



Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Center/Program

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JOINT POWERS GOVERNING BOARD
Minutes of the Special Board Study Session
With the Four Member District Superintendents
March 7, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.
TVROCP District Office Board Room

1.0 OPENING

1.1 Call to Order

Board Chairperson Stewart Gary called to order the special study session of the Joint Powers Governing Board on Monday, March 7, 2011, 7:02 p.m.

1.2 Roll Call of the Board and Introduction of Participants

TVROCP Governance Team

Stewart Gary, Chairperson
Amy Miller, Vice Chairperson
Jamie Hintzke, Member
Neil Davies, Member
Diane Centoni, Secretary/Superintendent

Participants

Parvin Ahmadi, PUSD Superintendent
Molly Barnes, SGUSD Superintendent
Kelly Bowers, LVJUSD Superintendent
Steve Hanke, DUSD Superintendent

Others in Attendance

Dave Nakashima, Nakashima & Associates – Facilitator
Leah Cleveland - Recorder

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT on posted agenda item—*None*

3.0 BOARD STUDY SESSION

As an outcome of its February 28, 2011, Board Governance Workshop, the TVROCP Joint Powers Governance Team brought back Consultant Dave Nakashima to facilitate this special study session to be conducted with the four member district Superintendents for the purpose of defining the flex process and to develop finance to service strategy.

What do we basically need to do?

Three Stepping Stones

1. identify current issues
2. engage in strategic policy discussion
3. determine how we make joint decisions that impact each other

Three Big Strategy Questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to be?
3. How will we get there?

Five Components:

1. Values
2. Information/Data
3. Relationships
4. Interest
5. Structure

We don't have control over structure, but we do have control over the other four. Let's spend some time on the Information/Data piece to make sure we're all on the same page. In doing so, let's agree to follow these discussion guidelines:

- Ask questions/check assumptions
- Hear all perspectives/opinions
- Acknowledge differences
- Be accountable for actions and inactions
- Learn from history – not relive it
- Practice inquiry vs. advocacy
- Share the space WAIT (Why Am I Talking)
- Make "I" statements
- Set technology to silent

During the February 28 workshop, some things came out of the encompassing discussion by the Board regarding the Flex II (second year of flex) lessons learned:

- Need to understand roles
- Lack of communication
- Historical factors
- Positions to take as Governing Board members
- Lack of information
- Not knowing history
- Informal agreement not known from Flex I
- Governing Board left with this train wreck, meaning:
 - a collection of issues and miscommunication, lack of process regarding Flex II
 - statewide, flex was new last year; as we redo our JPA, need to incorporate what we learned and how we move from here
 - JPGB just got the Second Interim this weekend for approval on Wednesday. By having this discussion in March instead of January, we can't turn around the impact statements in the required time. Can we even do it this quickly, and with what degree of accuracy?

Identify Current Issues—Be honest and transparent

- An understanding of how flex impacts each of the districts and ROP.
 - What mitigation can ROP make and do we have the ability?
 - Putting the cart before the horse?
- The input-seeking and decision-making process
 - In a JPA, the governance team is the decision-making body, but we have to coordinate with so many others who go out to seek input and respond back within a specific time frame in order for us to make the decisions.
- Identify process issues
 - Better understanding of JPA
 - After taking JPA for test-drive, what changes are needed?
 - JPGB should be having conversations about potential flex before the district boards vote on it

- Need time to bring in partners and reflect on what the impact will be
- It may have been better if the districts came to ROP and asked what ROP can spare.
- Short-term strategy to align resources to services
 - Might yield a broader reworking, but at least it is acknowledged.
- Share the pain
- Coordinating Council discussion
 - Evolving as a group
 - Alignment of budgets with ROP
 - Get the total picture
- There was no strategic direction when Flex I was initiated.
- The process PUSD followed is what the JPA requires
 - Maybe timing is the issue
 - Flexing was mentioned at a district board meeting when there had been no previous conversation about it
 - We're missing the strategic piece
 - We should come together and share that "the family" needs to attrit ROP services to some degree of pain and decide how we will work that out
 - Discussion on structure (what we do have control of/influence over)
- Understanding/consensus of JPA language regarding flex and withholding of funds
 - What flex is/is not for
 - To free districts from any previous constraints so the funds go to the best suitable needs?
 - Under the JPA, do the districts have the right to flex when last year was a one-time flex?
 - If so, who is in the position to commit to that?
 - If not, maybe the discussion is over, or do we go back and change that?
 - Is it all or none of the districts?
 - Knowing and understanding the history
 - It was agreed by all four districts that they would flex one time only to bring down the ROP reserves
 - Contractually, the partners have an agreement to keep ROP solvent and to continue to fund ROP.
 - Districts may flex funds as long as ROP continues to function/remain solvent
 - At what point does a district withhold funds and have to withdraw?
 - What is meant by function/solvent?
 - If ROP files qualified, is that still considered "functioning" or "remaining solvent?"
 - Solvent means the state isn't taking over.
 - All of the districts have a shared interest in keeping ROP solvent.
 - Providing for needs not wants

- What if one district withholds to a point of affecting other districts to the point of insolvency?
 - Means to get through difficulties
 - Streamline process/make more efficient
- Clear understanding and transparency regarding local property tax funding and the degree to which we are confident it is or is not part of next year's funding for ROP
 - ROP has been advised by the County that ROP can't anticipate the local funding and cannot budget for it. TVROP had requested information in writing from Damon Smith.
 - Interest in ROP having an A budget and B budget that includes scenarios with and without the local funding
 - If the local money comes, a district might be more inclined to flex. If the money doesn't come, maybe the district can find the reductions elsewhere.
- If there were no flex, how would we design cost-sharing services?
 - How do we resolve different inputs (wants/needs) into the services?
 - How would we align fiscal to services?
 - Who puts in what and what do they get in return?
 - Was all this determined when JPA first formed?
- Each of the districts is at different places with their budgets and needs.
 - We'll be in a different place completely if the tax extension measure gets on the ballot and is approved.
 - Plan for the worst and hope for the best – seek a win/win
 - ROP is not a separate school district but an organization that helps us provide the services the best way possible.
 - Is this similar to the SELPA? We have models that work.
 - Anything that is in flex is always open for consideration every year.
 - Districts must look at everything; nothing is sacred.
 - Districts are bringing back many items from last year's one-time reduction list.
 - Districts are not at a place where they can maintain any program untouched.
 - In making decisions about how much they're going to flex, districts need to know how it will impact kids.
 - There can be no assumption that it won't impact kids.
 - DUSD's board will vote tomorrow night on a budget reduction plan to include items "very likely to be cut" down to "likely to be cut."
- Revenue side and the services side.
 - We're right at the cusp of having data, common language, and determining ROP's role in the regional delivery approach.
 - Flex changed how we operate at a time when we were coming up with good strategies for providing options for kids.
 - We're missing the information/data piece.
 - How do we maintain an infrastructure so that when we get out of this fiscal stress, it's there?
 - Biggest challenge is individual v shared identities.

- The ROP JPA is a separate entity with its own governance team, formed by the districts to provide certain services that the JPA can do more efficiently.
 - How can we do it more efficiently?
- ROP has regional plans to provide capstone classes. We need to agree on what the money will be spent on if there is extra money.
- Differing degrees among districts of whether or not CTE is a core for the 9-12 program
 - For PUSD and LVJUSD, CTE is at the forefront and ROP is just a piece of it.

What policy discussions do we need to have?

- How do we operationalize JPA?
 - Did not anticipate domino impact
 - What are the discussions that should have happened with ROP?
 - Each district works within the parameter of how their district functions. In a JPA, it's broader than that. More stakeholders, more time for input...
- How can we develop a Plan A and B that maintains fiscal solvency for ROP and allows districts to flex to the ability they can to assist their own budgets?
 - What does that look like?
 - Impact is different on smaller or larger districts
 - Timeline
 - Decision-making
 - Encourage Superintendents to meet to put the meat on the bones of the strategies
 - Superintendents' viewpoints, "I know my district values XXX?"

Reframing Plan A and Plan B:

- If some degree of excess property tax comes in,
 - ROP will be forced to live with minimum reserves
 - if appropriations are needed, will come back to districts for funding stream.
- If property tax does not come in,
 - ROP is going to live to a minimum
 - If we can't keep a 5% reserve and we're negative, we'll have to cut programming.

Joint Decision Making

- JPA – broader impact, more stakeholders
 - Give framework – what is best for kids?
- Impact in chunks
 - Career Tech funded 50% by ROP across all districts
 - Sections are roughly \$16-\$20K each
 - Different for ROP than districts
- Equitable way for districts to flex
 - The partners play different roles and have different levels of investment.
 - Some districts are investing more of their own money into ROP for facilities and equipment (i.e., DUSD)

- Declare Intent to Flex
 - Triggers impact discussion as a group
 - Add language to JPA

Next Steps

- Impact piece – hear from Coordinating Council
 - periodic meetings, special and emergency meetings
 - Send Coordinating Council away with the minutes and action items from the meetings to share with district superintendents
 - Need help from Superintendents regarding level of importance of meetings
- Communication to districts
 - There may be consensus among Coordinating Council members, then district reps go back to their districts to share and gather input, then it changes.
 - Need for time to get the total picture and understand where we are, the hats we all wear.
 - PUSD and the TVROP JPGB said TVROP needed to separate services from them. Need to be clear that TVROP took over services AND cut staff and expenses.
- Agreement on issues
- Design consistent communication
- Identify with workforce data
 - Come back to JPGB with layers to programming: Shall, Should, Ought To
- Workforce table: If industry is screaming for it, why are our emotions overriding?
- Typify sections and come back to board

Issues for follow-up

- CTE—ROP
 - Combine CTE and ROP into something that can serve us more efficiently?
 - What is our ultimate responsibility?
 - Acknowledge shared interest
 - Overall goal: Keep ROP solvent
 - Definition of solvent? Wants – Needs – Core
- Shared services (structural discussion)
- Annual governance meeting/retreat
- Common lexicon of ROP language/terminology
- June gathering – 2011-12 planning issues
 - Look at June ROP calendar and schedule a structural meeting now before everyone's calendars are booked.
 - Permanent funding flex formulas
 - Brainstorming

4.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the Study Session was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Sincerely,

Diane Centoni
Secretary to the Board

Original Signed

*Approved and entered into the proceedings
of the Board this 1st day of April, 2011.*

Stewart Gary
Board Chairperson