

MEMO

To: Board of Education, Superintendent, and District Administrators

Re: District Reorganization Update

Tuesday January 5, 2016

The purpose of this memo is to summarize meetings Superintendent McKell Withers held with a representative group of Equity Leadership Team Members and SLASA Board Members. The purpose of these meetings was to share concerns raised by administrators regarding the draft transitional reorganization Dr. Withers presented at the October 21, 2015 GAM session.

On October 30, 2015, Dr. Withers invited administrative members of the Equity Leadership Team and the SLASA Board to meet with him. At this meeting, Dr. Withers shared his rationale for the reorganization. He explained that the purpose for the transitional reorganization was to address the leadership void created by Dr. Patrick Garcia's retirement and to secure educational initiatives implemented under Dr. Withers' leadership. As the November 3, 2015 memo indicated, there was disagreement over the reorganization. Dr. Withers invited meeting participants to share their concerns and present alternative reorganization proposals. As a result, a representative group of administrators met with Superintendent McKell Withers on two separate occasions where concerns regarding the reorganization and the appointees were shared with him. The concerns centered on four key issues. Recommendations for addressing these concerns were also shared with Dr. Withers. The original concerns and recommendations are available from SLASA.

On November 11, 2015, Dr. Withers presented the representative group of Equity Leadership Team and SLASA Board Members with a revised reorganization chart identifying four positions that directly report to the Superintendent—Assistant Superintendent (Kathleen Christy), Chief Academic Officer (Barbara Kuehl), Chief Improvement Officer (Brian Conley), and Chief Operations Officer (Larry Madden). The Superintendent explained that the revised reorganization chart resulted from Dr. Kathleen Christy's decision to not retire.

On December 2, 2015, the representative group of Equity Leadership Team and SLASA Board Members again met with Dr. Withers to review the status of our recommendations. By this date, the new salaries of the four appointees had been approved by the Board of Education via the Human Resources Report. Dr. Withers informed the group that he had directed the newly appointed Superintendent to collaboratively divide up their responsibilities.

To date, some concerns regarding the reorganization have been addressed. Dr. Christy has been added to the Superintendent as an equal assignment as the Chief Officers and responsibilities have been divided to reflect a balance in leadership, accountability, and authority. Concerns remain regarding transparency, collaboration, and equity in access to district-level leadership

Addition to the Official Minutes
Agenda Item: F1C
Board Study Session: 1/05/16

positions for all qualified district administrators. Superintendent McKell Withers assured the group that the reorganization plan is transitional and the appointments are designed to be temporary. Dr. Withers further explained that he selected the appointees because it was an option that would cause the least disruption of educational services to students.

As we move into the next phase of leadership with the impending selection of a new Superintendent, the representative group of Equity Leadership Team and SLASA Board Members would like to share our recommendations for your consideration. The first set of recommendations are based on our desire to have the concerns raised by Salt Lake City School District educational leaders fully addressed by the Salt Lake City School Board and Superintendent McKell Withers. The next set of recommendations focus on our continued effort to close the racial achievement gap and ensure the academic and personal success of all Salt Lake City School District students.

Signed,

Dr. Sandra V. Buendia, East High Assistant Principal
Dr. Kathleen Christy, Assistant Superintendent Educational Equity
Dr. Christine Marriott, Director Assessment and Evaluation
Jennifer Mayer-Glenn M.Ed., Mountain View Assistant Principal
James Yapias M.Ed., Bryant Middle School Principal

**EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL SALT
LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS
REORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **Reinstate the two Associate Superintendent assignments and hold vacant until a new Superintendent is selected**
 - *The School Board and Superintendent publically stated that they have secured funding to reinstate two Associate Superintendent assignments*
- **Allow the new Superintendent to set the criteria for the Associate Superintendent assignments with input from the School Board, Equity Leadership Team, SLASA, and community leaders**
 - *Transparency and collaboration will be essential in establishing a trusting relationship between the School Board, Superintendent, educational leaders, teachers, parents, students, and community leaders*
- **Allow the new Superintendent to reorganize the Superintendency and district-level leadership with input from the School Board, Equity Leadership Team, SLASA, and community leaders**
 - *The School Board and Superintendent publically stated that the reorganization is transitional and in response to the departure of Associate Superintendent Dr. Patrick Garcia*
- **Beginning July 1, 2016, return the Temporary Chief Officers to the original assignments they held prior to the reorganization drafted by Dr. Withers**
 - *The School Board and Superintendent publically stated that these assignments were transitional in nature until a new Superintendent is selected. Specifically, they emphasized that the Interim Chief Officer assignments served to redistribute Dr. Patrick Garcia's responsibilities in lieu of appointing an Interim Associate Superintendent.*

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are based on Salt Lake City School District's Mission Statement, Policy G-19, and Policy I-10.

Mission Statement: The Salt Lake City School District advocates for all students, provides the highest quality education, and prepares students for a future of opportunities.

Policy G-19: The Salt Lake City School District Board of Education is committed to providing a working and learning environment free from harassment, prohibited discrimination, and retaliation. The board values diversity among its students and employees. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to unlawful discrimination in any district program or activity on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status (Protected Classes).

Policy I-10: The Salt Lake City School District Board of Education provides educational equity for all students and advocates for the success of every student. The board recognizes that there are student groups that have not reached their potential, and therefore closing achievement gaps while raising performance for all students is a top priority for the board. The district is committed to offering services necessary to prepare students to become college and workforce ready.

The purpose of this policy is to support and prioritize educational equity through district policies, programs, and services.

In pursuing educational equity, the district recognizes and seeks to teach the dignity and worth of all human beings, regardless of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, mental or physical abilities, national origin, race, religion, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation. This pursuit of equity will be supported by a district-wide commitment to use culturally and linguistically responsive practices and instructional approaches to support all students in achieving at the highest levels.

The district will engage community-based organizations, businesses, cultural organizations, the Utah State Office of Education, and institutions of higher learning to cooperate in developing and promoting educational equity and advocacy.

- **STUDENTS:**
 - The District shall strive to close the racial achievement gap by
 - providing all students with equal access to high quality, culturally relevant instruction and curriculum
 - providing all students with highly qualified personnel who are culturally competent and sensitive to the needs of our diverse students
 - implementing multiple pathways to success for all students by actively encouraging and supporting their academic achievement
 - remedying the practices that lead to the over-representation of students of color in areas such as special education and the disciplinary pipeline while also contributing to their underrepresentation in advanced programs such as Gifted and Talented Education and Advanced Placement

- **DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS**
 - **DISTRICT LEADERS**
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders will participate in research-based professional development related to leading urban schools and promoting educational equity and social justice, including cultural competency.
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders' effectiveness in leading schools will be evaluated on a yearly basis by their subordinates, parents, students, and community leaders.
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders will develop an equity action plan that clearly identifies how they will close the racial achievement gap, including the prioritization of allocating financial and human resources to support this effort.
 - **DISTRICT HIRING PRACTICES**
 - The District will actively strive to have our teacher and administrator workforce reflect the diversity of our student body.
 - The District will implement fair hiring practices to ensure leaders of color are considered for leadership assignments at all levels of the organization.
 - The District shall recruit, employ, support, retain, and promote racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent personnel at all levels of the organization, including instructional and school support.
 - The District will provide professional development to strengthen all employees' knowledge and skill set toward the goal of eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in achievement.
 - **SEARCH COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS**
 - The District will strive to have the composition of all search committees reflect the demographic representation of their respective school and the Salt Lake City School District.
 - The District will strive to have the composition of all search committees reflect the ethnic diversity of the school and District.
 - The composition of all search committees will include parents and community leaders.

- **DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES**
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders will strive to have participants on any committee reflect the ethnic diversity of our District.
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders will ensure that parents and community leaders are involved in all educational initiatives.
 - All site-level, district-level, and Superintendent-level educational leaders will ensure that all site-level, district-level, Superintendent-level, and department-level initiatives center educational equity and closing the racial achievement gap in all conversations.

- **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:**
 - The District will welcome and empower students, families, and community leaders as essential partners in the education of their students.
 - The District will prioritize increasing outreach efforts to our culturally and linguistically diverse families to include them in conversations about the academic success of their students.
 - The District will ensure all educational sites convey a welcoming environment that embraces and celebrates the diversity represented in Salt Lake City School District.
 - The District will reach out to community organizations, community leaders, businesses, and other organizations with cultural competency expertise to help our effort in closing the racial achievement gap and ensuring the academic and personal success of all Salt Lake City School District students.