

February 19, 2021 - Wasatch County School District Board of Education Retreat Session (Friday, February 19, 2021)

Generated by Stacey Moore on Monday, February 22, 2021

A. Welcome

Attendees -

Board President, Tom Hansen
Kimberly Dickerson
Marianne B Allen
Cory Holmes
Superintendent Paul Sweat
Business Administrator Keith Johansen

Guests -

Aubreigh Parks, District Nurse
Malcolm Rose, WHS Agriculture Teacher

B. Discussion Items

Tom Hansen – Welcome to Retreat. Thanks for everyone joining to help with what we are trying to accomplish, which is to help our children, students, and teachers. Refer to agenda. Open casual meeting. New board members, Kim and MaryAnn.

Supt Sweat- Welcome. Thank you for being here. This retreat is meant to establish good relationships. As a staff, our job is to carry out the wishes of the board.

1. Our Purpose

Supt Sweat- Story: Son wrestling story on efficacy, exceeding expectations and fierce determination.

Shawn Kelly – Wasatch Fans absolutely thought he could win, he had the training and he'll beat him.

Tom Hansen- Talking about names of families that had brothers that wrestled. It was expected if you came from a family of wrestlers, that you were going to complete and be good. It runs in families, cultures, neighborhoods, cultures, programs...that expectation is a powerful thing.

Supt Sweat- The expectation resides in the community for the student, in the family for the student. Let's talk about School Employees.

Tyler Bluth- There is more to success than just one thing. He is lifted by everybody, with support from leadership, community members, etc.

Garrick Peterson- The boy believes it, because so many believe in him.

Supt. Sweat- Fierce Determination. Preparation.

Definition of Achievement: Something accomplished, especially by superior ability, special effort, great courage etc.; a great or heroic deed.

Jim Judd- Today's world, we have serious educational research for about the past 40 years, on what works in schools and what doesn't. More and more data all the time. John Hattie, did the work where he compiled, 300 million students across the globe on what things worked and what didn't. Effect Size: get to this hinge point, this is a strategy that will give a student a years' worth of growth. If you rank these in order, what you find is this term of efficacy is the single biggest factor on whether or not students are going to succeed. Efficacy: is your belief in your ability to do what you say you are going to do. Third: Teachers estimate of achievement. The single best thing we can do to make a difference to teachers and to kids is to instill in them a belief that, not only can they accomplish collectively as an organization, we can accomplish what we set out to do, but how we believe in student achievement and how we can get students to believe in themselves. It's a BIG deal.

Supt Sweat- We settle on the idea that all kids can achieve greatly. The key for us is to somehow now capture this (our love for sports achievement). The key for now, for this school board, for this group of administrators, our principals and for all of our teachers, and aides, and everyone else in the system. We've got to pull this culture that helped win that match, we've got to flood our classrooms with it and the hallways of our schools. We've got to embed it throughout Wasatch School District, in every way, shape and form...academically.

Tyler Bluth- Traditions. Further that tradition in everything we are doing.

Supt Sweat- PLC's -The whole idea of turning the activity of teaching into the secondary activity and the primary concern of this district being student learning and every teacher making that switch.

We need to approach academics with that same definition (the achievement definition). The number one gift we can give to our students is that of high achievement. We can't just know things, we have to demonstrate our knowledge in a practical sense, and we've got to demonstrate it on an assessment. We take those assessments seriously. We are not a district that pushes back on assessments. Being the BEST. We will take hundreds of students that aren't making it, and move them above the bar.

Tod Johnson- Wade Disher spoke to staff "The reason Wasatch High School is successful in wrestling is because we do the fundamental things that everybody studies the best. There is no secret, we teach the same things, but we do them better.

ACT Data: Broad reach, the state improved in every single tested category with a 5 year high, and WHS had a five-year high and was at least a half-point better than the state average, with the exception of reading. Our composite average was 20.7, which was 8/10ths of a point better than the previous year and ½ a point better than the state average. A goal that we set at the old high school, was to be at least 1 point better than state average. We are still chasing that goal, however the growth we saw last year is a significant step in achieving that. (Summary on how to read ACT chart...see video 52:00 minute mark).

It's a tough test, and it's worth chasing. You prepare for this test when you walk into WCSD, not just your junior year. How do you prepare? Three ways.

- 1) Build quality, nurturing, professional relationships between teachers and students. Build trust and give students confidence.
- 2) Make sure that your teaching the right things, the curriculum has to be correct, and of correct rigor.
- 3) Students have to be in class every day.

Next step...how do we bring our minority students to the same level of achievement?

Supt Sweat- Your always going to see some ups and downs. There will be some two steps forward and two steps back. The student achievement needle is a very hard needle to move, and to move it consistently. We are doing extremely well right now.

Tod Johnson- If you can see a 7/10th improvement in one years' time, that is statistically significant.

Supt Sweat-

Mission Statement: Ensuring all students obtain the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will enable them to reach their personal goals and be a productive contributing member of our society.

Three Goals Set (2019):

1. Become the highest achieving district in the state.
2. Become a nationally-recognized model PLC district.
3. Have all secondary students involved in activities that connect them to the school community.

We like big goals that get us inspired.

Visited one of the best schools in the nation in North Carolina.

Garrick Peterson- Not only do I want to work at these schools, but I want my kids going to these schools. Goals that support the 2nd goal...Become model PLC schools. There is an organization the is a model for the nation, get every school to become a model school. Two schools have applied and been accepted (MES & OME). We believe JRS, and WHS are close as well.

Social/Emotional and Academic are tied closely together. They work together.

Ben Springer- It's in the details. It's behind the Scenes.

What are the details? A framework we call RTI (response to intervention) a decision making model. Professional Learning Communities are the team to brainstorm what is best for the kids.

Behind the Scenes? Braiding and looping student supports through both RTI framework and PLC's

Garrick Peterson- Get it down the individual kid. See the need and go the extra distance for that kid. That's the effort that makes you like Mooresville, North Carolina. All students don't learn the same way or at the same speed. Some lack prior skills, or behaviors. You prepare upfront rather than react on the back side.

(Refer to triangle on screen 1:14 min.)

You give extra help to human beings. It stirs the soul.

Belief changes behavior.

(Referring to the RTI at Work Pyramid 1:17 min.) We do this work really well in this district. This is the framework we use to chase being a model PLC district/schools.

Ben Springer- It takes a lot of time and work. Create family and community partnerships. SHARP survey, mental health of students. Our students feel so safe in our district, higher than the state average. High achievement is intertwined with social/mental health.

Jim Judd- Power of Activities. 45% of online kids not participating. A teacher thought, how can I get these kids to feel a part of the community.

Online clubs-students decided club(s). Now this teachers academics are improving in her class.

Get kids who don't feel like they are a Wasp, to be a Wasp.

Eric Campbell- Creating a foundation for us to accomplish all these thing that we are talking about.

1. Stewardship over resources.
 - a. Ensure appropriate facilities for student success
 - b. Improve and maintain current facilities
 - c. Ensure proper financial management
 - d. Provide for District financial health
 - e. Secure land for future school sites.
2. Organizational Excellence

- a. Recruit and retain high-quality teachers, staff, & administrators
 - b. Establish effective student-to-teacher ratios
 - c. Support professional practices through high-quality Professional Learning Communities
 - d. Provide professional development that ensures continuous learning for teacher and staff.
3. Stake Holder Engagement
- a. Support school activities that connect students to their communities
 - b. Partner with civic, university and business leaders
 - c. Partner with parents and students to create individualized goals and plans.
 - d. Partner with teacher leaders, groups and organizations for increase teacher satisfaction
 - e. Provide schools that are physically, socially, and emotionally safe
 - f. Communicate with parents and community

Supt Sweat- We have an all-star team. Privilege for me to work with them. Praises each member of the team, and how they add to student achievement.

History about football trophy in 1942. We want to be known as a tough and gritty. We meet challenges head on. It takes fierce determination. We are excited to work with each and every one of you. You are the ultimate governing body of this district. We are here to carry out your wishes. Your job is about student achievement that's the main focus.

2. Bond Debrief

THOUGHTS AND OTHER SOLUTIONS FOR NEXT BOND:

- Start the Planning Process Earlier
- Listening Tours Start Prior to FSP Committee being created
- Price was too aggressive (150 Million), Produce another price point
- Grass-roots approach
- Build Community Trust – Tell the Story Better and Earlier
- Listening Tour - Listen to the Feedback, Listen to Other Civic Leaders
- 3rd Party Assessment of the Lifespan of the current facilities
- Timeline and Long-term Vision of future schools
- Build a Broader Coalition
- Listening Tour with Local Entities (build partnerships ahead of time)
- Presentation by Paul Berg about the location
- Build a Vision with other Community Entities, to make a better community for all
- Relationships and meaningful connections will be required to defend misinformation as it arises
- The FSP Committee will be a key part of passing a bond and their 10-year plan
- Listening Tour should include a Bond Debrief at WHS to answer questions that the community
- Pubic Affairs Firm to Support and Direct the Board (RFP Process)

Comments -

Citizens Group worked hard but there was a feeling of being rushed to assist the district with the process.

Grass-roots approach on the passed bond. The failed bond did not feel grassroots, our priorities should be reconsidered.

Door to Door, rather than other methods

More community supporters

Facebook was difficult to manage

Captains assigned to areas of the community is a great approach.

Our story was not told well, we need to inform the community in a better way.

Taxes did not play in our favor.

We error on the side of being conservative on what we could do to pass a bond. The citizen's group felt very frustrated that the district couldn't support their efforts more.

Off-year elections are hard years to have a bond election.

There are so many people in the county now, there is less of a community connection. We have to tell our story more and better – a more professional approach.

Building Trust – there were allegations that were made, but there wasn't enough trust for the district for community members to defend the school district.

Growth is difficult for the community to watch.

Location was a big issue. The opposition was brought up by people who would oppose any school that we would propose to build.

Future Schools Committee will help us with these discussions.

Land prices are going up and will continue to go up. I am feeling an urgency to secure those land spots.

Assessment for the Lifespan of the current facilities that we have

Alpine drew a plan up that included a timeline of when bonds would go on and go off.

The board felt rushed to pass the bond.

Kept hearing why can't we add on to the current high school.

Being open to criticism on a listening tour is very important.

Building trust is key — the community, leaders in the community

We need to respect the perception of the community to build trust

The vibe of the failed bond was so defensive and hard to talk to people in the community

Relationships and meaningful connections will be required to defend misinformation.

Social media was difficult

We are reactionary to the growth.

Our messaging became handcuffed by the bond attorneys – no promoting the bond, just answering questions was so difficult.

The analytics group told us to stop playing up the growth conversation. We should consider another analytics group. Their numbers were off on voter turnout, and they were not as involved in the citizen's group.

There is a history of failing a bond before passing a bond in this community.

We took a proactive approach. We learned a lot.

We will learn a lot from the FSP committee. It will be a neutral group.

The perception was that if you asked questions about the bond then you opposed the bond.

Some new members of the community are used to larger high schools (5000+). They are okay with that size of a high school.

We would like to keep freshmen in our high school configurations.

The high school has a different feel, the sense of community is tough. Kids get lost and fall through the cracks.

Parents feel disconnected in larger schools. The intimate setting of school is important to parents and students.

3. Future Schools Project

Creating a Culture of Trust Diagram (Tom Hansen)

High Connection, caring personally

High Consistency, reliable dependability

High Competence, credible knowledge

DENOMINATOR - Low Self Orientation, egocentric purpose

VISION FOR FSP –

1. Community Advisory Board to Expand the Scope of the 5 elected Board Members
2. Community Over site Committee – Group to review financials and the logistics of land and school purchases

Questions for Consideration:

Is a zoom call the best place to build a relationship?

COVID Restriction - 25% capacity of the room with social distancing and wearing masks

What is the process for appointing people? Application Process?

How big will the committee be? 20 or under with another level of advisor's present that includes; Police Chief, Fire Chief, Planners, Engineer, Architect

Do we create two groups?

Do we Create Phases of the Planning?

Elected Community Council and PTA's should be included in the process to educate our base population.

We have to do professional surveys to get specific data.

PHASE ONE –

Listening Tours, feedback will dictate the pace of the next phases

Evaluation of Buildings

Public Affairs RFP

PHASE 2

FSP Committee

4. Aubreigh Parks, District Nurse

100 recovery rate from COVID, with some staff members, having continuing effects from the virus (fatigue, shortness of breath). The largest hit was our secondary students. WCSD pioneered the testing for students and staff to provide early detection and to isolate the spread. Masks, Vaccinations and Sanitation have been the best mitigation.

Thanks to Aubreigh and her team for all of thier hard work and efforts to make WCSD a model district during the pandemic.

5. Roberts Rules of Order

Presented by Malcolm Rose with discussion on best practice and what the school board would like to practice in board meetings.

6. Detailed Agenda for Board Meetings

Discussion to provide easier access on the school district website to access agenda. Review other district practices for agenda descriptions.

7. Zoom Links Posted to District Website

Provide easier access for the public to find zoom links on the school district website.

8. Short Term Overcrowding Solutions

What is the current situation of crowding?

At the high school we only have space to move into a portable. A portable costs approx. \$250,000 for two classrooms. We would also consider a portable for online school staff.

Explanation of potentially adding wings to the existing WHS building or options for portable locations. Does adding wings help the problem.

If we could message that our mission is doing what is best for the students, and we believe that smaller schools is better for students.

Could we refurbished tower for baseball team room to open up a few more spaces for classrooms? Move marching band equipment to another location to use the space for classroom. Technology dept. housed in classrooms that should also be moved out.

Could there be a 9th grade center at Wasatch West Campus? The 9th grade center is an option that is difficult to consider. We want all 9th graders to have as many opportunities as other students. 9th graders take the same classes as upper classman.

We can get by one more year with our current situation. If we did \$500,000 in portables each year then we may be able to get by for 5 years.

Does it make sense to remodel? A third party architect could help us assess the facilities.

The board should tour the West Campus to evaluate the space in consideration of the portables.

9. Legislative Day at the District Office

JLC Meeting info from Marianne B Allen.

HB302 - LE.UTAH.GOV for bills. Transgender Athletes

Passed the house with two weeks left. The bill is called preserving sports for female students. A student of the male sex may not participate if the sport is designated a girls sport. The LEA is not indemnified from lawsuits. UHSAA and higher ed have been indemnified. If the bill passes, there will be legal issues because of the equitable constitutionality of the bill. USBA has reached out to the representative that created the bill. What we can do is reach out to our legislators, Winterton and Kohler, and let them know that UHSSA has a policy that covers this bill and that it is not needed.

SB131 - Building Construction and Bonding, Senator Harper. USBA opposes this bill. It creates stipulations on how we are audited and rules that should be followed for bonding. Senator Harper was open to hear about LEA thoughts. The law is basically that all school buildings would be the same, rather than custom-built to fit a community. Local control should determine the type of school that will serve our community. Reach out to senator and let them know that we would rather have local control to best serve our community, is this solving a problem or creating an issue.

SB107 - In-person instruction prioritization. Rick Saunders, Department of Health - Create a public health order for a test to stay in school. Test to Stay will be separated from Test to Play. At 1% threshold it triggers a testing event.

Test to Stay - Wasatch is one of the only rural districts who have set up the facilities to support this idea. Wasatch would work towards keeping numbers down rather than participating in Test to Stay. This may be presented as a Government Health Order, rather than a local decision.

Consider hosting Region 4 representatives for future legislation.

Consideration of New Website because of user difficulties

Alpine School District is a model site that we should review. Consider adding it to the Public Relations Firm. Should be added to an RFP.

If was difficult to navigate the bond info during that time.

Public Comment on Zoom

Continue to offer zoom link but not necessary to prescreen public comment.

Revise Agenda

Add more detail to agenda

Mission

Add language to the existing mission -

Add inclusion, diversity of all students, physical, social and emotional safety.

Wasatch Back should include a time to honor Blaik Baird and Mark Davis.