

Oakland Unified School District

Board of Education
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Minutes (Long)

Saturday, June 18, 2011

9:00 AM

Special Meeting

**Board Room, Paul Robeson Building, 1025 2nd Avenue, Oakland, CA
94606-2212**

Board of Education

President Gary Yee, Ed.D.

Vice President Jody London

***Directors: Jumoke Hinton Hodge, David Kakishiba, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins,
Alice Spearman***

Student Directors: Nikita Mitchell and Lashae Robinson

Staff: Edgar Rakestraw, Jr., Secretary, Board of Education

A. Call To Order

President Gary Yee called the meeting to order at 9:11 A.M.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Alice Spearman and Gary Yee

Absent: Lashae Robinson, Nikita Mitchell and Jody London

Roll Call (Secretary's Observation)

Vice President Jody London present at 9:13 A.M.

Roll Call: Present: David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Alice Spearman, Jody London and Gary Yee

Absent: Lashae Robinson and Nikita Mitchell

C. Unfinished Business



11-1232

District's Five Year Plan - Community Schools, Thriving Students - May 2011 - May 2016 (Second Reading)

Adoption by the Board of Education of District's Five Year Plan - Community Schools, Thriving Students - May 2011 through May 2016.

Attachments: [11-1232 - District's Five Year Plan - Community Schools, Thriving Students - May 2011 - May 2016 \(Second Reading\).pdf](#)
[11-1232 - Presentation - 6-18-2011- District's Five Year Plan - Community Schools, Thriving Students - May 2011 - May 2016 \(Second Reading\).pdf](#)
[OUSD Strategic Plan v2.0 - Presentation \(6-18-2011\).ppt](#)

President Yee introduced Junious Williams, CEO of Urban Strategies Council and facilitator of the Board's Study Sessions on the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Mr. Williams gave an overview of today's agenda to be followed by a Question and Answer session.

Superintendent Smith said the Strategic Plan frames where we want to go and it is about the deliverables. Board Members and the community have asked for a video that shows the joy and excitement in the District.

Superintendent Smith said the Plan includes the addition of the physical health. There has been a lot of conversation about why would one major part of this would be about social and emotional work. It is not just so we can get to the academic. He said building empathy and connectedness is part of a good quality public education. We need to be in relationship

and create a culture of connectedness and caring inside the classrooms. He said the culture of well-being and empathy needs to be taught.

Superintendent Smith said we have an opportunity to create a community where kids and families create a system of care and we have to take responsibility for it as educators. We have captured a structure to do that in spirit and in action.

Superintendent Smith reviewed the Community Schools Model for Change & Action - Prepared for Success in College & Careers which he said is essential for a healthy community. Young adults who have not completed high school education cannot come close to participating as part of a skilled work force. We are taking public responsibility for reshaping and becoming a high quality education institution that lives in this framework.

Superintendent Smith said we had the opportunity to present to the Board and we heard the need to be in different language groups and the need to be in community engagement events. He said it is the community engagements and connectivity when we get people together to get feedback. We also need to talk specifically about each child.

Superintendent Smith said the real work is making the Plan work and we have to take it on systemically and systematically. We have to have a way of engaging ourselves and of pacing ourselves over the long haul to get to the goals and outcomes that we believe are essential.

PRIORITIZING

Superintendent Smith said a big question is about the cost. The answer across the board is that every resource we get will be spent on these ways. We have to figure out how to prioritize the money we have and how do we organize ourselves to get the effects we most desperately want to see for all kids.

ALIGNING

Superintendent Smith said some of the questions from Board Members have been extraordinary. They said we need to be more aggressive. Having so many goals, what are we really going to do?

Superintendent Smith said every fifth grader that is in our system next year will be prepared for success in ninth grade. He said we will have in our District about 3,400 fifth graders next year and our ability to create a culture of care, of extraordinary expectation of focused energy to help each child be proficient and ready as they go through the grades, is our work. He said high school graduation is everybody's responsibility. We have to know how get very specific and targeted. As a community we need to ensure that this fifth grade cohort is entering high school ready for success. That does not mean we are only teaching to the test. It is about creating connections, creating culture and a sense of well-being, the expanded linked learning, other opportunities for children, and we know that unless children are proficient or better, the likelihood of their future academic and social success is a great predictability. It is not the exclusion of the other things. We think if we do the other things well, we'll see the baseline move. These are interrelated and connected.

COMMUNICATION

Superintendent Smith said communication is huge. People are talking about it. We know that people are talking about it as an intense 61-page document.

ENGAGEMENT

Superintendent Smith said we need to engage deeply with the principals and building out a Principal's Guide to Leadership in this Plan is essential. The UAOS has submitted many pages of recommendations. Page 11 contains a very thoughtful section on community engagement. We are committed to have meaningful engagement and build from the great work of the All City Council, parents and community groups.

Superintendent Smith said the Results policies are the reframing and shaping of our work as a Board, Superintendent's Governance Team and how we use results through the system. We are getting better with technology and data. We are moving towards Healthy Kids, Healthy Oakland as a transformative measure to help other people engage with us.

Superintendent Smith said we have the opportunity for refining. When we speak about the difference between success or failure, we are trying to be in a relationship and take feedback seriously and make changes. Some of the feedback about the video included an absence of Latino faces. He said we are a majority Latino district. There are some kids doing amazing work. Where are those kids? The video did not highlight the academic success as much as some of the challenges. Superintendent Smith said we tried to take that feedback and said this is still a work in progress. Our work together is about improving over time and learning lessons and as we try things, to be great learners. We are serious about taking feedback and getting better.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Director Hodge said she appreciates the day when we acknowledge the presence of historical Black colleges on our high school campuses.

Director London said she would send her list of comments to Mr. Williams. She said she would like to have a video to ask principals to show at PTA meetings in the fall. She asked where is the middle school? Middle schools are where we lose the most students. She would like to see a system that would guarantee a spot at Oakland Technical High School for those students who attend Claremont Middle School. She said we want to have family support centers and we find ourselves with a very dismal budget for next year. She said she likes the idea of a school site Director, but she foresees much confusion in the community. What is the role of the SSC and the PTA? If another administrator is hired at every school, what does that do to the 55-45 ratio? Director London said there has been a lot of talk about career ladders and mentorship opportunities for teachers. We need to be very focused on the career ladder for principals and retention efforts for principals when they have been in the District for several years and max out on the salary scale. How can they mentor the new principals who are coming on board?

Director Spearman said she was concerned about our saying we were going to follow the fifth grade cohort. She asked about students in secondary schools.

Superintendent Smith said the work of the Secondary Experience and Achievement Network (SEAN), in particular the A-G support, would bolster activities and look at early warning systems. Focusing on high school graduation became inadequate and we are going to start talking about the fifth grade cohort while we do all this other work. There are many things described in the Goals and Objectives in the deliverables about secondary redesign and supports.

Director Spearman said she was extremely concerned about the interaction of the District and African American families. She is seeing a disconnect in the gap that is widening. When she looks at the programs and participation, the African American family is extremely absent.

Superintendent Smith said many of these are ongoing bigger questions. We have already made extraordinary steps in outreach and become more engaged in the African American community.

Junious Williams said one of the important things that happened in the process was a mid year check-in on the Strategic Planning process on the issues of standards, principles and metrics of engagement. It is important for us to have metrics and standards and be able to elevate the conversation to a factual one as we move forward.

Director Gallo said a lot of it has to do with our attitude at the Board level, at the administration level, and at the adult level within the District. A lot of it is the direction, instruction and the focus we have to give as a District and as a Board in terms of the implementation. He is asking the Superintendent to be very specific and clear in providing a score card or score board that we can continue to monitor on a regular basis. He said the ADA is there, but the kids are choosing other locations to attend school. The Spanish-speaking families look for choices where they feel welcome. The language is not the top priority. They are here to be competitive in the English language. Addressing English Learner issues are important, but if you ask any parent, they want their kids to be proficient and in the mainstream of the English language as soon as possible and to be competitive. Director Gallo said a scoreboard would gauge our success in the classroom and in the school site for ethnicity and background, and provide indicators to change our strategy. The percentages need to be clearly spelled out on an annual basis based on the overall plan.

Director Hodge asked about the balancing of family choices and that we need a conversation to embed charter schools in the plan. She asked if we have weighed out the connection and interplay among all the options and how we are balancing our portfolio with strong charter school options for families and strong traditional public school options.

Director Dobbins asked about the focus on the fifth grade cohort instead of earlier grade levels?

Superintendent Smith said if children are not on a winning streak, have a sense of belonging and understand where they are headed, they are often lost in middle school. He said part of the reason why you see the low graduation rate for whole populations is because they did not even make it to high school. We are going to continue to talk about embedding early childhood and linking early childhood with the elementary level. The focus all the way from third grade to graduation felt a little long; and we felt we could

support the fifth grade cohort to enter proficient.

President Yee said there were some confusing statistics regarding the African American graduation rate. Mayor Jean Quan cited 30 percent. The Strategic Plan cites a range in the 50's. He would appreciate if we could get precise about the graduation rate. There is a big difference between 30 and 50 and 100 percent.

Superintendent Smith said this is the larger work. Many of our African American boys do not make it to high school. What is in the plan is the cohort graduation rate, but when we look at African American males in Oakland, about 3 in 10 graduate from high school.

President Yee said we should be having some precision around our benchmark and what we mean by graduation.

President Yee said he heard the Superintendent say we have a Latino majority. He said we have a Latino plurality. Do we have 51 percent of our students Latino?

Superintendent Smith said Latino's make up a significant percentage, about 37 percent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Monica Green, parent, said she was glad to see the Principal's Guide because it is a connection between what happens at the District and what happens in our schools. She spoke in support of activities to support the children now. Research shows that when students are out of school for the summer, they drop back. If Advanced Placement students know what classes they are going to be enrolled for the fall and get summer assignments, she wants to know why her child does not have summer reading. The District needs to increase the rigor for all students in high school. Homework has to be read and corrected and given feedback. Homework is critical to understanding and gathering skills.

Roberto Mendoza, speaking through a translator, and parent of eight children, said there are a lot of needs at different schools where our children are being educated. There are problems with violence and we need young teachers.

Kido, Parent Leadership Action Network, thanked Superintendent Smith for including their demands within the Strategic Plan. She asked the District to continue the partnership with them.

Karla Perez-Cordero, Parent Leadership Action Network, thanked everyone for including the parent demands into the strategic planning. They have to continue the work. She said she believes in English language accessibility.

Melia Franklin, Executive Director, Parent Leadership Action Network, commended the District for stepping up to the task of including as many community members in the formation of the Strategic Plan. She said four of the Network recommendations are in the final goals in the Strategic Plan and relate to the standards of parent engagement and training. She said they look forward to continuing their partnership with the District.

David Roach, Family Hood Connection, stated their mission is to build healthy economics. He appreciates Director Hodge's comments about the presence of historical Black colleges

being a part of our high schools and schools in general. It is about building systems. As he is hearing about the plight of our young Black males, he is saddened to know that they have never been contacted to be a part of getting more males involved and changing the situation.

Sepeedeh Zabala, Oakland Technical High School parent, stated Peralta Elementary School has transformed into a community school. The situation at Westlake Middle School needs attention. Students were allegedly stealing from nearby grocery stores and student expulsions were on the rise. She said there was no process of turnaround.

Kate Nicol, Director of Oakland Charter School Collaborative, thanked the District for a document that is a culmination of many months of work on the part of many diverse stakeholders, but despite the bold direction of the new plan, there is a glaring issue that threatens to impede accelerated progress for all students and families in Oakland. She said over 7,000 of the students and families in Oakland are attending charter schools in Oakland and that number is inching toward 20 percent of the overall school population. She said the Strategic Plan is unclear about sharing a sense of responsibility for the success of the students in charter schools. She found only one reference to the entire charter community in the Strategic Plan. She said the exclusion is problematic in that charter schools will continue to exist in Oakland and they will continue to be part of the educational equation. Without explicit recognition by the District of the legitimacy of the schools and options for families and students, there is no chance of realizing one educational vision for Oakland. She urged the District to act as boldly as the Strategic Plan will allow. She said it is time to formally engage the charter community.

Eric Adams, student, UCLA, thanked the District and said they did an amazing job and that they incorporated input from the community, students, business, and all the people who tirelessly worked to make sure that students can get somewhere in their lives.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Director Spearman said she would vote for the Strategic Plan. The plan is good and is bold. There is still work to be done. She responded to remarks made by Kate Nicol by saying nothing good comes from fostering segregation. What is happening with most of the charter schools in Oakland is that they have segregated racism and they have pitted races against one another. She said some of the charter schools are not doing any better than the public schools and they are not doing anything innovative or anything different, except for segregation.

Director Gallo said people make a choice on where they want to educate their children. The District has failed kids. He said it is about discipline, having a strong work ethic, and having education as a privilege. He said there is nothing wrong with charter schools and we ought to include them in the Strategic Plan. We could learn a lot from the schools.

Director Dobbins said he is in support of the Strategic Plan. There are many societal factors that impact the classroom.

Director Hodge said schools are a part of the community and it is vital for us to understand it. She does not believe that teachers need to be social workers. We need to partner with social workers to be part of our community. She said the implementation phase is going to

be difficult. In her district, millions of dollars have been poured onto school campuses without making a difference. Her biggest concern is the trial-and-error system. We need to get it together to be on board. She said she supports the Strategic Plan.

Vice President London said the devil is in the detail and the implementation. Where is the money going to come from?

President Yee stated he appreciates his Board colleagues. He said they all attended every study session for the past year-and-a-half. He said adoption of the Plan sets in motion how we are going to do our budgeting and deployment of staff for the coming year and how we are going to engage the parent community, the charter community and others. He said this is our Plan and by our action today, we are embracing it as our plan moving forward. He said we would not have this Plan had Superintendent Smith not brought it. He remembers the Superintendent made a commitment early on to engage the community which was a big part of why this Board selected him as Superintendent. This is a moment where he is able to express that vision, those principles, and those values to the Board and to the community. He thanked Superintendent Smith for his leadership. President Yee said he appreciates the fact that this is a no-excuse plan and he holds all Board Members accountable on a collective basis.

Superintendent Smith said this is a moment of deep personal satisfaction and humble appreciation to everybody's leadership and work. The goal for next year is to have a prioritized budgeting process. We have already been engaging with Board Members about how the staffing needs to shift to support the Strategic Plan and engaging the community in the task force work. He said all reports of the Task Forces are posted on the District web site. The budgeting process is in front of us for the next two weeks and we will continue to build staff alignment to the Plan.

President Yee noted the web site has a place for public comment. Who is reading those comments and who will respond to people who submit comments?

Superintendent Smith said Troy Flint is monitoring the comments and we are all looking at and responding to the comments.

Junious Williams congratulated the Board for adopting the Strategic Plan. It is a time to celebrate because it is a milestone to recognize all the people who did a lot of good work; to reflect and capture the learning; and to figure out how to improve and get back to action. That is a cycle that we need to continuously be in. Mr. Williams stated he was pleased to have had the opportunity to work with the Board over the last year-and-a-half and he pledges the support of his organization in continued support to staff and the community.

A motion was made by Jody London, seconded by Christopher Dobbins, that this matter be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: Adv Aye: 0

Adv Nay: 0

Adv Abstain: 0

Aye: 7 - David Kakishiba, Jumoke Hinton Hodge, Noel Gallo, Christopher Dobbins, Alice Spearman, Jody London and Gary Yee

Nay: 0

Recused: 0

Absent: 1 - Lashae Robinson and Nikita Mitchell
Preferential Aye: 0
Preferential Abstention: 0
Preferential Nay: 0

D. Adjournment

President Yee adjourned the meeting at 11:03 A.M.

Prepared By: _____

Approved By: _____