

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC SESSION  
OF THE SOUTH BEND EMPOWERMENT ZONE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
9/19/2023**

**MINUTES**

- Meeting Time Start: 6:07pm
- Meeting Called to Order: Sam Centellas, Board Chair

**LOCATION**

- SBCSC Boardroom

**QUORUM**

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

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**SUMMARY**

The Board had a vigorous discussion about the Zone's enrollment for the 2023-24 school year and attendance, as well as about the Zone's improvement plan for the 2023-24 school year. The Executive Director of Talent Development also shared the priorities of the new program for teachers, including an outline of the next three years, and specifics for the current year. The next Public Session will be on October 13th at 1pm at Harrison Elementary School.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

- Motion to approve agenda: Jeff Rea
- Seconded: Sonya Watkins
- Discussion: None
- Approved unanimously

## II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Motion to approve minutes of August 22nd: Duane Wilson
- Seconded: Jeff Rea
- Discussion: None
- Approved unanimously

## III. BOARD PRESIDENT REPORT

The Board President spoke about recent and upcoming Zone events, including intramural games for the Navarre teams. On Tuesday, October 17th, the Zone will hold a Hispanic Heritage Event at the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, which will feature acts by students as well as community members. He also recognized International Literacy Day, which was September 9th.

## IV. BUSINESS SERVICES

### ***Finance***

The Executive Director of Business Services shared the finance reports from July and August 2023. The report began with the Zone's 501c3. Of note:

- Legal fees of approximately \$24,000 are included in the July report due to timing of the invoice, however the expenses were incurred in June
- The Culture and Celebration line item in August is due to the refresh of teacher workrooms

The report also included the all funds update for August 2023, which are the Zone's funds held by the South Bend Community School Corporation. Of note:

- SBCSC withheld the Zone's payment for shared services of approximately \$6 million at the beginning of the year.
- Government funding for 2023-24 is not yet available due to timing, and is represented as \$0 in the report
- Estimated revenue from IDEA and textbooks may not be fully realized.

Business Services is also modeling the 2024-25 budget, which is required for Collective Bargaining, which will begin the following week.

### ***Personnel***

The Executive Director of Business Services shared the new hires and dismissals from July and August. The vast majority of dismissals were in practice "transfers," individuals who moved from the Zone's 501c3 to SBCSC (where they were and rehired). However, they continue to work at the Zone and are paid from the Zone's funds held by SBCSC. The primary purpose of this move is to make use of the SBCSC's human resources, as part of the shared services agreement.

School-based turnover between 2021-22 and 2022-24 was approximately 40%. From 2022-23 to 2023-24, turnover was 24%, a decrease of 16 percentage points.

## V. FOCUS TOPICS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Enrollment**

The Executive Director of Student Services reported on the Zone's current enrollment for the 2023-24 school year (1,825). Enrollment is projected to be 1,597 in 2024-25 due to the Facilities Master Plan. Of the 337 student decline from Fall 2022, the Zone sent approximately 250 students (74% of enrollment decrease) back to their home schools, due to chronic absenteeism, where they are eligible for transportation. It is expected that non-Zone schools, including charter and parochial schools, will send some students back to Zone home schools after count day in October. It is also likely that the Zone's transportation policy, the closure of Warren Elementary, and absence of a marketing campaign, were also important factors in the enrollment decrease. Because of changes in SBCSC's software platform, comparing the change in enrollment of sub-groups from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 is not yet available.

Due to the Facilities Master Plan and changes in attendance boundaries, the Zone anticipates an estimated enrollment of 1,660 in 2024-25.

Also noted was the improved average daily attendance (ADA) at all Zone schools, although variable by individual grade levels. Exclusive of Pre-K classes, ADAs for the beginning of the 2023-24 school year are approximately:

- Coquillard: 87%
- Harrison: 91%
- Navarre: 85%
- Warren: 91%
- Wilson: 91%

The school attendance teams are working with families to understand why their child is absent, and provide support.

Board questions:

- *What does SBEZ do to find students have been absent for the beginning of the school year?*
  - The Zone takes a series of actions, including letters, phone calls, and home visits.
- *How do we respond to families who are told their child does not have an assigned school?*
  - Families can use the [school locator](#) on the SBCSC website to enter their address and identify their child's home school.

### **Talent Development**

The Executive Director of Talent Development shared progress to date and priorities for the upcoming school year. Specifically, the focus will be on current teachers and their pathways to licensure. Plans for future years will include, for example, recruitment of additional licensed teachers.

In the 2023-24 school year, licensure support includes several curated opportunities, including: Indiana-Wesleyan's STEP UP program, IDOE programs for teachers in high-need areas such as Special Education, math, and science, iTeach and Teachers of Tomorrow. There will also be various study supports for the licensure exam, such as mentorship, study groups, and access to other exam preparation services.

### ***Zone Improvement Plan for 2023-24***

The Chief of Staff of the Zone presented the Zone Improvement Plan for the current school year. The plan was developed based on priorities established in the May 2023 State of the Zone, and with the feedback of principals and the Governance Committee. The Zone Improvement Plan includes ten goals that address specific academic and social emotional needs, as well as support for families. Each goal has an action plan addressing how the Zone is planning to achieve them.

Of note, the Zone Improvement Plan focuses on goals for the 2023-24 school year, which will contribute to the Zone's ultimate desired outcomes of academic success for Zone students. Also discussed was the Zone's balanced scorecard, which includes over 70 key performance indicators that measure the Zone's desired outcomes, both with students and families, as well as other areas (e.g., teachers, finance). It is expected that, if achieved, the Zone Improvement Plan goals will contribute to the annual and three-year targets for the scorecard's KPIs. Of note: the Zone Improvement Plan goals will affect individual KPIs directly, indirectly, or not at all.

The board approved the Zone Improvement Plan, with conditions on further development of the action plans and additional information about their impact on the Zone's overall desired outcomes.

- Motion to approve: Jeff Rea
- Seconded: Duane Wilson
- Motion passed unanimously

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **VI. OTHER DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

The next Public Session will be at Harrison Elementary School, on Friday, October 13th at 1pm.

### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:07pm.