

DRAFT

February 25th, 2025 - Wasatch County School District Board of Education Interviews and Board Meeting (Tuesday, February 25, 2025)*Generated by Kirsta Albert***1. Pledge of Allegiance led by Board President Kimberly Dickerson****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

A. Board of Education Meeting - 4:00 pm*Meeting called to order at 4:01 PM*

Action: 3. Board Meeting Sign-in-sheet

B. Interviews to Fill Vacant Board of Education Seat D*Discussion, Information: 1. Interviews***Candidate Nicole Lofgran**

Nicole Lofgran, a resident since 2010, has a degree in social work with a child welfare emphasis and a minor in Spanish. She has four children in the district and extensive volunteer experience with schools and PTA programs. Fluent in Spanish, she supports improved communication with diverse families. She highlights time management, budgeting, and financial planning as key skills. Mrs. Lofgran advocates for anonymous stakeholder surveys, self-assessment, and open communication to evaluate district leadership. She plans to engage with teachers, staff, and community members and use social media and direct outreach for communication. Identifying as independent, she emphasizes balanced decision-making and collaboration.

Candidate Nicole Ferguson:

Nicole Ferguson, a lifelong resident, business owner, and parent of four students in the district, is actively involved in community and economic development. She brings experience in business management, problem-solving, and public engagement. Mrs. Ferguson values transparency, structured goal-setting, and collaboration between school leadership and the community. She supports Main Street revitalization while prioritizing education and advocates for balanced school funding. If appointed, she plans to engage directly with parents, students, and educators, emphasizing fact-based communication and structured assessments to ensure district goals are met.

Candidate Craig Chambers:

Craig Chambers, an attorney with 15 years of experience in local government, has lived in the area for over a decade and has three children in the school district. He has worked in prosecution, planning commissions, and HR matters, including budgeting, taxation, and bond processes. Mr. Chambers emphasized the importance of respect, listening, and community engagement in decision-making. He highlighted administration, teachers, and an engaged community as the district's greatest strengths. He supports establishing measurable goals to assess district leadership and advocates for proactive communication with stakeholders. Mr. Chambers plans to seek reelection and believes strong relationships between schools, law enforcement, and the community help foster student success.

Candidate Ryan Nord

Ryan Nord, a financial professional with experience in investment advisory, has lived in Wasatch County for eight years. He has two children currently in the district and recently served on a committee at the high school. His expertise lies in collaborative decision-making, financial analysis, and strategic planning. Mr. Nord emphasized the importance of understanding diverse perspectives, conflict resolution, and balancing educational priorities. He highlighted the district's broad range of educational opportunities as a key strength, supporting both college-bound students and those pursuing trade careers. He believes in continuous assessment of leadership through goal-setting, communication, and feedback mechanisms. Mr. Nord views taxes as an investment and advocates for fiscal responsibility while ensuring resources are used effectively. He is open to reelection and prioritizes community engagement, financial stewardship, and adaptability in addressing district growth and needs.

The Board then invited candidate Nicole Lofgran back up for additional questions as she was the first to be interviewed and they wanted to give her an opportunity to answer the same breadth of questions as the candidates who followed her:

Nicole Lofgran discussed the challenges faced by Title I families, particularly the impact of rising housing costs and accessibility to early education programs. She emphasized the need to expand preschool availability and ensure transportation options for students whose parents work early hours. Mrs. Lofgran highlighted the importance of maintaining diversity in the community and school district, noting that exposure to different backgrounds benefits all students. She advocated for improving accessibility to resources for families in need, including support for

special needs students and bilingual education. Regarding budget management, she emphasized the need to evaluate spending priorities objectively, ensuring funds are directed toward programs that best serve students' educational needs while balancing costs effectively.

Candidate Daniel Dahl

Daniel Dahl rescinded his application for the open board seat, citing concerns that his past close ties with the district could create perceived conflicts of interest and unnecessary scrutiny. He clarified that his decision to apply was made independently and that he was not encouraged by any board members or district leadership. Dahl emphasized his respect for the district and its leadership and stated that he did not want to be a distraction from the board's work. Board members expressed appreciation for his qualifications, past service, and courage in both applying and withdrawing. Mr. Dahl indicated he may run in a future election cycle rather than seek appointment. He voiced confidence in the remaining candidates and expressed support for the district's leadership.

Candidate Jake Collett

Jake Collett, a business consultant specializing in communication and problem-solving, emphasized his experience in aligning goals and fostering open dialogue. A Wasatch County resident, he values the district's adaptability and diverse educational opportunities. He aims to enhance community engagement, ensure fact-based decision-making, and support unity as the district transitions to two high schools. Collett advocates for measurable goals, fiscal responsibility, and balancing resources with student achievement. He believes strong communication and transparency are essential in addressing challenges and maintaining trust between the board, educators, and the community. If appointed, he plans to prioritize transparency, effective leadership evaluation, and long-term service to the district.

Candidate Charles Balch

Charles Balch, a longtime Wasatch County resident and banking executive, emphasized his financial expertise, leadership experience, and commitment to education. With a background in business finance and over 25 years in banking, he highlighted his ability to manage budgets, analyze financial data, and make fiscally responsible decisions. Balch values the strength of Wasatch School District's educators and the positive impact they have on students. He aims to foster collaboration, ensure financial accountability, and support the district's vision through clear metrics and strategic planning. If appointed, he intends to seek reelection, build strong relationships, and prioritize transparency in decision-making. Addressing concerns over a potential conflict of interest due to his employment with Zions Bank, he clarified that he has no role in the district's banking relationship and would recuse himself from related matters if necessary.

E. 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 Board voted to move this item up in the agenda to allow comments prior to the appointment of Board Member for Seat D***

- ***Jill Lawson** expressed concerns about how student complaints, specifically regarding misconduct by school staff, are handled. She shared her daughter's experience from two years ago, where a report about a coach's behavior did not lead to meaningful change. She emphasized that policies alone do not ensure student safety—responsible individuals do. She urged the board to clarify reporting processes and ensure proper handling of such issues.*
- ***Ryan Lawson** echoed his wife's concerns, pointing out that school safety should include protection from internal threats like emotional abuse from authority figures. He noted that neighboring districts prioritize student safety on their websites, whereas Wasatch County's website does not prominently feature it. He called for increased awareness and action to make internal school safety a priority.*
- ***Kimo Paulson** appreciated the selection process for filling the board vacancy, suggesting that a diversity of skills among board members would be beneficial. He also humorously suggested replacing elections with a similar selection process.*
- ***Randall Lund** highlighted the need for healing and unity within the community, emphasizing that board members must prioritize representing and valuing the community's concerns.*
- ***Denise Harris**, the outgoing board member, shared her thoughts on the candidates for her replacement, identifying three she found particularly strong. She also inquired about the possibility of expanding the board to seven members in the future, which is dependent on the student population reaching 10,000.*

C. Action Items

Action: 1. Appointment of Board of Education Member, Seat D - Board President, Kim Dickerson

The Board discussed the appointment of the new board member following the interviews with five candidates who remained in contention. The discussion showed differing opinions among board members, particularly regarding candidate Charles Balch, whose potential appointment raised community concerns despite no identified legal conflict of interest. Board members initially expressed support for different candidates, with Craig Chambers and Jake Collette also receiving consideration. Board President Kim Dickerson and Vice-President Cory Holmes supported Balch, while Brad Ehlert and Breanne Dedrickson emphasized the importance of maintaining community trust.

Key Points:

- **Community Considerations:** *Some board members, including Ehlert, emphasized avoiding candidates who might raise public concern, while others, such as Dickerson and Holmes, noted that Balch had no legal conflicts.*
- **Candidate Qualifications:**
 - *Jake Collette: Recognized for communication and relationship-building skills.*
 - *Craig Chambers: Noted for legal and governance expertise.*
 - *Charles Balch: Acknowledged for financial expertise but faced community concerns.*

- **Final Decision:** The board voted to appoint Jake Collette with three votes in favor (Dedrickson, Dickerson, Ehlert) and one opposed (Holmes). The appointment was based on Collette's communication skills and ability to build relationships. He was scheduled to take the oath of office the following day.

Motion to appoint Craig Chambers to fill Seat D

Motion made by Breanne Dedrickson, seconded by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Failed.

Yay: Ehlert, Dedrickson

Nay: Dickerson, Holmes.

Motion to appoint Jake Collett to fill Seat D

Motion by Brad Ehlert, second by Breanne Dedrickson.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Nay: Cory Holmes

Action: 2. Consideration of the Purchase of the 2024 Wasatch Home Building Class Residence - Weston Broadbent, Director of CAPS

A motion to purchase the Wasatch Home Building Class Residence, located at 1279 West Heron Way in Heber, UT for \$677,000. The Board considered purchasing the 2024 Wasatch Home Building Class Residence, as presented by CTE/CAPS Director Weston Broadbent. The home, originally sold to an educator in September, was being offered back to the district under its first right of refusal for \$677,000. The district is not obligated to repurchase the home but could do so to maintain control and ensure it remains available for an educator through sale or lease. The Board discussed the 3% deed restriction, which limits annual equity growth to preserve affordability in the Park View Place subdivision. Board Member Brad Ehlert shared community support for the program, emphasizing its value in allowing educators to live locally. Board Member Breanne Dedrickson highlighted the dual benefits of the program—providing real-world experience for students while also securing affordable housing for educators.

Motion by Cory Holmes, second by Breanne Dedrickson.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action, Discussion: 3. Consideration to Approve Flooring for Deer Creek High School - Zach Bredsguard, Maintenance Supervisor

The Board reviewed a proposal presented by Maintenance Supervisor Zach Bredsguard for flooring installation at Deer Creek High School. The proposal covered carpet and laminate vinyl tile (LVT) flooring, with a low bid from Certified Sales at \$1,032,500. Mr. Bredsguard recommended board approval, noting that the pricing falls under a state contract. Board Member Breanne Dedrickson moved to approve the proposal and highlighted that purchasing through the state contract resulted in a cost-saving, making it a fiscally responsible choice. Business Administrator Jason Watt added that the flooring quality is superior to the original specifications. Board Member Brad Ehlert confirmed that a credit would be applied to the original bid.

Motion by Cory Holmes, second by Breanne Dedrickson.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action: 4. Consideration to Approve Capital Projects for FY'26 - Zach Bredsguard, Maintenance Supervisor

The Board reviewed the proposed Capital Projects for Fiscal Year 2026, as presented by Maintenance Supervisor Zach Bredsguard. The list, compiled in collaboration with district staff, principals, and head custodians, initially totaled approximately \$2.5 million but was refined to a prioritized list of \$1,205,500. Board Member Breanne Dedrickson motioned to approve the capital projects list, which was seconded by Board Member Brad Ehlert. Discussion followed, with Mr. Bredsguard explaining the prioritization process and how some projects were deferred rather than cut. Business Administrator Jason Watt clarified that early approval allows the bidding process to begin before the fiscal budget is finalized in June. Concerns were raised about addressing emerging maintenance needs at the high school. Mr. Bredsguard explained that urgent issues could be handled through maintenance requests or reallocation of funds. The board also discussed contingency planning for unexpected maintenance expenses and confirmed that budget allowances exist for such situations. Additional topics included an LED lighting upgrade, which Mr. Bredsguard confirmed was eligible for rebates, and security camera installations, which are separate from state-funded legislative grants. The motion to approve the capital projects list was unanimously passed.

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

D. Consent Items

Action (Consent): 1. Consideration of Consent Items

Resolution: Consideration and Approval of Consent Items E 2. - E8.

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent), Minutes: 2. School Board Meeting Minutes - January 28, 2025

Consideration and Approval of Consent Items E 2. - E8.

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 3. Financials

Resolution: Approval of January 2025 Financials

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 4. Deer Creek High School Winter Construction Costs

Approval of New High School Winter Condition Costs

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 5. School Choice Applicants

Resolution: Approval of School Choice Applicants

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 6. Home School Affidavits

Resolution: Approval of Home School Applicants

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 7. Employee New Hires

Approval of Employee New Hires

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 8. Employee Separations

Approval of Employee Separations

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

Action (Consent): 9. Staff or Student Travel

Approval of Staff or Student Travel

Motion by Breanne Dedrickson, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

F. Board Report

The **Board Report** included updates from board members and reflections on the recent appointment process for a new board member.

- **Board Member Breanne Dedrickson** shared positive experiences attending literacy nights at **Daniels Canyon Elementary and Midway Elementary**, noting strong community participation and a focus on reading under the "Wasatch Reads" initiative. She also praised the **Wasatch Learning Academy (WLA)** for effectively engaging students with technology.
- **Board President Kim Dickerson and Superintendent Paul Sweat** commended the board for navigating the challenging board member appointment process with professionalism and respect. They emphasized appreciation for the candidates who participated and hoped they felt valued.
- **Board Vice-President Cory Holmes** acknowledged that while he voted against the final selection, he remains unified with the board's decision and expressed hope for mutual respect in future votes.
- The board welcomed **Mr. Collette**, the newly appointed board member, and expressed full support for him while also extending appreciation to the other candidates.
- Superintendent Sweat announced a **special board meeting the following day at 5:00 PM** to officially swear in Mr. Collette, inviting board members and his family to attend.

The report highlighted **community engagement, unity within the board, and appreciation for all participants** in the appointment process.

G. Superintendent Report

Nothing additional to report

H. Adjournment

Action, Procedural: 1. Adjourn Meeting

Motion to move into Executive Session

Motion by Cory Holmes, second by Brad Ehlert.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Cory Holmes, Kimberly Dickerson, Brad Ehlert, Breanne Dedrickson

I. Executive Session

Action: 1. Under Utah Code § 52-4, public bodies must conduct meetings openly, but certain topics can be discussed in a closed session under specific legal exceptions. The topics that may be discussed in a closed meeting include: Character, Competence, or Health of an Individual, Collective Bargaining, Pending or Reasonably Imminent Litigation, Property Transactions, Security Matters, and Investigative Proceedings.