



MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah
October 13, 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, Superintendent Richard Holmes, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Nate Esplin, 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, Professional Learning Director Brian Stevenson, and Student Services Director Brad Christensen. Board Member Heidi Gunn was excused.

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence by Member Hammer.

WORK SESSION

Snow Canyon Middle Site Visit

The Board toured the Snow Canyon Middle site to see the progress.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go into a closed session at 1:36 p.m. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

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CLOSED SESSION

Property and Personnel Items

Property, Legal, and Personnel items

Board Member Hammer presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 3:41 p.m. Board Member Staheli seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING

USBA Fall Training

Superintendent Richard Holmes briefly reported on the USBA Leadership Training. It was a great weekend. Some of the presentations were shared by USBA. Ron Wade said it was well organized and the content was good.

Burke Staheli also mentioned the Foundation Golf Tournament was amazing.

Legislative Priorities

Superintendent Richard Holmes shared information on the legislative priorities. He reported meeting with some of our representatives. Many of the legislative bills come from districts in northern Utah. He feels Terry Hutchinson would be a great one to track the bills.

NSBA and COSSBA Spring Conferences

Discussion postponed.

WORK SESSION

Board PLC Training – Wade Jensen

Presentation postponed.

UHSAA Activities – Rusty Taylor

Rusty Taylor said the principals have said having lacrosse has been hard but they do not want it taken away. He mentioned problems with having enough officials for girls' lacrosse. Brent Bills asked what UHSAA is doing about Title IX issues. Rusty Taylor said they are sending the officials they have. Craig Hammer said they are trying to recruit officials but there are just not enough officials. Rusty Taylor said they are supposed to have three officials per game but can do it with two. Craig Hammer said the originally the District was told they had enough officials. They should be told if they do not have enough officials, we won't be able to play. Rusty Taylor said some of the issues are also with practice. They cannot practice lacrosse at the same time as track and soccer. David Stirland said he would like to know the numbers participating to see if it is growing. Rusty Taylor said it is growing. Only Dixie High does not have a girls' team. Transportation is also being an issue. He mentioned that if officials are not there, the game is rescheduled. Member of the Board feel it is not sustainable to bring officials down from northern Utah. Craig Hammer feels the word needs to get out to parents. It is a safety issue. The lacrosse community needs to help.

Critical Behavior Support and Restorative Rooms in Schools – Jennifer Shepherd

Jennifer Shepherd shared some data points for the Critical Behavior Support program. They currently take elementary kids into the program to help support schools with behavior problems. They are getting more teachers and staff trained in the schools. Students come for 30-45 days. They find and work on skills that the students are lacking to get them back to their school. The program also supports the school with ongoing training. With the support system seems to be working really well. Last year they had 75% success rate with 24 students referred into the program. This year they have already had 24 referrals to the program. Approximately one-third of the students are Special Education students. Last year the data showed that they were able to make a 79% increase in positive behavior. This year they are already at 100% on positive behavior. More than ½ of the students that are getting rid of behavior issues before going back to the school. They really target the skills but also show love to the students. They use evidence-based practices and have also implemented a brain lab. They are also using their unit to help train staff. They are also sending team members out to the school. They have had many parents' express appreciation for the work they have done. They are really trying to support the schools. These are good kids who just need some extra help. Students feel success, love, and hope leaving the program. Jennifer Shepherd said they are now going to open a program for 6-7th grades. They have also received calls from other districts wanting to know what we are doing. Students come to Arrowhead Elementary for the program. They have four classrooms at the school. It is a referral program and schools are referring students because they need help. Students do not come back after going through the program. Jennifer Shepherd explained how they allow students in one at a time to figure out what the student needs first. The brain lab was developed this year using multi-sensory brain work and kinetic activities and play therapy to incorporate positive behavior.

N005 Public Education Hotline – Jeremy Cox and Cody Plumbhof

Jeremy Cox shared the Public Education Hotline notice and the administrative letter on ways to submit a report. Reports will be submitted through USBE. We need to formalize this in policy and train the administration on how it works. A link to the notice will be included on the bottom of every school website. There is also a 29-minute video that the board will need to watch. When the state receives a complaint, USBE will send the complaint to us and then we can send it where it needs to go.

District Branding – Superintendent Richard Holmes

Presentation postponed.

Review of Discussion Item Policies – District Administration

The administration briefly reviewed the policies being discussed in the meeting today.

Nate Esplin also reviewed information for the initiation of the elementary boundary change. There will be a lot of growth in the White Dome area, so he suggested moving the area with no homes yet to Little Valley Elementary next year. Brent Bills mentioned that Little Valley will need the enrollment down the road. Nate Esplin shared projections for an additional 2000 homes near White Dome. Today he will initiate the boundary change for Desert Color to move to Bloomington Elementary and the vacant land east of Hamilton Drive to Little Valley Elementary. The Board discussed including back lot lines of Flattop Drive in the wording of the initiation.

November Board Meeting Date Change – President David Stirland

David Stirland proposed moving the November 10th Meeting of the Board of Education to November 17th and cancelling the November 24th meeting. The Board supported the change.

OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE BOARD

Board Committee Discussions

Discussions postponed.

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, and Craig Hammer. Board Member Heidi Gunn was excused. Staff members present were Superintendent Richard Holmes and Business Administrator Brent Bills.

OPEN MEETING – 4:30 p.m.

1. Reverence by Member Wade
2. Welcome – Board President Stirland
3. Pledge of Allegiance by Member Seegmiller

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGE

The Washington County School District is proposing a boundary change between Coral Canyon Elementary and Hurricane Elementary. Currently, there are no students attending either school in the area affected by the proposed change. The proposal consists of moving the boundary line between the schools to 2800 West, continuing across 600 N to the back of the homes on 2760 W in the Eagle Pointe Subdivision. Homes in the described area will be moved from the Hurricane Elementary boundary to the Coral Canyon Elementary boundary. The Washington County Board of Education will hold a Boundary Hearing on Monday, October 13, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. to receive public comment on the proposed boundary changes.

Maps of the proposed boundary considerations are available on the Washington County School District website <https://www.washk12.org/transportation/boundaries-and-routes/>.

Nate Esplin said that the Washington County School District is proposing a boundary change between Coral Canyon Elementary and Hurricane Elementary. Currently there are no students attending either school in the area affected by the proposed change. The proposal would move the boundary line from the ridge line to 2800 West. There is a new development going in on the ridge. That development would go to Coral Canyon Elementary. This will help to clean up the boundary in that area. No public comment has been received on the proposed change.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes
 - a. September 8, 2025 Meeting of the Board of Education
 - b. September 22, 2025 Special Meeting of the Board of Education
2. Financial Report
3. Personnel and LEA Specific License Items
4. Sunset Elementary TSSA Plan Change
5. Snow Canyon Middle School TSSA Plan Change
6. Washington Elementary TSSA Plan Change
7. Crimson View Elementary TSSA Plan Change
8. Red Mountain Elementary TSSA Plan Change
9. Santa Clara Elementary TSSA Plan Change
10. Pine View Intermediate School TSSA Plan Change
11. Arrowhead Elementary School TSSA Plan Change
12. Millcreek High School Community Council Exemption Request
13. Post High School Community Council Exemption Request
14. Career Tech High School TSSA Plan Change

Board President David Stirland reviewed the items included in the Consent Agenda. There were no questions from the Board.

Board Member Hammer presented a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items numbered 1-14. Board Member Wade seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

WHAT'S RIGHT IN WCSD SCHOOLS

Arrowhead Elementary – Principal Jerrod Dastrup

Principal Jerrod Dastrup said this is Arrowhead Elementary's 20th year. He reported on the school rebranding. The fun started the first week of school as they had a bat in the school. The first thing they did for rebranding was address the school's mission and vision statements, and the collective commitments that drive the work. They met with the faculty to get their feedback and talked about what they believe in and what they are working towards. He mentioned that they recite the vision statement, "Be our best, do our best, and achieve success," to students every single day. One of the District goals for kindergarten was to have 90% of students knowing upper case and lower-case letter names and sounds by the end of the month. They are on their way to accomplishing that with a fantastic kindergarten team. They have all day kindergarten with about 25 students per class. They are also bringing back PBIS, be safe, be respectful, and be responsible, with the rebranding and have also added be kind. Students can earn eagle bucks for those behaviors and can shop at the Eagle Store to cash them in. They came up with a new mascot and a new logo. They allowed students to name the mascot during an assembly and voted for his name to be Thunder. They give out a spirit award at assemblies that classes get to carry around to show their school pride and school spirit. They held a readathon and were able to raise close to \$11,000 to purchase soccer goals and playground equipment. They want the kids to get outside and get exercise and play. They had a great Back-to-School Night with about 80% of their parents attending and were excited about the turnout. They have also done things like walk or ride to school day and have a mileage club. The goal for the mileage club was to go 500 miles this year. As of two weeks ago the students had run 1593 miles. The mileage club is run by the PTA. Arrowhead Elementary also participates in the Santa Clara Swiss Days Parade. He announced that the Arrowhead students took first place in the school float category.

Water Canyon High School – Principal Jonathan Howell

Principal Jonathan Howell shared what is right at Water Canyon High School. He shared that many of their graduating seniors had not considered post-secondary education, so that was something he wanted to tackle was to see how they as a school, as a faculty, and as a community could encourage the students to look at that as a viable option. Last spring they started what they called “Senior Signing Day” for all of the graduates that had decided to enroll in higher education, whether in a trade school, university, or community college. They highlighted 27 of the 60 graduates’ last spring. They wanted all of their students to see it as a viable option and did it during the school day as an assembly so students could witness the opportunities that are available to them. At the assembly, those students were highlighted and stood up to say their name and where they had chosen to go to school. After the assembly, those students were given the opportunity to sign their letter of intent. It was a remarkable day! All the highlighted students signed a big banner that they have hanging in the gymnasium so all students can see their names and where they are going to attend. He said students will be attending 15 different technical schools, community colleges, or universities including one student who will be attending George Washington University in Washington D.C. on a presidential scholarship. They also had a presidential scholarship winner at the University of Utah and they had a Dean Scholarship winner. During the event, the counselors took pictures of the students and have them hanging by the Media Center so students can see them every day. This is something they plan to continue and hope to see it grow. Ron Wade noted that was an inspirational idea. Board members asked how they are doing in the fall sports. Principal Jonathan Howell reported that they had won some football games, volleyball has won five games, and boys cross country team have been second and third in their meets and have a region meet with week.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD ACTION ITEMS

No public comments were given.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Policy 2920 Student Enrollment – Rusty Taylor

Rusty Taylor said the changes to Policy 2920 Student Enrollment were presented last month and have been under review. He has not received any comments and feels pretty comfortable with where it is at.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve Policy 2920 Student Enrollment. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Initiate Elementary Boundary Change between Desert Canyons Elementary and Bloomington Elementary - Nate Esplin

Nate Esplin said Desert Canyon Elementary is growing and it is time to consider a boundary change. He reviewed the proposed boundary changes to move Desert Color neighborhood from Desert Canyon Elementary to Bloomington Elementary and also to look at the moving the south Lansky Drive and future growth east of Hamilton Drive by White Dome to Little Valley Elementary. Desert Canyons Elementary has about 750 students right now. Little Valley will be approaching the low four hundreds next year. Bloomington Elementary will be about 470 without the change and would add about 50 students with the change. Without the boundary change their number will be over 800. They do not have classrooms available and would have to consider other ways to fit that many kids. It will be easier to make the changes while there are not many homes there yet. There will be a public comment meeting held at Desert Canyons at the end of the month. There will also be hearings in the November and December Meeting of the Board. David Stirland said it can be difficult to predict growth and there are changes that need to be made. Elementary schools are not built for 900 students.

Board Member Cox presented a motion to initiate the elementary boundary change as presented. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 2810 School Community Councils – Brent Bills and Kristine Hirschi

Brent Bills reported on policy changes needed to keep our policy in line with Utah Code. The policy stated that community council members would start their two-year term on July 1st but they should be taking office at the time of the election. Many of the elections are being held in the fall and they need to take office immediately to have a council. Another change is to the written notice of the elections. Written notice of the election is to be given at least 10-days prior to the elections. The last change is the

addition of a conflict-of-interest section. This is what the state recommended for the statement. Basically, members are asked to disclose any conflict of interest that they might have. It does not disqualify someone from participating on the council, it just needs to be disclosed so the remainder of the council determine the individuals level of participation.

Board Member Wade presented a motion to approve Policy 2810 School Community Councils. Board Member Staheli seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Policy 3110 Emergency Preparedness – Darin Thomas and Michael Lee

Michael Lee reviewed the proposed changes to Policy 3110 Emergency Preparedness. The changes include some housekeeping items and changes to the language adopted by the I Love You Guys Foundation. Years ago, they changed the term “lockout” to “secure.” It is important to have this language consistent as it is the same language used by law enforcement when they enter into our buildings. We no longer use the term “lockout.” “Secure” means the same thing and means there is a treat outside of the building and they need to secure the perimeter of the building. Another change that won’t affect any of our teachers as we have been preaching this for a while is holding five safety drills in secondary schools each year rather than four. The terms used for emergencies have been used for several years and have been updated in the flip charts used in the buildings.

Policy 1330 Employee Leave – Darin Thomas

Darin Thomas briefly reviewed the proposed changes to Policy 1330 Employee Leave. Under section 3.2.1.1 the changes will allow teachers in their first year of employment two days of personal leave at no cost and two days with the standard payroll deduction for a substitute teachers, whether a substitute is used or not. This is being changed to match the classified leave which was changed to include those in their first year of employment.

Policy 4300 Home Schooling – Brad Christensen

Brad Christensen reviewed the changes to Policy 4300 Home Schooling. There has been a change in state code and the policy needs to reflect that change. One of the changes throughout the policy removes outdated code references. Current code references were included at the end of the policy. In the past a signed and notarized affidavit was needed if someone wanted to home school. The legislature has changed it to now require a one-time written notification. It was pointed out that the policy does not specifically include “written.” Brad Christensen will include that update to the policy changes.

Policy 2310 Child Abuse and Neglect – Brad Christensen

Brad Christensen reviewed the proposed changes to Policy 2310 Child Abuse and Neglect. This policy has not been updated for many years. The wording has not changed in law but changes were made to update the state code references. A reference to Policy 2900 Attendance was included under section 3.5. Educational neglect is possible if kids are truant too many times. He shared that training is given to staff members each year as staff members are mandatory reporters for child abuse. An employee who gets the report from the child just needs enough information that it is reasonable that the abuse could be happening and that person is required to contact DCFS. The report to DCFS is done through an online reporting system. The policy includes that if there is suspicion of child abuse or neglect, the employee is to report it to DCFS and also give a report to their supervisor. Craig Seegmiller noted it used to be the supervisor who reported the abuse. Brad Christensen said it has been changed to the person who has the closest knowledge about it. The language in 4.10 was added that the child has the right to select a friendly adult to be present when they are interviewed. He mentioned the policy talks a lot about confidentiality and not reaching out to parents or guardians to find out if it is really happening. If parents or guardians contact the school to ask about a report, the school refers them to the agency that did the investigation. The policy still includes some indicators of possible abuse. David Stirland asked if educators review the policy. Brad Christensen said educators are trained every year. Brad Christensen said the “friendly adult” is a new thing and the administrators know it.

Policy 9100 Adult Education and High School Completion - Cheri Stevenson and Jan Goodwin

There was no discussion on Policy 9100 Adult Education and High School Completion.

INFORMATION ITEMS

There were no information items.

REPORTS

Superintendent

Superintendent Richard Holmes recognized the third-grade teachers at Three Falls Elementary, Crimson View Elementary, and South Mesa Elementary. The teachers will be recognized at the Utah Capitol Rotunda at the end of the month as they had 70% of their students achieve blue on the Acadience test. Kathy Hall said these are the third-grade teams across the District who achieved 70% blue on Acadience which means 70% of their students are actually above grade level. There is a high correlation between blue on Acadience and RISE scores. This is super exciting to see that these three schools have met this goal as part of Senate Bill 127. Our District is being recognized for this. It is a huge deal and is a huge undertaking and the gains they are making is remarkable. It is amazing and a lot of hard work. She is grateful that the state is recognizing these teachers. Superintendent Richard Holmes recognized Brittney Henrie, Three Falls Elementary, who was recognized by the UEA with the UEA Excellence in Education Award which is a state award. Superintendent Richard Holmes recognized Kellee Hindes, Pine View Middle, who was recognized with an Autism Council of Utah Award for her work with a specific student. This is a huge award and the only one in the state. He said we have amazing people in our District.

Board

Craig Seegmiller mentioned that our District hosted the 1A baseball tournament over the weekend. They used our high school facilities. It is nice that we can host the 1A schools from throughout the state and share our really nice facilities for the tournament.

Association

Annette Merchant, WCEA, presented their Public Service Heroes awards to Matt Williams from Arrowhead Elementary and Lauren Tingey from Water Canyon High School.

Matt William's favorite part about teaching is making life-long learners. His peers said he can always be counted on to do exceptional work. His dependability and initiative are truly appreciated. He consistently steps in before being asked. His dedication to student safety has been especially commendable as the School Safety Representative. He has shown great care to ensuring a secure and safe environment for all students and staff. He is an outstanding leader by his example. He is outstanding when it comes to technology and is the "go to" for staff who have technical needs. He communicates well and builds wonderful relationships with students and families.

Lauren Tingey is the FACs teacher at Water Canyon High. She loves her job and teaches five different CTE classes which shows her commitment, versatility, and passion for student learning. She works diligently to provide students with meaningful and memorable experiences in the classroom. She ensures that every lesson connects to real world skills and opportunities. Her commitment to Water Canyon High makes her an invaluable part of the community. She is one of the most organized and well-planned teachers. She cares so much about her students and the content she teaches. She goes above and beyond to make sure the students have the best experience they can. A former student shared how much she enjoyed and appreciated Ms. Tingey's class.

PTA/PTO/Community Council

Brittany Macdonald, Crimson Cliffs Council PTA President, represents the schools in the Crimson Cliffs cone-site. She mentioned the PTA presidents in the cone-site recently received training from the Washington City Police Department on the important issue of small vehicle safety. Recent accidents involving small vehicles, including a fatal one, have greatly affected families and students in the cone-site. They know this is an issue that needs to be addressed. At the training they received pamphlets that provided information about local and state laws regarding small vehicles. They are working with the Washington City Police Department and School Resource Officers to educate parents and students about these laws. They are sharing the pamphlets with member of our local PTA and the pamphlets are also being sent home with students and are available in the school offices. The student council from the high school is planning assemblies to help educate the younger students. In addition, they are communicating

with parents and educating students for walk or bike to school days and other events. They know that as they communicate and educate parents and students, they can help our community be safer and help prevent similar tragic accidents as have been seen in the past. She said we have amazing PTAs in our area doing great things to build and strengthen our students. Safety is a top priority not only for PTA but for all the members of our community. She said they appreciate the constant support of PTA as they continue to invest in the schools.

PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – 3 minutes each

No public comments were given.

President David Stirland expressed appreciation for the law enforcement in attendance.

Board Member Hammer presented a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 p.m. Board Member Wade seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT