

**LINN-MAR COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RETREAT AGENDA
LRC BOARD ROOM
July 7, 2014 AT 5:00 P.M.**

Present: Barry Buchholz
Rene Gadelha
Tim Isenberg
Todd Hutcheson
Tina Patterson
Elizabeth Wilson
Katie Mulholland
Angie Morrison
Gayla Burgess
Joe Crozier

Absent: Ann Stark

CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

The Linn-Mar Community School District Board of Directors Board-Superintendent Retreat was called to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Learning Resource Center by President Barry Buchholz. Roll was taken by Morrison and it was determined that a quorum was present for the meeting.

REVISION AND/OR ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Motion 001-07-07

Motion by Patterson that the Board adopt the Board-Superintendent Retreat agenda as presented. Second by Hutcheson. Voice vote. Motion unanimously approved.

BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RETREAT:

Joe Crozier, Grant Wood AEA Chief Administrator, shared thanks to the Board for participating in the self-evaluation process and led the discussion on Board self-evaluation and goals for the future. *Handout presented of tentative agenda of topics for the evening; refer below:*

5:00-5:15 PM – Overview of the Work Session

- Hopes for tonight’s work session. What do you want to leave the meeting with?
- Areas of focus; strengths, areas to improve, high functioning team, effective boards.

5:15-5:35 PM – Strength of the Board (Review of *Eight Traits of Effective Boards* rating/priority)

5:35-5:55 PM – Areas to Improve (Review of *Eight Traits of Effective Boards* rating/priority)

5:55-6:15 PM – Effective Boards (PowerPoint)

6:15-6:30 PM – Next Steps: what to focus on in the future and time for additional work

WORK SESSION:

Hopes/Dreams to Leave With Tonight:

- Buchholz: The Board has grown tremendously; but may have four vacancies in the future. This evaluation process can help determine what strengths are to help in the transition.
- Patterson: Determine if Board members are on the same path.
- Gadelha: Better understanding of collective and individual goals.
- Wilson: Understanding of where Board is headed in regard to the future.
- Isenberg: How Board can maximize strengths and minimize weaknesses.
- Hutcheson: All of the above. Board only has one perspective, which is how they have worked together so far. Can we develop or learn to look from a different perspective?

Question: Wilson asked if meeting was an open session. Crozier clarified that was correct.

Question: Gadelha asked if anyone had seen the completed Board self-evaluation surveys. Crozier clarified that no one had seen the results except for himself.

Crozier shared that the Board completed the following self-evaluation surveys prior to the meeting:

1. *Eight Traits of Effective School Boards* (handout shared with Board members). This survey asked questions to help determine celebrations, missing elements, and danger signs that might be overlooked in improving the Board.
2. *Decision Making Relationships/Teamwork* (handout shared with Board members with note to pay special attention to last two pages). This survey asked questions to help determine challenges, what to do differently, and two areas to focus on for improvement.

Areas of Focus:

Strengths: The Board split up into two groups to look over the results of the *Eight Traits of Effective School Boards* to determine Board strengths and then came back together to discuss.

- Group 1: Gadelha, Patterson, Wilson (Mulholland was recorder)
 - Focus...All children can learn.
 - District Assets: staff, facilities, finances, programs, community, etc.
 - Board commitment: members are fully committed and present in their roles.
 - Board collaboration and respect even through difficult times/discussions. Open communication is the key.
 - Commitment to improving ourselves as a group and individually.
- Group 2: Buchholz, Hutcheson, Isenberg (Morrison was recorder)
 - Decisions are based on what is best for entire district.
 - High expectations that increase each year. Don't become satisfied; strive to always improve.
 - Focused today on achievement of long-term plans/goals.

Areas to Improve: The Board split up into two groups to look over the results of the *Eight Traits of Effective School Boards* to determine areas to improve. And then came back together to discuss.

- Group 1: Isenberg, Gadelha, Buchholz (Mulholland was recorder)
 - Deeper communication and reporting by Board members on committees.
 - Collaboration with other entities...city, community, parent groups, etc.
- Group 2: Patterson, Hutcheson, Wilson (Hutcheson was recorder)
 - External communication with outside entities
 - Conversion of data into useful information
 - Creativity/analysis – higher level orders of data
 - Gathering meaningful data for a purpose; not just to gather data
 - Clarification of roles and responsibilities
 - Two levels of the Board
 - Disconnect with executive level and other board members
 - Solidifying 5-10 year vision/goals for education plan
 - Future of education/learning, roadmap, directions...bring it all together
 - Uncertain growth factors – building/construction, student growth, etc.
 - The next superintendent

Effective Boards: 20-minute PowerPoint presentation. Crozier decided to share this electronically with Board because tonight's discussion was more important use of time.

Next Steps

The Board determined to focus on the following three areas and will add additional Board-Superintendent Retreat Work Sessions to their schedule to further the discussion; which will continue to be led by Crozier.

1. Communication and collaboration with external entities/groups
2. Clarification of Board roles and responsibilities
3. Solidifying 5-10 year vision for education plan

Mulholland, Buchholz, and Patterson will come up with a list of suggested dates for additional Board-Superintendent Retreat Work Sessions and share with everyone to determine the best dates for the group to meet. Wilson asked if additional work sessions could begin at 6:00 PM instead of 5:00 PM.

Final Thoughts

Crozier: Focus on the *work* of the Board; not on the *teaming of the Board*; which can happen when a group of people have worked together for a long time. Be sure to remember this point when new Board members join who have not been a part of the team. Disagree around the table; but when you walk out of the room be a team focusing on the same thing.

Hutcheson suggested Board work on tactical communication and strategic communication. Share our vision with the community and why decisions are made.

Crozier shared a quote from Author Patrick Lencioni, "Create clarity, communicate clarity, and reinforce clarity." Tell the same story repeatedly to clarify the same thing the same way so only one conversation is taking place. Mulholland shared that she would obtain a copy of Lencioni's book for the Board to study.

Individual Check-In

- Wilson: Wants to know what the process will be to further discussion.
- Gadelha: Have a couple meetings to solidify 5-10 year vision/goals for education plan. Likes the time to discuss in person to deeper her understanding as a new Board member.
- Buchholz: Being cohesive as a Board is important and this discussion builds that cohesiveness. It is good to see the Board is on the same page on improving as a Board and opportunities for growth. Open communication is the key.
- Hutcheson: The process will be time consuming. Suggested forming subcommittees that could report out on the process.
- Patterson: Suggested expanding the solidification of the 5-10 year vision/goals for education plan to the administrative team.
- Mulholland: Shared there is a 5-10 year education plan and communication plan available to start discussion from.
- Isenberg: High School remodel is one of two tactical processes/communications in place for the 2014-15 year. The strategical processes/communications are the three areas of focus determined tonight. Suggested prioritizing the three areas of focus determined tonight and work on them one at a time so as not to spread the focus/efforts too thin.
- Gadelha: Suggested focusing on solidifying the 5-10 year education plan first since there is a baseline document and communication plan already in place to build from.
- Hutcheson: Clarified that he struggles with not addressing the communication piece as well.
- Patterson: Clarified the Communication Committee needs to meet again and then present the steps of instituting the communication plan to the Board for final decision.
- Mulholland: Clarified that the Board newsletter will go out quarterly beginning in August.
- Buchholz: Thanked the Board for their input and discussion and Joe Crozier for his facilitation.

Adjournment

Motion 002-07-07

Motion by Patterson that the Board adjourn the Board/Superintendent Retreat at 6:45 p.m. Second by Gadelha. Voice vote. Motion unanimously approved.

Board President

Board Secretary

*Respectfully submitted by:
Gayla Burgess
Admin Assistant to the Superintendent
7/7/2014*