

Board Study Session
Tuesday, June 16, 2026 4:30 PM Mountain

District Office Conference Room
346 East 600 North
Nephi, UT 84648

Brady Blackett: Absent
Linda Hanks: Present
Hollie Holman: Absent
Bart Mills: Present
Janet Ware: Present

Present: 3, Absent: 2.

Board member Holman participated in this meeting electronically.

1. Policy FGAB Student Conduct Policy: Electronic Devices

- **Context:** Superintendent Hughes presented the updated electronic device policy, which must align with state law going into effect on July 1. If the board doesn't take action, the state law defaults.
- **Key Provisions:** The policy implements a district-wide "all-time" restriction (including instructional time, lunch, and passing periods) on campus. A loophole clause is included for high school students explicitly excused from class for school-sponsored extracurricular activities/events, allowing device use if authorized or directed by a coach, advisor, teacher, or administrator.
- **Board Debate:**
 - **Emergency Situations:** President Hanks and Board Member Holman raised significant safety concerns regarding students using phones during emergency lockdowns (e.g., active shooters), noting that ringing phones can reveal student locations and rumors can create panic among parents with non-factual information. Board Member Mills noted that parents will struggle with restricted communication during crises. The board noted that the policy text allows exceptions for authentic medical needs, IEPs/504s, and crisis monitoring, which satisfies the parental pushback.
 - **Enforcement & Teacher Workload:** Board Member Mills voiced concerns regarding consistent enforcement across different teachers and the added disciplinary burden placed on staff. Dr. Hughes shared enforcing mechanisms used elsewhere, such as "brown-bagging" phones to the office upon violation. He noted the junior high transition succeeded after a few days of adjustment but acknowledged the high school ecosystem would be a harder shift.
 - **Cultural Shift:** The board agreed that overall buy-in from all staff (teachers, administrators, custodians, aides) is critical to reshape the social culture surrounding device dependency.

- **Next Steps:** This policy is up for a vote on its second reading during tonight's regular session. Superintendent Hughes will begin building an implementation plan with high school administrators during the upcoming Admin PLC next Tuesday.

2. Policy DBAB Employee Leave

- **Context:** Dr. Hughes presented a first-reading update to the employee leave policy to clarify parameters around the district's sick leave bank.
- **Key Issues:** The district has faced instances where employees exhaust their personal leave and try to draw from the sick bank for non-qualifying events (e.g., standard doctor appointments). The update emphasizes that the sick bank is reserved exclusively for qualifying FMLA events (such as cancer treatments or stroke recovery).
- **Additional Revisions:**
 - Leave must be requested in full-day or half-day increments, not hourly.
 - Add restrictions on stacking personal leave days immediately before or after high-absence holiday periods without prior principal approval.
 - **Wage Deductions:** A new section requires employees who terminate their contract mid-year to pro-rate any used leave days. If an employee quits in December but used all 11 allotted annual days, the monetary value of those unearned days will be deducted from their final paycheck.
 - **Leave Buy-Out:** The board briefly discussed revising the \$100 per day buy-out incentive for unused leave, as inflation has made taking the day off more valuable to high-step teachers than the current cash payout.

3. Standards Based Grading Platform change to Tradition Grading Platform

- **Proposal:** Moving the secondary schools from a Standards-Based Grading platform back to a Traditional/Standard-Informed Grading Trend system (A, B, C, D, F).
- **Rationale:** The current 1-4 standards platform has created immense confusion among parents and lacked grading consistency across different teachers and departments. Transitioning back to a percentage-based GPA model aims to restore stakeholder confidence, clarify academic tracking, and align with parents' understanding of performance metrics.
- **Implementation Strategy:** Dr. Hughes proposed keeping secondary grading autonomy within departments. For example, a department might agree that summative assessments account for 70% of a grade, formative practices for 20%, and other academic evidence for 10%. The policy shift will force collaborative department PLCs to establish standardized grading metrics.

4. 7-12 Language Arts Curriculum Pilot

- **Update:** Superintendent Hughes announced plans to launch a 7-12 Language Arts curriculum pilot. Due to timeline constraints, they cannot execute a full formal adoption process before the school year starts, so a pilot program will begin first. A standard adoption process will follow around February.
- **Objectives:** The district aims to re-establish a common, structured instructional baseline. Board Member Holman emphasized that the new framework must keep secondary reading strictly on grade-level and institute robust writing benchmarks, noting that the district has lacked a rigorous, uniform writing standard for multiple years.