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KCMSD School Board Report Card

Meeting Date: January 25, 2012

All School Board members were present: West, Richey, Benson, Carroll, Jackson, Kelly, Rea, and Wilson

The January, 2012 KCPS School Board meeting was listed as a regular business meeting; however, much of the meeting consisted of staff presentations and ceremonial activities including student recognitions and an award to the board. More efficient scheduling and time management could have prevented the meeting from being adjourned at 9:00 pm without completing the business of the board.

Staff presentations involved how to measure achievement, how to demonstrate progress and committees to be established with much less focus on what concrete steps are being taken, how to improve reading in the early grades and in other ways define what progress is. The discussion sounded like a board with a good deal of time and resources undertaking a long-term improvement program---not a turnaround plan for a system in crisis. Board members' comments tended to be diffuse and oriented to personal interests rather than focusing sharply on measures to regain accreditation. Many statistics that we have seen before were presented, but there was little information about the current status on specific achievement variables. Volunteers who serve in schools were somewhat surprised to hear the interim superintendent say that primary level students are not promoted without requisite reading skills. If so, why are so many elementary students reading below grade level?

It was mentioned that students attending student centered learning schools were regrouped into grade levels to take the acuity tests--different classrooms, teachers and classmates. Instability in the classroom is probably not a good way to improve test scores. Several comments followed to the effect that the district is ahead of the state in its learning strategies, and the state is emphasizing the wrong things and needs to catch up to the district. To the observers these comments sounded like rationalizations.

Consent agenda items were approved without discussion, as is standard procedure. Some \$16.5 million in expenditures were authorized without any details. Members of the public have little information about what is actually being spent and for what purpose. We are asked to assume that proper administrative controls are in place. With the district's problematic history with contracts and employment this assumption seems somewhat risky.

All in all, the observers saw a board and administrators focusing on details and structures rather than grappling with the serious problems that have caused the loss of accreditation. **Specifically, why is adequate learning not taking place in the classrooms?**

View the agenda/minutes of this meeting at: [http://www.boarddocs.com/mo/kanscsd/Board.nsf/
Public](http://www.boarddocs.com/mo/kanscsd/Board.nsf/Public)