



**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Washington County School District**  
**121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah**  
**September 8, 2025**  
**4:30 p.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 Craig Hammer, Board Member Heidi Gunn, Superintendent Richard Holmes, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Darin Thomas, Executive Director Susan Harrah, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Rusty Taylor, Executive Director Wade Jensen, Technology Director Jeremy Cox, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Assessment & Research Director Brian Stevenson, Student Services Director Brad Christensen.*

*Legislators present: Representative Walt Brooks, Senator Don Ipson, Senator Evan Vickers, Representative Joe Ellison, Representative Neil Walters,*

*Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer*

**Reverence offered by Board Member Seegmiller.**

**WORK SESSION**

**Meeting with Local Legislators**

President David Stirland welcomed the legislators and expressed appreciation for all they do. Representative Neil Walters said there are just three meetings left with the interim committee before starting the general session. There are a lot of policy discussions going on in interim. They have had some interesting discussions on the recent school district legislative audits. There are public documents out that can be read on the audits. They have also had a long discussion about the Utah High School Activities Association and the litigation going on. It's exciting and challenging at the same time. Looking ahead, he suggested that there are a few audits out that would be good for the District to be aware of and have an eye on them. They are dealing with some important discussion topics. The audits are framing some of the discussions for bills. He mentioned that for a legislative audit to be authorized the committee leadership has to authorize it. There is a process for that. He said there is a lot of discussion about public school construction and a lot of discussion about higher ed and government facilities. He mentioned a couple of schools being built in Salt Lake School District that are \$300,000,000 each. There is a lot of concern about the cost of facilities so there is an audit out for that. Last year there was a big blow up in the Tooele County School District budget because of their contract with Open Ed. That is an interesting audit to take a look at because of the way the money is moving through. He mentioned that student performance is a big deal. There is another audit coming out to look at compliance with sensitive materials. He feels the school districts are doing very well at implementing the sensitive material bill but because of our curriculum contracts we still have a lot of problems and they are not sure how to work through that with a third-party curriculum provider. He also mentioned that on student performance on the statewide tests all of the opting out of the assessments make it really tricky. He said there is some interest in looking at where to go from here in measuring student achievement. There is also another discussion coming around with regard to attendance policies. The Utah State Board of Education has a very large report and did their own audit on attendance so now they are trying to figure out what to do with that. He feels those are some of the issues that may materialize bill wise with proposed legislation. He mentioned that there are also a couple of things

that they tried to work through last year that did not get done including bus route issues specifically with sex offenders where there is not a digital list. They are working to find an easier process for districts. Representative Walt Brooks said with building construction costs, Washington County School District is a gem and is doing it right. He shared revenue projections for the state. The Trump tax cuts mean less money going to state and federal programs. They are looking at anywhere between \$200,000,000 to \$500,000,000 million less revenue in the next cycle. We do have a healthy economy and he is seeing some activity but it is not going to be a wonderful revenue year. The bill raised the standard deduction which automatically lowered the AGI.

Representative Joe Elison said he is not working on anything educational. He reported on the impact fees. He mentioned the large EMS strain on budgets with all of the visitors we have coming to the county. They are trying to find a way so that the citizens are not bearing the brunt of the expenses themselves. Some counties have the opportunity to use a local sales tax to help cover EMS expenses. It was requested that the Washington County be given the same as a third-sixth class county, even though we are considered a second-class county, because we are a very rural areas. It was passed the first year for Washington County. When they went to implement the code, the tax commission said everyone has to use the same rate and everyone has to participate. St. George and Washington said they don't need the tax revenue and they did not want to tax the citizens since they didn't need it. He said they ran the bill the next year to provide autonomy for municipalities to be independent of each other. Unfortunately, it didn't get to the Senate. The second year it got through both bodies but then the accounting code was changed. Washington County was changed back to a third-class county but the bill was for second class and needed to go back to the Senate. The session time ended and so the bill will be included in the special session this fall. It still will have to pass both the House and Senate. He mentioned how the European countries charge a percentage on room rates for non-resident tourists. Burke Staheli mentioned the proposed UHSAA moratorium. The representatives were not aware of any legislation pending on that. Craig Hammer mentioned the club programs. He feels that if we are giving students time off, we need to shut the doors and lock the schools. Craig Seegmiller mentioned that we could govern ourselves until a UHSAA lawsuit hits and then it becomes a challenge. Hopefully a statute is not required. It was mentioned that transformed university athletics allowing athletes to sign a contract coming out of high school. There is tremendous pressure to use high school athletics in a way different than it is intended. Senator Evan Vickers said he is working on some things directly related to kids. He reported on some of the drug and substance bills he is working on. He is working to make sure kids don't have access. We are ahead of other states with some of the legislation already passed. David Stirland said one thing the Board continually talks about is how to be more efficient and be wise stewards of taxpayer dollars. Brent Bills reported on the external audits done by the District to look at the number of administrators and how much they are paid and the professional development programs compared to districts of similar size. He mentioned that the District has also been looking closely at our budgets and the fund balance. He explained how our fund balance increased with interest rates, COVID funding, and our online school revenue. The District has some one-time projects that will help get our fund balance back down over the next couple of years to what we consider a reasonable amount. Craig Seegmiller mentioned that Washington County School District has historically been one of the most low-cost builders in the state and we have beautiful buildings. Representative Neil Walters explained how fast the bills move and said they can't always wait for the School Board Association to take a position on the bills. Many of the education bills originates because somebody had a problem and it was resolved at the school or district level so they go to their legislator. One of the ways to deal with that is to understand what the problem is and see if there is a better or different solution. It requires being very proacting and getting way out in front of the legislation. He suggested that as the Board or administration is watching legislation and has concerns the legislators need to understand what those issues are so they can start trying to avoid any unintended consequences. There is going to be legislation that originated from things that happened in other school districts and we will have to deal with it if they can't make it go away. He also mentioned that there's been a very long process that's been playing out around the Utah Land Trust Protection & Advocacy Office. The recommendations are out from those meetings. There are going to be some structural changes in the role of the LTPAO. There are some misconceptions that it will impact the amount of money coming to the school district or the way community councils work. That is not the case. It is a debate about whether or not there is overlap in governance. It will probably be a natural resources bill and should not have any impact of the dollars distributed. He also mentioned that there is some concern about the way the tax

increment financing is impacting property taxes. He is not sure what is going to happen but there is some concern about the amount of tax revenue that is essentially being captured in some of the local TIFs. They do have a real impact on the property tax revenue that is collected by the school district. He shared an example of a local development trying to get a tax exemption for a state incentive. Tax increments are going to continue to be an ongoing issue. They are not bad or wrong but just something we are going to have to be a little bit careful about. On the other side, there will be some interesting outcomes over the next few years on the SITLA portfolio audit and it's worth. They are looking to make that portfolio more efficient at its purpose which is creating a long-term stream of cash flows for beneficiaries. That is a good thing for our schools and there will be additional conversations around that. Superintendent Richard Holmes expressed appreciation for the legislators and appreciates the work they do. David Stirland also expressed appreciation for the time the legislators give to the District and said he wants to have an open relationship. Representative Neil Walters said if there is a concern with legislation don't wait but let the legislators know. The best chance is to work for a better resolution.

**Board Member Wade presented a motion to go into a closed session at 1:38 p.m. Board Member Cox 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 Craig Hammer, Board Member Heidi Gunn, Superintendent Richard Holmes, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Darin Thomas, Executive Director Susan Harrah, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Rusty Taylor, Executive Director Wade Jensen, Technology Director Jeremy Cox, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Assessment & Research Director Brian Stevenson, Student Services Director Brad Christensen, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.*

## **CLOSED SESSION**

### **Property and Personnel Items**

Personnel, Property, Legal, and Safety items discussed.

**Board Member Hammer presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 2:51 p.m. Board Member Staheli seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

## **FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING**

### **Policy 3740 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Update – Jeremy Cox**

Jeremy Cox said he has received a lot of feedback from teachers on the AI Policy. He sent out a survey to all of the secondary teachers asking for things missing or items that they would like in the policy. There were 150 teachers who completed the survey. The results showed only one person was unhappy with the policy but there were a lot of teachers who were happy or excited about the policy. He made changes to address specific comments and then sent a second survey. Again, there was one person unhappy but most were happy or excited about the policy. We have a policy that has been reviewed with great feedback. Jeremy Cox feels the policy is very polished. There will still be changes needed down the road. He said one thing teachers requested in training on using AI.

### **Fund Balance – Brent Bills**

Brent Bills mentioned that we would need to do an amendment to the budget in the next meeting to add the Fund Balance projects to the budget.

Steven Dunham shared information on Policy 2200 Student Dress and Grooming. Cheri Stevenson shared some proposed changes that the Board could make to the policy as requested. It would change the verbiage without changing the expectations of the dress code. David Stirland said we are trying to eliminate the word appropriate as it is subject to interpretation. The Board discussed how to address concerns. Steve Dunham said it could be stated that the board is considering how to move forward with the policy. LaRene Cox feels the policy is judgement related. Cheri Stevenson tried to keep the intent of

the policy but looked at the wording to see if it is judgement and gender neutral. Superintendent Richard Holmes suggested a statement should include that the Board is always listening to feedback. Heidi Gunn suggested we give it a few months and then look at it again for feedback.

## **WORK SESSION**

### **Board PLC Training – Steve Gregoire**

Steve Gregoire highlighted the Panorama Elementary and Majestic Fields Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> grade team collaborations. He introduced the teams at each of the schools and said we want the professional learning communities to produce growth. Every student gets a score at the beginning at end of the year. They are compared with the nation to determine growth. Panorama Elementary showed 83% growth. The District average is 72%. Majestic Fields also has dual immersion. They had 87% of students make typical or above typical progress. They were the highest school in the District. Steve Gregoire shared PLC words used. It is embedded in what they do.

### **Elementary Boundary Change between Hurricane Elementary and Coral Canyon Elementary – Susan Harrah and Steve Gregoire**

Susan Harrah shared the recommendation for the elementary boundary change. The proposed recommendation is to move the boundary line to 2800 West instead of the ridge. There are a couple of houses being built, but no one lives there yet. Students living east of the road would go the Hurricane Elementary and those west would go to Coral Canyon Elementary.

### **High School Extra Support – Superintendent Richard Holmes**

Superintendent Richard Holmes proposed adding a half TSA position at the high schools to help with administrative support. Over the past few years, we have added several additional boys and girls sporting activities. It would be rolled out for the 26-27 school year. He mentioned the District would also look at adding some additional summer days for the elementary learning coaches. Those selected would be encouraged to have administrative endorsements. The TSA would be there to help the AD at the high school. Having the TSA position makes it more flexible to change or the principal may also choose to keep the person longer. Brent Bills said the cost for half TSA would be about \$52,000 per school. The TSA would keep their teaching position for the other half of the day. Burke Staheli asked about matching extra days for the Title I coordinators. Richard Holmes said the learning coach job description is going to be rewritten so they could help with some of the administrative duties. They will not evaluate teachers but could help with IEPs and some discipline items. There would be no additional days other than six days in the summer. Brent Bills said it would be just additional days for the elementary schools and the six high school. Superintendent Richard Holmes said we have not determined what we need for Water Canyon High or Enterprise High. Superintendent Richard Holmes said there is such a need for the high school principals. Craig Hammer said as he has talked with high school principals throughout the state they are all worn out. All the districts are trying to find a way to help as they don't have enough people to send to every game.

### **Firearm Safety (HB104) – Brian Stevenson**

Superintendent Richard Holmes mentioned some of the media reports regarding the recent school shooting back east and the Utah bill to teach firearm safety. Brian Stevenson said that HB 104 requires schools to provide five years of firearm safety instruction during a student's K-12 experience. The law says three years in elementary and two years during middle or high school. The recommendation given to our schools is to provide the firearm safety instruction in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade when students may be a bit more age appropriate and to have consistency in schools, and then one year in middle school and one in high school. Some schools may choose to do it with their health curriculum. The recommendation is for schools to do it in 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade health classes. The materials we are sharing that are included in the Utah Attorney General's Office include a five-minute instructional video. If it's in the health class and meshes with some of the other things they can take longer, but the five-minute instructional video is a great resource for them and could be shown in the homeroom period with a light discussion. The letter that was written says that we need to remain politically neutral, no leaning one way or the other on gun laws, and instruction must be politically neutral with no advocacy or bias in either way. The video focus

focuses on and is titled L.E.T.S. Stay Safe: L – Leave it alone, E – Educator others, T – Tell an adult, S – Share any threats with an adult. The focus is on trying to keep kids safe if they come across a firearm. The video gives a few different scenarios and walks the kids through the scenarios by giving the correct answer or letting the kids choose. Students are not being taught how to handle a gun but what to do if they encounter a weapon. The site also includes a PowerPoint slides that could be used in a health class. Parents are given the opportunity to opt their student out. Brian Stevenson shared the video with the Board.

### **Math Textbook Adoption – Brian Stevenson and Steve Gregoire**

Brian Stevenson shared an update on the implementation and training of the new math curriculum. In the spring there was a full-day training for each grade level that was done by the vendor, Kiddom. They came to teach them the program. There was a follow-up day in the summer with two training days for each grade level teacher to choose from to accommodate busy summer schedules. It gave teachers the opportunity to attend one of the trainings and those went very well. It provided training on the program as well as planning and preparation for the program. On the first contract day back, new teachers to the District were brought in for the training as well as any teacher who was not able to attend during the summer. The learning coaches had some training on the curriculum and planning process a few weeks ago. The planning process takes some time getting used to and they wanted to provide the learning coaches with some training to help support teachers. As of now, he reported that over 48 teams have gone through the training with the grade level specialists and over 100 scheduled where the learning coaches are there and able to support them. They have been working really hard to provide that math support. He shared an email expressing gratitude for the training, support, and materials. Teachers are feeling supported. Steve Gregoire thanked Brian Stevenson and his department for putting it all together. He was able to attend a training session and get feedback on the program. The teachers feel it is more rigorous, students are having to talk and think about math, there is more depth in the content, there is more problem solving and collaboration among students, and they are focusing more on the standards. They were grateful to have the planning days provided. Some of the challenges include weaving all of the materials together. The planning is going slower as they are learning the program. Teachers are finding the exit questions for the assessment. The teachers are getting the support and he shared some of the materials. Principals feel the pacing is a challenge, but like the expectations and having everyone on the same lesson. Some challenges are the exit tickets and using their computers for practice to reinforce what they are learning. We have PD support and we have principals and learning coaches who are helping to support the teachers. Early indications are that we are providing the support needed. Craig Seegmiller feels the training has been phenomenal. It may be frustrating as it is new. He has heard no negative with the new program.

### **Crack Seal Contract – Brent Bills**

Brent Bills said we had four responses on the Crack Seal Contract. One of them they had some problems with their response. The District is working with them to let them know how to complete the documents properly for next year. The other three companies submitted and being considered for the contract include Straight Stripe, Holbrook and Signature Striping. Signature Striping had the lowest proposal at \$101,674.73. Their references were impeccable. The recommendation is to go with Signature Striping.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE BOARD**

### **Board Committee Discussions**

Craig Seegmiller said there has been nothing new with the Audit Committee. Brent Bills said we will be doing an RFP for a new external/internal auditor.

David Stirland said the assignment for Dixie Technical College is being assigned to LaRene Cox. Craig Hammer will serve on the Audit Committee and serve on the Water Canyon Irrigation Company. LaRene Cox shared an update on the Water Canyon Irrigation Company. The paperwork is with the BLM to give easements so we can get to work. They met with Congresswoman Malloy's office and Senator Lee's office. Gary Webster met with the BLM last week and let them know that he is highly interested in what is happening with our water company. Hopefully it will help us get some progress going. Craig Hammer suggested it would be good if we could do it in the wintertime. LaRene Cox said she was told it would

take two or three months. Hildale City has already started their process going to Maxwell Canyon. They are putting in pipe so if nothing else happens we will be able to attach to the old pipe. LaRene Cox encouraged the Board to be looking at their USBA Power Up. Heidi Gunn mentioned some issues as they are transitioning to a new platform.

Burke Staheli mentioned a couple of new assignments on the Utah Activities Association. He will be serving on the Legislative Committee. He is also the vice chair of the Board and is serving on the Finance Committee. He feels that the District ought to get behind the proposed moratorium. Craig Hammer reported on the UHSAA process for region violations. Burke Staheli feels that when his term is up, we should involve and support other regions in 4A to give them a voice.

Ron Wade reported on Healthy Dixie. They are focused on bicycles in the community. They are doing good things. They have contributed bicycles to our teen centers.

Heidi Gunn reported that the USBA Leadership Academy is coming up at the end of September. The USBA Fall Regional Meeting is scheduled for October 1<sup>st</sup> in Cedar City at 6:00 p.m. The USBA has their Day on the Hill scheduled for January 30<sup>th</sup>. They are planning to do a welcome and a color guard. They want people to make appointments to visit with their legislators. They will also have the JLC Meeting from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with box lunches. They want the majority of people to come. After 2:00 p.m. there will be time to schedule more visits. On January 21<sup>st</sup> they have reserved the Rotunda and have scheduled a celebration of public education. It could be a great opportunity for some of our AP students, history classes, or student councils to attend. They want to line the Rotunda with lots of schools from all over the state to promote good things in their school. They want student councils to come in their jackets, sweaters, or t-shirts. They want choirs to come and sing. They just want to promote public education so it could be a great opportunity for some of our schools if they want to go and learn about government and see a legislative session in progress and meet legislators. They selected that day as it was three days into the session so it will put public education on the forefront of the legislator's minds and given them a chance to meet some of the students and get student feedback. She suggested thinking of some ideas for sending someone or a group up there. Heidi Gunn reported on the Foundation. They are adding a new board member. Steven Dunham said one member stepped down and the bylaws require a minimum of ten on the board. Brandon Bulow from Mountain America Credit will be the new Foundation board member. He is also a member of the Golf Committee. Heidi Gunn reported that the Foundation Grants will be going out from October 20<sup>th</sup> to November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Teacher and administrators can apply for those grants. She also reported that the Foundation was given notice that the Light the World Giving Machines will be coming back and will have six weeks instead of two weeks with time.

Brent Bills said the Water Conservancy District impact fees document is ready for the board to sign. Superintendent Richard Holmes said enrollment has been good based on the numbers predicted. We are above the predicted enrollment numbers.

## **ITEMS FOR BOARD REVIEW**

1. Enrollment
2. Safe Schools
3. GRAMA Requests
4. Department Reports

*A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Washington County School District was held after due, legal, and timely notice being given to all members and interested parties. Board President David Stirland called the meeting to order and welcomed all visitors. Board members present were Craig Seegmiller, LaRene Cox, Burke Staheli, Ron Wade, Heidi Gunn, and Craig Hammer. Staff members present were Superintendent Richard Holmes and Business Administrator Brent Bills.*

## **OPEN MEETING – 4:30 p.m.**

1. Reverence by Member Gunn
2. Welcome – Board President Stirland
3. Pledge of Allegiance by Member Staheli

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Minutes
  - a. August 11, 2025 Meeting of the Board of Education
  - b. August 25, 2025 Special Meeting of the Board of Education
2. Financial Report
3. Personnel and LEA Specific License Items
4. Dixie High School TSSA Plan Change
5. South Mesa Elementary TSSA Plan Change
6. Paradise Canyon Elementary TSSA Plan Change

**Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items. Board Member Hammer seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

## **WHAT'S RIGHT IN WCSD SCHOOLS**

### **Desert Canyons Elementary – Principal Rod Broadhead**

Principal Rod Broadhead shared what is right at Desert Canyons Elementary. Desert Canyons Elementary is starting their fifth year. He said four years ago when they opened, they got the community together to come up with a motto. They are the Aviators because of their proximity to the airport. He invited a bunch of pilots, some former Air Force pilots, a Dixie High School JROTC pilot, and anyone in the community to come and help come up with a motto. They came up with something every pilot uses which is, “Aviate, Navigate, Communicate.” Every pilot that goes through school learns that. Aviate is the first one – fly your own plane and no matter what do not stop flying your plane or tragedy can happen. He goes around every year to teach the students about “Aviate, Navigate, Communicate.” He usually does it at the fly over we have at the first of school year or on National Aviation Day. Aviate means to fly your own plane. He relates that to what happens on the playground and that students need to take care of themselves and not jump into situations if they are out of control. It doesn't mean be selfish it is just like the flight attendants say to put your mask on 1<sup>st</sup> so you can help others around you. With navigate, before a pilot ever takes off, they are communicating with everybody to make sure they can get where they need to go safely. He teaches the kids about setting goals for not only this school year but for life to get where you want to go. The final area is to communicate. Airplane pilots are communicating with the tower and other pilots around them constantly. He teaches students to communicate with parents, teachers, friends, and those people who can help them get where they need to go to reach their goal. All the kids at Desert Canyons Elementary know these things and he hopes it helps them throughout life.

### **Dixie Middle School – Principal Paul Hurt**

Principal Paul Hurt shared what is right at Dixie High School. Their motto this year is to “Stay the Course” in a northeast direction as the superintendents have encouraged. He shared that they have a 911 tribute where they feed the first responders of St. George City in their courtyard. The Dixie Middle School choir visits all of the nursing homes in St. George. The choir teacher found a grant that helps cover all the expenses for that. They are on their third year of visiting all the nursing homes. He also reported that Dixie Middle School has instituted a life skills student royalty celebration to honor all of the life skills students that want to be honored and feel comfortable getting in front of the student body. It is a special moment for them. There are also tons of other things they do at the school. He reported that the preparation week before school started was put to good use as well as the time on Friday for collaboration.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

There were no public comments on Board Action Items.

## **BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

### **Policy 3740 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use – Jeremy Cox**

Jeremy Cox reviewed the proposed Artificial Intelligence Policy. He said after taking a lot of time to obtain teacher feedback, he feels the policy is in a good place now. He shared about surveys that went out to teachers. He received some constructive and positive feedback. Of those who completed the survey, 85% of them were either happy or excited about the policy. After applying the feedback another survey was sent with a 95% rating. He did reach out to one individual who was not happy about it and made some

additional changes based on their comments. He feels we are in a really good place with the policy at this point. He still believes that we will need to make some adjustments and changes as this area is an ever-changing landscape that we are navigating. President David Stirland asked about the concerns and reasons for developing the policy. Jeremy Cox said AI presents some very challenging issues. It is being integrated into everything that we do. We are seeing it in most products that are coming out from vendors so it's becoming ubiquitous within technology. He anticipates that it is going to change everything in ways that we never thought and will probably have more of an impact than the Internet has itself. There is a plethora of challenges on the use of AI, how it's being used, is it being used appropriately and responsibly or if it's being used to do things like cheat on a test or perform research where the user doesn't go through the process of discovery. It also has the potential for other mental challenges such as therapy and things like that where it can be devastating to the individual's mental health. The policy seeks to find balance and help students understand the importance of using AI in the right way. Having a well-established process is not just for students, but also for teachers. He feels we are on the leading edge with our policy compared with other districts in the state. He has not seen a lot of districts that have developed an AI policy yet. He mentioned that the state is working on an AI Policy Summit. We may see some districts look at our policy and use it as a good starting point for them. They are moving in that direction but it just takes time. Jeremy Cox said he will get the policy out and use it as a framework for training teachers. He will work at developing some clean and clear training to get out to the teachers as quickly as possible. The Board thanked Jeremy Cox for his work on the policy and feel that being able to use technology is part of a good solid education.

**Board Member Wade presented a motion to approve Policy 3740 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

#### **Initiate Elementary Boundary Change between Hurricane Elementary and Coral Canyon Elementary – Susan Harrah and Steve Gregoire**

Susan Harrah said the District would like to initiate the boundary change between Hurricane Elementary and Coral Canyon Elementary. The boundary currently follows the ridge line to the west of 2800 West. The proposal is to make a clear and natural line between Hurricane Elementary and Coral Canyon Elementary by moving the boundary line from the ridge to 2800 West. Anyone living to the east of 2800 West would attend Hurricane Elementary and anyone to the west would attend Coral Canyon Elementary. There is a development going in now which is why the District would like to initiate the change. There is no one living in the homes yet so this is the perfect time to get the change done. A public hearing will be held in the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and the Board could approve the proposed change in November.

**Board Member Hammer presented a motion to initiate the boundary change between Hurricane Elementary and Coral Canyon Elementary. Board Member Gunn seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

#### **2025 Crack Seal Contract – Brent Bills**

Brent Bills said the parking lots fall apart and every year we do a portion of them. We had three companies that submitted bids for the contract. The recommendation is to select Signature Striping who has an excellent reputation.

**Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve Signature Striping for the 2025 Crack Seal Contract. Board Member Wade seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **Policy 2920 Student Enrollment – Rusty Taylor**

Rusty Taylor shared the proposed changes and updates to Policy 2920 Student Enrollment. The changes help to clarify some areas that have been a little open to interpretation. This will help separate the way we look at Open Enrollment and boundary waivers and the two separate processes that are run by separate rules. The policy more clearly defines proof of residency and includes what it states in Utah Code and includes examples of documentation for evidence of residency and identifies things that would not be considered proof. There were also some changes in law with regards to the acceleration of kindergarten students and how that process works, so that has been updated in the policy. Under section 5.6 an updated board rule was added addressing the need for all students to be toilet trained for involvement in



the public school system. Section seven of the policy is where Open Enrollment and boundary waivers are differentiated. Open Enrollment is outlined in state statute, so one of the significant changes made to the policy was to remove all the wording and add the reference to the statute. If the law changes, we do not have to go back and change the policy. Under section 7.2, additional information was added to clarify the boundary waiver. It focuses on the process and not the reasons a parent may have for transferring the student. The boundary waiver transfer does depend on the size of the building, staffing at the school, and what programs are there. Under sections 7.2.1.5 and 7.2.1.6, the school board ultimately has control over boundary waivers but the decisions on boundary waivers will be made by the school principals. There are also changes related for foreign exchange students. Washington County School District does not allow F1 Visa students to be enrolled in our schools. The policy reference was changed from homeless to a child experiencing homelessness and the Child Services Coordinator was changed to At-Risk Coordinator. There was a removal of the vision screening as we are not requiring it. Rusty Taylor said in Utah we recognize the importance of parents deciding where they would like their student to be. Many times it involves extracurricular activities. With Open Enrollment (Utah Law), many of our schools have been declared closed so that hasn't been significant. Boundary waivers are controlled by principals and it varies anywhere from 5-20 requests. This year certain cone-sites did not accept any of them while other cone-sites accepted all of them. We leave that up to the principals because it is based on their numbers and what they have staffed for. He said the district is also doing a lot of training with principals. They have talked with secondary schools especially about making a school where everyone wants to be.

#### **Policy 1320 Separation Incentive – Darin Thomas**

There was no discussion on Policy 1320 Separation Incentive.

#### **Policy 2200 Student Dress Code – Steven Dunham**

Steven Dunham shared the background of Policy 2200 Student Dress Code. The Board of Education began reviewing the dress code policy nearly two years ago in public meetings. This included auditing other school districts throughout the state and discussions with our administrations to see what was needed. We found that having mixed expectations of standards can pull attention away from learning while consistent expectations cut down on distractions, support safety in labs and PE, and set a school ready tone. Changes were proposed to the dress code to provide clear simple standards for dress districtwide. Terms which could be misconstrued were removed and developed the focus on professional dress standards. This is preparation for the world of work where dress codes can teach students how they adhere to professional dress standards, preparing them for dress expectations in the future. The goal is not to police style, rather to create a professional learning environment while at school. It is important to note that the Board of Education is always listening to public feedback and always considering how they can move forward. President David Stirland said the Board spent a considerable amount of time discussing to craft a workable policy. He said that the Board has listened to comments and will adjust policy if needed. They have put their diligence in to crafting this policy.

#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

There were no information items.

#### **REPORTS**

##### **Superintendent**

Superintendent Richard Holmes recognized Jake King, our Building Inspector. The night before school was to start, we did not know if we would be allowed to have students at the Pine View Middle School with the changes being done at the school. Jake King went above and beyond to make sure everything was good. Superintendent Holmes thanked Jake and presented him with the Superintendent's Top Hand Award. He thanked Jake King for all he does. He shared photos of the changes made at Pine View Middle. He recognized the Facilities and Maintenance team who has done an amazing job.

##### **Board**

No reports were given.

### **Association**

Jake Shewmake, WCEA, recognized Adrienne Jacobs with the Public Service Heroes Award. Adrienne Jacobs is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Desert Canyons Elementary and has been an educator for 17 years. Her colleagues say she works quietly behind the scenes advocating for students and teachers. She loves what she does. She takes on some of the toughest students and is a mentor for other teachers on how to best work with difficult students. She runs the Science Fair, Engineering Fair, is on the Stem Committee that plans monthly activities, and volunteers to teach staff at faculty meetings. She works very hard at her job and has a very calm approach with her students. She teaches her students about growth mindset and teaches them that mistakes are okay and normal. Everyone feels safe sharing their work. Her class culture is one of safety. A former student, Hadley Shakespeare, shared some of her favorite memories being in her class. She did things that kept the class motivated and was a positive influence in her life.

### **PTA/PTO/Community Council**

Liesel Clove, Dixie Council President, oversees the Dixie cone-site schools and Enterprise schools. She feels that from a PTA standpoint and as a parent that things are going well. She was able to attend several Back-To-School nights that were great with a lot of excitement. They are right in the middle of their membership drive. She mentioned that PTA is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year. As part of that celebration, they are going to be in as many parades as they can including the upcoming Dixie Roundup Parade. She reported on the Utah PTA restructure. The Region PTA Director position was dissolved. Everything will now fall to the council presidents. There is a council president over each cone-site. They will now be responsible to do all the training and things that happen for PTA in the school district. There is a region person who will help relay information from the Utah PTA. She expressed appreciation for the Board for caring about the students in our District and for supporting the PTA.

### **PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – 3 minutes each**

**Jaclyn Wakley** addressed the Board on the dress code. She is concerned about the lasting effects the current dress code policy is having on her daughter. She understands the need for schools to maintain some level of standard but feels the way these rules are currently being enforced disproportionately target girls and causes far more harm than good. Focusing primarily on girls' clothing choices has created a double standard that over sexualizes them at an early age. She feels it is not just a matter of fairness, but a matter of their mental health and self-worth. She said studies have shown and parents have seen how practices like these can lead to body dysmorphia, eating disorders, and damaged self-confidence that follow young women into adulthood and often for a lifetime. She is concerned about the way the dress code violations are being handled by calling girls out in front of their peers. It can be humiliating and far more distracting than the clothing choice. Students have been forced to wear t-shirts that are oversized and unattractive and publicly mark them as having broken the rules. She feels that practice is cruel and damaging to a girl's self-worth. She is not against a dress code but feels it needs to be more fair and not one-sided.

**Norah Wright** addressed the Board on the dress code policy. She shared an example of her daughter being required to cover her outfit. She feels it is essential to foster an environment where children can express themselves freely and confidently in a setting designated for the growth and learning. She feels the current dress code disproportionately target certain styles creating a sense of discomfort and discouragement among students. Her daughter is particularly outraged and feels that the changes are not only unfair but also display an underlying bias. She wants children to take pride in themselves and in their schoolwork but wonders how they can do that when their self-expression is stifled. The notion that a student's outfit could become a distraction is a concern that must be refrained. If someone's attire causes such a distraction it is the responsibility of the individual holding the perspective, not the student wearing the clothes. The focus should be on empowering our children to embrace their individuality and not putting them down for it. She believes that every child should be celebrated for their unique style. Any criticism they face this year regarding their appearance warrants a personal apology from the school. They deserve to know that their self-expression is valid and valued. She asked the School Board to reconsider the implications of the dress code policy and the message sent to children. She wants to create

an atmosphere that nurtures confidence, self-expression and academic pride. She proposed a motion to revert the dress code back to 2023.

**Kalli Sampson** addressed the Board on the dress code. She did seek to understand by listening and reading all the notes from the meetings. She knows that the Board has put in so much time and effort and has a sincere intention to do what's good and helpful for everybody. She feels the purpose of the policy is good. We all want our kids to be safe in school and we want to have a place where students can learn and expand and do all the things in the purpose such as an appropriate learning environment, showing respect, a safe place for everyone to learn free from harm. She feels that most of the procedures are good and are not creating pushback. There are a couple things she feels the Board could reconsider. She has loved the experience her kids have had in the schools. They have felt safe, they have felt valued, and they have felt heard. She feels there is an opportunity to do that with the dress code. She suggested the Board could eliminate 3.1.2.2 and give a voice and a choice to the students. Let them show up in what they want that feels comfortable for a learning environment and see how it goes. She knows that everybody is trying and they want the kids in school and she wants kids to be in school too.

**Lindsay Chandler** addressed the Board on the dress code. She finds dealing with the dress code crazy. She feels the reality for many children is to feel constrained and judged every time they choose what to wear. She feels clothing is not just fabric. It is self-expression, comfort, and sometimes even armor. What we wear can shape how we think, feel, and behave. She said this is supported by the concept of enclothed cognition which shows that clothing directly impacts our confidence, focus, and even motivation. Dress codes often favor certain body types which can reinforce harmful beauty standards. When students are told to cover up or are singled out because of their shape, it can breed insecurity, body dissatisfaction, and lowered self-worth. She said that over time this contributes to anxiety, depression, and even eating disorders. Clothing is a powerful way students' express individuality and culture. Restrictive policies silence that expression, creating frustration and loss of identity. Students exploring their identity but forced into clothing that does not align with who they are can cause discomfort, confusion or even dysphoria. Strict rules often increase fear of judgment. Students worry constantly about whether they attire is appropriate enough. She has heard that students are actively avoiding their principals so they are not dress coded. Students are tattling on each other because of what they think is not good. She said her kids do not care about what other kids are wearing. Maintaining wardrobes that fit specific standards places pressure on families and students. When students can't wear clothing that fits comfortably or is affordable, they feel inadequate even walking into the classroom. She feels that clothing policies are not neutral. They actively shape students' mental health, self-esteem, and ability to thrive. She feels that a rule meant to minimize distractions may in fact be creating them. She asked the Board to prioritize equity, ensure policies apply fairly to all genders, body types, and cultural backgrounds, encourage comfort and individuality, move away from gendered rules, and focus on safety and appropriateness instead of outdated stereotypes.

**Stacy Heaps** addressed the Board on the dress code. She comes from a mental health perspective as an owner of a counseling service. She said that kids who attend events and are dress coded are affected and then she sees them in her office. She is not saying to not have a dress code but is saying the implication of how we go about it is really important. Safe means acceptance. She said the "big brother" effect of ratting out other students just creates such a divisive culture. The objective of the policy says that we want to create safe schools and she would say that the policy does not create a safe school emotionally for these kids. She feels the Board needs to reconsider and keep the conversation going.

**Board Member Cox** presented a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:40 p.m. **Board Member Gunn** seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**