



**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Dixie High School – Media Center
350 East 700 South, St. George, Utah
July 14, 2020
12:00 p.m.**

Due to COVID-19, participation in this meeting at the location listed above will be limited to the Board and necessary District Executive Staff only to follow the federal and state guidelines limiting gatherings to groups of 20.

This meeting will be available for public remote participation beginning at approximately 2:00 p.m. at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/washk12>

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member LaRene Cox, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Executive Director Amy Mitchell, Executive Director Nate Esplin, Executive Director Craig Hammer, Executive Director Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Lyle Cox, Communications Director Steven Dunham.

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence offered by Member Blake.

LUNCH SESSION

Working Lunch Discussion with Dr. David Blodgett, Southwest Utah Public Health Department

Superintendent Larry Bergeson briefly reviewed the WCSD Reopening Plan documents. The District only received the template a couple of weeks ago and it continues to be a changing plan. He mentioned that he has been conversing with Dr. Blodgett, the city mayors, hospital administration, community leaders, and community members in putting the plan together. Information was also gathered from the survey sent out. The plan must be submitted to the state and posted on our website by August 1st. Day-to-day procedures will be explained in the plan. A lot of time and work has been put into the plan. One of the biggest parts of returning to normal is getting school back in session. Terry Hutchinson asked how masks in elementary schools will impact learning. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said there will be more flexibility throughout the day when masks will not need to be worn.

Dr. David Blodgett said he appreciates the work of the District. He said the District's plan addresses many of the concerns. The state will focus on making sure there are not sick kids in the classrooms with screening and pulling sick kids out of the classroom, so they don't affect others. That is the easiest way to stop the spread. Schools should have an isolation area to keep students until parents can pick up a student who are sick. The role of the Health Department is contact schools for tracing. They will be able to share the name of students who have tested positive to make sure that they are not in the classroom. We can't have students coming to school sick and need to provide options for them to stay home and continue learning. Faculty and staff need to feel empowered to stay home as well when they are sick. The District needs to reinforce that message. However, individuals cannot expect schools to be COVID free zones. Dr. Blodgett shared information about case investigation and contract tracing information for those with COVID. The local health department will contact the POC of the schools and work with them to determine who may have been in contact with the individual that has COVID. There will be a standard letter that should go out. Schools will be asked to keep a list of students who are high risk. The Health Department will help with contacting those who are high risk. The school will notify other students who may have been exposed. He shared a spreadsheet showing the roles of the schools, School Board, and

local health department. The Governor made a mandate for wearing masks. There are a certain number of people who spread the virus before they know they have the virus. The logic behind the mask is to help keep the virus from spreading. Terry Hutchinson asked about children spreading the virus. Statistical modeling says that kids are about 50% less likely to contract and spread the virus. Dr. Blodgett reported on the vaccine development. Several of the vaccines are in phase two trials. Two vaccines are in production for when the trials are completed. He said that temperature checks and screening is a great way to check for symptoms. Those who are being tested have a temperature about 90% of the time. The plan includes parental screenings. He explained that there are two standards for quarantine - isolation and general quarantine. Essential workers may still need to work. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said there are four options for students to continue to learn if they need to be away. The District is planning for students to be in class every day. Teachers are being assigned to teach remotely so they are not carrying the burden of both. Dr. Blodgett explained that only the student who tests positive will need to quarantine. Others in the class will receive a letter stating their child may have been exposed. Regular cleaning of the classroom each day would be recommended. Things should be wiped down multiple times a day. Craig Hammer said the misters take about 15 minutes per classroom to sanitize. It does not require a 24 hour wait. Custodians are being trained on it. The District Office has been fogged and it did not leave desktops sticky. Dr. Blodgett said if a child is infected, logistically it could affect the whole classroom. The more people are spaced out, the better they are. Dr. David Blodgett said the virus is basically like a seasonal bug and will create a real risk when things cool down and the flu season comes back. Parents need to keep student's home when they are sick. The health department will be encouraging flu vaccinations this year. The School District will determine how to handle when teachers are exposed. The Health Department will be contacted and can work with the District. When someone has been exposed, the individual, if an essential employee could continue to work unless they have symptoms, or they could choose to self-quarantine. Those who are high risk should be given the opportunity to reduce their risk through accommodations. The virus is 19 times less likely to spread when outside. Staying six feet apart is the best option. When you can't stay six feet apart, a mask should be worn. The face shields can be used but should still try to stay six feet apart. Dr. Blodgett said he feels that the School District plan was done well. He reported on testing in our area and shared that the county has plenty of tests available as school starts.

Tour of South Mesa Elementary

The tour of South Mesa Elementary was postponed.

WORK SESSION

COVID-19 Update and Review for Reopening – Larry Bergeson

Lyle Cox said a lot of questions have come up about the District requiring masks, what requirements the District has in considering the needs of employees, and what to do if an employee tests positive. Legal Counsel said the Governor has the right to compel these types of mandates when it relates to public health. The State Supreme Court has said "yes" that we can exclude access of benefits to those who won't comply. The District is being respectful of the Governor's orders and is putting the plan together accordingly. The District is also being mindful of employees and working to meet employee needs. Social Distancing is a big part of that. There may be some employees who cannot come into work and may need to access FMLA and emergency leave to meet the accommodation. The District is working to balance the needs. Over 60% of our bus drivers fall into the high risk category. The District is working to keep them safe. There are currently 50 requests for accommodation. Employees will have to use some of the leave benefits that they qualify for. Each request will take careful conversations. There are several employees who are fearful, but fear is not a qualifying situation. We have professional counseling available for those individuals. Employees should come back into work. There will be some situations where we can allow an employee to work from home. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) mandates employers to provide leave for employees with COVID. They can only use it once in a year and limits the amount that can be paid. Emergency paid medical leave allows for 10 days of paid leave - (Admin Letter 150 explains more). The FFCRA expires on December 31st. Laura Hesson asked about the liability of bringing employees back together. OSHA requires that essential workers are isolated to minimize exposure. We have immunity as long as we are doing what we are required to do. If someone has been exposed, we have an obligation to let them know and ask them to monitor for symptoms and isolate or self-quarantine. If employees feel sick, they should not come into work. They

should not come back until they have tested negative, have not had symptoms for three days, or have been given a doctor gives an okay to come back. Students will be treated the same way. Lyle Cox said the mandate for masks is an executive order. It is a mandate and we need to follow the guidelines. If we don't enforce it, we will have some liability for not keeping people safe. We should be wearing masks when we can't be six feet away. Lyle Cox also shared legal supreme court ruling for similar cases. Kelly Blake pointed out that as information changes, the District will adjust. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the plan is based on the latest information received. Dr. David Blodgett said the plan fits and he does not see any adjustments needed. Enforcement will be a concern. The parameters needed to hold in-person school are in the plan. There will be more information coming from the Governor's office and the District will adjust the plan as more information is received. Terry Hutchinson said we have to follow the language of the mandate, but we may be allowed to be more flexible. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said we are receiving direction from the State Superintendent. Terry Hutchinson said he doesn't see the benefit of having younger children wear masks except on a bus. He wants to operate under the discretion we have from the Governor. Rex Wilkey said the young students can learn to wear them. Mask will need to be in place if needed to keep schools open. He would rather err on the side of caution. The executive staff and the principals are comfortable with the plan. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the District will make modifications as long as we can be safe. LaRene Cox pointed out that there are other options for those who are not comfortable with masks. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said students will be required to wear a mask on the bus, masks will be worn for short period of time in the class, and those participating in activities will have symptom checks and masks for those watching. The District is also making accommodations to make it less burdensome for teachers. Rex Wilkey said schools want to own it and will have teachers working either live or remote. Teachers will not do both. Blended learning will also be an option for elementary. As soon as the plan is done, the District will get word out to parents. Richard Holmes said secondary schools will have remote learning. The middle schools have identified 21 courses that will have additional courses remotely. The key course subject areas have been identified as well as some electives to keep students with a full schedule. There is also a blended option available. Laura Hesson asked about doing cohorts of students with similar classes. Richard Holmes said it would be difficult and there are still so many unknowns. He said the District would do the best they can to accommodate the needs of the students. Richard Holmes said secondary teachers have expressed the need for more planning time. They have looked at many options and have scheduled an early-out schedule on Friday similar to elementary. The benefits will be so big for teachers to have the PLC planning time. There will no longer be early-out PLC days on Mondays for secondary schools. Laura Hesson asked about staggering time for the early out to allow some classes to continue. Lunch times will be spread out more to allow students more distancing. It was mentioned that many students carry their items and don't even use lockers. Principals will be encouraged to spread out the lockers being used.

Brent Bills said we need to approve the bond. Matt Dougdale reviewed the resolution. It allows the District to issue the next \$58,000,000. The District has some bonds that could be refunded for a savings in December. The District would like the flexibility to refund those bonds from 2011. This delegates to Brent Bills and Superintendent Larry Bergeson to approve the bond sale. The market is strong, and rates have come down. The hope is to receive a 2% bond rate. He is hoping to have the bonds ready to sell by the end of August. Brent Bills said we will issue \$50,000,000 in new bonds and \$8,000,000 in refunded bonds.

David Stirland mentioned that the next Board work meeting will be on Monday, July 20th at 5:15 p.m. The meeting will be to implement a plan for approval at Monday, July 27th. The public will have an opportunity to respond and send questions to the District. There are a few inconsistencies from the state that need to be clarified and updated.

Name for New Elementary School – Rex Wilkey

Rex Wilkey said the name selection for the new elementary was overwhelmingly Desert Canyons Elementary. There were several mascot choices, one being the aviators. The school is out by the airport.

Summer Goals and Secondary Learning Framework – Cheri Stevenson

Cheri Stevenson reported on the work being done by teachers to prepare for next year. She shared the four summer goals set by principals. The first was to develop collaborative teams from other same level

schools that share common essential standards. They are bringing the best ideas for teachers to come together and work on. Second, teams are taking part in professional learning, best practices, and remote learning preparation. There is a District menu of support where teachers can get a live person to help. Third, teams will have all their content in a learning management plan and have a clear plan for implementing remote, blended, and traditional instruction. Fourth, teams have a clear plan in place to ensure learning for traditional, remote, blended, and online students. It has been a really good summer with teachers preparing.

Board and Administration Reports and Discussions – David Stirland

Brent Bills said his department is working on opening South Mesa Elementary. The furniture is in and the school is ready to open. The District vehicle rotation will be up to 32 cars. The District will be selling the older fleet cars and will have all Camrys. There are 6-7 maintenance trucks. They are buying trucks that we can sell better. The Finance Department is working to redo the TSSA plans. There may be a number coming back with changes. Budget growth formulas are being rolled out. Payroll is getting ready for new year and closing out the budget for the year. The District will need to bring the budget back for approval in September for any legislative changes. Some of the upcoming challenges include the new elementary school, p-cards, a school opening, warehouse stocking, October growth counts with COVID-19, tracking bond projects, and school account tracking.

Amy Mitchell shared a handout with information on Title I. Changes for the upcoming year include moving from 14-11 Title I schools. There will be new coaches to help with K, 2nd and 4th grades.

Amy Mitchell shared a literacy quote on interventions from one of the teachers. She mentioned that the things implemented this year were really helpful.

Nate Esplin shared the elementary goals to continue high levels of learning. Elementary will continue to have an emphasis on literacy. They would also like to do more with parent engagement. They would like to continue with the things we are doing well in the District. Curriculum planning has been based on student needs. Student learning will focus on the goals. Principal learning will happen eight times in the year with a focus on literacy. He shared some of the training dates and some of the professional learning happening throughout the summer.

Rex Wilkey said his group will focus on helping principals with leadership, communication, and problem solving. Principal leaders are ready to step up and do more to help principals with leadership. It makes a difference for the school.

Richard Holmes shared a handout on principal lead times and four main goals for secondary. There is a menu of training that is very targeted to focus on specific needs. Secondary will focus to support the principals and assistant principals. They want principals to feel supported in their challenges. Principals felt like they were not able to take a break. He is also helping them with the fee schedules. Richard Holmes thanked the Board for supporting the secondary early-out.

Cheri Stevenson reported on the work of the Professional Learning Team. Help is available anytime. She shared some of the feedback received from teachers. Principals have moved to collaboration among their peer group.

Craig Hammer said Transportation is pleased with the early-out on Friday as well. Safety of students and staff is paramount. Facilities has big projects that are still being worked on including the Springdale Elementary addition, the Water Canyon project, Pine View High addition and remodel, the new Desert Canyon Elementary, the Paradise Canyon remodel, the Transportation addition, security doors, and the priority projects. With the CT high school, the goal is to start it no later than September, so it is ready by fall 2022. The District is also looking for property for a high school site. Enterprise is pushing some projects as well. He said that 80% of bond projects were done for the summer. Craig Hammer also mentioned that fire-fighting crews are wanting to use Diamond Valley and Pine View High School.

Steven Dunham said Foundation is doing well. Teachers were excited about grant awards. The Foundation is moving forward with the golf tournament and most teams are returning.

Superintendent Larry Bergeson recognized the quality executive staff he works with. He also expressed appreciation for the Board and their patience. He appreciates working with the legislators, Dixie State University and the PTA. He appreciates patience as the District works through this challenging time.

Friday Early-out for Secondary PLC Time – Richard Holmes

The Friday early-out was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the District is planning to recognize retirees and hoping to do something in the fall.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Coral Cliffs Elementary School LAND Trust Plan Change

The Coral Cliffs Elementary Community Council submitted a letter to the Board of Education with a change request for their School LAND Trust Plan prior to the meeting.

Board Member Dunn presented a motion to approve 2020-2021 School LAND Trust Plans changes for Coral Cliffs Elementary, Washington Fields Intermediate, and Diamond Valley Elementary.

Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Washington Fields Intermediate School LAND Trust Plan Change

The Washington Fields Intermediate Community Council submitted a letter to the Board of Education with a change request for their School LAND Trust Plan prior to the meeting.

Board Member Dunn presented a motion to approve 2020-2021 School LAND Trust Plans changes for Coral Cliffs Elementary, Washington Fields Intermediate, and Diamond Valley Elementary.

Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Coral Canyon Elementary School LAND Trust Plan Change

This agenda item was postponed.

Springdale Elementary School Improvement (TSSA) Plan – Nate Esplin

Nate Esplin said Springdale Elementary Plan was not approved in the last meeting.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the Springdale Elementary School Improvement (TSS) Plan. Board Member Blake seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

School TSSA Plan Budget Update Approval – Nate Esplin

The approval is for updates to the budget with the increased amount.

Board Member Cox presented a motion to approve the School TSSA Plan Budget Updates. Board Member Hesson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

District Literacy Plan – Kathy Hall

Kathy Hall explained that she is required to present the District Early Literacy Plan each year for Board approval. She mentioned that we were not able to give the end of year benchmark for Acadience Reading statewide, so the state has asked that the District to keep the same goals from last year. Washington County School District had a kindergarten goal and a 2nd grade goal. The District kindergarten goal was to see a 5% increase in student proficiency from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. At the middle of the year, the District was seeing a 10% increase in proficiency. In 2nd grade, the goal was to get students considered below benchmark moved out of that level. At the beginning of the year there were 37% of the students below benchmark. At the mid-year point there were 22% of the students still below benchmark, so we still have a way to go. It was disappointing to not be able to give the benchmark at the end of the year. She said that many teachers were sad that they didn't get to test their kids. Those are the two goals that the District will continue to work on. She expressed appreciation for the work of teachers and asked for the Board approval of the District Literacy Plan for next year.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the District's Literacy Plan. Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

LEA-Specific License and Endorsement Applications – Lyle Cox

Lyle Cox shared that 15 of the applications are for endorsements and 31 are for licenses.

Board Member Blake presented a motion to approve the LEA-Specific License and Endorsement Applications. Board Member Hesson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Certified and Classified Negotiated Agreements – Lyle Cox

Lyle Cox reported that the negotiations were concluded with a favorable outcome. The certified agreement included a 2.6% increase to the base, 2 additional contract days for professional development and team collaboration, \$800 step advancements and education adjustments, and insurance benefits.

The classified agreement included a 3% increase to the base, steps, and insurance benefits. That same applies to the administrative schedule.

Board Member Blake presented a motion to approve Certified and Classified Negotiated Agreements. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Consideration of a resolution authorizing the issuance of up to \$58,000,000 general obligation school building and refunding bonds in one or more series and on a taxable or tax-exempt basis; giving authority to certain officers to approve the final terms and provisions of the bonds within the parameters set forth in the resolution and providing for related matters.

Brent Bills said this is the 2nd issuance. It is the largest issuance and includes an elementary and the CT high school. Terry Hutchinson said advice received today is this is a good time with the upcoming election and the District should receive good rates. The issuance will include \$50,000,000 in new bonds and \$8,000,000 in refunded bonds. Kelly Blake noted that issuing it now when rates are at a historic low will save the taxpayers money.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the issuance of up to \$58,000,000 general obligation school building and refunding bonds in one or more series and on a taxable or tax-exempt basis; giving authority to certain officers to approve the final terms and provisions of the bonds within the parameters set forth in the resolution and providing for related matters. Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Diamond Valley Elementary School LAND Trust Plan Change

The Diamond Valley Elementary Community Council submitted a letter to the Board of Education with a change request for their School LAND Trust Plan prior to the meeting.

Board Member Dunn presented a motion to approve 2020-2021 School LAND Trust Plans changes for Coral Cliffs Elementary, Washington Fields Intermediate, and Diamond Valley Elementary.

Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go into a closed session at 3:30 p.m. Board Member Blake 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 LaRene Cox, Board Member Kelly Blake, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Rex Wilkey, Executive Director Amy Mitchell, Executive Director Nate Esplin, Executive Director Craig Hammer, Executive Director Cheri Stevenson, Executive HR Director Lyle Cox, Communications Director Steven Dunham, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.

Participating Remotely: Mitch Maio, Carol Lear, Laura Belnap, and Technology Director Lawrence Esplin.

CLOSED SESSION – As Needed

Legal and Personnel

Present: Board President David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Becky Dunn, Board Member LaRene Cox, Board Member Kelly Blake, and Board Member Terry Hutchinson.

Personnel

Board Member Cox presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 4:50 p.m. Board Member Hutchinson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Board President David Stirland adjourned the meeting at 5:53 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT