



**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
May 13-14, 2020  
Office of the State Board of Education  
Len B. Jordan Building  
650 W State Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Boise, Idaho**

A special meeting of the Idaho State Board of Education was held via Zoom teleconference on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 and Thursday, May 14, 2020 with the call originating from the Office of the State Board of Education, located at 650 West State Street, Len B. Jordan Building, in Boise, Idaho. At this time, the Office of the State Board of Education is closed to the public in accordance with Governor Little's Stay at Home Order issued March 25, 2020 in response to the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Board President Debbie Critchfield presided and called the meeting to order at 8:00am (MST). A roll call of members was taken.

**Present**

Debbie Critchfield, President  
Dr. David Hill, Vice President  
Andrew Scoggin\*, Secretary  
Emma Atchley\*

Dr. Linda Clark  
Shawn Keough  
Kurt Liebich\*  
Sherri Ybarra\*, State Superintendent

\*Except where noted

**Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 8:00 am (MST)**

**WORK SESSION**

1. Board Retreat - Facilitated Strategic Planning Discussion

Board President Critchfield welcomed David Barkan, of David Barkan Consulting, who facilitated a discussion for the Board Members to make adjustments to their strategic plans. Mr. Barkan's firm specializes in assisting mission-driven non-profit, governmental, education, and philanthropic organizations. Mr. Barkan has been consulting for over 25 years, has a background in clinical psychology, and formerly worked as a school psychologist.

Board President Critchfield discussed that the Board's recent progress in refining and refocusing the K-20 Strategic Plan, but shared that there is room for further improvement and added that she would like to be able to summarize the plan using a

short “elevator speech”. Board Vice President Scoggin echoed Board President Critchfield’s comments and added that the strategic plan and performance measures should be more prevalent in the Board’s discussions and processes, and discussed that it would be beneficial to identify and focus on one area of the plan during each Board Meeting. Mr. Barkan discussed that the agenda for the facilitated discussion would focus on core institutional values, developing a shared vision, assessing the current mission, and enhancing strategies.

Mr. Barkan prompted the group to share their thoughts on the current strategic plan. Board Member Liebich echoed Board Vice President Scoggin’s earlier comments and stated that it would be helpful to have a brief summary of the history of the plan. Superintendent Ybarra discussed the plan should drive a more cohesive strategy for achieving the Board’s goals. Board Member Clark agreed with Board Member Liebich and added discussed that the plan has strong elements but may need to be altered to better suit the changes surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board Member Atchley shared that her biggest frustration is that the plan is very detailed and all-inclusive, adding that it’s like, “looking at a lot of trees but having trouble managing the forest”. She discussed that the Board needs to narrow down the plan so that it is more focused on goals, and stated that her main concerns are surrounding the “go on” rate of high school students who pursue post-secondary education.

Board Member Keough shared that, as a new Board Member, it is important to assess the current plan and ensure it is doing what it is intended to do. She added that while the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a period of crisis, it has also presented a period of opportunity to evaluate the plan and adjust the Board’s strategies so that they align with the Board’s goals.

Matt Freeman, Executive Director, asked Tracie Bent, Chief Planning and Policy Officer, to provide a brief history of the current strategic plan. Ms. Bent stated that one of her responsibilities is to assist with facilitating the Board’s ongoing strategic planning, and discussed that it is difficult to continue to be strategic when priorities and objectives change each year with the arrival and departure of Board Members. Ms. Bent stated that the Board is required to have a K-20 Strategic Plan in place and to evaluate the plan annually, and gave an outline of the timeframe, for annual review of the Board’s strategic plan, as well as the institution and agency strategic plans. The format and required content for the plans are outlined in statute by the State.

Mr. Barkan discussed that an organization’s strategic plan should be the vehicle that drives the work, and that it needs to align the organization’s direction with that of the stakeholders. He also discussed that an organization’s core values are used to shape strategic plans, and that highly successful and functional organizations incorporate their values into each day. In conversations preparing for the meeting, Board President Critchfield and Mr. Freeman shared with Mr. Barkan that affordability, access, accountability, and achievement are values that the Board discusses constantly and that drive the Board’s actions. Mr. Barkan provided sample values from several

organizations, and the Board discussed which key words could be used to encompass their values and goals. Throughout the discussion of verbiage, Mr. Barkan reminded the Board not to focus too intently on “wordsmithing”, and steered the discussion toward the meaning behind the words and how the words represent the Board’s values as they apply to the K-20 Strategic Plan.

Mr. Barkan discussed that an organization’s values are the foundation for how decisions are made, and asked the Board to reflect on whether the K-20 Strategic Plan reflects their values. Board President Critchfield stated that every Board action should be in service of students, and that the Board’s values and mission should reflect this. Board Member Clark discussed that the Board’s role is to provide leadership for the entire K-20 system, and added that the Board’s values and mission should encompass all aspects of system oversight. Board Member Hill shared that the values should be focused toward outcomes rather than processes.

Board Member Keough discussed that the K-12 system, as a part of the K-20 system, is foundational; the Board creates long-term, student-centered, relevant opportunities for learning. Todd Kilburn, Chief Financial Officer, shared that, in his past experience with developing institutional strategic plans, focusing on the end goal is helpful. He added that the “how” is outlined within the strategic plan but the values and mission statement help to define the “why”.

At this time, Mr. Barkan shifted the conversation to a discussion of vision statements. He discussed that in order to craft a compelling vision statement, it is important to imagine what the institution will be like in five to ten years, assuming successful implementation of the strategic plan. The Board’s current vision statement is: “The Idaho State Board of Education envisions an accessible, affordable, seamless public education system that results in a highly educated citizenry.” Board President Critchfield shared in the past, the Board has not utilized their vision statement purposefully, and that she hopes that the Board will reach a point where the mission and vision statements align and can be used to guide all Board actions.

At this time the Board recessed for 10 minutes, returning at 9:46am (MST).

Following the break, Mr. Barkan prompted the Board Members to discuss their vision, mission, and values simultaneously since they are intertwined. Board Member Atchley shared her view that the sole role of education is not economic benefit, and Board Member Hill echoed her comments, reiterating his earlier comment that “opportunity” should be included in the Board’s vision statement and added that students should have the opportunity to be educated in service of their individual goals. Board Vice President Scoggin agreed, and discussed that the goal of the Board should be to provide educational opportunities that allow Idahoans to engage in their community and economy.

Prior to discussing mission, vision, and values simultaneously, Mr. Barkan discussed the components of a powerful mission statement. He shared that a mission statement

should be a one-sentence statement that capture what an organization does, how they approach their work, and what condition they are trying to create. He added that a strong mission statement will communicate an organization's work, values, and vision. Mr. Barkan then discussed the Board's current mission statement, "To provide leadership, set policy, and advocate for transforming Idaho's educational system to improve each Idaho citizen's quality of life and enhance the state's global competitiveness," and asked the Board to consider how their mission statement aligns with the characteristics he previously outlined.

The Board engaged in a conversation about how the mission statement could be refined and revised to better reflect the Board's values and work. Board Vice President Scoggin discussed that the Board's work is not necessarily setting policy, but setting and measuring standards that need to be achieved and then taking action if those standards are not achieved. He echoed Board Member Liebich's earlier comments that even if standards are not achieved, progress towards the standards should still be praised.

Mr. Barkan encouraged the Board to consider which underlying values would help them focus on what matters most, and discussed that an organization's values should evoke the kind of result they are striving for. Throughout the discussion, the following themes were discussed as they apply to the different areas of the K-20 Strategic Plan:

- Vision
  - Opportunity, thriving, lifelong learning
  - World-class, student centered educational system that provides diverse opportunities for all citizens to improve their quality of life through knowledge
- Mission
  - Supervise, oversee, govern
  - Imagine the future
  - Drive innovation and lead improvement by setting priorities, set and measure standards, hold accountable, continually push for improvement for citizens of Idaho
  - Aligning, creating, connecting, nurturing components of the system
- Values
  - Sustainability, resilience, adaptability
  - Access, affordability, achievement, accountability
  - Serving students through knowledge, skill, and opportunity
  - Innovation and continuous implementation
  - Student-centered, user-friendly system
  - Growth, development, achievement

Supt. Ybarra inquired whether the Board should also create a more descriptive belief statement that would encompass each of these areas in a narrative format. Mr. Barkan discussed that focusing on the mission, vision, and values would yield a belief statement if necessary, and that it is often better if organizations keep their mission statement as succinct as possible.

At this time the Board recessed for 5 minutes, returning at 11:30am (MST).

Following the break, the Board discussed the goals listed within the current K-20 Strategic Plan. Mr. Barkan prompted the Board to assess the plan through the lenses that were discussed throughout the first segment of the meeting, and to look at the objectives for each goal as they can be achieved through strategy or tactics. Board Member Liebich discussed that the objectives may need to be revised in order to accommodate the challenges and implementation of blended learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Board Member Hill echoed these comments and discussed that there should be allowances for adaptability and change within the plan.

At this time the Board recessed for 30 minutes, returning at 12:35pm (MST).

For the remainder of the meeting, Mr. Barkan shifted the conversation back to the components of the Board's vision, mission statement, and values, and shared the revised versions of the previously discussed themes that he drafted during the break:

- Vision – A student-centered educational system that creates/inspires opportunities for all citizens to improve their quality of life.
- Mission – Drive innovation and continuous improvement of K-20 education for the citizens of Idaho, focusing on priorities, standards, and accountability.
- Values
  - Access
  - Knowledge
  - Preparedness
  - Excellence: world-class, exemplary, field leadership
  - Resilience, adaptability

The Board discussed potential revisions to the verbiage that would better serve the description of their work. Board Vice President Scoggin posed the idea was adding “prepare to engage productively in civic and economic life” to the Board's vision statement. Board Member Atchley reiterated her previous comments that the sole goal of education is not economic benefit; Board Member Scoggin agreed and discussed that the objective is to provide educational opportunities that will provide Idaho citizens with a solid foundation. Board President Critchfield inquired if the Board should, in fact, compose a belief statement in order to better convey and explain the vision statement.

Mr. Barkan asked the Board to consider their current priorities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Board President Critchfield discussed that achievement gaps are now a paramount priority, and that equity concerns are now escalated. She also discussed that the revised plan should reflect the changes and other potential developments that are being implemented as a result of the pandemic and school closures. The Board continued to discuss possible verbiage and structure for the vision, mission statement, and values.

Board Member Liebich reiterated his earlier comments regarding the transition to a blended learning environment, describing that one-to-one devices, connectivity for all students, a robust Learning Management System, and investments in professional development should be the main priorities moving forward in order to ensure that schools are resilient and sustainable. Supt. Ybarra agreed and discussed that, moving forward toward a student-centered approach, there will likely be more financial cutbacks and that successfully implementing a blended learning system should be the main priority.

The Board concluded their facilitated discussion by agreeing to direct the Board's Executive Officers to create a proposal for revisions to the K-20 Strategic Plan, which will be brought before the full Board for approval during a future Board Meeting.

There were no additional questions or comments from the Board.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION (Closed to the Public)**

**M/S (Hill/Scoggin):** I move to go into Executive Session pursuant to Section 74-206(1)(b), Idaho Code, to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of...a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student and pursuant to Section 74-206(1)(f), Idaho Code, to communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss pending litigation filed against the Board by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried 6-0. Mrs. Atchley and Mr. Liebich were absent from voting.

Board Members entered into Executive Session at 2:00pm (MST).

The Board convened in Executive Session to consider two exempt matters, which is permissible under Open Meeting Law, Idaho Code, Title 74, Section 206(1)(b) and under Open Meeting Law, Idaho Code, Title 74, Section 206(1)(f). The Board concluded its discussion and took no action on the matters discussed. If action is necessary in these matters it will occur at a future meeting properly noticed under the Open Meeting Law.

**M/S (Keough/Atchley):** I move to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried 5-0. Superintendent Ybarra, Mr. Scoggin, and Mr. Liebich were absent from voting.

Board Members exited Executive Session at 4:50pm (MST) when they recessed for the evening.

**Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 8:00 am (MST)**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION (Closed to the Public)**

**M/S (Hill/Clark):** I move to go into Executive Session pursuant to Section 74-206(1)(b), Idaho Code, to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of...a

**public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student.** A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried 7-0. Mr. Liebich was absent from voting.

The Board convened in Executive Session to consider an exempt matter, which is permissible under Open Meeting Law, Idaho Code, Title 74, Section 206(1)(b). The Board concluded its discussion and took no action on the matter discussed. If action is necessary in these matters it will occur at a future meeting properly noticed under the Open Meeting Law.

**M/S (Liebich/Keough): I move to go out of Executive Session.** The motion carried 7-0. Mrs. Atchley was absent from voting.

Board Members exited Executive Session at 11:55am (MST), effectively adjourning the meeting. Prior to entering Executive Session, Board President Critchfield stated that the Board would not return to Open Session for the remainder of the meeting.