

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Iron County School District
2077 W Royal Hunte Dr., Cedar City, Utah
Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Members present

Ben Johnson, Dave Staheli, Jeff Corry, Lauren Lewis, Tiffiney Christiansen, Megen Ralphs, Stephanie Hill

Also in attendance: Business Administrator, Todd Hess; Kevin Garrett; Steve Burton; Janette Stubbs; Roy Mathews; Hunter Shaheen; and Monica Torres

MEETING OPENING

At 5:30 p.m. President Ben Johnson called the meeting to order.

Trevor Madsen offered a prayer. Kim Bailey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- Minutes of the April 18, 2023 Work Meeting, April 21, 2023 Meeting with City Council, and the April 25, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
- Audit and Approval of Warrants
- Employment of Personnel
- LEA Specific License Approval
- Home School/Exemption from School Attendance
- Recommendation for Release of Students from School (JEG-R)
- Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Mr. Staheli made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mrs. Ralphs seconded the motion and the board members passed it unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Recognitions

The Board recognized the Parowan Rams Boys Basketball Team for being the 2A State Champions. Coach Rod Murphy was also recognized as the 2A Coach of the Year.

The Board next recognized employees in the district who have served many years and are now going to retire from service in Iron District. The following employees were recognized:

Michelle Barlow	23 Years
Brandon Batt	36 Years
Annette Black	25 Years
Hal Lamont Black	28 Years
Sharon Coonen	18 Years
Diane Houle	30 Years
Donna Hulet	31 Years
Susan Hulet	24 Years
LeAnn Leavitt	31 Years
Kathleen Mosdell	24 Years
Sharon Lynn Nielsen	30 Years
Linda Reid	25 Years
Gail Sardoni	16 Years

Karen Vinson	32 Years
Wendy Warrick	21 Years

John Webster, Transportation Supervisor, highlighted two community members who assisted in a medical emergency. On March 30th the driver of bus 935, Sarah Pine, had a medical emergency that rendered her completely incapacitated. Canyon View High School student, Lindsay Abbot, came upon the scene and was able to render CPR until the ambulance arrived. Lindsay has been taking emergency medical classes at Southwest Tech. Her fast actions and courage saved Sarah's life. Also on the scene to render help was Cassie Tiedel. She was able to gain access to the bus through a window and help Lindsay get the driver out on flat ground where CPR could be administered. The Board thanked the two for their life-saving efforts and courage.

Principal Denny Heaton and Agriculture Science teacher, highlighted the Tiffany Knowles, highlighted the FFA program at Canyon View High School. Canyon View High School has 110 registered FFA members and they are the only Southern Utah school going to nationals. Tiffany introduced Hallie Shortt, Vice-President, and Ashlyn Orton, Reese Ganci & Kenna Clark. Ashlyn Orton is the FFA President for upcoming year. Hallie placed first at the State Convention in Prepared Speaking. Ashlyn, Reese and Kenna competed in marketing and placed 2nd.

Steve Burton introduced Jill Schill and Keenan Hart, teachers at E-Valley Elementary. Keenan was unable to attend. The teachers were given the Highly Effective Teachers Award from the state. The Board congratulated them on their success.

Public Comment

Stephanie Abbott, Lindsay's mother, thanked the Board for their partnership with Southwest Tech. That is where Lindsay learned the skills needed to save a life. She thanked them for providing opportunities like this to our children.

Kelli Gibson, parent of kids at South Elementary, thanked the Board for the meeting that was held at South. She was pleasantly surprised to hear the conversation that was had. She said it means so much to us and feels like our concerns had been heard. We are grateful and blessed we have you as representatives. She encouraged the board to move toward a consensus to keep South where it is and put the resources of the 2023 bond toward building a new alternative programs.

Kim Simmerman, parent of eight children throughout the district, said she has utilized charter schools as her children have gone through school. She has had two graduate from SUCCESS Academy and multiple who have attended Cedar High. Because there are so many options here her child have thrived. They have also been able to participate in sports at the high school. She thanked the Board for the complex decision they are facing with charter schools and growth. She encouraged the Board to accept the charter schools as they come in.

Curtis Nielson, parent of kids in elementary, middle school and high school, expressed his appreciation for the Board all they do and for the facilities in the district. He is an assistant soccer coach at Cedar High School. He spoke about the soccer fields at Cedar High. Soccer is a growing sport and we are in need of good facilities here. Cedar High School needs a soccer field that is long lasting. The current grade of the Cedar High soccer field is over 3%, typically soccer fields are not over 1.5%. Our field is clearly slanted in one direction or another. There is an incline/decline of 13 feet when going from one end of the field to the other. Turfing the football field will help alleviate all of these issues. Cedar High is the only 4A team in the state that plays on grass. The injuries that have happened have been because we are going from playing on grass to playing on turf, which we are not used to. He thanked the board again for all they do and for the way the district has managed and maintained the facilities.

Scott Kamachi, Head Soccer Coach at Cedar High School, reiterated the fact that Cedar High is the only soccer team in the region that plays on grass. The team is already at a disadvantage because of the weather. There were only had three days they could train outside for preseason conditioning when the other teams in the region can practice outside for months. He said he is grateful for what we have, but asked that at the very least they look at modifying the Cedar High School football field to get us on a level playing field. He said he is not making excuses, but if it's something we can do it would be awesome. He thanked the board.

Kami Merrill, board member of Cedar Charter Holders, thanked the Board for accepting their application. She said her kids have had a great experience in Iron District schools and that is not the reason for wanting a charter school. She is passionate about bringing a classical model to Cedar City. As a community we support charter schools and adding another option would be beneficial. It could open doors for adding other models of education that bring more diverse options for the community. She thanked the Board again for reviewing the application.

Chad Smart, parent in the district, thanked the Board for coming to South Elementary for their work meeting. He said there were parents who wanted to speak up, but didn't because they didn't understand the process. He thanked Mrs. Christiansen and Mrs. Ralphs for their questions during the straw poll regarding how the tax increase benefit the residents of Parowan, etc. These are the questions we need to ask moving forward. He said as much as he wants to see South stay where it is at, there are other decisions that are going to affect us in the years to come so keep asking those hard questions. We've heard from emails and personal conversations that the previous boards left us with this mess, lets not keep making the same mistake. He explained that at the meeting at South Elementary his whole point was to bring to light the reason some parents would be upset about the perceived conflict of interest with South ever being sold to SUU because President Johnson is on the construction board, or with a board member only taking the word of doctors and lawyers on the hill seriously to parents that live in the neighborhood, or with a board member having a daughter on the board of the one and only charter school applying. We want a charter school to come, but not at the expense of losing one of our own schools.

Business Administrator's Report

Mr. Hess said the budget reports are typical for this time of the school year. We spent a little less this year then we did last year at this point. Board members had no questions regarding the budget.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Hatch highlighted Alternative Programs including: Southwest Education Academy, Post High, Adult Education, Coal Creek, Southwest Utah Youth, Summer School, MENTOR, Youth Health Associates, Launch High School, and IRON Online.

Board Member Report

Mrs. Christiansen reported on her visit to Cedar High School and commented on the incredible culture Principal Sanders has cultivated there. She also visited Iron Springs Elementary for their May the 4th lunch.

Mrs. Ralphs spoke about attending the Launch High Expo. She complimented the school and how it is always a highlight to attend the Expo. She also reported on her visits to Fiddlers Elementary for the color run fundraiser, and Iron Springs Elementary for the May the 4th lunch. She spoke about the Technology Student Association (TSA) students at Canyon View High School as they presented their project to professionals in aerospace.

Mrs. Hill reported on the ADA playground committee meeting at Iron Springs Elementary. The hope is to obtain funds through a grant to help complete this project. She also visited Three Peaks Elementary and Canyon View High School this month. On the 29th she spent the day at an Autism Conference, hosted by SEDC and organized by Chris Haught. She reported the conference provided invaluable information. She also visited Mill Creek, a secondary program in Washington County for alternative programs. She sat in on a zoom meeting with Iron Springs Elementary discussing tier 2 and tier 3 interventions. Lastly, she attended a

literacy workshop hosted by Dr. Hatch. She commented that she will do everything she can to support his vision.

President Johnson expressed his appreciation to the teachers and administrators throughout the district. He said as the school year comes to an end, he has appreciated the time he has spent in the schools.

Vice-President Lewis spoke of her visit to Cedar High School. It is a wonderful school where the kids really care about one another. She also attended Iron Springs for Star Wars Day. She will be attending a follow up meeting with district and safety personnel tomorrow. She reported there will be a fun run on Saturday for the Children's Justice Center and the proceeds will go toward building a new facility. She also reported that beginning in January she has sent thank you notes in an effort to close the gap between board members and teachers, classified staffs and others throughout the district. This effort has resulted in many conversations with district employees. She commented that there have been many great ideas come forward.

Mr. Corry thanked those who have come to make comments today and in the last meeting, especially regarding the bond. He reported on his school visit to Canyon View High School where he visited Mr. Lowry's math class. He also reported on the monthly meeting for the Cedar City Historic Downtown Economic Committee he sits on. The main concern is improving the image of downtown Cedar City. In June we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the railroad in Cedar City. There will be various activities to attend and more information will come. He also spoke of his visit to Cedar High School where he visited Josh Maher's history class and praised him for doing a wonderful job.

Mr. Staheli highlighted the Board for being so engaged in the district. He also praised Alternative Programs for what they do.

Policy Review Discussion

Superintendent Hatch presented a plan to review policies on a regular basis. He said it has been really hard getting to policies in work meetings the past few months and we need an opportunity to have a good discussion about them. There were over one hundred bills passed regarding education in the last legislative session alone that affect our policies. He informed the Board the district will be working through the summer to prepare many policies for update. The plan is to hit policies hard in August for first readings. In an effort to be more proactive in examining our policies, beginning in September we will start examining them section by section. President Johnson informed the Board that Vice-President Lewis will start sending policies in September for the Board to review. He emphasized the importance of having sound policies because when our policies are sound and we have trust, we have the opportunity to cheer others on and look for the good going on around us. He also noted the Board will review the book, Anatomy of Peace, in their board trainings.

2023 Bond Discussion (15 Minutes)

President Johnson expressed the need for the Board to come to a consensus on proposed bond projects and give direction to the district administration. We need to get information out to our community so they are aware of what this bond is and the benefits it will bring to the community. Mr. Staheli referred to the scenario Mr. Hess presented last week in the work meeting to keep South Elementary and build a smaller school somewhere else and also build a new facility for Alternative Programs. He said he favored that option because if we were to repurpose South for Alternative Programs and then build a new elementary school it would not solve the portable issue we have. It would also leave us a little more room for moving the lights on the football fields and to do significant security upgrades at South. President Johnson pointed out everyone is on board with the Canyon View High School weight room and wrestling room project. Parowan High School plays soccer on a city field, they don't have a soccer field at their school. If we put turf in on the football field they will have a place to play soccer and it will also resolve the issue of the home team crowd sitting across from the football team, rather than behind them. He adamantly pushed for Parowan to get turf, even if Canyon View and Cedar High do not. Turf is the only project for Parowan on this

bond and they need it. Mrs. Christiansen indicated her heart and mind are conflicted when it comes to South Elementary. The smartest decision for our tax dollars would be to turn South into an Alternative school right now and in 15 years we turn it into a location for a new alternative program facility. By doing that we can complete all of the bond projects and we would get more out of the larger elementary school when it is built. If we choose to keep South Elementary it will be done in 15 years when it has aged out. She brought up the question of where a new Alternative Programs could be built. Mr. Corry indicated his number one priority is to keep South Elementary where it is. Other priorities he mentioned include the Canyon View weight room and wrestling room and security measures. Mrs. Ralphs expressed the importance of building an Alternative Programs facility in the downtown area. She asked if Alternative Programs aren't transferred to South, what are our options to build somewhere in the proximity that we need it to have? There's no purpose in building a facility that doesn't serve the purpose and mission of the school. Mr. Hess indicated they are looking for property to purchase because the district doesn't have any district owned options in the downtown area. The Board discussed different options. Mr. Staheli suggested giving the district more time to find property. Superintendent Hatch pointed out the decision needs to be made as to whether or not the Board would like to move Alternative Programs to South Elementary, or build Alternative Programs somewhere else, so the district can pursue options in regard to property. The Board went through and polled each of the proposed bond projects. The Board members supported constructing a new facility for alternative programs somewhere in the downtown area. Mr. Staheli, Mr. Corry, Vice-President Lewis, President Johnson, and Mrs. Hill opposed the \$37M - \$40M South Elementary replacement. Mrs. Ralphs was supportive of rebuilding it and Mrs. Christiansen was undecided. Relocate alternative programs to South Elementary was opposed by all board members, except Mrs. Ralphs, and Mrs. Christiansen was undecided. All board members were in favor of constructing a new facility for alternative programs as long as it is in the centralized educational community near SUU and Southwest Tech. Hunter Shaheen pointed out the dollar amounts are very preliminary and are based on the most recent bids from East Elementary and it's hard to be clear on what the cost will be to build a new facility this far out. President Johnson agreed and also commented that if property cannot be found to build in a centralized area, the discussion for South changes. A new smaller elementary built in an area where there is growth was supported by all board members. It was also agreed by all board members to stay tax neutral. All board members also agreed on the Canyon View High School Weightroom expansion. In regard to security, Mr. Hess indicated those projects could be paid for out of the capital budget plus the additional funding we are to receive. He also mentioned the ADA playgrounds could be ran through capital, but it may require adjustments to tax rates if the Board would like them completed at once. When asked if they would like to see the playgrounds on the bond or to slow roll the project and complete playgrounds as funds are available, Mr. Corry, Vice-President Lewis, President Johnson, Mrs. Ralphs and Mrs. Christiansen favored taking it slow. Mr. Staheli favored adding the project to the bond project list. Mrs. Hill expressed her passion and desire to just get the project going as soon as possible. The Board next discussed installing turf and moving lights on all of the high school football fields. Hunter Shaheen reviewed the specifics of why the lights on the fields will need to be moved if turf were installed. In order to meet the width requirements for soccer and UHSAA guidelines, the lights will have to be moved out. Mr. Staheli suggested moving the lights out, but keeping the grass rather than installing turf. Roy Mathews pointed out the maintenance of the fields would be very demanding to keep them playable for soccer and football if they were to remain grass. Having been a principal and having worked with ground crews it would be very difficult to keep the fields safe and playable with the number of staff we have available. President Johnson pointed out Parowan High School does not even have a soccer field, they have to utilize the city field and use portable bathrooms during games. Mr. Staheli commented there is not much difference in Parowan playing on the city field and other high schools playing on other fields, except the distance it is away from the school. President Johnson indicated the city and the district share an annual memorandum of understanding and at any time the city could choose to not renew the contract. Mrs. Christiansen, Mrs. Ralphs, Mrs. Hill, President Johnson, and Vice-President Lewis were in favor of the turf and lights project. Mr. Corry and Mr. Staheli were not in favor. Mr. Staheli suggested holding off on the project until the Board has had more time to learn the specifics of turf. Mr. Corry asked if we would be over the \$71M with all of the projects discussed. Mr. Hess explained that with this proposal they would be over the \$71M. Mrs. Christiansen pointed out the original proposal made by Mr. Hess was more cost effective because all projects could be completed and wouldn't go over \$71M. Mr. Staheli raised the

issue of the original plan not addressing growth like this new proposal. Superintendent Hatch summarized the discussion of the Board to leave South where it is and build a new alternative programs facility and a new tenth elementary, complete the Canyon View High School weight room and install turf while staying tax neutral. He requested that based on this information, the Board allow them to go back to work to see if there's a way to make it happen. We are close enough to the \$71M that we should be able to make it work. Mr. Staheli suggested polling the community on their interest in turf being on the bond.

Charter School Application (15 Minutes)

President Johnson began the charter school application discussion. Scott Garrett, attorney for the district, was welcomed to the meeting. Mr. Staheli asked Scott if the district could be liable for the corrective action plan (CAP) that American Preparatory Academy was given, if they were chosen as the educational provider for the charter school. Scott indicated the CAP information has not been given to him so he is not familiar with the details, however, if the district chooses to authorize a charter school with a CAP against it, it could be an issue for the district. Ultimately, for the district to be liable for something, it would have to be for something that happens here. It is something that would need to be looked at. Mr. Staheli explained it would be the responsibility of the district, as an authorizer, to oversee the charter and to ensure they are following all state guidelines so that a CAP doesn't happen. Mrs. Hill commented on the importance of scrutinizing any potential charter and being incredibly sensitive to special education. Mrs. Ralphs asked what liability the district has if we authorize a charter, regardless of the CAP. Scott responded that there is liability in everything, the idea is to manage it and have the foresight to prepare so you can avoid the liability to the extent you can. He suggested consulting with a charter school expert. Superintendent Hatch reviewed state code 53G-5-205, an authorizer shall annually review and evaluate the performance of charter schools authorized by the authorizer and hold a charter school accountable for the school's performance and monitor charter schools authorized by the authorizer for compliance with federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. That would be the district's job. He said what is unclear is what happens if they don't follow federal or state laws. Mr. Corry inquired about financial liability. Scott pointed out anytime you authorize someone you take on the risk of being sued if they are sued, so your oversight and policies are important. If the leadership or management require additional resources the district would have to provide and pay for them. Vice-President Lewis asked how intense the district would be on any school we authorize? Will we be involved in picking the management company, etc? Superintendent Hatch indicated the district has no desire to be or to take over a charter school and that's what makes this hard. We would want as little responsibility as possible. President Johnson outlined the district policy regarding the application timeline. The Board has 45 days to make a decision on the charter approval, therefore, the decision cannot be tabled, it will have to be voted on in the next meeting in June. He reminded the charter stakeholders that if the Board rejects their application at this time they can reapply. President Johnson explained that he wants parents to have options, but he is concerned with the issue of potential concerns in the policy outweighing the potential benefits. He thanked the Cedar Charter Board for their patience as this is the first charter application that has come to the Board for approval. Superintendent Hatch agreed to try and find an expert on the state level to give some guidance before the next meeting. The Board will take action in the meeting in June.

ACTION ITEMS

Policy IIAB District Curriculum Adoption

Vice-President Lewis made a motion to table Policy IIAB (District Curriculum Adoption) to give teachers a chance to review it. Mrs. Ralphs seconded the motion. Mr. Corry asked what options parents have who disagree with curriculum that has gone through the adoption process. Superintendent Hatch indicated there is an entire policy based on parent grievances. Mr. Staheli indicated he would like to see Policy IIAB approved, it has been reviewed and it is very clear. Mrs. Hill indicated she does not agree that a general waiver from the University is going to supersede a parent's right to protect their child. For that purpose, being redundant is important. Superintendent Hatch agreed to send the policy to principals and teachers to review. **After further discussion the board members passed the motion to table the policy for further discussion unanimously.**

Negotiated Agreement and Teacher Salary Schedule

President Johnson abstained from this agenda item as he has a spouse who is a teacher. Mr. Staheli clarified that President Johnson is abstaining because his family will be impacted financially, but if a family member isn't impacted financially they shouldn't have to abstain. Vice-President Lewis indicated she believes it Mr. Hess, Business Administrator, informed the Board that the negotiation agreement has been approved by the Iron County Educators Association. Included is the teacher salary schedule as well as a comparison graph that shows how the two schedules compare. **Mr. Staheli made a motion to accept the negotiated agreement for 2023-2024 as presented. Vice-President Lewis seconded the motion. Mr. Staheli, Mr. Corry, Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Ralphs, and Mrs. Christiansen approved. President Johnson abstained.**

Classified and Administrator Salary Schedules

Mr. Hess typically don't do a negotiation process. proposed salary schedules with charts and graphs that show comparisons from prior years. The schedules were modified, similar to the teacher schedules, eliminating the gaps. **Mr. Staheli made a motion to approve the classified and administrator salary schedules. Mr. Corry seconded the motion and the board members passed it unanimously.**

CLOSED SESSION

Enter into Closed Session

At 9:12 p.m. Vice-President Lewis made a motion to enter into a closed meeting to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual as well as to discuss the purchase, exchange or lease of real property. Mrs. Ralphs seconded the motion. By voice vote the board members voted as follows:

Tiffiney Christiansen - aye

Megen Ralphs - aye

Stephanie Hill - aye

Ben Johnson - aye

Lauren Lewis - aye

Jeff Corry - aye

Dave Staheli - aye

Reconvene to Open Session

At 9:44 p.m. Mrs. Christiansen made a motion to come out of the closed session. Mr. Staheli seconded the motion and the board members passed it unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

President Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:44 p.m.