

MINUTES OF STUDY SESSION **October 27, 2015**

Alpine School District's Board of Education met in a study session on Tuesday, October 27, 2015, at 4:00 P.M. in the Media Center at Deerfield Elementary.

Board members present: President John C. Burton, Deborah C. Taylor, S. Scott Carlson, Brian E. Halladay, Wendy K. Hart, and Paula H. Hill.

Excused: Vice President JoDee C. Sundberg.

Also present: Superintendent Samuel Y. Jarman, Business Administrator Robert W. Smith, and members of the administrative staff. There were 17 others in attendance.

The following took place during the study session:

1. Fall Community Meeting Presentation
Kimberly Bird, Assistant to the Superintendent and David Stephenson, Public Relations Administrator, reviewed the presentation to be shared at the community meetings during the month of November. Board members asked questions and offered suggestions to help clarify the information. Business Administrator Rob Smith reviewed the maps identifying the high growth areas in the district.
2. Attendance Intervention and Policy
Judge Suchada P. Bazelle from the Fourth District Court shared information and answered questions from Board members regarding excessive absenteeism and truancy. She estimated that currently she has a caseload of 700 and 68 of those are truancy issues. Chip Koop, Administrator of Student Services, reported that approximately ten percent of the District's students struggle with attendance.

The study session concluded at approximately 5:12 P.M.

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING – October 27, 2015

Alpine School District's Board of Education met in a regularly scheduled Board meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2015 at 6:00 P.M. in the gymnasium at Deerfield Elementary.

Board members present: President John C. Burton, Deborah C. Taylor, S. Scott Carlson, Brian E. Halladay, Wendy K. Hart and Paula H. Hill.

Excused: Vice President JoDee C. Sundberg.

Also present: Superintendent Samuel Y. Jarman, Business Administrator Robert W. Smith and members of the administrative staff. There were approximately 53 others in attendance.

Board member Wendy K. Hart conducted the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Cub Scout Troop 1260 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVERENCE

Lisa Steppi offered the reverence.

STUDENT RECOGNITIONS

The following Deerfield Elementary students were recognized for their excellence:

- Liam Johnson
- Natalie Buchanan
- Tiare Soliari
- Madeline Kidd
- Carter Hawley
- Jed Dahl
- Jalen Austin

ALPINE FOUNDATION RECOGNITIONS

Shelly Butterfield, Foundation Board member, presented the “You Make A Difference” award to the following individuals at Deerfield Elementary:

- Monica Chamberlain, Certified Employee
- Diane Kitchen, Certified Employee
- Becky Jo Bryant, Volunteer
- Sherrie Hanna, Volunteer
- Bob Nilsson, Support Professional
- Ann Jacklin, Support Professional

PRINCIPAL, PTA, AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Principal Caroline Knadler reported that Deerfield Elementary currently has an enrollment totaling 845 students. The school’s successful extracurricular activities include ballroom dance, band, Knowledge Bowl and student council. In an effort to increase student-reading success, Deerfield offers highly effective intervention programs such as Starr Reading and Double Dosing. Principal Knadler concluded by expressing her gratitude for Deerfield’s amazing students, supportive parents and a talented, dedicated staff.

PTA President Allison Shippen reported that Deerfield Elementary PTA offers 19 different programs and activities. One such activity is The Gold Mile Marathon where participants run a 26-mile marathon over the course of the school year. Students enjoy increase physical activity and the sense of belonging to a club, while socializing with others. Other PTA sponsored activities include Parents and Pastries, Red Ribbon Week, Reflections, school plays, reading contests and read-at-home programs. The PTA finds at least two room moms for every teacher and sponsors activities to show teacher appreciation. The PTA runs the book fair twice a year. Proceeds provide books for the library and classrooms. After the last book fair, the library received a \$1,000 and \$200 went to every grade level for books.

SCC Chair Kristin Howard reported on the SCC goals in language arts, math and science.

- Kindergarten students not meeting DRA winter benchmark will grow at least two levels by spring.
- Students in first through third grade not meeting DRA benchmark will make one year’s worth of growth by spring.
- In 2016, all Tier 2 students will increase their 2015 SAGE math test scores by at least two percentage points.
- To close the gender gap by five percentage points in the SAGE science test scores of 2016 over 2015’s results.

School Land Trust money has been used in the following ways to achieve the goals:

1. Hiring an upper and lower grade Literacy Coordinator.
2. Using Trust Land funds to match the money the district gives the school to strengthen programs like Double Dosing and other reading programs.
3. Purchasing chrome books for fifth grade classrooms. Students will benefit by accessing online resources that increase fluency, reading and writing comprehension. Students can also access Go Math and other online math resources.
4. Teachers applying for web-based summer grants for collaboration.
5. Hiring aides in the classroom, or funding stipends used to provide after school math programs for students needing additional help.
6. Purchasing science materials to make sixth grade science more engaging. The school will host a science assembly. The upper grade girls will be invited to stay after the assembly to discuss women in the science fields.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Christel Swasey attended the study session and voiced concerns about Judge Bazelle's comments regarding attendance. She appreciated the word "care" from the judge, but feels that it shouldn't trump a parental authority. Mrs. Swasey was of the opinion that Judge Bazelle was implying the district should change the existing attendance policy, which allows a parent to excuse any absence within ten days. She said it is a God-given authority for a parent to guide the education of their children. Mrs. Swasey urged the Board to listen to the parents of the majority and not the recommendations of the Judge.

Melanie Allen thanked the Board for the current attendance policy, which grants parents the right to excuse their children from school. She is a mother to eight children and knows what is right for them. Mrs. Allen personally feels that children are in school too long each day and for too many days in the year.

Lani Stott is the mother of five children and would like to keep the attendance policy as it is, because parents know what is best for their children. She feels that if a different policy is implemented it will hurt the parents who are really trying to help their children. Mrs. Stott has a daughter with diabetes who has missed a lot of school, but has stayed current with all of her schoolwork. She feels that the minority should not dictate to the majority who are doing it right.

Meredith Ohran agreed with everything that has been said about the attendance policy. She said her purpose for being at the meeting was to talk about the ALL program at Cherry Hill Elementary. She spoke at the last Board meeting about the same topic and was at this meeting representing a group of parents who could not be in attendance. Mrs. Ohran reiterated her position that moving the ALL program away from Cherry Hill would not allow the underserved to have a gifted program. She proposed allowing the ALL program to remain at Cherry Hill for a two-year trial to see if the ALL, Dual Immersion and regular education classes could all work together.

Tami Hirsch is a former teacher in the district and the mother to five children. She appreciates the current Alpine School District attendance policy allowing parents to excuse absences for their children. Mrs. Hirsch shared that in her studies she found that President Obama's education plan has a clause that would take parental rights away from attendance. As a teacher she has seen parents who don't care about their child's attendance in school, but she does not want her rights taken away because of their choices. She said that as a parent it is her prerogative to take her children out of school and is an advocate to keep the current policy.

Michelle Stallings is grateful for the current attendance policy because it gives flexibility and allows parents to take advantage of other opportunities. She understands attendance in school is important and hopes that parents don't take advantage of the policy currently in place. Mrs. Stallings appreciates Judge

Bazelle's position and the concern she has for the students with truancy issues. However, Mrs. Stalling is concerned about using words like "prosecution" because she doesn't feel that is a direction we should go. She had a child with a truancy issue and they did all that they could do, but to get a letter stating they were going to be charged with a misdemeanor did not help the situation. Mrs. Stalling hopes that the Board will keep the current attendance policy and work with parents, not against them.

Rachelle Glines is supportive of the current attendance policy. She moved here from another district in Utah and feels that to change the current policy teaches children that government, doctors, lawyers, etc., have authority over them. Mrs. Glines said the cost of freedom is high and not everyone will be saved. She said it is a God-given right for parents to have authority over their children. The more schools get involved with these issues, the more parents allow schools to take away their responsibilities, and then parents will become less responsible. She asked the Board to keep the responsibility on the parents. Mrs. Glines thanked them for the current policy and to please continue it.

Karen Smith voiced her support for the current attendance policy. Her daughter has had health issues and missed a lot of school. The existing policy allowed them as parents to deal with it in a positive way and keep their daughter current in school. Mrs. Smith also addressed the Board about the ALL program at Cherry Hill. She said that many parents feel that they have been left out of the loop and have not had a say in the plan to move the ALL program. She gave her support to the PTA president who spoke about giving all three programs a two-year trial. Mrs. Smith said the ALL program is a life-changer for so many families. She and her husband bought their home in the Cherry Hill boundaries for the ALL program. She voiced her opinion that she doesn't think moving the program will solve the problem.

Jared Carmen lives in Highland and has two children. He thanked the Board for the time they spend in their positions on behalf of students. He said that he hoped the spirit of truth was felt in the room as parents spoke about the attendance policy. Mr. Carmen quoted the state statute about attendance and then proposed the question, "Which is more important, agency or compassion?" He then gave three examples of compassion vs. agency and then asked the Board to do the right thing. Mr. Carmen said that if there are children falling between the cracks, encourage administrators to help them, but do not take away the right of parents. He said that recently we have been encouraged to support the family and then asked the Board to not change with current policy.

ACTION ITEMS

2016 Board Meeting Schedule

Superintendent Jarman recommended the approval of the 2016 Board Meeting Schedule. He said that the adjustments to the schedule requested by Board members in the October 13 meeting had been made.

Debbie Taylor made the motion to approve the 2016 Board Meeting Schedule. Scott Carlson seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Wendy Hart asked about the timeline for the Cherry Hill ALL decision. Barry Beckstrand, Supervisor of the South Elementary Schools, said November 1, 2015 is the deadline to notify parents of the ALL options. He said the decision would be made in the Cabinet meeting tomorrow, October 28.

Paula Hill attended the DCC meeting, an early out collaboration visit and the ATEC open house. She said she experienced the best of Alpine School District. She also reported on the MATC meeting she attended.

The students from UVU who were in attendance were recognized.

Wendy Hart seconded the opinion of the parents who spoke about parental rights regarding the attendance policy. She has seen the detrimental impact that removing those rights can have.

ADJOURNMENT

Debbie Taylor made the motion to adjourn and John Burton seconded the motion. It passed unanimously at approximately 7:00 P.M.

Approved