

Superintendent Evaluation Sheldon H. Berman, Ed.D

2008-2009

The Jefferson County Board of Education met on May 11, 2009 and again on May 15, 2009 to conduct Superintendent Sheldon Berman's annual performance evaluation. The Board based its evaluation on the broad areas of responsibility encompassed by the superintendent's role in the school district and community, and on the superintendent's progress towards meeting the goals outlined in the 2008-09 Comprehensive District Improvement Plan and Strategic Action Plan.

This evaluation was influenced by events over the course of the year that were unusually challenging for staff and community. These issues tested the Superintendent's leadership and teamwork, including the death of a student following a school athletic practice; management of a controversial teacher assignment at an elementary school; the downturn of the economy and its effect on our district budget; serious labor/management issues; and natural weather-related disasters. The Board recognizes the importance of the need for strong leadership in reacting to these situations and our overall evaluation is influenced by the Superintendent's management of these difficult matters.

Dr. Berman and the district's leadership team developed four goals for the district along with strategies to achieve those goals. The district's goals are to enhance effective teaching, enhance effective leadership, strengthen organizational culture and improve organizational effectiveness. The Board appreciates Dr. Berman's collaborative effort in establishing these goals and for establishing the strategies to implement these goals. Dr. Berman is executing his vision through the development of leadership and teaching competencies and classroom instructional frameworks – all efforts to drive the vision to the classroom level.

While the Board believes that it is too early in Dr. Berman's tenure to determine the district's progress towards meeting these goals, the Board is supportive of the initiatives developed to implement the goals, among them: the reorganization of the Gheens Institute for Innovation, the initiation of freshman academies, the elementary redesign program, the changes in the district's career and technical education program and the "nurses in schools" initiative. The Board looks forward to the development of measurable student outcomes (such as academic achievement and suspension, attendance, and graduation rates) to measure progress towards meeting the district's goals and to the Board's increased involvement in planning future goals and strategies for the district.

The Board recognizes Dr. Berman's leadership in the wake of the Supreme Court Decision in *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education* and his continued work toward the district's goal of diversity in the district's student assignment plan. As implementation of the new student assignment plan begins, the Board anticipates that Dr. Berman will devote equal time to this phase and continue to monitor the district's success in adhering to the Guiding Principles for Student Assignment and in building support for the plan throughout the community.

The Board believes that management of curriculum and instruction is Dr. Berman's greatest strength. The Board is pleased that the superintendent strives for JCPS to be a national leader in adopting innovative teaching strategies that make a real difference in student outcomes. Dr. Berman has indicated a vision and has shown enthusiasm for implementing his initiatives in curriculum and instruction, including building on the existing GE Foundation-supported initiative and adopting an inquiry based math and science curriculum, promoting a civics initiative- *One Community, One Nation* - and expanding online curriculum offerings. These initiatives are supported by embedded professional development for our teachers. The Board applauds Dr. Berman for this work and looks forward to the development of measures to track how these programs ultimately affect student achievement. Dr. Berman is making his mark on an already highly-regarded, successful school district with the prospect of even higher achievement with focus on his instructional goals.

Dr. Berman has provided strong leadership in the development of a positive school and classroom culture. He has implemented CARE for Kids in 28 elementary schools and all of the district's sixth grade classrooms. The Board supports this initiative and believes it is a strong program that has already made a difference in our classrooms. The Board looks forward to the expansion of CARE for Kids and to the continual improvement of the climate in our schools. The Board also appreciates Dr. Berman for the "nurses in schools" initiative and looks forward to reviewing how this program enhances attendance at participating schools.

The Board believes that the district's budget is well prepared and well managed. The Board recognizes the hard work of Dr. Berman and district staff during the budget crisis brought on by the nation's current economic climate and appreciates his response to the opposition raised to some proposed budget cuts. The Board recognizes Dr. Berman's efforts to seek additional funding through the preparation of grant applications and proposals to various funding agencies and foundations. However, the Board encourages the appropriate balance between the search for funding and day-to-day operation of the school system. The Board appreciates Dr. Berman's willingness to seek the advice and support of district staff in managing the district's business affairs. The Board encourages Dr. Berman to continue to focus on the fiscal management of the district in partnership with our CFO and to ensure that the district continues its history of maintaining sufficient reserves to see the district through future budget cuts. The Board will work with Dr. Berman to follow through on our commitment to facilitate a management audit of the District.

Dr. Berman has properly maintained the district's physical facilities and continued the implementation of the district's long-range facility plan. The Board recognizes the immediate and appropriate response of Dr. Berman and district staff resulting from the unusual wind and ice storms that affected the district this year and for the immediate actions taken during the recent water main break. Dr. Berman has also responded quickly to facility changes needed for the success of the district's magnet programs.

Dr. Berman has provided the Board with updates on facilities management, including information on the age of all district facilities and on the plans in place to meet the district's needs. The district's facilities are well maintained and it is evident that district staff takes great pride in the facilities under their care.

The Board believes that Dr. Berman communicates well, is generally responsive to members' inquiries and keeps the Board informed about issues facing the district through a variety of means. However, in order to enhance the information exchange, the Board requests that Dr. Berman regularly provide a summary of his upcoming scheduled activities and meetings. The Board encourages Dr. Berman to

continue to hold periodic meetings with individual Board members to discuss emergent issues and to respond to concerns that arise.

Dr. Berman's recommendations to the Board are well considered with input from appropriate staff. On most issues, Dr. Berman provides the Board with the information necessary for the Board to make informed decisions. During the coming year, the Board looks forward to increased collaboration with Dr. Berman on district programs and issues facing the district.

Dr. Berman's knowledge and enthusiasm combine to make him an engaging public speaker and advocate for education causes. The Board appreciates his involvement in community-wide programs. JCPS is unique in its partnerships with business and community organizations and the Board supports continuation of these important relationships. The Board recognizes Dr. Berman's efforts in seeking financial support from community businesses and organizations, but encourages him to continue to seek ways to keep these organizations meaningfully involved in ongoing activities that can impact student success, including increasing volunteers in schools.

Dr. Berman serves on a variety of boards on a local, state and national level. The Board recognizes the significant demands on Dr. Berman's time. The Board encourages him to place a higher priority on events and programs in the local community.

The Board appreciates Dr. Berman's efforts in keeping parents and the community well informed on district programs through various district publications and other means. The Board encourages Dr. Berman to continue to seek feedback and welcome involvement from parents and the community. The Board has long held that family and community involvement is an essential element of JCPS success, and we respect and applaud those who spend time in partnerships with us, and we expect our leadership to reflect that value.

The Board believes that personnel management and staff relations are Dr. Berman's greatest challenge. Now that some important initiatives are underway, the Board encourages Dr. Berman to spend more time focusing on these areas. We encourage Dr. Berman to have a larger presence in the district, to increase his collaboration with appropriate district staff, and to make decisions that support an organizational structure that promotes efficient and effective operations at the school level. The Board supports Dr. Berman's intentions with regard to personnel issues that are crucial to improving the quality of the district's educational program. Furthermore, the Board asks Dr. Berman to strive for productive labor/management relations, keeping lines of communication open and seeking feedback from union representatives prior to implementing decisions that will materially affect district/union relations, as well as employees. The Board encourages continued analysis of issues that need to be addressed to ensure both a supportive professional culture and high educational attainment.

The Board also encourages Dr. Berman to continue his practice of visiting schools and collaborating with principals and other administrative staff. The Board encourages him to increase the involvement of staff at all levels in the decision-making process. As decisions must be made in response to budget constraints, this communication is essential to facilitate understanding and support. We believe this practice will go far towards improving the morale of district staff. The Board values a positive climate of respect and support for staff members so that they can perform at high levels, as well.

The Board believes that there are good systems in place for the hiring and training of high quality administrators, faculty and staff. The Board appreciates Dr. Berman for his leadership in this area and applauds his personal involvement in the interviewing and hiring of district administrative staff. The

Board encourages Dr. Berman to take a more active role in managing significant issues that arise in the district.

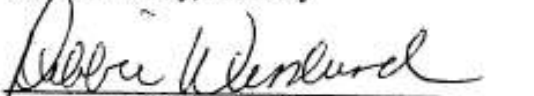
Dr. Berman is a knowledgeable educator who is committed to moving the district to higher levels. To meet this goal, the Board encourages Dr. Berman to work towards developing a relationship of mutual respect with district staff. The Board believes that by improving his relationship with staff, Dr. Berman will become an even more effective leader that staff will gladly follow.

Overall, the Board believes that Dr. Berman is a high level thinker with an excellent vision for the district. This year, Dr. Berman has begun the realization of that vision by initiating CARE for Kids in 28 elementary schools and all of the district's sixth grade classrooms, creating freshman academies to support the transition to high school, implementing a new civics course, placing thirteen nurses in the district's most challenged schools, beginning the development of *One Community, One Nation* and redesigning the district's career and technical education program. While initiating all of these programs, Dr. Berman has led the district in revising the student assignment plan in the wake of the Supreme Court Decision in *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education*.

The Board expects Dr. Berman in the coming year to continue his emphasis as instructional leader of the district while increasing his focus on operations of the district and personnel management. We support Dr. Berman's recent statement that he will shift from new initiatives to deepening those we have currently undertaken and we encourage him to support the effective implementation of successful ongoing programs that were underway in the District.

Dr. Berman has begun the implementation of many great initiatives for the district. The Board looks forward to reviewing the measurable results of the programs that Dr. Berman has initiated and to ultimately celebrating the effect those programs will have on increasing the achievement of all of the district's students. In realizing his vision for the district, the Board supports Dr. Berman in being mindful of budgetary constraints and working within the confines of the district's available resources.

Jefferson County Board of Education
Jefferson County, Kentucky



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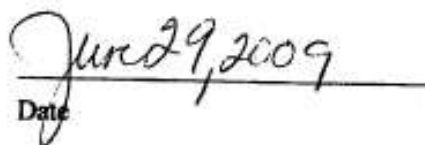
Linda Duncan

Ann Elmore

Joe Hardesty

Larry Hujo

Stephen Imhoff



Date