FINAL REPORT OF THE BOC IT TASK FORCE (#4)

*Pursuant to BOC Resolution 2018-38 –
Appointment of a BOC Task Force and Development of a
Proposed Work Plan in Response to the IT Organizational Study*

January 14, 2021

Submitted by the BOC IT Task Force
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Introduction

The BOC IT Task Force #4 previously provided a Progress Report to the BOC dated August 22, 2019 (attached for reference). This final report presents an update and conclusion to the Task Force's activities.

Task Force members, excluding Scott Pansky whose term with the BOC concluded on March 13, 2020, met on January 14, 2021 via video conference to finalize this report.

Status of District Progress in IT Organizational Improvements

The following is an update on the Task Force's determination of the status (as of January 2021) of the District's progress in implementing IT organizational improvements as initially described in the Progress Report:

- District's Recruitment of New Chief Information Officer: Mr. Soheil Katal was appointed CIO by the Board of Education on December 3, 2019. Mr. Katal had been serving as Interim CIO at the time and was previously the Chief Technology Officer. BOC staff are pleased to have recently established a monthly meeting with the CIO and ITD senior staff to increase communication and engagement with the division.

- Strategic Plan: BOC staff believe a Strategic Plan to currently be in development based on discussions with District staff. BOC staff have recently received Component Plans (which are specific implementation plans) for Telecommunications (dated July 21, 2020) and Unified Communications (dated September 28, 2020). Prior project initiatives and priorities under Measure Q were largely set aside to reprioritize funding and resources toward addressing Covid-19 with the launch of the Distance Learning Project. Going forward, a Strategic Plan should include the District's vision for maintaining and supporting the initial investment toward the Distance Learning Project, such as projected plans, timing, and funding sources for device refresh. The Task Force recommends a Strategic Plan be published and presented to the BOC prior to the BOC's consideration of approval of ITD projects under Measure RR.[1]

- ITD Project Management Office (PMO): the creation of the PMO to support division-wide project planning, schedule and budget management, and reporting has been a significant improvement in the opinion of BOC staff. While the PMO Director position is currently vacant, it is being maintained on an interim basis by Ms. Monica Nolen, Special Assistant to the CIO. BOC staff understand recruitment is currently underway to fill the position, based on discussions with District staff.

- Structured Program Management Process: this process involves several monthly meetings which have largely waned in recent months with the absence of additional bond-funded projects under Measure Q. With the passage of Measure RR though, BOC staff look forward to this process gaining more momentum. Monthly meetings and their purpose are as follows:
    - Instructional Governance Committee: prioritize projects needed by instructional divisions
    - Business Project Governance Committee: prioritize projects needed by the central office
    - Architecture Review: review projects to ensure alignment with strategic goals
    - Cost Estimate/Budget Review: review project budgets and funding sources
    - Project Approval Board: review proposed projects and pre-project studies for consideration of approval

- Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO): this office was instituted via LAUSD Policy Bulletin on November 15, 2019 and the BOC subsequently received an information presentation introducing the EPMO on January 23, 2020 by Ms. Megan Reilly, Deputy Superintendent and Ms. Mary Lu Camacho, Executive Coordinator, Office of the Deputy Superintendent. The EPMO's mission is "to establish the District's project governance to

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[1] Strategic plans were also encouraged by the BOC in Resolution 2020-19, Bond Oversight Committee's Position Statement Regarding November 3, 2020 Election Ballot Measure RR (Los Angeles Unified School District School Upgrades and Safety Measure).

Bond Oversight Committee
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continuously improve the identification, prioritization, and management of enterprise projects". EPMO acts as an advisory body to the Executive Governance Committee to officially approve or defer projects. EPMO is focused only on ITD projects and so its activities have waned in recent months with the absence of additional bond-funded projects under Measure Q, as well as the redirection of EPMO staff to provide assistance with Covid-19 response. However, with the passage of Measure RR, BOC staff look forward to the EPMO becoming more active and engaged with ITD. BOC staff have also appreciated the additional project documentation that has been created pursuant to EPMO, which includes an Enterprise Project Justification report and an EPMO Risk and Impact analysis.

- Increased Engagement and Communications with BOC: the frequency and depth of communication from ITD to the BOC has greatly improved. Communication improvements include the creation of a BOC meeting agenda item for the Chief Information Officer's Report which has occurred most months beginning January 2020 (8 of 11 monthly meetings) and provided a forum this year primarily to update the BOC on the status of the Distance Learning Project. In addition, the BOC has received periodic ITD presentations on project updates such as Unified Enrollment, the Learning Management System, and Enterprise Reporting.

- Bond Eligibility Criteria: we understand District staff are in process with updating the bond fund eligibility criteria for justifying the use of bond funds toward IT projects. BOC staff plan to support this effort, which should include an analysis of relevant State and Federal legal requirements, LAUSD policies and plans (such as relevant Board policy resolutions, District policy bulletins, and published Strategic Plans), and the specific bond project lists incorporated into Measures Q and RR. The Task Force recommends this process be continued and the criteria strengthened.

Conclusion

The Task Force recommended to the BOC in its Progress Report that the Task Force remain intact, and its mission in effect, until further progress had been made by the District in IT performance. The Task Force believes that, in consideration of all the above progress, sufficient improvement has been made to conclude the Task Force. We commend ITD on strengthening the department with improved organizational processes, and we look forward to further development in this area. Specific outgoing recommendations of the Task Force are, in summary, for a Strategic Plan to be published and presented to the BOC prior to the BOC's consideration of approval of ITD projects under Measure RR, and for bond eligibility criteria to be updated in justifying the use of bond funds toward IT projects.

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