



MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah
October 25, 2021
5:15 p.m.

Present: Board President Kelly Blake, Board Vice President Becky Dunn, Board Member David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member LaRene Cox, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Nate Esplin, Human Resources Executive Director Lyle Cox, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Amy Mitchell, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Executive Director Cheri Stevenson, Technology Director Jeremy Cox.

Other: Cody Plumhof, Derek Larsen, Tammara Robinson, Matt Dugdale

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence offered by Member Seegmiller.

Cody Plumhof shared a list of books from the GRAMA request that were found in schools. The spreadsheet shows all the books found in the systems at the schools and in the digital systems. Derek Larsen explained the process for selecting books. All the librarians have a state endorsement and have training using Utah Core. They also work with a Collection Development Policy. It is a top priority to find books to use academically and to find books that are worthwhile. They find books that are based on library standards and not just on what they believe or like. Policy 4220 explains the process for removing books from schools and includes form 941, the request to review educational materials. The librarians also meet as a team and discuss books that are being purchased. Cody Plumhof shared a sample of the policy used at Hurricane High School. If books are explicit in content, they should be challenged. David Stirland said the selection is subjective and one person should not be selecting all the books. Terry Hutchinson said they should follow guidelines in other policies for the appropriate content and age.

WORK SESSION

Work-based Learning Committee - Mike Hassler

This presentation was postponed.

Wellness Program – Tammara Robinson

Tammara Robinson reported on plans for the wellness program. It will be a program that all employees can participate in. The Fitbit will be phased out and the new program started in January. The Fitbit dashboard can continue to be used for personal fitness. The payroll deduction will continue through the contract year (July) for last year's program. Next year the penalty will be waived. The focus will be on preventive care and mental health, providing resources, recognize employees for what they are doing, and focusing on trends in the community. Fitbit helped the first couple of years but is no longer having the same impact. Laura Hesson said changing it up will be good. It will take a couple of years to see the impact, insurance enrollment, and utilization. The District will work with consultants in looking at utilization. The first wellness activity will begin in January. Lyle Cox said Fitbit will no longer be subsidized beginning January.

Insurance Timeline – Tammara Robinson

The insurance timeline was shared in the online packet. The dates are similar to what has been done in the past. There will be a vendor fair again this year. The District will get the renewal rates in January. Tammara Robinson said we are averaging 2.6 million a month in claims. Competition of services in the area have helped with insurance prices.

ESSER Funding – Brent Bills

Brent Bills reported on the ESSER funding. Our first request was repealed. He said expenses have been moved to pay for 120 employee salaries. The all-day kindergarten program and Millcreek employees are included in the salary programs. Expenses for ELL program trainings and secondary literacy interventions have been paid for with the ESSER funding. Science supplies were rejected by the state as they were using food items. An email was sent to dispute these purchases. He said that the District does not have time to dispute the purchases. Using the funds for teachers will be easier. We will do the time and effort reports. Information received from the state is that they want the funding spent on the teachers. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said the funding rules are coming from the state. We are doing what we can to spend the funding and not spend money back. Laura Hesson said the Legislators need to know that we are not planning to send the money back. They need to know that we need the funding. Brent Bills reported that the District applied for GEARS funding today. Laura Hesson suggested hiring more SLPs. Brent Bills said a good chunk of the funding was given to Special Education and he will let them know that it needs to be a priority. Many want to be hired as consultants so they can earn twice the amount of salary. Lyle Cox said one competitive advantage is the shorter contract with benefits, which allows them to do other work during the summer.

Board Book Review – Laura Hesson

Laura Hesson reviewed the seductive seven used to solve problems: Technology, data, strategy, training and communication, reorganization, accountability and assigning blame, money. The purpose of the book was to uncover the real problem. We need to not decorate the fish. Craig Seegmiller said we need to approach problems without using the seven strategies to be more creative and thoughtful in uncovering the problem. Becky Dunn noted that the Beaver (by stander) was able to see while those inside were still busy decorating the fish. We need to stand outside the box to come up with better solutions. Kelly Blake said the teacher has the biggest impact on the learning in the classroom with their interaction. Professional Development is the greatest impact. David Stirland said solutions can come from different sources. We need to look at other sources. Terry Hutchinson said the Board is responsible and does need to look at other sources. Craig Seegmiller said sometimes we have the solutions, and we miss them.

NSBA Affiliation – Terry Hutchinson

Terry Hutchinson shared concerns with NSBA Affiliation after a letter was sent to President Biden asking for federal assistant to stop threats and acts of violence against schools and board members. The NSBA did not approve for the letter to be sent. NSBA is funded by state agencies. We have not joined it, but we do go to their annual convention. Some of our Board feel the convention is helpful as it gives an opportunity to associate with other board members from around the country. Terry feels that the letter draws a line on parent involvement. The issues addressed in the letter should be dealt with by local law enforcement. He said calling on the federal government to intervene is dampening and putting parental involvement on the line. Our District's association is with the USBA. He mentioned the mask mandate being lifted for adults and not students. The USBA took no position on the legislation or helped do anything to lift it. He suggested sending a message to them that they need to support us more. Craig Seegmiller said we can affect change more by being inside. Brent Bills said the District pays \$17,000 a year in dues to USBA. A portion of that pays for USSA director. David Stirland feels that there are some benefits belonging to the USBA. He feels we could work with legislators for more local control. Terry Hutchinson feels we can use our experience to push for local control. Becky Dunn said USBA has been working on local control all summer. Board members suggested sending a letter stating that funds not be sent to NSBA and that our Board expects USBA to express concerns with local control. Terry Hutchinson will draft a letter and send it to the Board to review.

ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of a resolution authorizing the issuance of up to \$35,000,000 general obligation school building and refunding bonds; 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 explained that we are issuing bonds. Matt Dugdale said we will be at about 1% interest. It will provide great savings and He expects great results. The resolution gives Brent Bills authorization to set the pricing rates when the time is right. Matt Dugdale said it will be about 90 days. The first couple of weeks in January usually have a slight dip in rates. It will be great timing. The issuance will be for \$25,000 in new bonds and 7-8 million in refunding. \$35,000 is the cap and gives some flexibility. Matt Dugdale said the District still has the triple and double “A” ratings.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the issuance of up to \$35,000,000 general obligation school building and refunding bonds; 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 Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Work-based Learning Committee – Mike Hassler

Approval of this item was tabled.

Wellness Program – Tammara Robinson

Board Member Stirland presented a motion to approve the Wellness Program as presented. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Sandstone Elementary SLT Plan Change

Hurricane Middle School SLT Plan Change

Water Canyon High School SLT Plan Change

Board Member Hutchinson presented a motion to approve the SLT Plan Changes for Sandstone Elementary, Hurricane Middle School and Water Canyon High School. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

LEA Licenses and Endorsements – Lyle Cox

Board Member Hesson presented a motion to approve the LEA Licenses and Endorsements. Board Member Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Board Member Hutchinson presented a motion to go into a closed session at 6:40 p.m. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Present: Board President Kelly Blake, Board Vice President Becky Dunn, Board Member David Stirland, Board Member Craig Seegmiller, Board Member LaRene Cox, Board Member Laura Hesson, Board Member Terry Hutchinson, Superintendent Larry Bergeson, Business Administrator Brent Bills, Assistant Superintendent Richard Holmes, Assistant Superintendent Nate Esplin, Human Resources Executive Director Lyle Cox, Executive Director Steve Gregoire, Executive Director Amy Mitchell, Communications Director Steven Dunham, Executive Director Cheri Stevenson, Technology Director Jeremy Cox, and Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer.

CLOSED SESSION

Personnel and Property

Personnel items discussed.

Board Member Stirland presented a motion to go out of closed session at 6:58 p.m. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Board President Kelly Blake adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT