



MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah 84770
April 9, 2019
4:30 p.m.

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member LaRene Cox, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Toquerville City Council Member Alex Chamberlain.

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence offered by Business Administrator Brent Bills.

WORK SESSION

Toquerville City

Superintendent Larry Bergeson said Washington County School District is a large district with almost 50 schools, 33,000 students, and a \$300 million-dollar annual budget. Alex Chamberlain shared that Toquerville City has about 660 roof tops in the city. They have seen about 50% growth over the last seven years. Down the road it will probably necessitate a school. They have been working hard to get a bypass road around the west side Toquerville from north to south. They are also working to preserve the historical part of town. The road would help divert traffic going to Zion National Park or the Hurricane areas. Alex Chamberlain said it currently would be more cost effective to build a home in Toquerville rather than buy an existing home in the city. There are building lots ready to build on. Alex Chamberlain said Principal Lowe at Hurricane Elementary has been awesome to work with. He expressed concern with the early hours of the intermediate school and wishes that the District could come up with a creative solution that would allow the students more time to sleep. Elementary students get on the bus at 8:17 a.m. Intermediate students are picked up at 6:45 a.m. Craig Seegmiller said it has been discussed, but we don't have enough bus drivers and have to stagger picking up for the schools. Research has shown that intermediate age students do better getting up early than high school students. Brent Bills said the issue really runs around the high schools allowing for a zero hour and afterschool sports. Alex Chamberlain would like the District officials to keep looking for solutions. He mentioned that the Hurricane schools are part of the Spanish Dual Immersion program and loves it. He feels that the Dual Immersion program does seem to segregate students a little and suggested maybe looking to offer Dual Immersion programs at one school instead of specific classrooms in multiple schools. He also mentioned that the reservoir should be completed in the next 3-5 years.

Board Member Blake presented a motion to go into a closed session at 1:05 p.m. Board Member Dunn seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member LaRene Cox, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer. Human Resource Executive Director Lyle Cox, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Principal Sharla Campbell, and Attorney Russ Mitchell also attended a portion of the closed session.

CLOSED SESSION

Personnel and Legal Items

Board Member Dunn presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 3:24 p.m. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION

Lava Ridge Mascot Change – Kalyn Gubler

Kalyn Gubler said the students at Lava Ridge Intermediate School have had a real learning experience. They have attended legislation twice. Utah HB 144, designating a state reptile, passed with 56 legislative votes for and eight votes against the bill. The senators all voted in favor. The Governor signed the bill on March 27, 2019. Students from Lava Ridge proposed a mascot change to have the Gila monster represent their school. Students currently at the school said they did not have a choice in the original mascot decision of the gecko. Students at the school voted in favor of changing the mascot. They feel that future students will know they can do great things by changing it to the state reptile they worked to designate. Students will know that the Gila monster is part of their school. It is indigenous to Utah. Of the 900 students who voted, 64% were in favor, 30% were against, and a small amount didn't care. Board members gave their support to approve the mascot change.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go into a closed session at 3:34 p.m. Board Member Dunn seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

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CLOSED SESSION

Personnel Items

Board Member Blake presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 4:00 p.m. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION

School Fee Schedule – Richard Holmes

Richard Holmes said most of the fees have not changed except for some of the art fees. Driver's Education is being increased to \$110 to cover increased costs and school lunch will also have an increase of five cents. Changes also include adding other fees that are required to be on the fee schedule that were not there before. Schools were charging those fees already. The elementary school uniform fee for Dixie Sun will need to be included. The Board reviewed the fees. It was suggested that the schools own the formal wear for band and orchestra and just charge students a cleaning fee. The fee schedule only includes a nominal fee for camps and trips and students would need to fundraise for the balance. That would help reduce the cost to the District for students on fee waivers. Brent Bills said that the new rule would not allow for individual and group fundraising and group fundraisers will include some flexibility. Curricular clubs will need to fundraise to pay the costs of all camps and trips. Brent Bills explained that group fundraising would allow students to help cover the cost for fee waivers. Cheryl Snow shared concern that with the costs for transportation students would not be able to travel for multiple trips. Brent Bills suggested that fundraisers would have to help cover the gaps as all fees are now fee waivable. LaRene Cox suggested itemizing fees to include only those participating in a trip. Some of the art teachers are concerned that if they have to fundraise for trips, it will limit the opportunities. They would like the School Board to consider the impact on programs. Brent Bills said principals will not be able to pay the costs of all the fee waivers. Laura Hesson said the program costs should be similar. Programs should not be valued differently.

Graduation Credits – Richard Holmes

Discussion postponed.

Insurance Open Enrollment and Transition to EMI – Tammara Robinson

Discussion postponed.

Insurance Committee Responsibilities – Lyle Cox

Discussion postponed.

Professional Development School Update – Rex Wilkey, Nate Esplin

Discussion postponed.

Career Tech Progress on Pathways – Richard Holmes

Discussion postponed.

RFP for Board Software – David Stirland

Discussion postponed.

NSBA Follow-up

Discussion postponed.

Bond Report – Matt Dugdale

Matt Dugdale briefly shared how well the District has done with their bonds. In November 2013, the District passed an \$185,000 bond by 52%. Over the past six years, the bonds have

gone down by 17.25%. Interest rates dropped with the District still being successful in issuing bonds. The District has had successful issuances with a true interest cost of 1.826%. Washington County School District has issued shorter bonds than other Districts and has received a triple “A” rating with Fitch in 2016. Washington County School District has reduced the tax rates for the public.

Follow-up from Previous Meeting

Nothing to discuss.

OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE BOARD

Healthy Dixie Update – Craig Seegmiller

USBA Update – LaRene Cox

MBA Update – Laura Hesson

Dixie Tech Update – Terry Hutchinson

Foundation Update – David Stirland

FCAOG Update – Becky Dunn

Audit Committee Update – Kelly Blake

The reports were postponed.

ITEMS FOR BOARD REVIEW

Enrollment

Safe Schools

GRAMA Requests

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, Terry Hutchinson, Laura Hesson, Becky Dunn, Kelly Blake, and LaRene Cox. Staff members present were Superintendent Larry Bergeson and Business Administrator Brent Bills.

OPEN MEETING – 4:30 p.m.

Board President Welcome – President Stirland

Pledge of Allegiance – Member Cox

Reverence – Member Hesson

PTA Award Presentations – Mindi Barker

Mindi Barker, Region PTA president, recognized the PTA Council and Region winners as follows:

Becky Chase, Panorama Elementary, Advocacy Award for the Kind Kids program.

Mona Haslem, Horizon Elementary, Outstanding School Administrator

Casey Rasmussen, Panorama Elementary, Outstanding Educator

Lora Madison, Panorama Elementary, Outstanding School Support Staff

Tiffany LaCasse, Outstanding Volunteer

Jill Hardman, Spirit of PTA

Superintendent Larry Bergeson expressed appreciation for Mindi Barker and the PTA.

Superintendent Larry Bergeson also recognized Jeremiah Herron who was selected as the Skills USA Advisor of the Year. Jeremiah Herron reported that Dixie High has taken the Spirit Award for three years now.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – BOND PROJECT ITEM CHANGE

The Washington County Board of Education will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 4:45 p.m. to receive public comment on a proposed change to the approved 2019-2023 Bond Projects to include the Desert Hills High School Track and Field.

Brent Bills reported that a change was needed to include the Desert Hills High School track and field that were included in the original bond plan but were left off the bond notice.

No public comments were given.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the addition of the Desert Hills High School track and field to the 2019-2023 Bond Projects. Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

- 1. March 5, 2019 Meeting of the Board of Education**

B. Financial Report

C. Personnel Items

D. Three Falls Elementary School LAND Trust Plan Change

E. Enterprise High School LAND Trust Plan Change

Board Member Blake presented a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items. Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD ACTION ITEMS

No comments were given.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Bond Project Change – DHHS Field and Track – Brent Bills

Approved at conclusion of Public Hearing.

New Elementary School Bid – Craig Hammer

Brent Bills reported on plans for building a new elementary school in the Little Valley area. The bid committee reviewed the bids and recommends Hughes Construction at \$10,978,000.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the selection of Hughes Construction. Board Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

2019-2020 Priority Projects – Craig Hammer

Brent Bills said the priority projects were reviewed last month.

Board Member Hesson presented a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Priority Projects. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 2110 Safe Schools Policy – Karen Bess

Richard Holmes said feedback has been received and suggested that the Board table the approval of the policy.

Board Member Dunn presented a motion to table the approval of Policy 2110 Safe Schools Policy. Board Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Policy 1332 FMLA, ADA, and District Sick Leave – Lyle Cox

Lyle Cox reviewed the changes needed to clarify FMLA and ADA leave. The ADA imposed undue hardship. The policy will make sure the District is looking at hardship. Editorial changes were also made to make sure the language is clear. Employees have been allowed to purchase short term disability, then be covered with long term disability. Provisions that allowed employees to bring up to five days of sick leave accrued from a previous employer were removed. The short-term coverage makes it redundant. Re-crediting sick leave for employees who had a break in service and returned within 28 months will also be removed.

Policy 3400 School Fees/Solicitation of Funds and 2019-2020 Fee Schedule – Richard Holmes

Richard Holmes said the policy will be submitted for a 30-day review and the District would continue to get feedback from teachers. The District will continue to work through the new fee changes and is trying to be sensitive to all programs and to the parents who pay the fees. Superintendent Larry Bergeson mentioned that the state superintendents have spent hours reviewing the changes and how it will impact the school districts throughout the state. Washington County School District needs to comply with the legislative changes and keep it affordable without affecting the programs. Craig Seegmiller is concerned that some programs may be lost if students are required to fundraise. David Stirland said the Board is being conscientious about keeping programs and being cost effective. The legislation of school fees will begin to take effect on July 1, 2019.

INFORMATION

Student Achievement – Dr. Brad Ferguson

Dr. Brad Ferguson reported on the parent survey results. Thirty-three thousand emails received an invite to participate. On January 22, 2019, a subsequent email was sent reminding parents to participate in the survey. The District has received 3594 responses which is a 10.8% response rate. Parents were asked to think of a specific student while taking the survey and respond for the level of agreement about statements. He suggested that “no basis for judgment” could be included in the disagree category. Overall, the District has received a positive response. Information from the survey has been sent back to the schools to look at and use for actions to take. Laura Hesson asked about the slides related to bullying. Richard Holmes said comments received did not point to a bullying problem in our District. Dr. Brad Ferguson said the survey results will open up conversations for schools to ask questions about what they are doing. It was mentioned that elementary schools don’t know how to use PowerSchool as well. When information is kept current, parents want to use PowerSchool resources.

What’s Right in WCSD Schools

Little Valley Elementary – Rob Stevenson

Rob Stevenson expressed appreciation for the School Board members. He said he is in the process of hiring for upcoming openings. He said that Little Valley Elementary doesn't do all the extra thrills and frills, but they do the things they are supposed to be doing to educate students. The school has wonderful teachers and students.

Dixie Middle School – Tim Lowe

Tim Lowe briefly reviewed the accreditation of Dixie Middle School. Everything about the teachers exceeded the expectations. They are building a good school culture. PLC practices are in place and working. The culture in the school is extremely positive and students feel a connection to the school. Teachers have high trust and feel supported by the administration. Dixie Middle School is committed to using data to improve teaching. Character development has created a framework for the school. The school has staff that cares for the kids. Dixie Middle School and Washington County School District are doing amazing things.

REPORTS

Superintendent

Superintendent Larry Bergson briefly reported on the NSBA Conference in Philadelphia. He feels confident about the direction the District is going. He mentioned visiting every school each quarter and enjoyed participating with the classroom grant awards. There are great things going on in the schools and he feels we are making progress.

Board

Craig Seegmiller said the NSBA Conference has some good stuff. David Stirland mentioned attending a presentation on mental health and Terry Hutchinson said he attended a presentation on skills-based education.

Association

Amy Barton, WCEA, reported on attending the symposium. She also has interest in mental health issues as they relate to students. Behavior is a form of communication. She would be happy to share more about the symposium with the Board. She reported on the WCEA/UEA legislative debrief. They talked about what will happen with the TSSA funds and tax reform. She mentioned that one big thing coming up is the annual House of Delegates. She said WCEA will have 13 members attending from Washington County.

PTA/PTO/Community Council

No reports were given.

PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – 3 minutes each

No comments were given.

Board President David Stirland adjourned the meeting at 5:49 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT