

**VIBRANT SCHOOLS TACOMA COALITION  
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING ONE PAGE BRIEF FOR MARCH 10, 2016:**

**TOPICS AND ISSUES**

**1. An Extraordinary Superintendent.**

Vibrant Schools joins in celebration with our school board over the recent commendation honoring Superintendent Carla Santorno through a resolution passed by the Washington State House of Representatives.

**2. Vibrant School Recognitions.**

Vibrant Schools recognizes Peace Community Center and Bill Hanawalt for being honored by the White House as program of excellence for summer learning and to Jason Lee Middle School as a designated demonstration site for AVID.

**3. Service Provider and Evaluator?**

The University of Washington at Tacoma (UWT) has partnered with the Tacoma School District to support the Whole Child Initiative. The program will now be evaluated by the UWT as well. School Board Director Debbie Winskill posed a question about whether an institution can provide a service and also independently evaluate the success of that program. Vibrant Schools believes this is a legitimate question that deserves an answer.

**4. Topics for Future Board Study Sessions.**

Vibrant Schools believes that School Board Study Session are important and place the following recommendations as priorities:

- Tacoma's English Language Learner (ELL) Program
- A Look at Tacoma's Equity and Achievement Data
- Community Outreach Efforts and Ways to Measure Success

**5. Transparency**

Vibrant Schools would appreciate knowing what each School Board Director chose as a priority for upcoming study sessions.

**VIBRANT SCHOOLS CALL FOR ACTION:** None at This Time

## **SCHOOL BOARD REPORT MARCH 10, 2016**

School Board Directors Karen Vialle, Catherine Ushka, Andrea Cobb and Debbie Wiinskill were present. School Board Director Scott Heinze was excused. Student Representatives Bernante and Olson were present.

### **Recognition of Superintendent Santorno led by School Board President Karen Vialle.**

#### **Highlights**

- The Tacoma School Board received a resolution from the Washington State House of Representatives commending Superintendent Carla Santorno for her work.
- School Board Director Vialle read the resolution and presented it to the Superintendent which came as a surprise to the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent extended her gratitude to the whole team.

#### **Other Community Recognitions Vibrant Schools Would Like to Add**

Vibrant Schools would like to also recognize Bill Hanawalt and the Peace Community Center. Mr. Hanawalt and the Peace Center received an Award from the White House for the Summer Learning Program. Mr. Hanawalt recently travelled to Washington, D.C. receive the award. Also, Jason Lee Middle School was recently designated as a school-side demonstration site for AVID.

#### **Follow Up:**

The Foundation for Tacoma Schools did recognize Bill Hanawalt and Peace Community Center for its national honor at its annual report out event several weeks after this board meeting.

#### **No public testimony.**

#### **Superintendent's report.**

Construction update (brief) on McCarver, Stewart and Wainwright. Rob Sawatsky, Director of Planning and Construction did the report. Projects are on time and on budget. Both Stewart and McCarver are historic buildings. The Board asked for tours of all three.

## **An Update From March 22:**

Wainwright is not on schedule and will not open in the fall as planned, due to wet weather and shortage of subcontractors (TNT article).

## **Financial Report. Rosalind Medina, CFO**

- The District is saving more money than it had anticipated (!) and is doing an internal process to figure out how to spend some of it.
- Expenditures are \$13.9 million under budget thus far this year.
- The internal process will identify one-time things that can be done and not create a higher level of spending in future years.

## **A Board Request and Transparency**

The Board asked that the spending decisions come to the Board, so that the Board can have a say in where these funds are invested. Ms. Medina promised to bring a budget presentation to the Board. Vibrant Schools would like to see these allocations under consideration be available for public review.

## **Business matters.**

- The Safety grant (which will pay for a safety assessment) will likely end up identifying more expenditures that need to be made.

## **A Water Bottle-Neck?**

The Healthy Kids grant generated a conversation about clean water bottles. School Board Director Andrea Cobb related her experiences with three boys around the perpetual efforts needed to keep water bottles clean and sanitary.

## **Other business.**

The agreement between TPS and UWT was expanded so that UWT can evaluate the effectiveness of the City of Tacoma grant to the District.

## **A Good Question from School Board Director Debbie Winskill**

Debbie asked questions about whether this meant that UWT is essentially evaluating its own work. She received a general answer that did not directly address concerns about possible conflicts of interest when an institution is providing a service and also involved in evaluating the effectiveness of that-service. This still needs to be addressed.

## Let's Go to the Video: Can a service provider also be evaluator?

Here is the response to School Board Director's Inquiry:

[https://youtu.be/8EB-JU3-Y\\_U?t=2155](https://youtu.be/8EB-JU3-Y_U?t=2155) Video at time to start video (35:55)

Embed code:

```
<iframe width="854" height="480" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/8EB-JU3-Y_U"
frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>
```

## No Report to the Board.

### An Important Invitation to Choose Priorities:

**Topics for future Study Sessions.** Topics that have been suggested include:

- Energy conservation
- School start times (high school) (student reps supported this)
- Community outreach opportunities  
(*Vibrant Schools would like to look at how we evaluate success in partnerships*)
- Charter schools update
- Innovation—process, update, future
- Middle school boundaries (March 17 and again in the fall)
- **ELL program (A Vibrant Schools Priority)**
- Discipline (presented by principals...)
- **Equity and Achievement (A Vibrant Schools Priority)**
- Early literacy—elementary literacy program

### Other Board Requests

- School Board Director Andrea Cobb asked that family and parent engagement be added, and tied in with the other topics as well. School Board Director Vialle said that this is accomplished through public comment. Director Cobb reiterated her request.
- School Board Director Winskill asked for a report on test scores, grade level reading, AP passage rates, SAT and PSAT scores, etc.

The student reps also supported the study session on AP pass rates and brought up College in the High Schools (CIHS) as a fee based program that may not be accessible to every student.

## **Transparency**

Rather than discuss priorities publicly, the Board will send their top choices to staff who will compile them. Vibrant Schools would like to see what each Board member chooses as their priority and under this process, each Board member's choices will remain anonymous. Vibrant Schools would appreciate knowing what each board member considered to be their top study session priorities.

- Deputy Superintendent Josh Garcia noted that the District had been recognized by the College Board for providing access to SAT, AP. He noted that "this is not a self-nomination" but rather an honor identified by the College Board on their own.

**Future Meetings:** March 17 Study Session on Assessments and Middle School Boundaries, March 24 Regular meeting.

**Vibrant Schools Call for Action:** None at This Time