NOTES

COMMITTEE MEETING CALLED TO ORDER 10:02 a.m.

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<tr>
<th>Committee Member</th>
<th>Arrival</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Santos</td>
<td>10:02 AM</td>
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<td>Sue Deigaard</td>
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<td>Sergio Lira</td>
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<td>Other Trustees</td>
<td>10:10 AM</td>
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<td>Anne Sung</td>
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Staff: Silvia Trinh, Chief of Staff
Elneita Hutchins Taylor, General Counsel
Vermeille Jones, Director, Board Services
Noelia Longoria, Interim Chief Academic Officer
Carla Stevens, Assistant Superintendent Research & Accountability
Miles Leblanc, Assistant General Counsel

Other: Lisa McBride, Attorney, Thompson & Horton
Dr. Doris Delaney, TEA Conservator

DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR April 25, 2019

Review Notes from Previous Meetings
The minutes of the April 4, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting and April 25, 2019 Policy Committee Meeting were approved.

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• BOARD POLICY AE(LOCAL), EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Ms. Santos: Trustee Deigaard, I want to get your thoughts on moving Constraint #3 into Goal #4. I want to make sure we adhere to governance, but I still want to make sure that we do what’s best for students.

Ms. Deigaard: I would like to take five minutes to talk about the charter policy first.

[Trustee Santos agreed.]

Ms. Santos: [Addressing Ms. Stevens] Can the collaborative could be used instead of the universal screener?

Ms. Stevens: No, since I don’t have access to that. It is an optional formative assessment that campuses can select, and it is not district-wide mandated. The universal screener is mandated district-wide.

Ms. Deigaard: I am not inclined to, and I am happy to continue working on this, but my preference would be for us to act with a governance coach to do this work. I want to have data first to identify what the problem is, so we can come up with the right goal as a solution. For example, is there an achievement gap between non-economically disadvantaged African American students and non-economically disadvantaged Caucasian students? What is the gap between our economically disadvantaged African American students and our economically disadvantaged Caucasian students? What would be a better measure to address?

Ms. Stevens: (Provided handout)

Ms. Deigaard: What would be a better measure for closing the achievement gap growths or deficiencies?

Ms. Stevens: What I have given you addresses some of those concerns. Just to give you an idea to help inform your conversation, the first set of tables, the top box, is looking at the gaps that we have been looking at, but it includes both approaches and meets. There are two years of data, 2016-17 and 2017-18. The first row compares economically disadvantaged students. The data you see under the “Not” part would be the “not” economically disadvantaged groups. When we have the race and ethnicities, the “not” group would be “white.” I have also added male and females.
The “not” group would be the females. [She breaks down the gap for each group.] We also included the average, so you could see how it looked if we were to average the data. [She explained more details and indicated that the average of the gap closure was 0.3, then she explained that the average didn’t accurately depict the data that was presented and doesn’t tell the full story. She indicated the gap between male and female groups, with females outperforming the males.]

So, the average here is the gap closing but really, we had a gap widening. That closing of the gaps of 3/10 doesn’t really tell you the full story. We have a gap between male and female performance with females outperforming the males. The more you put in and the more you average, the less you can see where the problem areas lie.

Ms. Sung: But you can report on the problem areas, right?

Ms. Stevens: You all can tell me what it is you want me to do.

Ms. Sung: The other thing is that because the average closure is 0.3, it doesn’t meet the goal of the 1-point closure.

Ms. Stevens: Trustee Deigaard, you wanted to look at the gap with holding constant for economically disadvantaged student groups across the spectrum. It is holding constant for poverty across the groups.

Ms. Deigaard: Except for EL’s, because this is the group that is growing.

Ms. Stevens: We will create the data with whatever you want to make your goal.

Ms. Santos: Ms. Stevens, I am going to ask your recommendation in shifting Constraint #3 to Goal #4. What is the best tool we can use to measure our students, so we don’t bombard our students with testing?

Ms. Stevens: I don’t think that is really around the question for this goal because I will still have to use data that will probably come from the screener. We are also using the screener in Goals 1 and 3 already. The screener is the metric that we use multiple times a year that gives us reading and math data.

Dr. Lira: Are schools using OnTrack?
Ms. Stevens: The screener is part of OnTrack. OnTrack is the platform where all the formative assessment data goes.

Dr. Lira: What about district-created assessments? Which one do you think is more aligned with a criterion-referenced based STAAR test?

Ms. Stevens: The released STAAR exam. Right now, though we are only using the released STAAR for data around the writing goal.

Ms. Stevens: STAAR is best and the DLA is second best. The reason we use the screener is because of the board monitoring calendar, and the information you all wanted was at the beginning of the year. The DLA doesn’t happen until the middle of the fall semester, and I get the data a little later, so I wouldn’t have any data for the board at the beginning of the year if we used the DLA. We could change the goal progress measures to be on DLA and released STAAR but that would change the board monitoring calendar.

Ms. Deigaard: Is the district wide screener predictive of performance on STAAR?

Ms. Stevens: We provided this data to the board but there was a 0.6 or 0.7 correlation. They aren’t a perfect correlation, but they do align. You would rather have a predictor that under-predicts.

Ms. Deigaard: We don’t control the STAAR and if that test goes away, then we don’t have continuity of longitudinal data to report, correct?

Ms. Stevens: The current legislative session isn’t changing the TEKS but there is a bill being heard that would change the administration of STAAR. We don’t think this would impact the board’s goal.

Ms. Deigaard: Is there another way to control the gap with information that we own?

Dr. Lira: I think you can do a predictor and I agree the STAAR is the best predictor. I like the Olympics because I like to see the end results to see the winners. I would like to see other subjects in a very similar format (holding the data Ms. Stevens presented).
Ms. Stevens: So that will change your goal. Right now, your goals are on reading and math, so if you want to do other content areas...

Dr. Lira: What I am getting at Ms. Stevens, is that we can do great here (referencing data sheet handed out by Ms. Stevens) but if the runner stumbles at the last final lap, I want to know what is going on at the final lap. I know it changes these goals here, but I wasn't part of the beginning when these goals were revised. I would have different goals. I would like to see who is stumbling, who is crossing the finish line, and who is well-prepared, for me, Trustee Lira.

Ms. Sung: [Mentioned a referral that showed the connection of the STAAR and the Renaissance.]

Ms. Deigaard: Why don't you just send it again?

Ms. Stevens: [Nodded her head in agreement]

Ms. Sung: When we are looking at just economically disadvantaged students and performance gaps by race, some of these groups have become pretty small compared with economically disadvantaged white students, that’s got to be a percent or something.

Ms. Stevens: I will have to get you the numbers. It is probably a low percentage in the district, but it is probably a large enough group of kids to actually do an analysis on, but it doesn’t mean that it is representative of the district. The question is, is it the right group that you want to compare it against and based on the conversation that was had at the board table, I can add that; and, we have actually added it to the STAAR reports at Trustee Sung’s request.

We now have the gaps that are specifically for economically disadvantaged students that are included in the STAAR reports.

Ms. Sung: We are holding that sub-group as the standard for comparing, and if they have had a lot of growth between 2016–17 and current, the question that comes to mind is: Are economically disadvantaged white students concentrated in certain schools/certain areas in the district? Because that means that certain initiatives in the district can drive that behavior, and is that what we need when we are writing the goal?

Ms. Sung: When I am looking at this then, the meets gap is a little more of an ambitious gap to tackle for economically disadvantaged students, African American students, and Hispanic students.
So, paying attention to that is going to drive the district to be more focused in making sure those three sub-groups are growing and closing the gap. But for English Language Learners and students with disabilities, the gap is larger at the approaches level. Does it matter the size of the gap?

Ms. Trinh: Internally we have our own targets with masters and meets, and when we look at all the data, this is what we talk about with our area superintendents when we are analyzing the data.

Ms. Stevens: Our current accountability system is not just focused on passing, which is approaches. It is really trying to get us to the meets and masters.

Ms. Sung: The whole point of setting goals is to drive changes in behavior that touch students, so it matters, with the goals we set, to ensure effort and resources that the administration is bringing forward. I am curious that if we have a goal for the approaches gap versus a goal for the meets gap, how that would change the work for the administration.

Ms. Trinh: Here we just have approaches and meets on this goal, but we also have masters. Internally, we focus on making sure teachers are looking at the data to get a student that meets the previous year to masters for the current year.

Dr. Lira: Let me interject a point, it depends on the school you are at to focus on a starting point for where you want the students to go.

Ms. Sung: Just looking at the meets here, if we were to use the meets gap with the language I passed around at the table, it would show we are making progress amongst the sub-groups. It shows we are going backwards for students with disabilities and making progress (but not as much as we would like) for English Language Learners. Overall, we are not hitting the target of closing the average of the gaps with decreasing it by 1 point. When we look at the data at the end of the year for why we didn’t meet the target, we would then take it apart to show that there are sub-groups not making as much progress as we would like. I actually think that if we add the sentence back in about monitoring several groups, that this would be supportive of the proposed language.

Ms. Santos: The Iowa test wouldn’t satisfy the goal progress measure because it is still once a year, correct?

Ms. Stevens: That’s correct.
Ms. Santos: Monetarily, how much money are we spending on the universal screener vs. another test?

Ms. Stevens: One is a formative and one is a summative assessment. The Iowa happens once a year and we need a test that gives you data multiple times a year. It then allows you to progress monitor throughout the year.

Ms. Santos: That's great but I am going to voice my concerns based on my teaching experience. You don't have to answer this today, but if there was anything else we could possibly do with goal progress measures that didn't cost a lot of money, didn’t take a lot of time, and that would provide us with the information we need—could it be something that could meet those standards?

Ms. Stevens: Based on Lone Star Governance, it is required that your progress measure be predictive of your goal, which is why we did the analysis of the Renaissance screener and the DLA. A short three question exam is not going to be predictive of the performance on STAAR.

Ms. Santos: Is there anything else that would drive governance, be cost efficient, and allow students to spend less time on testing?

Ms. Stevens: I can look at if we did it on the DLA and released STAAR, but we would have to do a new monitoring calendar and new progress measures. At the time this was written, the board wanted information sooner.

Ms. Santos: I want to apologize because I do not want to trivialize your work or my colleague’s work, but from the point of view of a teacher, this is important. I wouldn’t be doing my job if I didn’t give this point of view.

Ms. Deigaard: Digging around, our EL kids, some are taking test in Spanish and some in English. There could be a gap there and we don’t know that. I would like to see that data.

Ms. Stevens: We have non-EL’s that take tests in Spanish under the Dual-Language track, and we have that data.

Ms. Deigaard: What happens with Arabic and Mandarin?
Ms. Stevens: They all take the tests in English.

Ms. Deigaard: When we look at where the gaps are, there is a gap between our different groups within the three racial groups, but tell me if I am interpreting this incorrectly, the gap is less a product of race than it is as being economically disadvantaged.

Ms. Stevens: Yes. But if you address the economically disadvantaged gap rather than the race gap, we can put in more resources to address it as poverty gap versus addressing it as a race/ethnicity gap. [Ms. Stevens broke down the data by race and economically disadvantaged students by showing the difference between African American and Caucasian students by race at approaches, it is a 28.4% gap. But the gap for economically disadvantaged African American and economically disadvantaged Caucasian students, the gap is 16.6%. So, it drops by at least 8 percentage points that attributed to students being economically disadvantaged. 16.6% gap is by race, and 8% gap is attributed to being economically disadvantaged. We can put in resources and can do things to address the poverty gap better than being able to address a race/ethnicity gap.]

Ms. Santos: I am going to respectfully push back because our special learning population, students with disabilities and English language learner population, have been pushed to the side for so long. This data shows us where we could have our money and resources going.

Ms. Deigaard: Clarified for Ms. Santos that she wasn’t leaving a group out but trying to get more information, so they could get their progress measures down to three since they currently have five. The root cause among race is an opportunity. I would be curious to see how non-economically disadvantaged African American students perform versus economically disadvantaged African American students, as well as the same for Caucasian students.

Ms. Deigaard: We are looking at two different things. Closing the performance gap, and the growth of students.

Ms. Stevens: You want the growth to be higher for students that data shows performs the lowest. The higher the group performs, the less steep their growth slope is going to be because there won’t be drastic gains to make if the group is performing high already.

Ms. Sung: The growth is implied by closing the gap.
Dr. Lira: Is it possible to add another chart so we can see non-economically disadvantaged students as well. I believe about 80% of our students are economically disadvantaged.

Ms. Stevens: Yes, I can add that to the data as that was Trustee Deigaard’s request as well.

Dr. Lira: The other piece, and I am just going to be transparent. These groups have consistently, for decades, been underperforming and we know that this is based on institutionalized racism with not providing equitable resources to these groups. It is a systemic problem that we can only address by ensuring these groups have the best resources to grow them.

Ms. Santos: I want to put in a request. Trustee Skillern-Jones made a request from the dais about comparing data across the groups such as comparing non-economically disadvantaged Hispanics to economically disadvantaged Hispanics, and this data across all groups.

Ms. Sung: That data is here on the chart though.

Ms. Stevens: Yes, the information is on the table, but I didn’t do a specific breakdown map of it.

Ms. Sung: The point about the five progress measures is important because we need to get it down to three progress measures. We need to look at the three that are most independent, economically disadvantaged students, English Language learners, and students with disabilities. Yet, it will be really important to monitor all five of these gaps addressing specific racial groups. Looking at the AA and Hispanic gap is not typically what we look at. Typically, the comparison has been to compare the minority student groups with the Caucasian student groups.

Ms. Stevens: Yes, we can do this differently, but standard practice has been to compare the minority student groups to the Caucasian students. We do not compare them to the Asian student groups even though the Asian students typically outperform the Caucasian student groups.

Ms. Sung: Hopefully the administration does the deep drive, as we have discussed, with breaking down all of the specific groups by nationality, where they are relative to their area in town, in Houston, etc. and the board is able to get those different analyses. Although we can’t, as a board, outline all of the fine specific details of different groups from the goals that we set, I hope it does draw for further analysis that the board will be provided with the data that comes from that.
Ms. Deigaard: Is there a place I can be directed to where I can access some of this information myself?

Ms. Stevens: There is standard reporting data that is broken down specifically by the groups we have identified. You all will get this data. We have not done a breakdown by male or female, but if that is something that we need to start expanding, we should.

Ms. Stevens: So, we are cutting it down to 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, and remove 4.4. and 4.5.

Ms. Sung: Yes, based upon the conversation today.

Ms. Santos: (Reading the language of the goal that Trustee Sung handed out at the dais during the last meeting) Language will be changed to “meets,” so “approaches” will be deleted.

Ms. Stevens: Did you want to add in male of female into the average or just leave in the five gaps that you currently have?

Ms. Santos: I want to leave it with the five gaps that we have.

Ms. Stevens: (Referred to the data on the chart)

Ms. Santos: Let’s add the male/female and if the consensus of the board is consistent, then we can move forward or amend as needed.

Ms. Deigaard: I am only okay with the three groups. First, I am going to reiterate what I said earlier. I am not okay with any of this until we are working with an LSG coach. We have to hold ourselves accountable to actually doing that.

Ms. Santos: I am only going to say that that will be a decision of the full board. We will do the six, and if we have any feedback or pushback at the dais, we will make the changes Ms. Stevens.

Ms. Stevens: There are two things that are going on. On the goal, from what I am hearing, we are adding on the male/female gap. So that will be six gaps that we would average together for the
goal part on STAAR. The progress measures that we would be doing, would be the three groups, economically disadvantaged, English language learners, and students with disabilities. We would have three progress measures on the universal screener, and an average of six gaps on the STAAR that we would then collapse for each one we would be measuring. But as I said before, when you average across groups, you take away all of the variance. [She believes Trustee Sung wanted to include a sentence where there was monitoring for all the groups, so we would have to provide the board with all of the data for it, but your goal target would be set on the average across groups].

I am hearing that this will be six groups to compare, and three progress measures on the universal screeners of economically disadvantaged, EL’s and special populations, an average of six gaps on the average that we would be measuring. But when you average across groups you are taking away the variance of all of those groups.

Ms. Deigaard: We could technically meet the goal even if the gap grows with our economically disadvantaged students.

Ms. Stevens: Yes

Ms. Deigaard: I am not okay with that.

Ms. Stevens: You could also not meet the goal with the gap closing.

Ms. Deigaard: The biggest gap or the majority of our economically disadvantaged students are African American and Hispanic, or “children of color,”

Ms. Santos: For time purposes, I am going to recommend the following: The recommendation of both Trustee Sung and I... Ms. Stevens when do we meet to discuss this again?

Ms. Trinh: This is on the agenda for Thursday’s meeting (May 9, 2019) as first reading.

Dr. Delaney: I have a question for the caveat at the end. It is really two goals based on the wording. We are adding an additional group.

Ms. Santos: No, it is five. We will leave it at five.
Ms. Stevens: She is saying it is two caveats. You have the goal to close the gap, and if you didn’t close the gap, then you didn’t meet it.

Ms. McBride: It is a goal and a constraint.

Ms. Santos: Let’s change this, as such, for first reading. I will consult with AJ and we will change it if more input is provided.

Ms. Stevens: I will draft this up to have this ready for tomorrow.

**Proposed Action Items for AE(LOCAL):**

- Board Policy AE(LOCAL) will move to first reading on May 9, 2019 for the portion regarding averaging the gaps.

**BOARD POLICY EL(LOCAL), CHARTER CAMPUS OR PROGRAM**

**Discussion:**

Ms. Deigaard: From what I am hearing from our colleagues and the board (at the board table) is that we want to have earlier notice to families, sometime in the fall. If we have this ready, it would be the first reading done in June and second reading done in August, which may not be feasible. If we don’t have it ready for the June meeting, then it would be first reading in August and second reading in September.

Ms. Santos: Let’s start with the pressing things. 1. The time to notify families and parents.

Ms. Deigaard: Yes. That way parents have time to access other choices and the administration has time to make changes as necessary.

Ms. Santos: Is your recommendation October 1\textsuperscript{st}?

Ms. Deigaard: Yes. What does the administration think of an October 1\textsuperscript{st} deadline date?
Ms. Trinh: Ms. Longoria is here as she has been working really hard to address some of the concerns. We agree that the earlier the better for notifying the families but there will be logistical issues.

Ms. Longoria: The issue with coming in earlier is that the audit reports are due in November, December, and January. January is when Dr. Barajas reviews the three audit reports. The earliest would be February when we could get his recommendation with solid information. It is hard to give a recommendation in October.

Ms. Santos: Since the district would have longstanding relationships with the charter schools, would the board be able to look at previous years or the last 3-5 years audit reports, so they can make an informed decision about this?

Ms. Deigaard: I understand that, but February doesn’t give the families enough time, and if we look at our charter policy about the partnership, there are a lot of things in there. What I highlighted last night were a lot of items where it really spells out the performance contract, evaluation, and the process for revocation. Most of the things in the partnership charter policy can be adapted into this.

Ms. Longoria: We did take all of your requests and recommendations into consideration, so we could make sure we were incorporating them, so they are reflected in the contract.

Ms. Deigaard: All of the things in ELA (LOCAL) is very accurately spelled out. February will not give us enough time to review from the board level.

Ms. Sung: I was reviewing the contracts and there was a lot of language about exceptions to nepotism rules that I didn’t understand. I see there is nothing in our local policy around that, and it is sort of a peculiarity around that in the contracts.

Ms. Hutchins-Taylor: I don’t know the historical context behind that, but it may have been that from the time that some of those charters came on board, they already had people in place, and in order for the board to vote to bring them in, that was language added. We can look back to see, since we have several years of charter contracts, to see when or why it was added if that is something that we want added. Is that something that we want to keep or not keep that?
Ms. Sung: I would be interested to understand the context behind that.

Ms. Deigaard: I want to present the timeline concern and request that a lot of the ELA language be added before I approve this because this is what governs how a contract is written. We can have the conversations around the concerns but that doesn’t mean much unless it is codified in policy.

Ms. Sung: I appreciate the edits done here but I agree with Trustee Deigaard.

Ms. Santos: So, the recommendation from the Policy Committee is to go back and add more ELA language into the EL(LOCAL) policy.

Ms. Hutchins-Taylor: Can you tell us exactly what ELA language you want added?

Ms. Deigaard: I think that this is something that the administration should be bringing to the board. My recommendation would be for the administration to look at the whole thing and look at the language that would be beneficial to incorporate into this, or like Trustee Sung stated, maybe even start with this. There are some things that are in EL (LOCAL) that should stay even if they are not in ELA (LOCAL) but the thing that jumped out at me was the language around the performance contracts. There is also a section on oversight and evaluation, probation, and revocation, notification, and closure protocol.

Ms. Sung: Pages 4-9 are the important pieces we want reviewed and added.

**Proposed Action Items for EL (LOCAL):**

- Administration will work on requested changes and bring it back to the next Policy Committee Meeting for review.

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Meeting Adjourned: 11:45 a.m.