support
- Accountability. Alignment, Equity
- Action Oriented
- Self-Reflection
- Partnerships
- Practice Driven

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Conversation continued, which led to discussion of Board strengths and opportunities for growth related to board meetings and board support.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Committee reports- Financial reports- Student reports- Discussion items on board meeting agendas- Staff achievements- School success stories- Student and staff presentations- Student/staff recognition at board meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Policy alignment with current practice- Meeting agenda items connected to goals- Budget alignment with district goals- Improved flow of meetings- Mandatory action items (primarily state/federal laws related to policy)- Increasing Board engagement with the community

Members identified several actionable items the Board could engage in to improve board meetings, which included:

- Inviting teachers to share innovative and best practices in the classroom with the Board at meetings
- Developing a consent agenda/calendar for meeting agendas
- Identifying/associating meeting agenda items with Board/District goals
- Creating a process for all stakeholders to recognize staff
- Being intentional about sharing student success stories
- Hosting a community potluck
- Hosting a staff appreciation event in January 2018

Lastly, the Board brainstormed ideas for long-term goals in the context of future hopes and dreams for students in our school system, which encompassed:

- Students feeling successful and confident in their abilities to survive/thrive in their world
- Competency-based learning
- School/learning without boundaries (not just within the school buildings)
- A school system that is adaptable/flexible/relevant/responsive with changing times, where mistakes are encouraged as a means to learn and grow
- Trauma-informed practices incorporated K-12
- A meaningful and relevant diploma upon graduation
- Facilities that support long-term goals and changing needs
- Learning environments that are on the leading edge of best practices and technology use
- A system that is learning driven

Board members closed with comments of thanks to those who participated in the work session and expressed committed interest in improving their governance roles for the benefit of all students.

The work session ended at 5:30 pm, Saturday afternoon.