

Kyrene Parent Network took the following information regarding the discussion on the Superintendent Evaluation from:

MINUTES OF THE KYRENE SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

October 4, 2007

Governing Board Rom, Ben Furlong Education Center
8700 South Kyrene Road, Tempe

Board Members Present

Sue Knudson, President
Mitzi Epstein, Member
Patrick McGill, Member
Rich Zawtocky, Member

Administration Present

David Schauer, Superintendent
Terry Tatterfield, Ass't. Supt.
Gina Taylor, Ass't. Supt.
Mark Knight, Executive Director

7.3 Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation
Process

Ms. Knudson stated after attending a workshop this summer in Flagstaff she decided she would like to come up with a more comprehensive system for the superintendent's evaluation. She stated John Baracy and Karen Beckvar from Scottsdale Unified School District made a presentation, talking about what is done in Scottsdale for the Superintendent's evaluation. She stated Scottsdale starts out with a Study Session where goal setting is done for the Superintendent. She stated these are comprehensive goals that are measurable. She stated a 360 degree evaluation is then drawn up that goes out to 165 people in the District. Those people are agreed upon between the Superintendent and the Board. The final results of the evaluation are public documents. The Board then conducts an Executive Session to discuss the document. Once that is complete, the Board composes a letter that is a public document that serves as the Superintendent's evaluation. She stated the first step in this process is setting the goals. She said she thought it would be beneficial to have someone attend the Study Session to facilitate the goal-setting meeting because this is the first time the Board has done something like this. She stated for David and herself, they can be participants rather than trying to facilitate the meeting. She stated it is not like she thinks the Board has done a poor job evaluating the Superintendent, but thinks the Board can do a better job and share more with our community, which she thinks would more beneficial to the school district and Dr. Schauer. She stated she spoke with Dr. Schauer about this a number of times, and he is supportive of this idea.

Mr. McGill asked if the Superintendent's evaluation has always been made public.

Ms. Knudson stated that historically it wasn't, but some years back there was an issue in Tempe Union and one of the newspapers took them to court. The newspaper stated the Superintendent's evaluation was a public document. If you create a document that is an evaluation, it is a public document. She stated it challenges people in a way because although you want to share information with the public, you want to feel like you can be candid with your superintendent and not have someone pounce on a weakness. She stated once that court decision came along, it caused everyone to re-think what they were doing with regard to the Superintendent's evaluation. She stated when the Board handled the Superintendent evaluation, it was handled in Executive Session to assure a candid discussion between the Superintendent and the Board. She stated she felt that what they do in Scottsdale is the best of both worlds. You have public documents, things coming in from the community and candid discussion, and then the Board produces a letter. She stated the letter includes what it thinks is most important.

Mrs. Epstein stated she likes the idea of setting goals. She stated they have to be achievable. She stated the biggest change would be making this public. She advised proceeding with caution. She stated she would like to talk with people who have done this process.

Ms. Knudson stated she had a conversation with John Baracy and the interesting thing about Scottsdale is that it is similar to Kyrene demographically. She stated there is a candid discussion with the Superintendent in Executive Session and then the Board composes a letter. She stated she would like to think about having the Board go ahead to set up a Study Session to work on the goals. She stated she was very open to discussion regarding the particulars. She stated it doesn't have to look exactly like Scottsdale. She stated she thought it had some components that were interesting and beneficial.

Mr. Zawtocki asked what document becomes public, the responses to the 360 degree evaluation or the letter.

Ms. Knudson stated the individual responses do not become public. The only person who would have those results would be the Director of Technology.

Mr. Zawtocky stated to his recollection, four different evaluation instruments have been used since his tenure on the Board. He stated he would like to have the District legal counsel give the okay to this and make sure that it is okay with the Superintendent. He also said he would like to make sure when we are doing this evaluation, that we do it well because the Board has tried several instruments and they were complex.

Dr. Schauer stated he appreciated that Mr. Zawtocky said we had a lot of different systems. He stated we believe it is in the District's best interests to have something that we think is the very best way to do this work and we can count on over time. He stated the way you get the 360 degree information is through the ISLLC standards, which are standards for school administrators. He stated he is already in the Wallace Program, which is for new superintendents and it is a mentoring program. He stated he is currently working on these standards and this is a perfect match for him, because he has to do a self-assessment on them. He stated he thought the additional feedback would be valuable. He suggested at the Study Session there might be a broader conversation about how people are feeling about it. He stated he thought this was a good move and will be a good thing for Kyrene.

Mr. Zawtocky stated that one of the struggles the Board has had was making the evaluation meaningful and helpful to whoever the Superintendent is so that when they get the information, they have a way to take it forward. He stated he understood the goals will help do that.

Ms. Knudson stated she will speak with Janis Merrill and try to iron out some of the logistics. She stated the idea of someone coming in to assist the Board at the Study Session is important. She stated John Gordon from ASBA might be a good person to assist the Board. She stated this new process will also help future Board members. She stated the goal setting is pivotal and drives the entire evaluation process and assures a certain amount of continuity.