

# METROPOLITAN EDUCATION DISTRICT

Governing Board Retreat Minutes  
July 6, 2010

## I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Governing Board of the Metropolitan Education District was called to order by President Biehl at 9:04 a.m., in the Superintendent's Building 400, Room 403, 760 Hillsdale Avenue, San Jose.

All Members present, except when noted "absent":

Frank Biehl	East Side Union High School District
Jim Canova	Santa Clara Unified School District (Arrived at 9:20 AM)
Cynthia Chang	Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District
Richard Garcia	San Jose Unified School District
Diane Gordon	Campbell Union High School District - Absent
Matthew Dean	Campbell Union High School District Alternate
Marsha Grilli	Milpitas Unified School District

## II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Biehl.

## III. ADOPT AGENDA

**MOTION:** It was moved to adopt the agenda. M/Garcia, S/Grilli, Vote: 6 Ayes

## IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Biehl: He asked the record reflect there was no one that wished to speak under the public comments section of the agenda.

## V. ORGANIZATIONAL LONG-TERM PLANNING

- A. Review CDE Multiple Pathways PowerPoint Presentation
- B. Discussion of Multiple Pathways Recommendations
- C. Potential changes for MetroED over the next five years.
- D. Potential changes to MetroED's Vision and Mission.
- E. Challenges to Implementation of Multiple Pathways
- F. Other items related to long-term planning.

Superintendent Hay: He introduced Mr. Paul Watters to facilitate this portion of the meeting as well as Marti Rao, MAEP Curriculum Specialist, who will be assisting with the process.

Paul Watters: He shared the Power Point presentation presented at the CAROC/P Conference on June 21, 2010 by Patrick Ainsworth, Assistant Superintendent Secondary, Career, and Adult Learning, California Department of Education. The report took approximately three years and a lot of research was done by the Irvine Foundation looking at ways to improve school by linking students with pathways and career tech support. The high school report focuses on high school transformation. He shared the background of how the report was required through legislation (AB 2648) that required the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a report.

There is considerable disagreement within the state on pathway definitions. One is focused on students having a career pathway to develop technical skills and another is promoting academic success and engaging students in a career theme.

One type of a multiple pathway program is through partnership academies. Generally, a partnership academy is a theme-based program structured around a career focus. Ideally, the academic focus would be integrated into the career theme. The A-G course curriculum required for admission to the University of California and now adopted by CSU, the courses are pre-approved and taught at a certain level and the students that pass the course work, meet minimum entry requirements for CSU and UC. Traditionally, in the high schools state-wide, not all students focus on A-G coursework. There are proponents that believe that all students should be prepared to succeed in college and insist that all students pass the A-G curriculum.

Member Dean: He said he was not aware of any correlation for success between the A-G requirements and college disciplines.

Paul Watters: The report did a lot of research on what students that pass the A-G curriculum did when they went on to college. Over the years, when education tries to get all students to pass the curriculum, it has become less rigorous and not all students come to high school able to complete some of the classes (Algebra, Geometry, Lab Science, etc.).

Member Dean: He said many of the courses of study in high school have no relevance in some areas of college courses of study.

Member Chang: She said she did not think the A-G requirements should be dismissed. She had read a report where many students have to do remedial courses when they enter community colleges or the UC/CSU system. She said there is room for improvement in the A-G requirements in the state.

Paul Watters: He said that he hoped at the end of the discussion, the board would have an understanding of the report and would be able to provide direction on what administration should do as it moves forward.

Member Dean: He asked how the report squared with adolescent brain development for students after high school.

Superintendent Hay: He said the report deals with high school reform and the report says there needs to be more research on earlier years for students. Ainsworth shared that about one-third of students who graduate go on to college and about one-half drop out of college. Approximately 20% leave high school with career skills that they can use to go to work. That leaves about 47% that graduate from high school with no employable skills and do not go on to post-secondary education. When you factor in the 20% of students who drop out of high school statewide, and the achievement gap, our current high school system is failing the majority of students. The purpose and goal behind the report is to reform high schools. He noted that one high school superintendent had pointed out that he was being evaluated on how many students graduated from high school, and it didn't matter what happened to them after high school. Many superintendents feel the same way. This raises the question; what is the goal of high school?

Member Garcia: He said he has heard employers say give us a highly educated student and we will prepare them for the job. The idea of just having a high school diploma based on this report is not good enough anymore. We are suggesting schools have them career ready and what does that mean?

Paul Watters: It will be tough to get a definition on what career ready means.

Member Chang: She said in reading reports, how many jobs will the students have in their lives. What career will we be preparing them for? She said the basic knowledge is important for students to go on to college, however, relevant skills to gain the knowledge is important as well.

Paul Watters: The career piece, what do we mean by that? There will need to be a balance. Students will have 9 or 10 jobs over their lifetime.

Member Garcia: He commented we do not know what jobs we will be preparing students for when we are being told there will be jobs in the future that we do not even know what they are now.

Member Chang: She said the report talks about a lot of ideals for high schools; smaller class sizes, etc. Where are the resources to accomplish the recommendations?

Paul Watters: He has heard those comments from a lot of superintendents in the state. There are not a lot of things in the report that one can argue with; however, it has to be considered in light of the cost, and what resources are available now.

Member Dean: He said that is our challenge. He said that he shares with parents that they can never abdicate their responsibility to educate their children to any educational system. He said he didn't think money was impeding an effective education; it is the school boards' creativity to make opportunities available for students. He said the traditional model for high schools has a role to play in education; however, there are other models that may look much different.

Paul Watters: He said the report is suggesting looking at what is being done now and to look at them differently. He shared the four components that high schools will move toward in the future (slide 7). He said the A-G requirements were put in place as the default curriculum. If a student did well in this course of study, they may do well in college. In various forms, A-G has been in place for almost 40 years.

President Biehl: He said one reason the A-G requirements were put in place was to limit the number of students that would be eligible to attend UC.

Superintendent Hay: He said the new area in the report to be included in high schools was the rigorous career technical core and work-based learning.

Paul Watters: He said a lot of research has been done and businesses are saying that students are coming out of school not prepared to go to work. He said that the core content, for example in Language Arts, has not changed significantly since the 1960's. He said there are a number of students that educators do a good job with and are successful; however, we know there are a number that are not successful and the report is trying to address this. One area that keeps coming up in discussions is the community college system which is serving a higher number of students and seems to be successful in transferring them on to four-year colleges. A huge area in the report is a change in focus on mastery, and not seat time. In the current system, proponents of the report would say it is based on seat time which is an over simplification of what occurs with good teachers that we have in the educational system. Seat time refers to a student taking a year of Algebra, for example, to complete the graduation requirements and not competency. In the report, they are using mastery for a student that reaches a competency; indicating there is no reason why the student should not be able to continue in the course work even if it is less than a year (seat time). As a former principal, he said how a school could put together a master schedule of classes when students move through the system at different levels will present challenging adjustments to the traditional model for a high school.

Superintendent Hay: He said current funding is based on average daily attendance (seat time) and has nothing to do with whether a student is learning or not. The report is suggesting a fundamental shift in funding, not based on seat time. Actually changing the funding model to one similar to the community colleges where the dollars are based on the enrollment. Additional dollars would be based on mastery performance.

Vice President Canova: He commented that information has come out this week on community colleges, which have to spend more time to get students up to competencies in English, math and writing skills. He said if it came about that it was not about seat time but about competencies, it would be revolutionary.

Member Chang: She said when talking about performance, you need a definition. You are talking about measurements. She said another piece to keep in mind, there are parents that will push their children to meet the competencies to skip levels. She said it does make sense but then we are talking about teacher qualifications and how performance is measured and socio-economic factors.

Paul Watters: He said at the end of the presentation, there will be a number of recommendations such as, amend education code to allow. These are great things to look at including tenure rights, teacher credentialing, and others that are so embedded in the current system, it will not be easy politically to make some of the changes.

President Biehl: He said we need to look at these fundamental changes and provide leadership and support or nothing will ever happen.

Paul Watters: He said superintendents and boards are beginning to look at some of these good ideas to determine which ones are doable now and will help students succeed, and which ones will take more work, including legislation, to make changes.

Vice President Canova: He said the education code is like the IRS code. It continues to grow and becomes very difficult to streamline and make changes.

President Biehl: He commented that there needs to be a change in the mentality from “that is how everything has been done,” to “how can we make changes that will help students succeed.” He said he would argue that we would not be looking at changes if we were not going through a financial crisis. The education funding crisis is forcing boards to look at where they are spending money, and it provides an opportunity for change.

Member Chang: She said we need to be careful that we are not making changes just for the sake of change. She said in the report only one out of twenty students to be responsible and ethical. She felt ethics is very important.

Paul Watters: He said this is one area of education where business leaders have an influence on our students. When students are in a workplace environment, the CEO or manager reinforce making good decisions, customer relations, behavior, dress, etc. It has a profound impact. Students here at the center (CCOC) develop a more professional attitude by the experiences they have in their classes.

Member Grilli: She asked about the focus of funding for performance and what that meant. Does it mean that schools that are doing well will get more money. She said it did not make sense to her. If you are doing well, how does that fall in line with closing the achievement gap? She said a school may need more money to continue what they are doing well.

Paul Watters: He said in asking the question of Mr. Ainsworth, it was yet to be determined. How do you define performance? There may be a different growth models, it may be keeping students in school and not dropping out, etc.

Member Grilli: She said it has not been defined and there are no concrete options on funding for performance.

Vice President Canova: He said it does bring them back to the education code and the IRS code. For example, H&R Block would have a vested interest in keeping the IRS code as it is.

Member Dean: He said H&R Block has actually supported a simplification of the tax code because 80% of their business is now in advice and investment counseling.

Vice President Canova: He said in respect to the education code, are there not special interests who would want specific sections added or changed in the code.

Member Dean: He said there is nothing in education code that prevents districts from moving to a mastery-based system (slide 8). He said there is nothing that precludes what a district could do on moving forward with many of the bullets on the slide. Districts could move forward with focus on performance and not seat time.

Member Chang: She asked how you could move forward if there is no definition of mastery. She said we always talk about staff development for teachers. She said these are good ideas in concept but you need a master (teacher) to ensure the students are mastering the curriculum.

President Biehl: He shared his son is taking a calculus class and he is never graded on the homework. He is given a test at the beginning of the week and then a test at the end of the week. He is graded on the test at the end of the week. The students have learned they need to do the homework to be successful. So instead of measuring the seat time, they are measuring the performance and he asked if that was essentially what they were discussing in relation to the report.

Paul Watters: He said absolutely.

Member Chang: She said in her school district, there are students that are afraid of taking tests, and the homework is a piece to demonstrate they are learning the material.

President Biehl: He said he didn't have a problem with project evaluation and testing. Projects can be a valuable way of testing competency and mastering skills as well. He said he was interested in students learning something and giving them the opportunity to move to the next level and those who have not learned the material give them the opportunity with time and resources necessary to help them learn the material.

Paul Watters: He said currently it is very specific on which teacher can teach which subjects. For example, biotechnology is a new field, but must be taught by a biology teacher. However, we may want to reconsider who can teach which subjects. Credentialing requirements can be a restraining issue for many schools.

Member Dean: He said that, historically, there have been more and more credentials required and yet test scores have declined. He was suggesting what makes an outstanding teacher isn't necessarily more credentials. He said as more and more requirements are added to credentials, if that was being effective, we would see a rise in performance of students.

President Biehl: He said the credentialing system we are using may not be the most effective.

Paul Watters: He said the reason it comes up in conversations is not because of the credential but if you are going to do project-based learning, who else might be allowed to lead that instruction.

Vice President Canova: He said he has heard over and over that in the late 1950's and 1960's, California had a premier educational system. What did they do then that we could be doing now?

President Biehl: He said it could be that we had the best system that was needed for that time period.

President Canova: He said that system provided the engineers that lead to the development of Silicon Valley.

Member Chang: She wanted to make sure that we do not dismiss what we are doing now.

Paul Watters: He said the report makes a lot of suggestions of what they think would be good for education. These are things that must be weighed with what will fit with local decisions. In this state, local governing boards have a great deal of authority to institute what they think is right for their districts, within parameters. One finding of the report was that CTE gives many students a reason to stay in school.

Vice President Canova: He said he likes the relevancy of what this means for students. The best teachers will bring the material to life. How do you take all the content and connect it with the real world.

Member Chang: She said an inspirational teacher can keep students in school.

Paul Watters: He said CTE can keep some students in school as well as sports, music, etc. He said there were different strategies that will motivate many of the students and CTE is one of the ways.

Member Garcia: He said this is something the MetroED board sees when students come to speak and talk about the relevancy of what they are learning. They are passionate about what they are doing.

Vice President Canova: He said he liked the word "passion." This is one area missing in education; a passion for learning. Even if there was unlimited funding, would that bring the passion back for many students.

Paul Watters: He said there would need to be other strategies as well. The authors of the report believed Multiple Pathways would be the cure for education.

Member Chang: She said there needs to be some connection between the report and the recommendations; cause and effect.

Paul Watters: He said when students are engaged in something, they do better in school. There are other factors for those students including home life, etc.

Member Dean: He said if the teachers can't measure mastery, they need to be fired. He said a teacher didn't have to be an expert in the area; however, they should be able to ascertain a student's level of mastery. He said mastery is a level just above competence where the student can recognize and use the information. Mastery is the level above where you are able to develop new knowledge to use the fundamental concepts in the level below. He said there are four levels to get to educational mastery and it is where you can apply concepts to other sets of data and information and be able to create new information.

Member Chang: She said in reviewing the information, she agrees with it but she is trying to bring up questions on mastery and trying to understand what this means. She said she was not defending the existing system and there is room for improvement. She said in reality, all the teachers can't just be fired.

Member Dean: He said he was saying that if a teacher can't measure a student's performance and how much they have learned, they have no business being in education. It is fundamental to what the teacher does daily.

Vice President Canova: He said when you try to define things such as mastery, over the years being on the school board as long as Member Chang (16 years), it begins to feel as though you go in circles. He said it is important to get everyone on the same page with the definitions and then make it happen.

Paul Watters: He said it is already starting to happen. There are charter schools doing this with parental support and students are doing well based on current measurements. The charter schools are in a position to allow some of this to happen. He said CSU is looking at three-year degree programs.

Member Dean: He said the political system in the 1950's dictated how post-secondary education would work and it had nothing to do with preparing students to learn. There are other models in other

countries. He said CUHSD doesn't do this, but he was curious how many schools give a student a test and if they demonstrate mastery of the subject, let them move on.

President Biehl: He has seen this institutionally in ESUHSD where a student taking course work at Stanford can't get credit because they have to take the high school course. He said this was a very important concept. He said in his home district in reviewing a student's credits, they are listed as a junior in high school; however, they only have enough credits to be considered a freshman. He said there are some students that could get through high school in three years while some may need five years. He said some students need summer school, a longer day, and why can't this be done.

Paul Watters: He said these are some of the conversations he is hearing more of now. It may not be necessary to change the whole system but just to change pieces of it. He said there are some school districts that are doing health as an on-line course. In small school districts, they are looking at on-line courses for AP subjects.

Vice President Canova: His district has a sister-school in China and he had the opportunity to visit in 2007 and he asked questions about what they do with students that get behind in school. People he spoke with said the teacher of the student that is behind has to come in early, or stay late, or come in on the weekends or holidays until the student is achieving at the expected level. He said they didn't know how real the situation was; however, that was the answer they were given. The teachers (China) are responsible for the performance of all the students.

Member Chang: She said that is not always the case in China. She said she knows there are teachers in all the school districts that will come in early and stay late to be an advisor to a club. Again, she said the teacher is the key to the success of our educational system.

President Biehl: He said districts compete with charter schools and the charter schools he has visited have a longer school day and a longer school year and spend more time with the students. They are a smaller size and are able to deal more with the students needs than with the institutions needs.

Vice President Canova: He noted that President Obama wants to see a longer school year and at the SCCSBA Legislative Breakfast, he told Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren a longer school year would be awesome; however, they are not even funding the school year currently in place.

Paul Watters: He shared the ten recommendations from the report and the need for movement on all areas to improve the educational system in California. As we have discussed, there may be several different ways to measure mastery.

Member Garcia: He said there is no definition for mastery and there is no agreement across the state, or nation, on what mastery means. He said that, when he hears that teachers should be fired when it has not even been defined or what the variables are for mastery, it causes him great concern.

Member Grilli: She asked how parents will be brought into the discussions and how will they be a part of the recommendations.

Paul Watters: He said students receive multiple tests to determine what they have learned; however, it is not the only measurement for many students and it still does not put a clear definition on mastery.

President Biehl: He said the concept of using the current adult education funding to extend learning opportunities from age 16 and beyond is being somewhat done in ESUHSD since they are no longer able to have summer school. Seniors who are down credits for graduation are being routed into adult education in the summer. Before budget cuts, they would have gone to summer school through the traditional high school programs.

Paul Watters: He said adult education is in Tier III flexibility, which allows districts to utilize the adult education funds for any educational purpose. There are some school districts that are using funds for credit recovery while others have used all their funds from adult education to help with remediation in

the high school. He said adult education, historically, has had a purpose but we know lifting the restrictions on the funding has made some dramatic changes throughout the state. He shared there have been discussions about changing from an ADA based funding to enrollment based funding. The school year starts based on projections; however, districts are tied to contractual agreements and not able to make changes as enrollment changes.

Superintendent Hay: He remarked on how much a district could save in costs if they did not have to take attendance and do all the state reporting that is required under the ADA based system. (It was noted if a student was mastering the subjects it didn't matter if they were in the classroom.) He said attendance should still be taken for a number of other reasons; however, the other reporting requirements would change.

Paul Watters: Another concept from the report would provide districts with additional funding based on students moving on to other work at the college level through dual enrollment and dual credit policies and programs. It is also suggested to phase in over a ten year period a longer school day and longer school year.

Member Chang: She asked how districts dealing with lower socioeconomic areas would get the extra funding needed. She said there are a lot of students in districts where the parents have no resources currently to help their children benefit from extra experiences during the summer.

Paul Watters: He said a critical question is how this will be done, who will do it, and what organizations will be behind the legislation that will be needed to implement many of the recommendations. He said the recommendations do go against Race to the Top. Whoever can put together the best applications get the funds.

Superintendent Hay: He said the issue of equitable funding for each student enrolled in education throughout the state translates to ROP. There are certain areas of the state that have seen tremendous growth and there is no ROP funding to support those high school students. The ROP funding is capped and there is no additional funding for the growth. He said there are a number of districts that have declining enrollment and yet they still get the same amount of ROP funding, less the 20%. There is inequity and there are discussions related to the report on how to redistribute the funds so all students will have the same opportunities for career technical education.

Paul Watters: Currently, there is no accountability measure in CTE. If we are going to say students are college and career ready, most people believe there needs to be assessment. If you don't measure it, it doesn't become very important in a high school. Principals that look at what they will be graded on look at very specific outcomes.

Vice President Canova: He asked what other countries look at for what they are doing, since we are competing on the world stage. The conversation comes back to how it is defined and he wanted to know how other countries define what they do.

Paul Watters: He said it did come up during the conversations. There are some countries that track students from a very early stage and decide what they should do and limit what their access to other options in the future. When ROPs were created in California in the 1960's, it was decided to not track students. In other countries there are still the traditional trade schools. In California there are Regional Occupational Centers and ROP classes on the high school campuses.

Vice President Canova: He said in Germany if you want to start a business and the government does not have the concept categorized, you can't start your business. He said that in America we have a culture of entrepreneurial creativity, and we need to find a way to bring this spirit into the schools. He said if charter schools have autonomy that districts do not have, it should be given to districts as well.

Paul Watters: He said he did hear a superintendent say if the rule book for charter schools was so good then why not use the same rule book for everyone. One of the concepts is being used by some districts currently in the state and could be implemented using technology for on-line classes. There



are sites available on-line to assist students in determining the possible career goals that would best meet their needs. Districts throughout the state have reduced counseling in the schools and the focus has been on how to get a student into college.

Member Chang: She said the qualifications for counselors are important. They need real life experiences to be able to assist students in focusing on a career.

Member Dean: He said in thinking of counseling, he expects parents to play a role with networking with friends and to expose their children to different careers and opportunities.

Paul Watters: He said there are students that do not have the same opportunities.

Vice President Canova: He said President Jefferson was an advocate for public education and he said a good public education system would take advantage of the natural intelligence. He said there are possibly students that could do great things; however, they do not have the same access to education as the wealthy.

Paul Watters: He said a goal of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) is to have a single website accessible to all on the internet (Brokers of Expertise web site). The SPI wants to have one source where information is shared and is available to everyone. He said if the model is going to work, they will need access to rigorous CTE instructional options. It will be a huge challenge. At MetroED, students have access to the center; however, throughout the state there are huge variances on what is available for students (9-12 grades). He said currently there is no agreement on what a CTE option is, let alone a rigorous one. He said academic teachers have not been prepared on how to offer CTE so it can be done successfully. He said a very successful regional system CTE delivery system has been in place for many years and needs to be part of the model put in place. He said the regional concept comes up relating to how schools develop relationships with business and industry. They are not organized that way. To be successful, there needs to be regional.

Member Garcia: He had a question regarding counseling students for a career and the best method to do this. How do we help a student decide what a good career would be for him or her?

Paul Watters: He said there are a number of age appropriate interest inventory and assessments that are on-line now that are good. One site is capathways.org with some links that have information that may be helpful. He was aware of the site as there are districts in Northern California that needed to have access to information to assist them with age appropriate assessments for their students. He cautioned that it was important to not tie a student into one path or interest area.

Member Grilli: She said she would be concerned about limiting a child's opportunities.

Vice President Canova: He said it was important to have the multiple interests available for students.

Paul Watters: He shared the report wants to modify the Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCP) name. In doing research, in 1967 it was acceptable to talk about students getting an occupation. However, parents believe it is acceptable for students to attend occupational programs but not for their children. Parents believe there are better opportunities available for their children if they go to college. The report recommends changing the name to Regional Career Preparation Authority (RCPA). Those who wrote the report do not want to lose the regional concept that has been so successful.

At this time, the board brainstormed various strategies relative to the recommendations which are outlined on the attached document.

**Next Steps:**

1. We need a policy platform (position paper) on Multiple Pathways, adopted by the board as guidance for the Superintendent, MetroED's lobbyist, CAROCP, etc.

2. Letters to lobbyist, legislators, etc. (chief concerns identified)
  - a. What will defeat us in the report?
  - b. What do we agree with in the report?
  - c. What changes we recommend to improve the report?
3. Revisit CCOC classes at high schools (JPA).
4. Revisit possible name change (this was a recommendation from the Stanford report three years ago).
5. Contact local legislators regarding the Multiple Pathways Report.
  - a. Clerk Chang will give an update to CSBA on the Multiple Pathways Report.
6. Share the information with home district boards (check if there is another presentation available from CDE on the focus for high schools that could be shared).
7. Discuss for the future the possibility of classes available at the districts to expand opportunities for students including bargaining groups, etc.
8. Put on August agenda the possibility of scheduling another retreat to discuss specific issues relative to the JPA.

**XIV. OTHER MEETINGS**

Regular Meeting, August 18, 2010	Closed Session	6:00 pm
	Open Session	7:00 pm

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** It was moved to adjourn the meeting. M/Garcia, S/Dean, Vote: 6 Ayes  
 President Biehl adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

---

Cynthia Chang, Clerk of the Board