

A Community Value Statement in Support of Public Schools

Presented to Seattle Council PTSA

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Heidi Bennett, SCPTSA Leg. VP,
Ramona Hattendorf, SCPTSA President

every child. one voice.

1/21/2010

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Purpose



- In light of the upcoming contract negotiations and policy changes, representatives from various education and child advocacy groups worked together to identify principles that reflect our ideals.
- Our goal: Every public school student graduates ready for life; that means SPS has to work for all children.
- There is an opening for dialog with SPS and the unions prior to contract negotiation and that time is now.

The Process



- The “Community Values” and supporting recommendations are being presented to each group for their approval and /or endorsement.
- Organizations will either support/endorse as written, amendments can be added
- These “Community Values” will be presented on February 2, 2010 to:
 - SPS: Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer and Human Resources/Contract Negotiator
 - Seattle Education Association (teacher’s union)
 - PASS, Principals Association
 - School board members
- Strategies for continuing the dialog are in development

Who participated



- Child and Education Advocacy groups include:
 - Seattle Council PTSA
 - League of Education Voters
 - Communities & Parents for Public Schools (CPPS)
 - Successful Schools in Action
 - League of Women Voters
 - Alliance for Education
 - Stand for Children
 - Save Seattle Schools blog
 - Vietnamese Friendship Association
 - Compana Quetzal
 - Social Venture Partners
 - College Success Foundation
 - Plus engaged individuals

The Current Environment



- The US is poised for change as standings are day lighted. New directions and voices are coming from the federal level, state level and professional associations.
 - Race to the Top federal grant program rolls out
 - WA State ESHB 2261 “Basic Ed” bill
 - National Council on Quality Teachers analysis on SPS
 - National teacher unions speak up
 - More than 900 Washingtonians rallied on the steps of the Capitol in Olympia for PTA Focus Day on 1/18/2010
 - New policies and budget shortfalls at Seattle Public Schools.

Race to the Top (RTTT)



- RTTT is a federal grant program that can deliver \$150-250 million to WA State.
 - Phase 1 State applications – done, WA did not submit
 - Phase II State applications are due June 1, WA considering
 - Possible Phase III to include School Districts, Seattle ??
- RTTT is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and focuses on 4 priority areas:
 - Standards & Assessments
 - Teacher/Leader quality
 - Data collection & use
 - Struggling Schools

Race to the Top (RTTT)



- **RTTT is being addressed by the State Board of Education, the governor and legislators because the reforms promoted will:**
 - Close the achievement gap
 - Allow students to compete in the global economy
 - Create and retain great teachers and leaders
 - Improve math and science achievement
- **RTTT incentivizes education change and fits with ESHB 2261 – the basic ed bill that will create a new school funding system.**
- **Challenges for WA State & SPS include:**
 - No state authority to take over low-performing schools
 - Our current intervention system is voluntary
 - Not enough students for STEM careers
 - Cleveland helps address this need for Seattle
 - No charter schools (a very small percent of qualifying points)
 - Vague evaluation system for teachers and principals; no defined criteria

Source: Race to the Top, Senate Education Committee 1-18-2010

RTTT Teacher Survey



- A collaborative survey (11/09) was done among teachers across WA by a consortium of Education Advocate Non-Profits -- League of Ed Voters, Stand for Children and Partnership for Learning.
 - 62% supported (strongly or somewhat) adopting international benchmarked standards and assessments
 - 66% supported (strongly or somewhat) to raise the HS graduation to 24 credits so that all HS graduates have the option to applying to college
 - 64% supported (strongly or somewhat) building data systems that measure growth in students success and inform teachers and principals on how they can improve their practices
 - 57% support (strongly or somewhat) the priority of recruiting, developing, retaining and rewarding effective teachers and leaders
 - 62% supported (strongly or somewhat) that a fair way is needed to differentiate teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance
 - 55% supported (strongly or somewhat) and 33% disagreed , that teacher effectiveness should be the predominant factor when making staffing decisions (placement, transfers and RIFs) meaning that seniority and other factors are secondary considerations

Source: "What Washington teachers Think About the Race to the Top Issues, by Davis, Hibbits & Midghall, inc. 12/09

Promise of WA State ESHB 2261



- **“Redefines basic education** as the opportunity for students to graduate with a meaningful high school diploma. Prepared for college and/or a family-wage job”.
 - Passed into law April 2009, to take effect by 2018.
 - Create a **“prototypical school”** funding model
 - **Core 24** – This aligns high school requirements with college and employer requirements.
 - **Increased instructional hours** -- Six periods in middle and high school.
 - **All-day kindergarten** rolled-out and reduced class size K-3
 - **Enhanced allocations** for low income, bilingual and highly capable.
 - **Implementation by council, boards and groups**
 - **Quality Educational Council (QEC), Funding Formulas Working Group** (Directed by OFM with OSPI), **State Board of Education (SBE), Professional Education Standards Board (PESB), OSPI** to establish a **K-12 Data Governance Group**

National Council on Teacher Quality



- In the fall of 2009, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) analyzed and reviewed the Seattle Public Schools’ teacher policies.
 - They reviewed the current SEA labor contracts and policies linked most directly to teacher effectiveness
 - The report was funded by a grant from the Alliance for Education with additional funding by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
 - The 70+ page report was distributed to all 3,000 SPS teachers and Principals.

National Council on Teacher Quality



- The report, “**Human Capital in Seattle Public Schools -- Rethinking How to Attract, Develop and Retain Effective Teachers**” examined four areas of teacher governance in which better policies – state and local – could improve teacher quality:
 - **Compensation:** Structure of Seattle’s salary schedule
 - **Transfer & Assignment:** The process of hiring and assigning teachers and the teacher transfers
 - **Work Day:** An examination of the work day and year, including leave policies and their impact on student instructional time
 - **Developing Effective Teachers and Exiting Ineffective Teachers:** The quality of support provided to new teachers, rigor and quality of the feedback in the evaluation process, tenure and efforts to dismiss a substandard teacher
 - A complete copy of the Seattle Report can be found at www.alliance4ed.org

Current News - AFT



- The President (Ms. Weingarten) of the American Federation of Teachers speaks up
 - AFT is an affiliation of the AFL-CIO, represents 3000 local affiliates nationwide, 43 state affiliates and 1.4 million members
 - The AFT “pledges to work with districts to streamline the often-cumbersome procedures for dismissing teachers who fail to improve their performance after receiving help and support.”
 - Speech reiterates “that student test scores should be part of the evaluation system, coupled with multiple measures of teacher performance.”
 - “Union membership was polled and 4-to-1 ratio said their union should put a higher priority on promoting good teaching rather than defending the job rights of teachers facing disciplinary action.”

Source: E-Week, online 1/12/2010
[“AFT Chief Vows to revise Teacher Dismissal Process”](#)

Current News - NEA



- The National Education Association speaks up on performance pay
 - National Education Association (NEA) is the largest labor union in the US with 3.2 million members and an affiliation in every US state
 - From the NEA website, they quote:
 - “Education Secretary Arne Duncan says performance pay for teachers is his department’s “highest priority.” The Obama Administration created the \$4.3 billion Race to the Top fund to encourage states to implement performance pay systems and other changes”
 - “NEA supports systems that create career paths and include teachers as partners in any compensation reform effort. “
 - “It is crucial that all pay plans or policies be negotiated with teachers in collective bargaining, or developed collaboratively with the Association where there is no bargaining,” says Bill Raabe, NEA’s Director of Collective Bargaining and Member Benefits

Source: [NEA website](#), “Pay Based on Test Scores” by John Rosales

PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships



- Welcome all families into the school community as active participants.
- Communicate effectively – that is regular, two-way, meaningful engagement – around student learning.
- Support student success through continuous collaboration.
- Speak up for every child.
- Share power. Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children.
- Collaborate with the greater community to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

Current SPS Outcomes



- SPS is implementing their “Strategic Plan” to improve student outcomes and while some progress is being made, not all schools or student populations are comparable or reaching goals set forth:
 - Free/Reduced lunch students proficient on state reading: 57%, 2013 goal 83%
 - 3rd graders proficient on state reading: 74%, 2013 goal 80%
 - 4th graders proficient on state math tests: 60%, 2013 goal 80%
 - First-time 9th graders earning sufficient credits: 85%, 2013 goal 90%
 - Repeat 9th graders earning sufficient credits: 47%, 2013 goal 75%
 - High school students taking an AP exam: 16%, 2013 goal 40%
 - SPS high school graduates meeting 4-year college requirements: 17%, 2013 goal 40%
 - Only about 50% of HS graduates are able to enter community colleges or technical schools without needing remedial classes

Sources: SPS Strategic Plan and District Scorecard update

Sources: [SPS District Scorecard](#) & [SPS Strategic Plan page 11](#)

Current SPS Policies & Events



We’re going through tremendous change this school year, and many are concerned about community participation.

- New Student Assignment Plan Issues
 - Siblings, transportation, school quality, access to programs and more
- Budget shortfall and staff reductions – college counselors, etc. Need to cut tens of millions.
- Curriculum Alignment
- Textbook Adoption
- Principal Re-assignments, and more

Now is the time for Seattle PTAs & PTSAs to rally and support these Community Values. Community needs to be part of the process, and SPS policy and practices need to reflect the public’s priorities and address student need.

Community Value Statement



We believe:

All schools must be quality schools and the district should ensure:

- **Every school is led by a principal who is an effective instructional leader and manager**
- **Every classroom is led by an effective teacher**
- **Every student is provided equitable access to core academics, enrichment opportunities and services as needed**
- **Every family is given the opportunity to work in collaboration with educators**

In support of these values, we propose the following and request an ongoing dialogue.

Community Value Statement



All schools must be quality schools and the district should ensure:

- **Every school is led by a principal who is an effective instructional leader and manager**
- **Every classroom is led by an effective teacher**
- Our recommendations:
 - Define principal and teacher effectiveness using clear criteria and benchmarks.
 - Evaluate principals and teachers using multiple measures that include student performance.
 - Identify ineffective principals and teachers. If benchmarks are not met after appropriate support, develop a timely exit plan.
 - Consider teacher effectiveness and cohesiveness of school teams, in addition to seniority, when hiring or reducing staff

Community Value Statement



All schools must be quality schools and the district should ensure:

- **Every student is provided equitable access to core academics, enrichment opportunities and services as needed**
- Our recommendations:
 - Ensure appropriate programs are available to meet the needs of all students.
 - Ensure all students receive the state's requirements for instructional time.
 - Ensure all students have access to curriculum and supplemental online materials.

Community Value Statement



All schools must be quality schools and the district should ensure:

- **Every family is given the opportunity to work in collaboration with educators**
- Our recommendations:
 - Define district-wide parameters for building leadership teams, design teams and interview teams, ensuring that parents and community members have a voice and representative vote.
 - Document and respond to family and student concerns.
 - Require all teachers to use the Source to post grades and assignments in a timely manner so that families can monitor student status.



Next Steps

- Discussion
- Vote
- Continue the dialog with SPS
- Report back to local units

Addendum: 1/22/10

Seattle Council endorsed the Community Value Statements and recommendations on our 1/21/10 member vote.