



Do The Right Thing For Kids
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KCPS School Board Report Card

Meeting Date: May 9, 2012

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

REPORT OF THE MAY 9, 2012 KANSAS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD "WORKSHOP"

The first meeting of the month is designated a workshop in which administrative staff members make presentations to the Kansas City Public School Board about various aspects of the organization's operation. These meetings often provide as much information about the staff's work as that of the board. Observations by Board Watchers about the meeting and its implications for the district's progress follow.

The improved visual and sound technology is appreciated. The audience can now hear oral presentations and see one of the four screens from anywhere in the room. Fine tuning to provide larger print and fewer lines per page will make information easier to comprehend.

The question cube is an interesting idea, but our observers found it somewhat problematic. Those of us who sent questions got no response. In order to avoid the appearance of interest groups having special access, perhaps someone other than the board chair should receive and sort the questions. Index cards need to be provided for those who do not text.

As usual, we were impressed with the presentation on finances. This aspect of the district seems to be operating well except that there were a number of unanswered questions about enrollment and attendance figures. We continue to be concerned about the board's role in adequately monitoring expenditures. For example, do we know how the \$6.2 million for the African Centered Education campus will be spent? We are also concerned about enrollment projections given what we know about new charter schools, students already moving to surrounding districts and possible court decisions opening possibilities for more transfers.

We are concerned about the early childhood programs. Our sources tell us that certified teachers are being replaced by teachers with associate degrees. With the national focus on preparing preschoolers to read, is this a good idea? If fiscal restraints necessitate staff cuts should the district not be providing curricula based on best practices along with staff supervision?

One observer asked, "What is the board's purpose, again?" Is it leading or following? We see a focus on academic achievement at the verbal level but less evidence of basic turnaround behavior in classroom teaching.

View the agenda/minutes of this meeting at: <http://www.boarddocs.com/mo/kanscsd/Board.nsf/Public>