

## I. PRELIMINARY

Shepherd called the March 17, 2015, meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### ***Roll Call***

The following members were present:

JulieMarie A. Shepherd, president  
Cathy Wildman, vice president  
Mary W. Lewis, secretary  
Dan Jorgensen, treasurer  
Amber Drevon, director  
Eric Nelson, director  
Barbara J. Yamrick, director

Also meeting with the Board of Education were:

D. Rico Munn, superintendent of schools  
William Stuart, deputy superintendent  
Brandon Eyre, district legal counsel  
Georgia Durán, chief communication officer  
David Trautenberg, chief financial officer  
Anthony Sturges, chief operating officer  
Adrienne Bradshaw, controller  
Tonia Norman, assistant to Board of Education

The following staff members were present via phone:

Lisa Escárcega, chief accountability and research officer  
Damon Smith, chief personnel officer  
John Youngquist, chief academic officer

### ***Pledge of Allegiance***

Shepherd led the Board and audience in the pledge to the flag. She then welcomed visitors to the meeting.

### ***Approval of Agenda***

The March 17, 2015, agenda was approved as written.

### ***Approval of Minutes***

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Education held on March 3, 2015, were approved as written.

### ***Recognizing Excellence***

Munn congratulated Crawford Elementary School Principal Jenny Passchier for earning the 2015 National Distinguished Principal of the Year for Colorado, presented by the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE). The award honors her amazing leadership and commitment to students, staff and the community. Thanks to her vision of focusing on a standards-based teaching learning cycle, writing across all content areas and maintaining a positive climate,

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Crawford achieved the highest overall proficiency increase of all elementary schools in Aurora as reflected in the 2014 TCAP scores. The APS Board of Education and I are proud to have her on our team and wish her continued success.

Passchier expressed appreciation for the wonderful honor. She shared that the Crawford community is excited about the award and the attention it is bringing to the school and the great work of teachers and students. She is excited about going to Washington D.C. in the fall and representing Aurora.

Munn shared that spring break is March 23 to March 27. We wish those who will have time off during that week a safe and restful time with family and friends.

Wildman recognized Jennifer Cross, business and technology teacher at Aurora Central, for encouraging students to prepare tax returns for community earners. Cross was recently observed by a representative from the Piton Foundation and the coordinator for Tax Help Colorado as well as Alex Jared, associate dean at CCA, who expressed that student workers were engaged, professional and knowledgeable. The IRS conducted a surprise audit of tax returns completed by students and determined that the site was 100 percent in compliance with federal regulations. Approximately \$800,000 was refunded to community earners.

### ***Opportunity for Audience***

Julie North, natural and renewable resource coordinator for APS, highlighted a pilot project last semester in which student groups examined energy use at five schools, resulting in approximately \$45,000 in savings for the district and community taxpayers. She indicated that two schools received cash incentives for energy efforts, including Side Creek Elementary, \$975, and Fletcher Community School, \$5,676. She noted that the pilot program has been expanded to 21 schools and hopes to double savings. She will be highlighting the district's Green Star program at Stanford in May and will showcase the wonderful work that students are doing around energy efficiency.

## **II. BOARD WORKSHOP**

### Turnaround Options Discussion

Shepherd reminded the Board and audience that tonight's conversation related to turnaround options for Aurora Central High School is in response to questions that the Board generated from a previous meeting. No formal decision or action will be taken at the meeting.

Munn reviewed a slide from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) that highlighted the time line for schools on year five of the state accountability clock. The State Review Panel will conduct a site visit to Aurora Central and the district in spring 2015. The State Board of Education will provide recommended actions to the district in spring 2016 for implementation in fall 2016.

Munn provided an overview of work that has occurred to date, including meetings and phone conversations with representatives from CDE and SchoolWorks, which has contracted with CDE to facilitate work. The Board previously received an outline that SchoolWorks provided to district staff that highlighted the process and work of the State Review Panel. SchoolWorks will review background materials from the district designated for the State Review Panel, including the

(1) the district's unified improvement plan (UIP) that identifies root causes and major improvement strategies, (2) Aurora Central's UIP that identifies root causes and major improvement strategies, (3) the RMC Research Corporation educational audit reports that identify progress, strengths and challenges as well as recommendations associated with the implementation of Aurora Central's UIP, and (4) an outline of the Tier Intervention Grant (TIG). District leaders will provide the School Review Panel with the APS 2020 Strategic Plan, partnership and assessment work regarding readiness for turnaround planning from the University of Virginia, and equity work with Dr. Robert Marzano. In addition, district leaders have met with local and national foundations and experts to review feedback to determine best approaches to utilize related to state mandated options. Some of the foundations and organizations include the Gates Family Foundation, Denver Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, National Association of Charter School Authorizers, League of Charter Schools, and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Board was provided with additional research around turnaround efforts, strategies, and options, including the "*The Turnaround Challenge*" produced by Mass Insight, an organization that assists districts with turnaround work and implementation; a 2004 research summary highlighting small school reform efforts at the Manual Education Complex; and a summary of findings from the Center of Public Education regarding turnaround efforts and strategies under the federal School Improvement Grant, which concluded that school closure or restart was ineffective, transformational efforts had mixed results and turnaround options and strategies had limited effect. The Board also received a summary page, "*Strategies that Have Failed*," produced by Mass Insight that highlights both successful and unsuccessful turnaround options and strategies.

The Board asked for transformational and turnaround work that has been implemented at Aurora Central to date.

Drevon asked for clarification related to revised language under root causes within Aurora Central's UIP. Munn shared that draft root cause analysis of district and low performing school UIPs were provided to the Board earlier in the year. He noted that the Board raised concerns regarding root causes identified in Aurora Central's UIP and feedback was utilized to revise language. District and school UIPs were due to CDE by January 15, 2015. Escárcega shared that Aurora Central's revised UIP was provided to Board members upon request. Youngquist added that Aurora Central's root causes were adapted in response to feedback received internally as well as from the Board and CDE.

Yamrick asked for additional information related to restructuring efforts, timelines, and outcomes at some Denver Public Schools (DPS), including Cole, East, Manual and Montbello. Munn suggested that Yamrick meet with Youngquist, former principal of East High School, to discuss restructuring outcomes. Restructuring outcomes for other DPS schools will be provided to the Board.

Drevon asked if current research included options provided by the state for schools entering year five on the accountability clock. Munn indicated that options are included in some form of the research, noting that the four categories listed under the SIG grant are the most recognizable in terms of state reform options.

Yamrick requested that an extrapolated summary of information be provided to the Board in terms of how options vary within research summaries. Shepherd

believes that research requires some form of interpretation, extrapolation, and creative visioning to determine how reforms might look in APS. Munn shared that research provided to the Board is specific to APS.

Munn reviewed the five state mandated options, including school closure, educational management organization (EMO), conversion to charter school, innovation status, and other change of equal structural impact. He briefly highlighted impacts for Board consideration under each option including the EMO option, which would allow corporate management of an educational institution either for or not for profit. The district would enter into a contract with the EMO and operating funds would most likely be provided through PPR funds. The EMO would utilize research-based instructional models and systems to meet requirements for the school and the community. National research indicates that an EMO or charter assuming responsibility for a comprehensive high school of 2,000 students is very low.

Shepherd asked about accountability between the Board and an authorized EMO. Escárcega explained that the EMO would be a school by CDE's definition and would fall under the same accountability as other state schools.

Wildman asked if EMOs were operated by corporate businesses. Munn indicated that some EMOs were operated under a corporate structure.

Dion Arguelles, director of employee relations, provided an overview of implications to Aurora Central staff under state restructuring options. If management of Aurora Central is assumed by an EMO, charter school, or results in school closure, all employees would be released from the school. Probationary classified and licensed employee contracts would be non-renewed or terminated. Non-probationary employees would retain employment rights within APS. Classified staff would be subject to overage placement and licensed staff would be subject to mutual consent provisions under SB 10-191, Article 18, of the Master Agreement and could reapply for positions at Aurora Central or elsewhere in the district. All administrative/professional technical employees would be released from employment with the exception of administrative/professional technical employees who had previously gained non-probationary status as a licensed employee. If the state innovation option is selected, some employees could be retained dependent on personnel policies developed within the innovation plan. Employees who are not retained would have the same rights as indicated in above scenarios.

Munn noted that the five state options are structural in nature and highlighted school design and framework options. He indicated that innovation status is the best option for a comprehensive high school of 2,000 students.

Jorgensen discussed the importance of ensuring cohesiveness between programs and structures and requested additional background and clarification around research to ensure all proposed options, including the pilot school alternative, are equally reviewed. Munn emphasized that work is ongoing and shared that a variety of meetings have been scheduled with national charter and EMO organizations to review frameworks and designs for a high school type setting. He added that meetings have also been scheduled with organizations that facilitate processes to better pinpoint options.

Lewis asked if the Aurora Lights Health Sciences program would be considered a school within a school model. Munn expressed that Aurora LIGHTS is a fine

program, but is currently not considered a school within a school model.

Anthony Sturges, chief academic officer, and Josh Hensley, planning coordinator, provided an overview of five scenarios and impacts in the unlikely event that Aurora Central was temporarily closed, including costs associated with transportation, wet mobiles, split schedules, additional sections, and common core facility updates to accommodate enrollment of Aurora Central students at existing high schools.

*A detailed presentation of the five scenarios is appended to the March 17 minutes.*

Yamrick asked for additional clarification related to facility use of the building if Aurora Central was temporarily closed. Munn shared that the Board would be responsible for determining how the building would be utilized in the event of temporary closure.

Durán provided an overview of preliminary engagement efforts and approaches to solicit stakeholder feedback from the Aurora Central community. She highlighted the importance of utilizing multiple engagement strategies and reviewed the current attendance area format to engage stakeholders in cafeteria style conversations. She reviewed an example of data boards that will be displayed at community engagement sessions at Aurora Central and community meetings. She noted that several boards in multiple languages would be displayed, and hopes to have one member of the Board and Leadership Team at each session. She indicated that engagement work is still in the development stage and is expected to increase following the State Review Panel visit. Broader community engagement work is also starting for the district and other low-performing schools as well as the new APS 2020 Strategic Plan.

Lewis asked about the number of Aurora Central staff and students who took part in yesterday's visit with district leaders. Munn shared that district leaders were available to meet with Aurora Central staff and students yesterday, but did not keep an official tally. He added that district leaders had an opportunity to visit a student leadership class and met with Aurora Central staff who drafted the pilot school design proposal.

Yamrick hopes Aurora Central students will have numerous opportunities to provide feedback and express their opinions, especially seniors who will soon be voting members of the community. Duran confirmed that students would have opportunities to provide feedback. She also expressed appreciation for Aurora Central's strong alumni association.

Escárcega and representatives from SchoolWorks are working directly with Aurora Central staff to schedule interviews and focus groups for the State Review Panel visit, March 31 through April 1. The State Review Panel will interview district and school leadership teams, licensed staff, and school and district specialists, and plan to conduct classroom observations on the first full day. The second day will be dedicated to report writing. Munn will provide the Board with feedback following the visit and update the presentation as information becomes available.

Munn emphasized that the state time line does not require any Board action until January or February of 2016, but does not believe it would serve the district to adhere to the state mandated time line. He indicated that following the State

Review Panel visit, the Board and district leaders are expected to complete a form stating the preferred restructuring option within the state mandated options to implement at Aurora Central, and recommends that the Board identify a preferred option at its next meeting. He noted that the State Board has invited district representatives to its April 9 meeting to present information related to both district and Aurora Central accountability concerns. He recommended that the presentation include a preliminary proposal and structural design option, and suggested that the district enter into some type of agreement or MOU with the State Board for possible adoption at its June 10 meeting. He speculated that the State Board would monitor the agreement or MOU over the next few months and take final action in March or April of 2016. He proposed that the Board make a final decision on the proposal and design option at its final meeting in May.

Lewis asked when the State Review Panel report would be available. Escárcega replied that the report should be available in May.

Lewis asked if district staff requested the date for the State Review Panel visit. Munn replied that district staff did request the early date.

Munn highlighted the innovation structure option and action zone proposal, a concept driven to address student needs as well as needs within the broader context of the community. He shared that innovation status would open structural options, including schools within a school, smaller learning communities, or a mix of some autonomous or charter schools.

Drevon noted that the innovation proposal specifically references immigrant and refugee students at schools identified in action zone one, and asked if connections identified within the proposal that focus on this student population group would improve outcomes for the entire student body. Munn replied that skill sets, supports, outside resources, caring adults, and professional development focusing on culturally responsive education will support all students. He also noted the importance of identifying action zones based on school commonalities such as location or other themes.

Jorgensen asked about waivers outlined in the Innovation Act. Munn indicated that state waivers might include budget, calendar, personnel and curriculum. He shared that the state waiver structure provides examples and a process structure under SB 163, which helps develop capacity and a solid understanding of the framework.

Lewis likes that the innovation structure option includes language that requires support from the majority of teachers, administrators, and the site accountability committee as well as a statement of support from classified staff, parents, students, and the community. She stressed the importance of ensuring that the innovation structure looks different and asked if any DPS school had elected to revoke innovation status. Kathleen Shiverdecker, P-20 learning director for community L, noted that DPS schools that achieve innovation status at the district and state level go through a rigorous criteria and innovation necessary for the school to accomplish its purpose. She shared that innovation for five DPS schools was revoked and recommended for closure/reopening under a different model. She will provide the Board with names and background of DPS schools in which innovation was revoked.

Drevon voiced concerns regarding school groupings within innovation zones and discussed the importance of ensuring the focus remains on low performing

schools. She asked if the State Board was expecting a proposal specific to Aurora Central or a broader district proposal. Munn explained that each school within the innovation zone must be approved for innovation status and have its own innovation design to ensure a school-level focus. He noted that schools within innovation zones must have some type of commonality or theme. He does not believe it distracts from individual schools having broader principles in terms of collective supports and operations within the innovation zone community. He is unsure of specific expectations of the State Board, but believes time will be allotted for staff to highlight district celebrations and challenges.

Yamrick asked about accountability, oversight and local control related to the innovation structure option. Shepherd is also concerned, but believes the Board and district will retain the highest level of control and influence under the innovation structure option.

Lewis asked who would be spearheading planning work in the 2015-16 school year. Munn is scheduled to meet with organizations and companies that specialize in centralized planning and consulting work. He emphasized that staff, school-level design teams and the community would engage in centralized planning work as required by law. Wildman is pleased that the school community will be part of the innovation work and process.

Jorgensen discussed the importance of dedicating resources to review planning and reconfiguration options for low-performing schools next year. Munn noted that significant resources have been dedicated to schools with high risk factors and turnaround challenges through differentiated support structures, turnaround leadership partnership with the University of Virginia, and SIG and TIG grants. He added that the innovation proposal to implement a series of innovation zones would address school restructuring.

Yamrick voiced concerns around stewardship, commenting that we have lost the idea of what is best for the child. She requested clarification regarding decision-making around funding to implement the plan.

Drevon asked if the school design committee would provide additional details related to innovation work during the planning year. Munn shared that part of the innovation option includes the creation of a design team to determine the innovation structure, costs, supports and other details.

Jorgensen requested that Eyre review new Board policy, Executive Limitations 3.10, to determine if the policy is specific to current or future programs.

Lewis asked if the Board would be provided with SchoolWorks' district stakeholder input form for review on April 7. Munn shared that a draft form would be prepared for the Board.

Drevon asked if the innovation option would provide more control in terms of staff retention. Munn replied yes.

The Board is open to discussing, exploring and pursuing the innovation structure option and innovation zones.

Munn requested that Board members email additional questions or concerns directly to him.

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Jorgensen asked Munn if the Board could assist in dedicating resources for personnel or other options to assist with the planning process. He noted the importance of early planning to better assist the district and low performing schools. Munn is reviewing external supports, resources and grants to assist with planning work.

Shepherd thanked staff for providing information to the Board, noting that feedback and engagement is critical as we get closer to the State Review Panel visit. She also thanked Aurora Central community supporters who were present in the audience.

*The Aurora Central – Shaping the Future presentation is appended to the March 17 minutes.*

#### Review of Implementation Plans – APS 2020 Strategic Plan

The Board reviewed implementation plans for the APS 2020 Strategic Plan, core belief statements and proof points demonstrating the commitment to statements and metrics around strategic goals.

Drevon asked if proof points under each core belief statement had been completed. Munn indicated that proof points still needed to be assigned to a couple of core belief statements.

Lewis asked if information would be included on the district website. Munn replied that information would be available on the website.

Munn reviewed the core belief statement, “Every student has unique abilities that we must recognize and engage” and highlighted proof points and implementation plans around ongoing equity work with national experts, Dr. Pedro Noguera and Dr. Adeyemi Stenbridge. He noted that the second proof point relates to supporting the whole child around art, music, sports and debate. The Board will be provided with a draft of proof points in the next couple of weeks.

Drevon asked if research or strategies in terms of best practices to engage students would be included as a proof point under the core belief statement. Munn believes that this will be included under the core belief statement, adding that equity work is built around the three levels of engagement and understanding in terms of what it means to engage students.

Wildman asked if supporting the whole child around sports was exclusive to the school context, noting that fees might preclude some students from participation in sports. Munn stated that the goal is to be as inclusive as possible in identifying the district’s commitment to provide opportunities for student engagement. Sturges added that processes are in place to assist APS students who cannot afford to pay athletic or other co-curricular or civic fees.

Drevon asked how the three strategic goals fit into core belief statement, “A district with students at its center provides an adaptable and responsible foundation for learning.” Munn stated that core beliefs set the foundation for what the community believes needs to be instilled across the district and goals compliment the foundation of core beliefs. He highlighted parallels between every students having a plan and having a responsible and adaptable foundation, and creating processes and systems that can respond to a variety of student plans by providing adequate choices to achieve success.

Drevon asked about ongoing monitoring of security cameras as part of core belief statement, "Students and staff safety is essential to our vision and mission." Munn confirmed that all district schools have cameras and ongoing video surveillance.

Drevon asked if students were recommended to serve on the district student advisory committee as part of core belief statement, "Students take an active and ongoing responsibility for their learning." Durán replied that building leaders currently recommend student leaders to serve on the district student advisory committee, but wants to get to a point where student endorsements influence other students to serve.

Drevon noted that most identified student leaders already possess leadership qualities. She would like to see leadership qualities developed in all students and feels this is missing in current proof points. Durán believes that schools should be responsible for leadership development. Lewis highlighted the importance of engaging students in leadership roles throughout the community.

Shepherd noted that diversity is one of the strengths in APS and emphasized the importance of ensuring that diversity experiences and cultural understandings are reflected in proof points under core beliefs. Lewis commented that diversity should be recognized and celebrated in the district. Munn concurred and asked Board members to consider how to best reflect it within the strategic plan.

Drevon asked if it was appropriate to include a proposal that focused on bilingual and classroom instruction to better assist ESL students. Durán noted that the district currently utilizes the sheltered model. She suggested that the Board consider having a broader conversation around bilingual instruction.

Lewis asked if there were plans to implement a Futures Center at an additional location as indicated in core belief statement, "Community partnerships provide vital resources and opportunities to students and families." Munn shared that more planning conversations would be needed prior to establishment of an additional center. Lewis requested that language be revised to better clarify implementation of an additional Futures Center.

Lewis asked if a policy was needed to require every school accountability committee to identify a representative to serve on the District Advisory Accountability Committee (DAAC) as part of core belief statement, "Families are our partners in education."

Lewis would like to see the development of a "career ladder" program as indicated under core belief statement, "Student achievement and growth are driven by a highly-effective and respected staff working as a team," expanded to include all district staff. She emphasized that classified staff have expressed an interest in career and professional development opportunities for some time.

Jorgensen asked about strategies to improve supports around school accountability committees. He would also like the Board to consider having a broader conversation related to bilingual instruction.

Drevon is the Board's representative for DAAC and noted that community directors will be identifying parents to serve on DAAC. She added that DAAC is focusing on professional learning opportunities for school accountability

committee members. Lewis has served on a number of school accountability committees and noted varying levels of expertise related to school and district budgets. She discussed the importance of ensuring that professional development opportunities are unified across the district and is supportive of inviting school accountability committee members to a professional learning presentation with Dr. Pedro Noguera.

Munn briefly reviewed draft metrics within the strategic plan and expressed that work around Goal 2, "A set of skills to implement his or her plan," highlights student skills and competencies. He indicated that current systems do not allow all students to access plans and goals, but is having conversations with representatives of companies, including Naviance, that have connective platforms and drives so all students can access plans and goals.

Shepherd thanked staff for providing information to the Board, emphasizing that this reflects a significant amount of time and work.

*A draft of the APS 2020: Shaping the Future and APS 2020 Strategic Plan are appended to the March 17 minutes.*

### **III. CONSENT AGENDA**

Wildman moved and Jorgensen seconded to approve the following items on the consent agenda as presented:

- Regulation LBD-R, Charter Schools
- 2015-16 Construction Calendar – Edna and John W. Mosley P-8
- Personnel

Roll Call: Drevon, Jorgensen, Lewis, Shepherd, Wildman, Yamrick #8343

Board Director Eric Nelson was not present for the consent agenda vote.

Approved on a vote of 6-0

### **IV. BOARD WORK**

#### **Ends Conversation**

Standing Committee Report

Lewis shared that Edna Mosley will be inducted into the Aurora Colorado Women's Hall of Fame on Saturday, 10 a.m., at Community College of Aurora. She, along with Carrie Clark, principal of Edna and John W. Mosley P-8, and a number of the staff, plan to attend.

Lewis announced that Moorhead Recreation Center is being renovated and is expected to be closed for an entire year. She noted that the City of Aurora has engaged in conversations with Fletcher staff related to facility use during the renovation.

Shepherd briefly highlighted the APS Education Foundation retreat and noted that the foundation is making progress to secure funding to operate two Future Centers for the next two years. She added that Hinkley staff is also in the process of interviewing for a director for the Future Centers.

Shepherd announced that APS Education Foundation Executive Director Paul Lhevine will be pursuing other employment opportunities. She shared that the foundation board will be starting the process for a new executive director and requested that Board members email any ideas, suggestion, or qualifications they would like reflected in the position.

Policy Perception Checklist

Did the Board receive information at tonight's meeting that requires a policy change?

The Board did not receive information that required a policy change.

Did the Board receive information at tonight's meeting that requires additional information or monitoring?

Additional information, data and questions will be provided to the Board.

*Board Self-Monitoring*

Wildman shared that good conversations occurred at tonight's meeting and everyone participated.

**V. CONCLUDING ITEMS**

***Next meeting date***

The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on April 7, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the Dr. Edward and Mrs. Patricia Lord Boardroom of Educational Services Center 4.

***Adjournment***

The regular meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

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**President**

**ATTEST** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Secretary**