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GOVERNING BOARD

Vicki L. Johnson, President ■ Donna Stout, Clerk
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SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Jennifer Johnson

Governing Board Study Session Desert Foothills Library July 21-22, 2009

In compliance with ARS 38-431.01, and consistent with the requirement set forth in ARS 38-431.02, notices of this study session held in public were appropriately posted.

July 21, 2009

Governing Board participants: Vicki Johnson, president, Donna Stout, clerk, Kevin Clayborn, member, Ian Hugh, member, and Pam Reicks, member.

Cabinet participants: Dr. Jennifer Johnson, Superintendent, John Croteau, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Dr. Linda Rosness, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Gene Dudo, Administrator of Finance, Brian Capistran, School Safety Administrator, Lou Wiegand, Director of Business, Kim Mesquita, Administrator of Community Relations, and Linda McIntyre, Assistant to the Superintendent and Cabinet.

Call To Order

President Johnson called the study session to order at 9:15 a.m. and Governing Board members adopted the agenda.

Welcome and Overview

Superintendent Johnson welcomed the Governing Board and cabinet members and thanked the group for the opportunity to spend two days together looking back at 2008-09 and ahead to 2009-10. She shared that the theme for the year was "Navigate Your Future with GUHSD." Dr. Johnson explained that during the time together, the group would be reviewing student achievement results, receiving updates from various departments and discussing the goals and initiatives for 2009-10. She expressed that she was looking forward to the discussions and input.

Budget Update

Mr. Dudo walked the group through the GUHSD budget breakdown for 2009-10. He told the group that the legislature had really not solved the budget issues; they more or less postponed them. He explained that the district will experience:

- A \$600,000 loss in ADM money (200 fewer students)
- A 2% increase in base level funding; however, this translates as a loss as the funding will be calculated on the 2008-09 budget numbers after the cuts were made.
- A \$4 million loss in excess utility money
- A \$2.5 million loss in the capital budget
- A \$2.5 million loss in 301 revenue (\$1.5 million in salaries)

An estimated \$8.5 million in losses is expected for 2009-10.

Mr. Dudo reviewed the prioritized budget reduction list and shared the latest budget cutting decisions made at the Principal/Cabinet Leadership retreat.

Empowering All Students for the Choices and Challenges of the Twenty-First Century

Budget Update (continued)

1. Cuts up to and including line 48 – Local administrators as subs (1 day/month @ savings of \$90/day) Item total of \$32,400 and running total without Capital of \$5,909,729. This is the local school administrators second full day of subbing in the classroom.
2. Each school will be allowed to bring back three, 4-hour support staff positions to replace parking lot attendants and local school clerical aides. These positions must be part-time, without benefits and for one semester contracts. Schools will have flexibility in determining position placement based upon local campus need.
3. Each school will be allowed to bring back their Sweeps instructor on a one semester contract. The position is paid as a permanent sub without benefits.
4. Each school will be allowed to hire back their 8-hour Ed Tech position with benefits on a one semester contract.

Mr. Dudo explained that positions are limited to one semester contracts due to the uncertainty around state funding. If necessary these positions will be the first reductions for the 2009-10 school year should further reductions be necessary.

Academic Achievement

The Learning System – Mr. Croteau distributed a diagram of the district’s Learning System. A discussion about the three components, curriculum, assessment and instruction followed. The discussion was a review for many participants, affirming their beliefs; and for others, the systematic approach to learning held by the district was new learning. Mr. Croteau told the group that curriculum, assessment and instruction and the inter-relationship among these components forms the framework for learning in the district. He assured the board that the district will continue to implement items above the line and will focus attention and resources to items below the line on the diagram.

District Assessment Results – The board reviewed district and school assessment results from the spring. They compared performance to previous years and concluded that the data showed areas of strength and weaknesses. Mr. Croteau explained how principals and coordinators will use these results to develop and implement improvement plans. The board then was given English, Math, Science and Social Studies tests to review. They were also given actual, scored student products.

Graduation and Drop-Out Rates – The four-year graduation rate, as calculated by the Department of Education for Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and the drop-out rate calculated by the district’s IT department were shared. The graduation rate is above the state average and remains stable. The drop-out rate is far below the state and is exceptional.

AIMS Results – Mr. Croteau spent time with the group analyzing and discussing district AIMS results. Senior results continue to meet achievement expectations. The board asked for additional information about test score fluctuation, comparisons to other districts and interpreting the results. Mr. Croteau will provide follow-up information at a future presentation.

AYP/Az LEARNS – Mr. Croteau lead a discussion about AYP and Az LEARNS (school achievement profiles.) He spent time teaching how the two accountability indicators are calculated and how unrealistic the AYP measure is. He told the board that four schools did not make AYP and have been given a warning label (first year). They will not be considered to be in school improvement until they do not meet AYP for two consecutive years. Apollo High School, however, which was in school improvement, made AYP for the second year in a row so is no longer considered in school improvement. The discussion moved to Az LEARNS and the calculation of school achievement profiles. Mr. Croteau shared that the district performed at approximately last year’s levels. Tentative school labels have been received but may not be shared with the media until the Department of Education’s formal release on July 29th.

Academic Achievement (continued)

Performance Pay – Tentative performance pay summaries by school were shared with the board. Mr. Croteau reminded them that the first award is payment for district assessment results, AP results, survey results and local school goal results. He explained that this is the first year that TerraNova was not used as an indicator. Instead schools selected a local improvement goal to replace the TerraNova percentage. Most schools selected freshmen failure rate. As requested, additional data for the parent satisfaction surveys and the local school goals will be provided to the board in a follow-up report.

The Big Picture

Mr. Croteau presented graphic models that illustrate how all programs and initiatives align to the district Learning System. Specifically, time was spent showing how Title I program initiatives and district and school improvement plans support the Learning System. In summary, the Learning System continues to drive all aspects of learning in the district.

No concerns were raised by board members.

Recess

President Johnson declared a recess of the study session at 4:40 p.m. Board members were reminded that the study session would resume tomorrow, July 22, at 9:00 a.m. at the Desert Foothills Library.

July 22, 2009

Governing Board Participants: Vicki Johnson, president, Donna Stout, clerk, Kevin Clayborn, member, Ian Hugh, member, and Pam Reicks, member.

Cabinet Participants: Dr. Jennifer Johnson, Superintendent, John Croteau, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Linda Rosness, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Brian Capistran, School Safety Administrator, Kim Mesquita, Administrator of Community Relations, and Linda McIntyre, Assistant to the Superintendent and Cabinet.

Call to Order

Governing Board President, Vicki Johnson, called the study session to order at 9:17 a.m.

2009-10 District Initiatives

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) – Dr. Johnson took participants through a Powerpoint presentation explaining with discussion the concept of Professional Learning Communities (PLC). She told the group that C&I and principals have been studying the concept for over a year and are now confident that its implementation district-wide will enhance student achievement. It is a belief among cabinet and principals that the district is not successful until all schools are successful. Dr. Johnson told the board that she has directed all principals to begin or further advance PLCs on their campuses. To this end, the first Executive Council meeting of each month will begin one hour earlier than usual so principals have time to collaborate with each other about PLC implementation. Additionally, Mr. Croteau and C&I will support the implementation of PLCs by making the formative assessment component of a PLC a focus for the year.

Literacy – Dr. Johnson described literacy, the second initiative for the 2009-10 school year. She shared that work on literacy began in 2008-09 when a diverse committee of teachers met and decided that the district should develop a literacy plan to implement district-wide. At that time a definition was crafted: “The literate student in a global society will communicate effectively by listening, reading, reasoning, speaking, and writing in a variety of situations.” She told the group that Sunnyslope, Thunderbird and

Literacy (continued)

Washington High Schools have named literacy coaches who will work with Tami Strege during the school year to develop a GUHSD literacy framework that will then be put in place in 2010-11 at all schools. Mr. Croteau shared a two-year implementation timeline and will keep the board updated on the development of the literacy plan.

Freshmen Transition – Freshmen transition is the third initiative. Dr. Johnson provided the group with a short Powerpoint presentation about the need to help students make a smooth transition to high school. She explained that research shows that giving students a successful freshmen year translates into a more successful four year high school experience. Dr. Johnson shared with the group the activities currently in place on each campus and those planned to enhance the freshman experience.

Title I

Title I – Dr. Johnson explained that during the 2008-09 school year the district transitioned from targeted-assisted to school-wide Title I status. This status change allows the district and schools to service more students. She provided participants with additional information about local and district Title I programs, initiatives and improvement plans in place across the district and re-emphasized the alignment of Title I to the Learning System.

Mr. Croteau then explained the district's Title I and VI stimulus fund allocations, spending criteria and possible ways to use the dollars. He explained that the funds are guided by the same rules as regular Title funds i.e. supplanting, etc. The district plans to use the funds to again support the Learning System through the aligned initiatives and improvement plans. Ideas generated from C&I and principals include PLC professional development and implementation, formative assessment training and use, technology upgrades and enhancement and personnel.

Time was then spent discussing AYP and its relationship to Title I. Mr. Croteau explained that the district is in LEA (Local Education Agency) improvement as it did not make AYP for two consecutive years. Districts in improvement are required to develop plans that address seven improvement areas. He explained that the GUHSD plan again aligns efforts and resources to the Learning System as well as the Title I/stimulus program.

Community Relations

Ms. Mesquita provided the group with highlights about the Community Relations department. She informed the group that cabinet and principals combined for a total of 330 community visits from July 2008 through June 2009. These face-to-face visits are extremely important to the community image and perception of the district.

Ms. Mesquita told the group that the district's website is critical to parent and community communication. She explained that websites are a timely and fluid mode of communication. The Community Relations department

- Unveiled ten new websites in July 2008
- Trained 40 employees
- 575 teacher web pages were created
- 9 teachers trained to pilot internal piece
- Unveiled internal pieces including workspace and meeting room reservation system.

Knowing the importance of parental involvement to school success, a parent liaison position was added as an outgrowth of the Title I improvement plan. The parent liaison will facilitate better parent/school communication and more parental involvement.

Maricopa County Department of Health

Mr. Capistran reported that the Maricopa County Department of Health is advising schools of the potential for a widespread outbreak of the H1N1 flu. The Health department suggests schools mail home prevention information. He told the board that he will prepare and send a letter to parents and has drafted a school closure plan that will be reviewed with principals at their August Executive Council meeting. The plan will be shared with all administrator groups in preparation for a necessary school closure.

District Organization Chart

Dr. Johnson shared the district organizational chart and provided the board with information about job responsibility changes at the district office. Mr. Dudo now has a 3/5th contract and Mr. Wiegand will pick up some of Mr. Dudo's former responsibilities. Mr. Jim Threadgill, Administrator of Operations/Athletics, will work a 4/5th contract and Mr. Capistran will supervise the transportation department. Additionally Mr. Capistran will pick up some of the recruiting responsibilities formerly held by Dr. Edward Murphy, District Recruiter.

No concerns were raised by board members.

Adjournment

President Johnson adjourned the study session at 4:10 p.m.

APPROVED:

Vicki Johnson, President

Kevin Clayborn, Member

Donna Stout, Clerk

Ian Hugh, Member

Pam Reicks, Member

Janice Mays
Administrative Assistant
to the Governing Board