



**MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 27, 2021**  
**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Ann Wake, Wilena Old Person, Rob Watson, Deborah Silk, Russ Lodge, Grace Decker, Nancy Hobbins

**1. Welcome:**

Vice-Chair Ann Wake opened the meeting at 1 p.m. welcomed all. Rob Watson shared the agenda and discussed the purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee.

**2. Discussion Item: Review the Draft MCPS Strategic Plan with Deborah Silk, MTSBA Associate Executive Director and General Counsel**

Rob Watson shared core values and core ideology are key. Further shared the Board had questions regarding the goal areas. Explained Administration focuses their work around the goal areas to develop specific strategies and action plans. Discussion turned over to Debra Silk. Silk provided the history of the draft strategic plan including the work started prior to the pandemic. Reminded the Board the plan is intended to be flexible. Everything must align with the purpose. Part one has been embedded for a year. Part two's purpose is to set the bar high to strive for excellence. Part three is current goals and strategies. Reminded Trustees that staff will be reporting out on these goals throughout the year. Important for the Board to adopt the initial plan so that administrative staff and others can start working on the strategies. Silk turned the floor back to the Trustees for further discussion. Agreed to an open ended dialogue. Trustee Decker asked for clarification of the process in creating the strategic plan. Expressed reservations to the amount of public that was able to participate during the pandemic. Asked for the make-up of the participants. Questioned its inclusivity, total numbers, etc. Vice Chair Wake appreciated Decker's comments. Expressed concerns over past practice with strategic plans. Encouraged the strategic plan to be revisited every year. Silk further commented that in order to be relevant the plan must be reviewed every year. Shared there were approximately 60-80 participants during the in-person meetings and approximately 30 participants in the zoom meetings. Shared the District also sent out surveys with close to 400 respondents. Silk suggested another survey on the components and/or post the document on the website for public comment. Reiterated it is a living document. Watson shared his previous experience with strategic plans. Goal areas allow staff to flesh out strategies. Would like to come to the board in fall with the strategies, action plans and how it ties to goal areas. All of it starts with the board being comfortable with the goal areas. Vice Chair Old Person commented on the need to take the process slower and be sure of the plan's alignment and inclusivity. Trustee Decker echoed Old Person's comments. Shared an analogy and her thoughts where the document does not address specific areas. Vice Chair Wake explained the administration is looking for guidance. Trustee Hobbins explained she volunteered for the Ad Hoc Committee to take a 'deeper dive' and workshop it. Decker agreed. Silk was interested to know if Trustee Old Person had strategies for the District to reach out to different groups. Further explained how to look at the strategic plan and think about the action plans to follow. Need to outline timelines. Not an operations plan...it is a strategies plan.

Committee agreed to review draft language for edits.

- **Page 1:** Trustee Decker explained the terms equity/safety terms confusing used as is. Vice Chair Old Person agreed and asked to add anti-racism. Shared her own experience. Trustee Hobbins agreed with the tweaks expressed the need to be clear about what the District values. Silk shared District's past strategic plan and the consensus of the committee, community, etc. did not want the qualifier – regardless of ability, etc. Regardless of individual circumstances was not liked by the Strategic Plan Committee. Consensus of the group agreed with Decker's wordsmithing:
  - Equity – remove reference to equitable access but adding qualifiers Trustee Decker wanted specifics. The committee agreed to being specific in qualifiers. Example: We provide opportunities where each student received a high quality comprehensive education regardless of students race, location, wealth. Silk will re-write.
  - Safety - Trustee Decker wants a stronger statement. Example: We value a safe environment where our students and staff feel secure valued and will be unharmed during the day. Silk to rewrite.
- **Page 2:** Silk reminded that this piece needs to be re-invented every 5 years to not become irrelevant. Trustee Hobbins asked for clarification of 7<sup>th</sup> bullet point under Part II: Planning Horizons. Trustee Decker commented many of the points are comparative, difficult to gauge if District achieved, and terms 'enhancing' and 'improving' means something different to everyone. Trustee Hobbins echoed Decker's comments and added they were not really measurable. Silk warned the Trustees that not everything can be measured quantifiably. Suggested there could be an appendix at what tools would be used to measure the goals. Watson commented it would require Board agreement. Decker suggested rewrites without the word enhanced. Suggested the statements maybe framed as an outcome vs activity. Silk reminded that the statements were worded as they have been completed. It takes it out of the third person talking and more into first person action. Group agreed.

Silk directed the members to email changes to herself or Supt. Watson. Silk will provide a redline draft.

3. Next Meeting: Tracy Long will send a Doodle Poll.
4. Public Comment: Grace Decker read a letter from Gabriele Sather Olson expressing concerns over the strategic plan not being specific. Further noted the strategic plan process was too rushed.
5. Meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.