



**BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK SESSION**  
**92 Lodestone Way – Tooele, Utah 84074-8050**

**Tuesday, April 29, 2025**

***THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT YET BEEN FORMALLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND, UNTIL SUCH FORMAL APPROVAL, ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE***

The public Session was held in the Ophir Room at the District Office.

**Board Members Present:**

Robert Gowans, Emily Syphus, Elizabeth Smith, Melissa Rich, Todd Thompson, Scott Bryan, ValaRee Shields

**Administration Present:**

Superintendent Ernst, Brad Hranicky, Cody Reutzel, Dustin Nelson, Charles Hansen, Heather Castagno, Terra Sherwood, Andy Peterson, Lark Reynolds, Jeffrey Hamm, Ian Silva, Angie Gillette, Sarah Jarnagin, Sue Medina

President Rich conducted the meeting. Notice of the time, place, and agenda had been given to each governing body member more than two days before the meeting. The plan was published on the Utah Public Access Website and Transcript-Bulletin. Supportive documentation for this meeting can be reviewed at: <https://www.boarddocs.com/ut/tooelesd/Board.nsf/Public>.

**1. Work Session (A work session is intended to provide opportunities for board members to study issues in-depth, gather and analyze information, and clarify situations and potential solutions. While open to the public, these sessions are more informal than the regular board meeting.)**

**1.1 Welcome and Roll Call**

President Rich called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Ophir Training Room at the District Office.

**1.2 White Fleet Analysis**

Bucky Westfall from Enterprise provided a summary of the White Fleet partnership and how the program works. Blake Mansfield from Enterprise then went over our partnership summary, showcasing notable improvements in fleet size, vehicle age, odometer readings, acquisition and maintenance costs, fuel costs, total annual fleet expenditure, and equity in the fleet. Member Shields inquired about the daily usage percentage of vehicles, to which Mr. Reynolds responded that such data is currently unavailable. Mr. Westfall assured us that a utilization report would be provided in a future meeting. The discussion focused on the necessity of vehicles, price comparisons, and utilization analysis, with telematics being implemented to gather extensive data. It was noted that the cost of telematics is covered by state rates, and the data is highly valued by other districts, primarily for insurance purposes.

Member Bryan expressed concerns about the effectiveness of telematics without proper

monitoring. Mr. Westfall explained the onboarding process with Geo tab, emphasizing the importance of annual data reviews and identifying infractions. The conversation also addressed the total annual miles and the potential use of Expeditions instead of buses, highlighting the need for cross-referencing fleet size and vehicle usage.

Dr. Cody Reutzel, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, shared his experience of using his own vehicle due to scheduling difficulties, with Heather Castagno, Director of Student Services, concurring. Feedback from various departments indicated that vehicles are consistently in use, with occasional shortages during peak times such as summer hires. The age and condition of vehicles were discussed, with Mrs. Castagno recounting an incident of being stranded due to an old vehicle.

Member Syphus questioned the reimbursement rate for employees using their own cars, which Mr. Reynolds confirmed has not changed in years, and how often employees are using their own cars because a District car was not available. Member Thompson emphasized the need to evaluate fleet size for potential cost savings. Member Bryan noted that reducing fleet size might not significantly impact costs but could affect employee satisfaction with not being able to get a car.

President Rich recommended that if the board was not comfortable with the white fleet, they engage in a discussion on financial stewardship and spending to ensure they can effectively justify the district's expenditures. Mr. Westfall offered to conduct a case study, presenting all relevant data in a format that can be easily displayed on a webpage.

### 1.3 Teaching and Learning Director Report

Dr. Cody Reutzel, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, presented an annual report to the Board, outlining his department's initiatives, goals, and progress in curriculum development, assessment strategies, and early learning plans. The strategic plan for curriculum development and implementation spans from 2022 to 2028, emphasizes the importance of a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) and the role of district and school leaders in supporting effective instructional practices. District leaders will focus on studying, researching, and planning for GVC, the Common Formative Assessment Cycle (CFAC), and systems of support, while school leaders will prepare for the implementation of the Instructional Framework, GVC, and CFAC over the years. This phased approach aims to ensure continuous improvement in curriculum delivery and instructional quality.

Specific goals for literacy and math improvement were outlined, particularly targeting early grades. The literacy goal aims to increase the percentage of third-grade students at or above benchmark by implementing a kindergarten excellence program, with targeted growth metrics including a Kindergarten Composite increase of 21 points, K-3 Growth at 65%, and third-grade Computation improvement by 6 points. A daily 60-minute Tier 1 literacy block is planned to enhance literacy skills.

The report also provided an overview of the completion rates for various curriculum calibration observations as of Fall 2024, indicating high levels of completion across different subjects: CTE Curriculum (100%), DLI/Social Studies Curriculum (100%), ELA Curriculum (93%), and Math Curriculum (100%), with an overall Teaching & Learning completion rate of 97%.

Strategic model elements focus on credible and consistently implemented curriculum goals and their expected impacts on educational outcomes. The Executive Director of Teaching & Learning will support the completion of school GVC documents, ensuring all TCSD schools complete GVCs to provide system accountability and a foundation for continuous improvement. These goals aim to enhance the success of principals and teachers through effective monitoring and support.

Member Syphus highlighted the importance of celebrating the teachers behind these successful scores. Dr. Mark Ernst, Superintendent, emphasized the four-year cycle outlined by Dr. Reutzel, stating that as long as he remains Superintendent, this pattern and focus will continue, building and fortifying the foundation of the district's educational initiatives..

1.4 Technology Director Report

Dustin Nelson, Technology Director, presented an annual report to the Board, highlighting the Technology Department's focus on improving technology services and infrastructure. The report included the department's mission and vision, emphasizing the delivery of reliable, high-quality, and cost-effective technology services while ensuring a secure infrastructure. The vision aims to provide easy access to technology for students, staff, and the community, guided by core values of integrity, teamwork, quality, customer service, reliability, and innovation.

He stated that for the 2024-2025 school year goals, the department aimed to enhance communication, team development, and system integration across departments, leading to increased efficiency and reduced data duplication. Key goals included empowering education through technology initiatives, improving stakeholder communication regarding technology changes, enhancing team development through targeted training, and focusing on system-to-system communication improvements.

Planned actions to achieve these goals included creating connections between Active Directory, School ERP Pro, and Ed-Fi, implementing single sign-on (SSO) for various systems, and enhancing information systems and data security measures.

The timeline for technology initiatives outlined specific projects for each quarter:

- Jul-Sept: Firewall replacement, content migration, phone migration, and CCTV upgrades.
- Oct-Dec: My VR Spot rollout, IT policy review, and SSO migration.
- Jan-Mar: (Details not specified).
- Apr-Jun: Security training, equipment orders, and technology audits.

The Technology Department has resolved a significant number of help tickets, indicating a high demand for support. A total of 5,031 help tickets were resolved, with 74% related to tech systems and 25% pertaining to classroom and office devices. Cybersecurity and network issues accounted for 8% of the total tickets.

Mr. Nelson commended Whitney Wallace for elevating the district's website to full compliance. During the state's privacy compliance review, only 2% of websites were fully compliant, and the district's website was among them. He also noted the impacts of tariffs on technology, citing an example of classroom projectors increasing by \$1,400 in a week. Fortunately, the department has already ordered the necessary equipment for this year, but this will need to be considered for next year's budget. Mr. Nelson mentioned that the department is currently undergoing several audits and has been very efficient with their budgets this year.

Member Syphus questioned whether the expenditure on one-to-one devices for lower grades, such as kindergarten and first grade, is justified, as some teachers are opting out of using them. This led to a discussion on whether kindergarten students need to use technology devices. Chantel Cowan, Assistant Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, clarified that there are computer science standards for kindergarten that require the use of devices. She added that Ed Techs are available to assist and coach teachers on how to use these devices to meet the standards.

### 1.5 Operations Director Report

Ian Silva, Operations Director, presented his report titled "Student Success Starts with Operations" to the Board of Education. He emphasized the alignment of the Operations Department with Superintendent Ernst's Moon Goals and highlighted the critical role of over 400 employees in ensuring a clean and functional environment for students and staff. Silva stressed the importance of understanding the department's purpose and its impact on the overall success of the district.

Mr. Silva outlined the department's goals, including improving customer service and meeting capital outlay objectives. He encouraged staff to adopt a proactive approach and highlighted the importance of key performance indicators, referencing the book study on "Lessons from the Mouse." Silva also addressed the quick response times for maintenance issues, such as air conditioning repairs, and the often-overlooked contributions of custodial and food service staff.

President Rich raised questions about lunch program finances, noting the impact of state coverage for free and reduced lunches. Casey Kress, Child Nutrition Director, explained that despite federal reimbursement cuts and inflation, the district remains in the red for lunch programs. Mr. Kress mentioned the use of reserves from COVID funds and the need for standardized processes and lobbying efforts at various government levels.

Member Thompson inquired about exploring partnerships with local businesses for food donations. Mr. Kress stated that donations are managed through Successfund due to regulatory constraints. Vice President Gowans noted that community groups and individuals often donate to cover student lunch debts, especially during the holiday season.

Mr. Silva discussed budget priorities, emphasizing the importance of understanding and justifying expenditures to the public. He mentioned the ongoing assessment of building statuses, with significant attention on West Elementary due to seismic issues. The board agreed to a future presentation on this topic.

Mr. Silva addressed the bus driver shortage growth in students riding the bus, noting the challenges of recruitment and the impact of COVID-19. He highlighted the need for competitive compensation to attract and retain drivers and mentioned that administrative and maintenance staff have had to fill in as drivers.

Member Shields inquired about the maintenance plan and its communication to the Business Administrator. Silva confirmed ongoing discussions and the plan to add two positions to his team. He acknowledged the difficulty in hiring skilled tradespeople due to competition with higher-paying industries and the need for creative solutions to fill staffing gaps.

Mr. Silva provided examples of maintenance challenges, such as the high cost of repairing neglected equipment like the Stansbury High chillers. He also discussed the impact of tariffs on technology and construction costs, noting significant price increases and the need for strategic planning to mitigate these effects.

Mr. Silva's report highlighted the critical role of the Operations Department in supporting the district's educational mission and the need for continued investment and strategic planning to address ongoing challenges.

### 1.6 Tooele Education Foundation

Keith Bird, Executive Director of the Tooele Education Foundation (TEF), presented a report to the Board, highlighting TEF's achievements, dedication to education, and plans for future growth. He expressed gratitude for the opportunity and shared a slideshow of TEF's activities.

Mr. Bird emphasized the importance of TEF's mission and the significant contributions of its team members. He reported that TEF has received \$462,000 in in-kind donations from various businesses, contributing to the promotion of education. Employee contribution grants have reached \$ 24,782 this year, and scholarship donations for 2025 have reached \$71,100, with over 600 applications received. TEF has also secured \$727,000 in grants, all in cash, to support its initiatives.

Mr. Bird outlined TEF's areas of focus, including improving education, supporting students and educators, and providing essential resources. He introduced the Five Pillars of common goals and activities, which are Improve Education, Advocate for Educational Justice and Equity, Support Educators, Promote STEM Education, and the Ophir Learning Center, emphasizing the importance of each pillar in ensuring student success. TEF aims to provide students with necessary items such as clothing, beds, and food, and supports Title 6 funding to address diverse student needs. The foundation also assists with new teacher orientation, supplies, and funding for seminars to boost morale among employees and teachers.

Mr. Bird highlighted TEF's commitment to STEM education and Career and Technical Education (CTE) through grants and supplies, including kindergarten math stackers costing \$500 each. He expressed excitement about the Ophir Learning Center, which offers summer classes, ropes courses, trail-building opportunities, and student government retreats. The new building at Ophir is nearing completion, marking the start of a new chapter for TEF.

Member Thompson inquired about TEF's budget goals and reserve funds, and Mr. Bird explained that TEF aims to provide necessary supplies and raise money through in-kind donations, with a reserve PTIF account gaining interest. He noted that TEF strives to give back at least 95% of what it receives.

President Rich inquired about the status of teen centers. Mr. Bird explained that TEF does not manage teen centers, which are state-funded. He noted that DPHS has the only true teen center, while others serve as wellness centers. Bird suggested that fundraising for teen centers could be a future focus for TEF.

#### 1.7 Renaming CTE Program at the Community Learning Center (CLC)

Jonathan Marble, Principal of the Community Learning Center (CLC), and Grant Roberts, a teacher at the CLC, presented to the Board on the need to establish a distinct identity for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at the CLC. They explained that while the CLC is the building name, it houses several programs, and only one currently has a clear identity.

Mr. Roberts highlighted the achievements of his Graphic Arts class, which won first place in a board game design competition and will compete at nationals next month. He noted that while the culinary program has earned numerous trophies, many people outside of education are unaware of the CLC's offerings. Some students mistakenly believe they are part of Blue Peak High School (BPHS), and parents are often hesitant to send their children to the CLC due to this confusion.

The CTE program at the CLC includes 13 teachers, 22 subjects, and 50 classes for 780 students, offering a wide range of opportunities. Mr. Marble and Mr. Roberts discussed the importance of creating a distinct identity for the program, like other district tech centers. After numerous meetings and brainstorming sessions, including input from Vice President Gowans and Board Member Smith, "Advanced Career Exploration" (ACE) emerged as the favored name. A survey of students who brought friends to the CLC showed that 64.9% preferred the name ACE.

The next steps in establishing this new identity include developing a logo and branding, creating signage, updating the website, and communicating with parents, students, and the community.



Member Shields suggested incorporating "Tooole" to identify the district, but Marble noted that this might not resonate with students from other high schools. Member Syphus expressed concerns about the term "Exploration," while Roberts explained that it accurately reflects the exploratory nature of high school education.

Vice President Gowans and Member Bryan discussed the fit of the name with career and technical education, with Member Bryan suggesting that "Exploration" might imply a temporary phase rather than a career path. President Rich emphasized the need to focus on the technical aspect and suggested that the proposal be added to the public agenda for a vote. Superintendent Ernst provided historical context on the building, which has housed various programs over the years, and supported the idea of formalizing the name change.

The Board agreed to include the proposal on the agenda for further discussion and a vote.

#### 1.8 Budget Priorities

Lark Reynolds, Business Administrator, led a discussion with the Board regarding budget concerns and priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. He provided a recap of state revenue fluctuations and increasing expenditures, highlighting the growing financial burden. Mr. Reynolds explained that the district has managed by using funds set aside for opening two new schools and shifting expenses to the Capital Projects Fund. He presented options for addressing these financial challenges, including increasing revenues, temporarily using reserves, or cutting expenses.

Board members expressed concerns about the impact of cost-cutting measures on students and buildings. Member Bryan noted that relying on economic increases in state revenue might not be sufficient to cover rising costs, especially with the impact of tariffs.

Mr. Reynolds asked Board members to discuss their budget priorities to aid in drafting the budget for June. Member Syphus expressed concerns about the budget creation process and the lack of clarity regarding consequences. Member Bryan emphasized the need for the Board to focus on higher-level budget parameters rather than granular details. He agreed with Mr. Reynolds that the goal is to set a budget and trust the District to operate within those parameters. Member Shields stressed the importance of understanding the consequences of adhering to the set budget.

President Rich expressed the view that further cuts would negatively impact students and buildings. Member Syphus acknowledged the hard work of employees in cutting costs and going without raises. Vice President Gowans emphasized relying on departments to identify essential needs and manage within the available revenue.

Mr. Reynolds noted that the first draft of the budget would be presented at the June Board meeting.

## 2. **Adjourn (10 pm Curfew)**

### 2.1 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 pm.

#### **MOTION:** Adjourn

Motion by Scott Bryan, seconded by ValaRee Shields.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Robert Gowans, Todd Thompson, Melissa Rich, Emily Syphus, Elizabeth Smith, Scott Bryan, ValaRee Shields