



**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Washington County School District
Water Canyon High School
880 North Carling Street #520, Hildale, Utah
July 14, 2025
10:00 a.m.**

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Vice President LaRene Cox, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Burke Staheli, Board Member Ron Wade, Board Member Heidi Gunn, Superintendent Richard Holmes, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Nate Esplin, Assistant Superintendent Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Darin Thomas, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Susan Harrah, Executive Director Rusty Taylor, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Director of Teaching & Learning Brian Stevenson, Physical Facilities Director Bryan Dyer, Maintenance Director Rob Parr, and Student Services Director Brad Christensen

Also present: Stan DeMille - President of Water Irrigation Co.

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence offered by Member Wade.

WORK SESSION

Site Visit to Irrigation Facility in Water Canyon

Stan DeMille shared a brief history of the water in Hildale. The diversion pond has been here for 70 years. Approximately seven years ago pipes were put in and it has been water for the community. Washington County School District owns the majority of the shares. The District acquired the water from the UEP to provide water for the schools. David Stirland said the UEP approached us about purchasing the water. Brent Bills explained the UEP (United Effort Plan) Trust. Stan DeMille said there are a number of people who are connected and using the water that do not have rights to the water. Once the system is put in, we can start metering the water as per state law and get a little funding. He also mentioned that some of the lines run through private property, and they are trying to get an easement. LaRene Cox said the water company is trying to run new lines, so the line does not run under homes. She mentioned that Hildale City has a grant to run the pipes to Maxwell Canyon. They thought they would have enough to help the School District. They have been great and are wanting to help us. David Stirland said it would still be a couple of miles beyond Maxwell Canyon. Stan DeMille also mentioned that the current pipe has had several leaks. All five miles of the pipe need to be replaced. Stan DeMille is still working with the BLM on grant funding to help. LaRene Cox mentioned she has been working with the legislators on some funding help. The Board did a site visit to the irrigation facility.

Water Irrigation Company Update – President David Stirland and Vice President LaRene Cox
This report was included above.

Water Conservancy District MOU – Terry Hutchinson

Terry Hutchinson reported on the MOU with the Water Conservancy District. The MOU is about impact fees. The statute provides that they can only charge us for the actual impact that we have. In the past they have charged us as a regular commercial entity. They have developed a formula in negotiating with them. Essentially when we plan a new school there will be a meeting with them and provide data from water usage based on other schools to come to an agreement on how much impact we are going to have

on their system. They will look at what they physically have to do to their system to account for the water usage they are going to have. There is a provision that after three years either side can look at an accounting to see if it has been accurate. We would either pay a little more based on that or receive a refund or credit if we have overpaid. The Water Conservancy District will approve the language at their next meeting and then we will recommend the Board sign at the following Board Meeting. He mentioned he is working on two other memorandums that will be provided in a later meeting. Brent Bills mentioned that we do owe them for a couple of buildings right now. We have put off paying while we worked on the MOU. Brent Bills said they have agreed that we should not have to pay the surcharges we have been getting and will be working with us on that.

CT High Update – Cheri Stevenson

Cheri Stevenson shared a request for a cosmetology program at CT High. She shared that 36 students are currently going to cosmetology school. She shared a plan showing the courses and business fundamentals. Students as early as 9th grade can be certified and ready to work as a nail technician. They have some very specific classes and courses they take as they move up through the 12th grade. Another idea would be adding a fifth year through Dixie Technical College in order to allow them to do their master esthetician. We have a lot of spas coming to our community and they offer high end treatments that need highly specialized people. This career pathway would allow us to tap into that. She said that Chris Homer, CT High principal, is very supportive of this process and program. We do not want to have the high schools competing with duplicate programs. This would be a way with a standalone pathway for cosmetology at CT High. Those students that are interested would then come to CT High for the pathway. Not only would the students get their certificate, but they would also graduate with a 2-year degree in business which is incredible. They would have a great foundation. She said most people who are not successful after graduating from cosmetology school did not understand the business side of it. When Chris Homer started at CT High School, he had tons of emails and still receives calls about a cosmetology pathway. The program would cost students \$1500 to \$2000 compared to \$14,000 to \$20,000 and they would finish with a 2-year degree. It is incredible to think about what we would be providing for students. Cheri Stevenson mentioned that Bryan has been working with the architects on what other campuses have done and added two classrooms. The cost would be about a \$3.6 million investment for the addition. It would not be ready for about 18-24 months. She mentioned that Dixie Technical College is also interested in doing a program but is respectfully waiting to see what the District is doing. Craig Seegmiller asked if all the pathways at CT High are successful or if this could maybe replace one of the pathways. Cheri Stevenson said the business pathway is a standalone pathway and is being integrated into all the other pathways, so we could take that pathway and combine it. All of the pathways are full and are producing. Rusty Taylor said that the issue is space. We could lose the business program but would need the space for cosmetology. Cheri Stevenson said the business classes are essential for every single pathway so it doesn't need to be a standalone pathway and would be integrated. We wouldn't lose teachers, and we wouldn't lose content adding it to each of our pathways. She doesn't know if that space can be repurposed and utilized because the cosmetology suite is pretty specific and unique. Burke Staheli feels it should be integrated and agreed that it would need to be built for the right program. He asked about the number of students that would enter per year. Cheri Stevenson said based on the enrollment we have had anywhere from 25-36 students in the last three years. Burke Staheli estimated that there could be 140 students in the cosmetology pathway when full which might be worth the money. Cheri Stevenson said as we look at our vision for education, there are people who want something different like this. They are looking for that so they'll either go somewhere else, or they can come to us. Heidi Gunn asked about security risks of having random people coming into the school for students to do their hair during the day. Cheri Stevenson said they would have specific hours to provide services to the public. Superintendent Richard Holmes said we would also build an outside entrance. Brent Bills said they would not have access to the rest of the school and would only be in that area during the open hours. Burke Staheli asked if the intern students in their last year make the money or if the school would make the money for services provided. Rusty Taylor said as part of the program internship students don't make money but sometimes people give tips, so they get a little bit. The amount charged should go back to the program to help pay for it. LaRene Cox asked if CT High would be able to handle it if kids from other schools wanted to come for the program. Cheri Stevenson said that already happens

in all of the pathways. Superintendent Richard Holmes said they would be allowed to come as a full-time student only. Ron Wade questioned the economic impact it could have on existing schools in the area. Cheri Stevenson said there are different populations of students. We are accessing a population of younger students, 9th grade, so it's a very specific student compared to schools who sometimes will get someone who has maybe already gone to college or someone a little more mature and is coming for the classes. Some of the individuals she has talked to believe that there are kids in 9th grade that would have elected to go to cosmetology school but don't have \$20,000. This would be opening it up to more kids having access to do something like that. Ron Wade also asked about the return of investment. David Stirland pointed out it is not just about the return of investment. We are educating them, and they are getting their diplomas. The return on investment starts the second the program starts, and it is not always about dollars and cents. That is not public education. We are educating students, and they are now getting certifications. Ron Wade said if we are looking at maybe five potential pathways over the next five years, which of the five would have the greatest community financial impact. Cheri Stevenson agreed there is definitely more to research information so that we can create a plan for the next five year. Steven Dunham said one of the big things we talked to our taxpayers about was how every pathway we add alleviates pressure from all of our other high schools and delays the need for a whole new cone site which is tremendously expensive. By doing this, we are taking pressure off the high schools and can bump a new cone site further down the road which saves taxpayers money. We are being more efficient and efficient in the use of the taxpayer dollars. Brent Bills said this would cost about \$29,000 per student. The last high school we built cost \$50,000 per student. It would cost more now. It is cheaper per student to do this than to build another high school. The group talked about other pathway options and concerns with too many pathways. The current pathways include Health, Construction, Hospitality/Culinary Arts, Education, Engineering, Graphic Design, and Computer Science. Burke Staheli feels it would be great to add a plumbing or electrician pathway. David Stirland said in thinking about supporting cosmetology or any pathway some are probably the first children in their family to get a degree or certification. David Stirland asked at ongoing CTE funds. When the CT High School was built, he recalls that the vision wasn't to stop there but to continue to add to it. Superintendent Richard Holmes said we anticipated phases where we would add additional pathways to help slow down the need for a new high school. Currently we are in uncharted territory as our high schools are not growing so we are a little apprehensive to all of the sudden add three or four pathways for fear of what it would do to our current high schools. When Chris Homer approached us with one pathway he gets constant calls about, we thought well maybe. If we had continued our explosion of growth the next phase would have been to add three to five more pathways. Craig Seegmiller asked what students are getting from the vocational program in the high schools. Cheri Stevenson mentioned that one thing liked about cosmetology is that it is not offered at any of the high schools so we would not be competing with our high schools. She said we do have highly successful vocational programs at the schools. She said they have tried to really educate the high school principals on how the funding works to have a good solid foundation. Most of schools have started doing community nights where they invite the entire cone-site to come. The teachers talk about what they are doing. They are getting a lot of families there, so they are trying to build their programs through the cone site. Rusty Taylor mentioned they are able to take graphics, which is available at CT High as well, business is at every school, computer programming, auto shop, woods, and welding. Brent Bills also mentioned the school-to-school programs like concurrent enrollment. We have a lot for students in our schools. Ron Wade asked about the negative impact of AI on pathways. The group discussed some of the classes that could be impacted such as graphics.

UFA Scholarship and Music Participation – Rusty Taylor

Rusty Taylor said Utah Fits All is a scholarship where students can unenroll from public schools and they get a voucher. In the past we stopped those students from participating in extracurricular activities. We have had a few come back wanting to take a choir class, but there is competition at the end of the year that is state required. By our rule we haven't allowed that. His suggestion is to let them participate in choir or fine arts. We would not include them in any UHSAA sports. That would be the definition we would use. We will not be a provider for sports. We are no longer going to be a provider for elementary. It will just be for secondary schools at \$250 per class per quarter.

High School Facilities Use – Rusty Taylor

Rusty Taylor said there is a loud group of tennis players that want 24/7 access to the tennis courts, and they don't think they should have to pay anything for that. Some of the schools due to vandalism, overuse and issues have started to limit access to school outside facilities like tennis courts, baseball fields, and softball fields. Some have locked up the track and football field because of the amount of vandalism, damage, and dog poo that ends up on them. He asked if the Board is okay with that. In the past we have tried to be very open, but we really feel like if a school feels they need to limit that access we want it to be a little bit more regulated than just wide open to the public. Tennis courts is really what it is. There are groups of people that want access to the tennis courts whenever they want. Because of the amount of damage, overuse, and conflicts with scheduling we have had, some schools have started to lock their courts, and the tennis people are mad. They have been told they can still use them and here is our rental policy so they can schedule it and pay the rental fee. The complaints have been made to the city wanting more tennis courts built because the high schools are locking them. He told the city they can use them but have to rent them. He mentioned some of the damages happening to the property. There have also been problems removing people from the courts when someone else has it scheduled. Superintendent Richard Holmes said in the past, the sentiment of past boards has been to have them open for our public and community to feel that they can use the facilities. With the increasing population, there have been some challenges. The schools would like some guidance and direction. Heidi Gunn asked if the tennis courts could be left open during school hours for community use. David Stirland pointed out that would be when the schools are using them for classes. Craig Seegmiller said it is good public relations to be open but feels administrators should be given some oversight. Rusty Taylor said he would take back the message to principals to protect our facilities and to be good community members. He will let them problem solve and come up with some kind of schedule for courts to be open to the community. It was suggested to shut them off when it is dark.

Hurricane Pool MOU – Rusty Taylor

Rusty Taylor said he is working with Hurricane City and has talked with them about the District making a significant donation or investment into the pool. In return we are asking for quality practice time in perpetuity, hosting meets and also allowing the local elementaries field trips and even other schools to use the facility. The District is proposing to put \$1 million towards the pool.

Beginning of School Items/Calendar – Superintendent Richard Holmes

Superintendent Richard Holmes reviewed calendar items. He mentioned the school visits at the start of the year and invited board members to attend when available. The visits are short to welcome the staff back. We do have the USBA conference at Bryce Canyon. Heidi Gunn said the conference is September 25-27th. She shared some of the events planned for the conference. Ron Wade and Heidi Gunn and planning to attend. The Foundation Golf Tournament is on September 26th.

Building Update & Water Usage – Bryan Dyer and Robert Parr

Bryan Dyer said one of their main goals of the Facilities and Maintenance Department is water conservation. They have developed a water audit program to try and evaluate the biggest water users and the best water users and are looking to remove non usable lawn and access areas to help conserve. They are working to develop an asset inventory plan to identify equipment to start tracking some of the improvement costs going into schools. Rob Parr explained what has been done in the past. Craig Seegmiller said with the water conservation he would like some balance to keep our buildings looking attractive. Bryan Dyer said they are trying to keep some green space around the buildings and want to be balanced with their approach. They have been working with a landscape architect who specializes with this type of work to help make these improvements. Bryan Dyer mentioned working with the Water Conservancy on an MOU for impact fees. He also mentioned they have a program to give rebates for lawn removal. Brent Bills said the money comes from another source and the language states that once you remove the grass you can never put grass back in. If we removed the grass and needed it back in an area, we would not be able to put it back. Burke Staheli said when we do something, and it saves; we need to advertise it. Superintendent Richard Holmes asked Bryan Dyer and Rob Parr to keep track and take pictures when grass is pulled out so we can share with the community what we are doing to save.

Rob Parr said they are looking at spaces around the school where it doesn't make sense and will keep green spaces where the students are. Bryan Dyer reported on projects being done throughout the District including the Enterprise High remodel, Snow Canyon Middle replacement, the Dixie High Vocational Building, Pine View Middle renovation, the Pine View High remodel, and the priority projects. He also reported on some plans for a commons area and classroom additions at Water Canyon. Rob Parr reported on projects on the Water Canyon campus. He did get a call about the water pond being empty and called the city to get culinary water. He reported on the property behind Panorama Elementary and Pine View Middle. They did have to put in a new valve to get water back on the campus. A new filter has been put in at the Centennial Park. The city is anxious to get their controller out. They have given the property to the District. The grounds crew has been putting in extra hours. He reported on the grass, trees, and campuses that the 13 staff members are taking care of. The staff talked about the need for additional staff. The District will be looking at hiring some staff to save some funds on projects by not contracting it out. Rob Parr discussed some of the work done by the grounds crew throughout the year. There is always something for them to do. Superintendent Richard Holmes said he would like to approach the city about taking the south property piece by Paradise Canyon. The city could take the park and take care of it. They are continuing to switch over to secondary water and have asked the custodians to adjust watering.

Department Goals – Executive Administration

Steven Dunham reported on the Foundation growth and some of the new additions. He also reported on the Communications goals on transparency and pursuing additional social media opportunities.

Darin Thomas reported on the HR goals including helping employees understand new policies, working with IT department on access of policies. He also has personal goals to support the administrators and district departments.

Cheri Stevenson said the secondary theme is “all in”. They have the same goals from past years. They are working to simplify and support the school administration with clarifying policies and procedures and focusing on principal needs to show support. The secondary Goals are shared clarity, ownership in learning, impact with 65% District MGP, and a 3% increase in proficiency. They are going to be out in the schools, know what is going on in the schools, being visible, and working with principals on professional learning in the schools.

Nate Espin said the elementary focus will be on math. They are working to simplify. They have already done training with the teachers and most of them have had training on the new math program. He reported that 90% of the teachers feel comfortable with the new program. They will be training principals on good math instruction. They will also be doing learning walks and will have the principal challenge again. The challenge will be focused on math and school culture.

Brian Stevenson said his focus will be on putting usable data in the hands of the principal and provide ongoing support. He shared some graphs on RISE and ASPIRE showing the areas we are above the state. The PD team members are trying to be responsive to help teachers.

Brad Christensen said his focus will be on school safety with guardians. The department recently received an award from the Sheriff's office. He is continuing the anti-discrimination/anti-harassment training with the principals. The principals will then train at their school. Students will receive the training twice and information will be sent to parents. The MTSS will continue for the behavior unit. They are implementing a focus center at the intermediate school this next year to give extra support for students. They are working to make sure every school has an MTSS plan in place. They are holding parent nights throughout the year and are going to support families and schools with guidance and support for some of the hard things.

Brent Bills said the federal government has frozen the 2A, 3A, and 4A Title funds and the Adult Ed funds for this year. Next year they have rolled into one big grant that will be distributed, but there will be a 75% cut in the total amount. For this next year we can absorb them with our fund balance.

Superintendent Richard Holmes shared his goals to simplify the work, recognize administration with “top hand” award, communicate with the Board regularly, school visits, ride for the brand and honor the brand - which is how we conduct ourselves and treat others, and working on a five-year plan and vision.

FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING

Safe Schools

No discussion.

Washington City Property

David Stirland and Burke Staheli are still working with Washington City on the property. They haven’t been able to meet with them yet.

Negotiations

No discussion.

Legislators

No discussion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Policy 2920 Student Enrollment – Rusty Taylor

A copy of the proposed changes to Policy 2920 were given to the Board for review.

Board Member Cox presented a motion to go into a closed session at 1:57 p.m. Board Member Gunn seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Vice President LaRene Cox, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Burke Staheli, Board Member Ron Wade, Board Member Heidi Gunn, Superintendent Richard Holmes, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Nate Esplin, Assistant Superintendent Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Darin Thomas, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Susan Harrah, Executive Director Rusty Taylor, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Director of Teaching & Learning Brian Stevenson, and Student Services Director Brad Christensen, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.

CLOSED SESSION

Personnel and Property Items

Legal, personnel, and property items.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 2:19 p.m. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Board President David Stirland adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT