DRAFT

January 28, 2025 - Wasatch County School District Board of Education Meeting (Tuesday, January 28, 2025)
Generated by Stacey Moore on Thursday, February 13, 2025
Members present
Board Vice President, Kim Dickerson
Board Member, Cory Holmes
Board Member, Breanne Dedrickson
Board Member, Brad Ehlert

Superintendent, Paul Sweat
Business Administrator, Dr. Jason Watt

Excused
Board President, Tyler Bluth

A. Study Session - 5:00 p.m.

Discussion, Information: 1. Policy Review: Ethical Conduct Policy, Discussion, Information: 2. Policy Review: Employee Bullying Policy
Student Services Director Eric Campbell presented revised policies on ethical conduct and bullying and hazing to the Board of Education. Below is a concise summary of the key points discussed:

1. **Policy Revision Goals**:
   - Add bullying and hazing policy to include employee-to-employee and employee-to-student dynamics, creating a more "adult-centric" version.
   - Address questions regarding the inclusion of language relevant to students and definitions sourced from state legislation.
2. **Key Concerns Addressed**:
   - Definitions of bullying and hazing, with emphasis on the inclusion or exclusion of terms like "repeated."
   - Adding provisions for bystander responsibility and expanding the definitions to include "physical restraint" and "sexual hazing."
   - Clarifying ambiguous terms like "promptly" in policy language, which board members suggested making more specific (e.g., timeframes for reporting).
3. **Consequences and Reporting Protocols**:
   - Discussion of consequences for policy violations and ensuring procedural clarity in reporting incidents (e.g., verbal reports followed by documentation).
   - Enhancing mechanisms to document bullying and hazing cases systematically through the district's SIS system for trend analysis and accountability.
4. **Board Recommendations and Next Steps**:
   - Incorporate clearer links between related policies (e.g., sexual harassment policies) for ease of reference by parents and stakeholders.
   - Reassess action plans for ensuring follow-up after incidents to guarantee a safe environment for affected parties.
   - Suggest modifications to address procedural gaps, such as detailing escalation processes and disciplinary actions.
5. **Model Policies and District Adaptation**:
   - USB Model Policies serve as a baseline but are often tailored to district-specific needs.
   - Discussion of how these policies align with Title IX and state requirements, including PAC reporting for teacher misconduct.
6. **Future Actions**:
   - Revise the policies based on board feedback, incorporate additional clarity on ambiguous terms, and finalize an updated draft for further review.
   - Provide training and procedural guidance for administrators on handling bullying and hazing incidents per the revised policy.

Discussion, Information: 3. Policy Review/Updates: Early Retirement Policy
Director of Operations & Human Resources Shawn Kelly presented.

· **Policy Issue Identified**:
  - The current early retirement policy could negatively impact families if a retired employee dies within the first three years of receiving their retirement stipend. The stipend would terminate, causing financial hardship for beneficiaries.

· **Proposed Changes**:
  - The revision proposes that employees designate a beneficiary for the stipend (similar to the Utah Retirement Systems policy). This allows the stipend to continue for the remaining duration (up to three years) in the event of the employee's untimely death.
  - Beneficiaries are no longer limited to a surviving spouse. The new policy would allow employees to designate any beneficiary, such as children or other dependents.

· **Rationale**:
  - This change ensures the policy supports employees and their families during catastrophic situations.
  - It aligns with the district's goal of offering equitable and compassionate benefits.

· **Action Items**:
  - Board members discussed updating the policy language to reflect the ability to designate any beneficiary.
  - The revised policy is expected to be presented for a vote with the suggested amendments included.

Discussion, Information: 3. Round Table Discussion:
The following items were discussed during the Round Table Discussion:

1. **Capital Project Prioritization**:
   - A process is underway to identify and prioritize capital improvement needs based on feedback from principals and custodial crews.
   - A detailed list of requests (the "wish list") will be reviewed and organized according to importance and budget constraints.
2. **Budget Constraints**:
   - The district's capital improvement budget has remained consistent at around $1 million annually for nine years.
   - Unexpected repairs, such as the JR Smith Elementary roof, are prioritized, causing other projects to be postponed.
3. **Examples of Projects**:
   - Replacement of 20-year-old carpet at Rocky Mountain Middle School is a priority due to its age and usage.
   - Routine maintenance, like addressing overgrown bushes, is managed by the in-house maintenance team, which helps save costs.
4. **Timeline**:
   - Meetings with principals to finalize project lists are nearly complete.
   - A finalized list and budget recommendations will be presented at the February board meeting, allowing time for project bids and summer implementation.
5. **In-House Expertise**:
   - The district's maintenance team handles many tasks, such as plumbing, electrical, and painting, internally, reducing reliance on external contractors.
6. **Long-Term Planning**:
   - Emphasis is placed on finding the right timing for maintenance to maximize cost efficiency and longevity.

B. Board of Education Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
Meeting called to order at 6:37 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance led by Board Member Brad Ehlert

2. Board Member Roll Call
Members present
Board President: Tyler Bluth
Board Vice President, Kim Dickerson
Board Member, Cory Holmes
Board Member, Breanne Dedrickson
Board Member, Brad Ehlert

Superintendent, Paul Sweat
Business Administrator, Dr. Jason Watt

C. Information/Celebrations

Discussion, Information: 1. School Board Appreciation Month

Kody Clyde, a teacher at Wasatch High School and representative of the Wasatch Education Association, expressed gratitude on behalf of all district teachers to the Board of Education. He acknowledged the board's support as a key factor in the great things happening in the Wasatch School District. While noting current challenges and concerns in public education at the legislative level, he emphasized the district's positive achievements and thanked the board sincerely for their contributions.

Superintendent Sweat responded to Mr. Clyde's comments by emphasizing that the Wasatch School District is committed to abiding by laws as they are enacted. Without delving into specifics about current legislative matters, he reassured that the board and administration value their relationship with teachers and are always open to discussions on topics important to both sides. The superintendent highlighted their shared commitment to doing their best for students and maintaining a collaborative working relationship.

LaNay King, Principal of Old Mill Elementary, presented a performance from 5th Grade Dual Language Immersion Students in honor of School Board Appreciation Month:

1. ***Introduction and Gratitude**:*
   - *Principal King expressed deep appreciation to the Board for their dedication, hard work, and ongoing support of the district's schools, faculty, and students.*
   - *She highlighted the Board's role in protecting the future of the valley's "most valuable resource"—the next generation.*
2. ***Civic Education Focus**:*
   - *King, passionate about civic education, emphasized the value of connecting students with the Board members who impact their education.*
   - *She introduced the fifth-grade DLI (Dual Language Immersion) cohort, describing their presence at the meeting as a meaningful learning opportunity and a way to express gratitude.*
3. ***Music Program Acknowledgment**:*
   - *Shelly Gladwin, the music specialist at Old Mill Elementary, also spoke, thanking the Board for supporting music education in elementary schools—a privilege not common in many Utah schools.*
   - *She expressed her love for her job and appreciation for the Board's efforts to grow the music program.*

The presentation concluded with a performance by the students, celebrating the Board's contributions and dedication.

(NOTE: Following a Board vote, Action Item 1 was moved to this position ahead of Community Comment.)

Action: 1. Consideration of Resignation for Board Member Tyler Bluth

*Board President **Tyler Bluth** formally submitted his **resignation** from the Wasatch County School District Board of Education due to his **relocation outside the district**, which disqualifies him from serving under board residency requirements. He cited **rising housing costs in Heber Valley** as the primary reason for his move.*

- *In his remarks, **President Bluth reflected on his tenure**, highlighting key accomplishments, including **improving school facilities, increasing school security with the placement of officers in schools, managing challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, and securing funding for a new high school**. He expressed gratitude for **public education, the relationships he built, and the collaborative work of the board**.*
- *Board members and district officials commended **President Bluth's leadership, integrity, and commitment to the district**, emphasizing his contributions to **teacher pay raises, student achievement improvements, and his ability to lead with kindness**.*
- ***Superintendent Sweat** outlined the **process for selecting a replacement**, stating that **applications will be accepted from eligible community members, followed by public interviews before the next board meeting**. The **newly appointed board member will serve the remainder of Bluth's term**.*
- *During the **public comment period**, **community members, parents, and district employees** expressed appreciation for **Bluth's service and leadership** during pivotal moments in the district's development. The meeting concluded with **words of gratitude, a group photo, and President Bluth being officially excused**.*

Motion by Kimberly Dickerson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Abstain: Tyler Bluth

D. Community Comment

Discussion, Information: 1. Public comments will be accepted for approximately twenty (20) minutes. Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of two (2) minutes.

*The **Wasatch County School District** follows policy **R277-301-7**, which allows for the issuance of **LEA-specific educator licenses** to individuals who may not have a state teaching license but possess **expertise in a particular field**. These individuals are **hired by the district** to teach specific courses when there is a demonstrated need, and the **Board issues a license** for them to teach under district oversight.*

- *Superintendent **Sweat clarified the purpose** of these licenses, emphasizing that they enable the district to **bring in qualified professionals** with relevant expertise to **fill instructional gaps**. The names of the individuals under consideration for an **LEA-specific license** are publicly posted, and the meeting provides an **opportunity for public comment** before the Board approves the licenses.*
- *The floor was then opened for any public comments regarding the **LEA-specific educator licenses -** there were no public comments.*

E. Consent Items

Action (Consent): 1. Consideration of Consent Items
Resolution: Consideration and Approval of Consent Items E 2. - E8.
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent), Minutes: 2. School Board Meeting Minutes - December 17, 2024
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent), Minutes: 3. School Board Meeting Minutes - January 7, 2025
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent): 4. Financials
Resolution: Approval of December 2024 Financials
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent): 5. New High School Winter Conditions Costs
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent): 6. School Choice Applicants
Resolution: Approval of School Choice Applicants
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action (Consent): 7. Home School Applicants
Resolution: Approval of Home School Applicants

Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth
Action (Consent): 8. Employee New Hires
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth
Action (Consent): 9. Employee Separations
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth
Action (Consent): 10. Early Retirement Requests
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth
Action (Consent): 11. Staff or Student Travel
Approval of School Choice Applicants
Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

F. Action Items

Action: 2. Election of School Board Leadership President

- ***Business Administrator Watt*** *introduced the process for electing a* ***new Board President and Vice President****. He explained that* ***nominations would be accepted from any board member****, followed by a vote. If multiple candidates were nominated, a debate would be held before voting.*
- ***Nominations for Board President*** *were opened, and* ***Cory Homes nominated Kim Dickerson****. No additional nominations were made. The board proceeded with a* ***vote by hand****, and* ***Kim Dickerson was unanimously elected as the new Board President****.*

Motion by Cory Holmes
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action: 3. Election of School Board Leadership Vice President

- *Following the election of the* ***Board President****,* ***Business Administrator Watt*** *opened the floor for* ***nominations for Board Vice President****.*
- ***Breanne Dedrickson nominated Cory Holmes*** *for the position. No additional nominations were made.*
- *The board proceeded with a* ***vote by hand****, and* ***Cory Holmes was unanimously elected as the new Board Vice President****.*

Motion by Kimberly Dickerson
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Following the elections, ***President Kim Dickerson*** *expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve and emphasized that the* ***Board functions as a team of five****, where all voices will be heard. She stated her commitment to working collaboratively with fellow board members.*
Vice President Cory Holmes *echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the importance of* ***collective decision-making*** *and recognizing that* ***differing viewpoints contribute to strong leadership****. He also expressed appreciation for* ***Superintendent Sweat's guidance and support*** *in board matters.*
Director Shawn Kelly *congratulated* ***President Dickerson and Vice President Holmes****, expressing confidence in their leadership and looking forward to working with them.*

Action: 4. Consideration for Approval of LEA-Specific License for New Hire - Shawn Kelly, Director of HR/Operations
Approval of LEA-Specific License for New Hire

- ***HR and Operations Director Shawn Kelly*** *provided an overview of the* ***LEA-specific license request****, explaining that while such licenses are sometimes issued to* ***professionals transitioning into education****, they may also apply to* ***teachers who are in the process of completing their degree or student teaching****.*
- *The district has hired a* ***new teacher at Timpanogos Middle School****, who falls into the latter category. Based on this,* ***Director Kelly recommended board approval of the LEA-specific license for the new hire****.*

Motion by Kimberly Dickerson, second by Breanne Dedrickson.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action: 5. Consideration to Purchase School Bus - Shawn Kelly, Director of HR/Operations

- ***HR and Operations Director Shawn Kelly*** *presented a request for the* ***purchase of a new school bus*** *as part of the district's* ***annual fleet rotation plan****. He explained that the district typically purchases* ***one or two buses per year*** *to ensure that* ***newer, safer buses*** *are used for* ***extracurricular and long-distance travel*** *while maintaining a fleet of* ***six spare buses*** *for backup. Mr. Kelly recommended the* ***purchase of a Bluebird bus*** *from* ***Bryson*** *for* ***$221,728****, citing Bluebird's* ***reliability, compatibility with existing district buses, and suitability for the local climate****. The purchase falls under the* ***state bid process****, which allows school districts to buy from pre-approved vendors without requiring additional bids.*
- *During discussion, board members inquired about* ***bus safety features****, including* ***GPS tracking, surveillance cameras, backup cameras, and radio communication with the district****. Kelly confirmed that all buses are* ***equipped with these features*** *and noted that* ***future upgrades may include tablets with student routing maps*** *to improve efficiency and safety.*
- *Following further discussion regarding* ***spare bus usage and safety protocols****, a* ***motion to approve the bus purchase was made by Cory Holmes****, seconded by* ***Kim Dickerson****, and was* ***unanimously approved by the Board****.*

Motion by Cory Holmes, second by Breanne Dedrickson.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action: 6. Consideration to Revise the Early Retirement Policy - Shawn Kelly, Director of HR/Operations

- ***HR and Operations Director Shawn Kelly*** *presented proposed revisions to the* ***Early Retirement Incentive Policy****, which provides a* ***stipend for employees who retire before becoming eligible for full Social Security benefits****. The revision aligns the district's policy with* ***Utah Retirement Systems (URS) guidelines****, allowing the stipend to be* ***transferred to a designated beneficiary*** *in the event of the retiree's passing during the designated benefit period.*
- *Following discussion in a* ***study session****, the revised policy was brought forward for approval.*
- *A* ***motion to approve the revised Early Retirement Policy*** *was made by* ***Breanne Dedrickson****, seconded by* ***Brad Ehlert****, and was* ***unanimously approved by the Board****.*
- *Board members commended the change, emphasizing that it reflects the district's* ***compassion and commitment to supporting employees and their families****. They expressed appreciation for the policy's effort to* ***alleviate financial burdens during difficult times*** *and acknowledged the* ***importance of expanding the definition to allow for greater flexibility****.*
- *Mr. Kelly reiterated that* ***the revision is the right thing to do****, a sentiment supported by the* ***Superintendent and the Board****.*

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

Action: 7. Consideration to Approve Wireless Access Points -Zach Bredsguard, Maintenance Supervisor

- ***Zach Bredsguard*** *presented a proposal for the* ***replacement of wireless access points*** *at the* ***high school and two middle schools****. He explained that the current devices are* ***three generations behind****, and upgrading them will allow for* ***increased student connectivity, higher speeds, and future scalability****.*
- *The proposal, submitted by* ***Summit Partners****, amounts to* ***$134,430.01****. The* ***district anticipates E-Rate funding****, which could reduce the final cost by approximately* ***50%****, though the funding is not guaranteed at this stage. The purchase will be funded through the* ***Technology Department's budget****.*
- *Board members inquired about* ***the placement and scalability*** *of the access points.* ***Bredsguard confirmed that the new devices will replace all existing classroom and hallway units*** *and are* ***Wi-Fi 7 capable with future upgrade potential****. The district will continue using the* ***Aruba brand*** *to maintain compatibility with its existing network management system.*
- *A* ***motion to approve the purchase*** *was made by* ***Kim Dickerson****, seconded by* ***Cory Homes****, and was* ***unanimously approved by the Board****.*

Motion by Kimberly Dickerson, second by Cory Holmes.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

G. Board Report

Discussion, Information: 1. New High School Name and Mascot
Director of Assessment Brett Zabel *presented the results of the* ***community survey*** *conducted to determine the* ***name and mascot*** *for the new high school.*

- *The survey for the* ***high school name*** *resulted in* ***"Deer Creek High School"*** *receiving* ***50.5% of the votes****, meeting the majority threshold and eliminating the need for additional rounds of voting.*
- *The survey for the* ***mascot*** *required multiple rounds, as no option initially received over 50% of the votes. After eliminating the lowest vote-getter in each round and reallocating votes accordingly,* ***"Riverhawks"*** *emerged as the final selection with* ***52.1% of the votes****.*

Superintendent Sweat *noted that surveys were distributed to* ***students, teachers, parents, and the broader community via social media****. Across all groups, the results were* ***unanimous in favor of "Deer Creek High School" and "River Hawks."*** *He commended the* ***board and administration*** *for handling the process professionally and responding to community input.*
Board President Kim Dickerson *acknowledged the* ***extensive outreach efforts*** *and expressed excitement for the* ***final selections****, emphasizing the importance of community engagement in the process.*
The finalized name and mascot will now be used to move forward with branding and school spirit initiatives.

Board Vice President Cory Homes *reported that board members recently attended the* ***State School Board Meetings in early January****. He noted that the event was* ***informative and motivational****, providing an opportunity for board members to* ***gain insights into their roles and responsibilities*** *while also strengthening* ***team relationships****.*
Board President Kim Dickerson *welcomed the* ***new board members****, expressing appreciation for their* ***collaboration and commitment****. She emphasized looking forward to* ***working together in the coming years****.*

H. Superintendent Report

Information: 1. Updates/Information

- ***Superintendent Paul Sweat*** *commended the* ***Board for their full attendance*** *at the* ***Utah School Board Association State Convention****, highlighting the event's* ***well-organized structure and valuable professional development*** *opportunities. He emphasized the district's* ***commitment to professional learning communities (PLCs)****, explaining that student achievement is* ***directly linked to continuous learning and collaboration among educators****. The district's* ***high-functioning PLCs*** *have gained recognition* ***statewide and nationally****, with other districts visiting Wasatch to learn from its success.*
- *Superintendent Sweat acknowledged the* ***collective efforts of administrators, principals, and teachers*** *in driving student achievement forward, noting that their dedication has resulted in* ***recognition for Wasatch schools****, such as* ***Old Mill Elementary being ranked 5th out of 855 elementary schools in Utah by U.S. News & World Report****.*
- *He* ***thanked the Board*** *for its* ***policy and financial support*** *in ensuring that teachers are* ***adequately compensated and valued****, which contributes to their ability to maintain high educational standards. He also welcomed the* ***two new board members****, expressing enthusiasm for their fresh perspectives and participation in the selection process for a new board member.*
- *Additionally, Superintendent Sweat* ***invited Board President Kim Dickerson and Vice President Cory Holmes*** *to attend a* ***board leadership training session hosted by the Utah School Boards Association*** *on* ***February 22nd in Spanish Fork****, offering to accompany them for professional development.*

Board Recognition of Superintendent Sweat
Board President Kim Dickerson highlighted a **recent feature on Superintendent Sweat** in the **School Administrator Magazine** published by the **American Association of School Administrators**. She read a quote from **former board member Tom Hansen**, who praised **Superintendent Sweat's ability to honor Wasatch County's traditions while embracing forward-thinking initiatives**. She expressed her appreciation for **Superintendent Sweat's leadership, commitment to student success, and dedication to the district**, affirming her excitement for continued collaboration.
Superintendent Sweat thanked the Board for their support.

I. Adjournment

Action, Procedural: 1. Adjourn Meeting
Motion by Cory Holmes, second by Brad Ehlert.
Final Resolution: Motion Carries
Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson
Not Present at Vote: Tyler Bluth

J. Executive Session
Action: 1. Section 52-4-5 of the Open Meetings Act identifies the topics that may be discussed in a closed meeting. Discussion to purchase, exchange or lease of real property; character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; pending or reasonably imminent litigation; and or collective bargaining.