



**AGENDA**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Washington County School District**  
**121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah 84770**  
**October 28, 2019**  
**5:15 p.m.**

Reverence offered by Member Seegmiller.

*Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member Kelly Blake, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Executive Director Craig Hammer, and Executive Director Cheri Stevenson*

*Participating via phone: Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Board Member LaRene Cox*

*Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer*

**PUBLIC HEARING – BOND PROJECT ITEM CHANGE**

**The Washington County Board of Education will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, October 28, 2019 at 5:15 p.m. to receive public comment on a proposed change to the approved 2019-2023 Bond Projects that would change the priority of the Coral Canyon Elementary Intercom System from the 2021 school year to the 2020 school year for completion.**

***Public Comments Given:***

Amy Barton, Coral Canyon teacher, said the Intercom System is a disaster and a safety concern and agrees it needs to be replaced.

**WORK SESSION**

**Social Emotional Learning – Cheri Stevenson & Tami Curtis**

Cheri Stevenson introduced the Social Emotional Learning happening in the District. The District has appreciated the conversations with teachers and principals to determine what is needed to move forward. Teachers can't keep doing more. It is about doing things right. The strategies need to be simple, effective and sustainable. Tami Curtis said it was determined that the District needed to focus on Tier 1 schoolwide. Students need to feel acceptance and belonging. Teachers need to receive professional development. Learning can't happen for students when social emotional learning needs are not met. Teachers are asked to focus on a 3:1 positive to negative ratio. In training, they learn simple things they can do in the classroom. Elementary schools are using Move this World. Secondary are also starting to use programs. Counselors have been setting up Wellness rooms in the elementary schools. Currently there are

27 schools with wellness rooms. Jon Butler said some of the things being done for Tier 1 prevention include Move this World, increasing elementary counselors, teacher training, and parent education. Tier 3 will include tapping into community resources and partnerships. Cheri Stevenson said partnering with community resources will help with sustainability and help take the burden from the school. Tami Curtis shared the School District wellness website which has resources for mental health, parent resources, social emotional learning, wellness rooms, and educator resources. Parenting courses are being video taped so parents can view them online. Cheri Stevenson said it is about doing one thing a little better each day. Teachers are doing all that they can. We don't want to burden the teachers but provide support for them. Laura Hesson said social emotional behavior isn't just a problem with a few students anymore. Tami Curtis said bringing in more parent engagement will help. The schools can't address this alone; it really is a community effort. Kelly Blake said we need to build the family to help society in general. Amy Barton suggested having the website "live" in time to share with parents at SEPs. The parenting course flyer has been sent to every parent and could be sent out again prior to each class. It could also be text out and put on social media. Cheri Stevenson said that in recognizing that kids come differently and getting systems in place to help will help take the burden from the teachers. The Utah State Board of Education has asked that the District publish some of the studies on what we have done.

### **Millcreek School Improvement Plan – Richard Holmes**

Richard Holmes reported on the School Improvement Plan. He shared that their main focus is to improve attendance. Attendance is associated with graduation rates. He shared that they are offering incentives for attendance, making home visits, phone calls and have hired specialist counselor to work with the students. Southwest High has now been umbrellaed under the student's current high school. It has helped the District do a better job reporting and keeping track of where students are. The Student population is 160. Millcreek has a food pantry that students can take home every day and offers help for some students that cannot be replaced. Kelly Blake said the program is for students who don't fit into a traditional school. Richard Holmes suggested putting on their schedule to visit. He also suggested attending their Thanksgiving Dinner. For many of the students it is their first Thanksgiving dinner. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said our graduation rates would be affected without the school.

### **Board Training – Laura Hesson**

Laura Hesson reviewed the book, *The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook* with the Board. Chapter 1 – Vision: Laura Hesson pointed out that vision is not the same as a mission statement. The District does not have a vision statement. The mission statement is, "Improve student achievement and ensure high levels of learning for every student." The vision statement is what we want to see happen. The chapter talks about having goals. She shared the six strategic goals of the District. The Board should be focusing on these goals. Becky Dunn referenced from the chapter that tightly held traditions can kill a board's vision instead of allowing the Board to think outside of the box and do things different. Kelly Blake also suggested that traditions can be good and hold people together, paradigms can hold us back. Craig Seegmiller said we need to simplify the things that don't work anymore. Terry Hutchinson suggested the Board create a list of things that Board members see may not be working anymore and need to be eliminated or changed.

Chapter 2 – Accountability: Laura Hesson included six questions on the summary sheet for the Board to answer on their own. David Stirland said the Board does well with accountability. Accountability is a driver to success. Laura Hesson said success is measured by student improvement through accountability. Craig Seegmiller said there should be lots of positives along with accountability, not just ruling with an iron fist. Three positives for every negative should apply with accountability. Kelly Blake said to reach the goals and be accountable, it includes encouragement, motivating and moving forward. David Stirland said as we hold others accountable, there must be measures of success. Becky Dunn said there must be positives and say what is expected or they won't know what they are to accomplish.

Chapter 3 – Policy: Laura Hesson said creating policy is one of the Board's primary functions. The Board is the "who, what, and why." The Superintendent is the "how." Laura Hesson mentioned that the chapter talks about a regular review of policy. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the District administration does review on a regular basis, but not all policies reviewed are brought to the Board unless there are changes. The Executive Staff reviews them monthly to look at changes needed. He suggested that information could be shared with the Board on the policies being reviewed. Craig Seegmiller said it should be staff role as they know how it affects their department, then they can come to the Board with changes. Terry Hutchinson said there are other sides to the policies as well. It is not only reviewing but establishing. Kelly Blake said we are bombarded with the legislative changes and need to rely on the administration to review the policies. Craig Hammer mentioned that the District also has Administrative Letters that deal with procedures. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said advice from legal counsel has been to not put everything in policy if it is not needed. Some things can be adequately covered with an administrative letters. The District binds itself when everything is detailed in policy.

Chapter 4 – Community Leadership: The sole purpose of the Board is student learning. Laura Hesson suggested that the way to get word out on our purpose is with media and open board meetings. Superintendent Larry Bergeson mentioned the recognitions and school presentations. Terry Hutchinson said the Board should try to be visible in the community and emphasize the purpose for student learning. David Stirland suggested that the Board members could be better at being in the schools.

Chapter 5 – Board/Superintendent Relationships: An evaluation should be done annually. The evaluation should be to review future expectations, not just the past. Kelly Blake said the Board and Superintendent should have a partnership.

Laura Hesson shared a list of eight characteristics of effective school boards. She suggested that we need to involve the community more in what we do to educate students. It was suggested that the Board be asked to report what they are doing to involve the community more.

### **Ways the Board and Administration can Empower Teachers – Kelly Blake**

Kelly Blake shared that teachers in the past felt more respected. People today don't feel that same way due to litigation, legislation, and social apathy. In talking with the legislator, it was mentioned that teachers do not feel supported. He suggested that the Board could empower teachers by working with legislators to help give the control back to teachers and empower them. We need to get parents on board to spend the time needed with their child. We need to help parents through parent education. Teachers can be empowered as they feel respect from homes. We need to work with legislators to reduce the number of expectations for teachers in the classroom. Richard Holmes said he feels that the Board does all they can to show appreciation to

the teachers. Some of the feelings come from sources we have no control over. We need to do all we can to simplify and take things from their plate. Many times, the message they receive from legislation is more accountability. Laura Hesson said it ties in with what the Board talked about to increase community involvement. LaRene Cox said we need to promote teachers more and brag about a teacher each month. It could involve students who love their teachers. Kelly Blake said we need to promote the good things we are doing in the county. We need to put it on social media as that is where everyone is at. Larry Bergeson said teachers get into education to make a difference for kids and provide for their family. He suggested that social media and PTA could help. Craig Seegmiller said we would need to focus on the team with all the collaboration of PLC teams. Craig Seegmiller said teacher want things simplified and to be allowed to teach. We need to stop requiring teachers to do things that are not necessary. Cheri Stevenson said we need to pay attention to teachers and give them time and attention when they are doing the right thing. Teachers only get negative. Richard Holmes said we have had an interesting year being reactive, but we need to be more positive recognizing 3:1. Laura Hesson said it will help outweigh the negative in the community. David Stirland suggested that we also need to help teachers feel supported by their principal and build trust in that relationship.

#### **USBA Leadership Academy Reports – David Stirland**

David Stirland shared that the collaboration was one of the things discussed that the Board has started doing. That will also help the teachers feel supported. There is a school collaboration meeting this Friday with Kelly, Terry, and LaRene. Laura Hesson mentioned a PowerPoint on generations and how to talk with and communicate with generational parents. It was suggested to have Steven Dunham help communication information to the different generations. It would also be helpful with teachers on how to communicate with parents. Craig Seegmiller feels that as a Board member he is in the schools less now than he was 10 years ago. He would like to be in front of all the faculty and say thank you each year. Superintendent Larry Bergeson mentioned it is hard with the large number of schools we have now and with the time needed for PLCs. David Stirland suggested that it will need to be more individualized.

#### **USBA Conference – January 9-11, 2020 – David Stirland**

David Stirland said all Board members are planning to attend.

#### **2021-2022 Proposed Calendar – Craig Hammer**

Craig Hammer reviewed the calendar. He explained the September 17<sup>th</sup> will be scheduled as a Teacher Prep Day as the World Ironman is scheduled in St. George. There is two weeks scheduled off for Christmas Break and the Spring Break and Spring Recess are about a month apart. School will start on a Wednesday. Graduation will be held on May 24 and 25. Becky Dunn asked about testing for elementary students the first week of school. Rex Wilkey said it has not been determined yet.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

**Bond Priority Change for the Coral Canyon Elementary Intercom System from the 2021 School Year to the 2020 School Year for completion**

**Board Member Blake presented a motion to approve moving the Coral Canyon Elementary Intercom System from the 2021 School Year to the 2020 School Year for Completion. Board Member Dunn seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

#### **Millcreek School Improvement Plan – Richard Holmes**

**Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the Millcreek School Improvement Plan. Board Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

**Board Member Blake presented a motion to go into a closed session at 7:13 p.m. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

*Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member Kelly Blake, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Executive Director Craig Hammer, Executive Director Cheri Stevenson, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer. Board Member LaRene Cox participate via phone.*

#### **CLOSED SESSION (As needed)**

##### **Personnel Items**

**Board Member Blake presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 7:34 p.m. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

**Board President David Stirland adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**