

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION
OF THE SOUTH BEND EMPOWERMENT ZONE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
11/21/23**

MINUTES

- Meeting Time Start: 6:05pm
- Meeting Called to Order: Sam Centellas, Board President
- Meeting video is available on [Youtube](#)
- Meeting presentation is available on the Zone [website](#)

LOCATION

- SBCSC Boardroom

QUORUM

- Attendees:
 - Sam Centellas, Board President
 - Rosa Hiestand, Board Secretary
 - Ryan Matthys, Board Treasurer
 - Kareemah Fowler (virtual)
 - Sonya Watkins (virtual)
 - Duane Wilson
- Absent:
 - Jeff Rea
 - Stephanie Ball
 - Leslie Wesley
- Quorum Established (Y/N): Yes

SUMMARY

The board meeting recognized students and teachers of the month at Wilson Elementary, and celebrated a group of Harrison Elementary students who presented the Family Math Night they had conceived of and implemented. Additional focus topics included (1) the inaugural class of Apprentice Teachers in the IWU Step Up program, and (2) the Zone's use of data to assess students' academic support needs and to monitor their ongoing progress.

AGENDA ITEMS

I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

- Motion to approve agenda: Duane Wilson
- Seconded: Ryan Matthys
- Discussion: none
- Approved unanimously

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve minutes of October 13 , 2023: Ryan Matthys
- Seconded: Duane Wilson
- Discussion: none
- Approved: unanimously

III. BOARD PRESIDENT REPORT

Board President Sam Centellas recognized the students and teachers of the month from Wilson Elementary, as well as the special guests from Harrison Elementary who presented to the board that evening.

The Wilson students of the month included:

- Pre-K: Owen McLean
- Kindergarten: Railey Harris
- 1st Grade: Bryce James
- 2nd Grade: Daisy Ambriz-Ramirez
- 3rd Grade: Jaiden Daniels
- 3rd Grade, Autism Resource Room: Giselle Acosta
- 4th Grade: Giovanni Ambriz-Ramirez
- 5th Grade: Briana Ponce

The Wilson staff of the month were Mrs. Tiffany Mason, 5th Grade Math Teacher, and Ms. Laurisa LeSure, Autism Resource Paraprofessional.

IV. FAMILY MATH NIGHT AT HARRISON ELEMENTARY

Francesca Jimenez, Principal at Harrison Elementary School, introduced with great pride and joy, the 5th grade students in charge of planning and implementing the Family Math Night for the school: Daniel Gaeta, Noelia Lopez, Tavon Patton, Keiyariah Pierce- Stalling, Adrian Vargas, Kawon Dickens, Faith Hernandez-Minjares and Jace DeBerry. Each student shared his or her experience and how fulfilled they felt by the very successful night.

- Board question:
 - Duane Wilson: Putting something like this together had to be difficult coming together as a team, can you tell me what it was like to work with your fellow students? Coming together as a team, was it hard or was it easy?*
 - It was easy to come together as a team because we are all friends and when we had differences we could still put those away and work together.

Dr. Lewis congratulated them for their great team work in putting together this amazing event. The board president, Sam Centellas, awarded certificates to each of the students.

V. BUSINESS SERVICES

Collective Bargaining Agreement

Board President Sam Centellas presented for approval the ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the South Bend Community School Corporation and the NEA-South Bend. He highlighted the collaborative process between SBEZ and SBCSC, which Kareemah Fowler also recognized.

- Motion to approve: Ryan Matthys
- Seconded: Duane Wilson
- Comments or questions: none
- Public Comments: None
- Approved: unanimously.

The board also approved the resolution to include Coquillard Elementary and Navarre Middle School in the NEA-South Bend bargaining unit.

- Motion to approve: Duane Wilson
- Seconded: Ryan Matthys
- Discussions: none
- Public Comments: none
- Motion Approved: unanimously

Finance

Ronda Ross, Executive Director of Business Services, presented October's financial report. The Zone's 501c3 expenses are within budget; revenue is reported as negative due to the timing of reimbursements that are not yet reflected. The Zone's 501c3 budget to actuals is just over a million, of which approximately 36% has been spent during the first half of the year. In the all funds updates, managed by the SBCSC, the Zone's budget is \$32 million, of which the Zone has expended approximately 42% through requisitions to SBCSC.

Of note, the Zone has begun to receive Pre-k vouchers.

- Board Comments:
Sam Centellas commented that he is excited to see the Zone receiving new funding.
- Motion to approve: Ryan Matthys
- Seconded: Rosa: Hiestand
- Discussions: none
- Public Comments: none
- Approved: unanimously

Personnel

The Zone's Q2 reorganization was due to a decrease in student enrollment, the introduction of the IWU teacher apprentice program, improving role fits, and addressing Harrison's size and needs. Twenty-four staff members were affected by the reorganization, most of whom moved into new roles, and a couple of whom departed the Zone. In addition, the Zone eliminated 13 vacancies, resulting in \$650,000 in net savings.

VI. FOCUS REPORTS

Nurturing the Zone's Teachers

Melanie Hackett, Executive Director of Talent Development, gave an update on the IWU Step Up program, and the impact it has had in the community. In particular, the Zone now has zero teaching vacancies, and has secured two-year commitments from the apprentice teachers. Several of the apprentice teachers addressed the board to share their experiences and express their gratitude for the new opportunities the program has provided them.

Mrs. Hacked also shared that additional work in Talent Development including encouragement and support for staff to earn additional credentials, as well as conducting Stay Interviews. The Stay Interview findings will help the Zone to identify specific steps that can improve employee retention.

Board Comments:

- *Rosa Hiestand expressed her excitement after hearing the guests' testimonies and their success stories.*
- *Duane Wilson complemented the intervention expressing his gratitude for these guests and their leap of faith in growing professionally*
- *Ryan Matthys expressed his excitement about the Stay Interviews, and discussed that it is more efficient and less expensive to retain people, versus hiring new people.*

Academic Assessments, Tiered Supports, and Interventions

Ms. Roxana Zapata, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, shared the Zone's approach to systematic use of data to inform both what academic supports individual students need, and how schools allocate resources accordingly. This approach includes both the use of MTSS (multi-tiered system of supports) and root cause analysis as schools created their School Improvement Plans (SIP). Additionally, she explained the connections between student data, SIPs, the Zone's Improvement Plan, and ultimately KPIs in the balanced scorecard.

The school improvement planning process starts in the summer, when school leadership teams look at data in a structured and systematic way to identify strategies to address the root causes of a particular problem. Zone's teams have done this using the fishbone and/or five whys protocols.

MTSS is a pyramid model, based on what support students need, including how much and with what intensity. Tier 1 (the base of the pyramid) is core instruction, which all

students receive. Students in Tiers 2 and 3 need additional support, such as tutoring, and/or intervention support. Schools use data (e.g., i-READY, DIBELS) to identify the appropriate tier for each student. The ongoing progress of the students is also monitored and shows when a student should change tiers. Promotion in Doubt was shared as an example of a Tier 3 intervention.

Board comments and questions:

- *Duane Wilson: Did Promotion in Doubt accomplish what you wanted it to accomplish? How did parents respond through the process and at the end?*

Feedback from parents received by teachers and school leaders, the partnerships created strong plans to support their students. In terms of effectiveness, there were successes. As an example, none of Navarre's Promotion in Doubt students needed to be retained. This year, Promotion in Doubt is starting earlier so that students can receive support throughout the year.

Separate from summer school, the Zone is hoping to work with 5 Star Life to create a summer bridge program for rising sixth graders.

- *Sonya Watkins: Since academics are affected by attendance and behavior, did we have any students that were retained due to attendance and behavior but with good academics?*

We had some students who would have been retained, and parents withdrew them from our schools. There were Navarre students who met academic requirements, but due to attendance and/or behavior, Mr. Harris barred them from attending the graduation ceremony itself. Alternatively, students had the opportunity to perform a documented service program to attend.

VII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS SECTION

None

VIII. GENERAL BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

The next board meeting will be on Tuesday December 19th at 6pm at Coquillard Elementary School.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:37pm