

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Work Session

MINUTES

April 4, 2016

President Haas called the work session to order at 7:22 p.m. in the board room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue. The work session was called to discuss charter schools.

President Haas read the district's mission statement: *"Our mission is to provide an excellent, equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students will succeed and contribute to a diverse and changing society."*

Present:

Heidi Haas, President  
Allyson Lambert, Treasurer  
Michael O'Brien, Clerk  
Wendy Dominique, Member  
Sue Hull, Member

Absent:

Lisa Gentry, Vice President  
Sean Rice, Member

Staff Present:

Dr. Karen Gaborik, Superintendent of Schools  
Lisa Pearce, Chief Financial Officer  
Sandra Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education  
Dan Schmidt, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education  
Traci Gatewood, Executive Director of Human Resources  
Dave Norum, Executive Director of Facilities Maintenance  
Melanie Hadaway, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction  
Helen Clark, Director of Federal Programs  
Sharice Walker, Director of Public Relations  
Holly Cervin, Director of Alternative Programs  
Craig Kind, Star of the North/Career Education Center Head Teacher  
Wendy Demers, Chinook Montessori Charter School Head Teacher  
Josh Snow, Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School Head Teacher  
Diana Childs, Star of the North/North Pole Academy Head Teacher  
Jarrod Decker, Watershed Charter School Head Teacher  
Sharon Tuttle, Executive Assistant to the Board

**Charter Schools** [0:00:29]

President Haas facilitated introductions and welcomed everyone. Superintendent Dr. Karen Gaborik thanked everyone for their work regarding charter schools and preparing for the work session. The board had previously raised some questions about charter schools and the work session was scheduled to provide information and allow for discussions regarding charter schools.

Melanie Hadaway, executive director of curriculum and instruction, reviewed the work session documents, including an overview comparison of the district's charter schools; race and ethnicity demographics; board policies and regulations and state statutes and codes pertinent to charter schools; charter school information from the Big Five Districts; and listings of waived district policies and regulations by each charter school. Ms. Hadaway also provided board members with a draft of the Q & A document she was developing regarding charter schools. After a review of the meeting documents, the floor was opened for board questions and discussion.

## **Charter Schools (continued)**

### **Board Comments/Questions** [0:07:40]

Board discussion ensued. Work session for discussion only; no action required. Board members had many questions and comments regarding the admission process and lotteries for charter schools. Discussion included enrollment diversity; sibling preference; enrollment availability for military families who arrived to the district after the start of the school year; and enrollment eligibility as it related to membership on the Academic Policy Committee.

Throughout the discussion, board members, administration, and charter school staff expressed strong interest in increasing and exploring ways to achieve greater diversity. There was a need to rethink and expand outreach in different ways; in ways that would create an atmosphere of diversity. Charter staff thought an optimum way to increase diversity would be to provide transportation and plan for a free and reduced lunch program for charter schools.

Discussion continued regarding the limited number of open positions at each of the charter schools and their wait lists; walking zones; the differences between a charter school and magnet school; transportation including busing, carpooling, and exploring other options; the free and reduced lunch program and hot lunches; program limitations/barriers due to facility structure, space, etc.; curriculum and charter philosophies; promoting the fact charter schools were part of the public school district; use of district logo in advertising and outreach; the additional student enrollment charter schools drew to the district; and the importance of diversity on the Academic Policy Committees and the need to have community expertise on the committee in areas related to the school's specific philosophy.

The administration acknowledged the limited number of openings at charter schools but stated there was another charter school in the pipeline with a very different curriculum than any other currently in the district.

A request was made by charter school staff for guidelines regarding the use of the district logo. There was also a board member suggestion to include diversity information in the charter schools' annual reports.

Charter staff members explained each charter school was unique and served specific needs. They were pleased to be an option for students and families, but would prefer to be a part of a group of options/solutions, rather than the one solution. They were excited to hear the board consider individualized learning and increasing choices for students and families.

Board members expressed their support of charter schools. They thanked the charter school staff members present for their hard work and dedication to students. Board members appreciated the work session; it was a great opportunity to get an update on what was happening in the charter schools and hear about the successes and challenges they faced. They looked forward to the annual reports later in the spring.

### **Board Comments/Announcements** [1:23:45]

None

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the Board of Education