



MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle, St. George, Utah
November 2, 2021
4:30 p.m.

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

Minutes: Executive Secretary Kajsia Boyer

Reverence offered by Member Cox.

WORK SESSION

School Construction Visits

The school construction visits were postponed.

Board Member Stirland presented a motion to go into a closed session at 12:22 p.m. Board Member Seegmiller seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

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CLOSED SESSION

Property and Personnel Items

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

Personnel Items

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to go out of the closed session at 3:01 p.m. Board Member Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

WORK SESSION

Work-based Learning Committee – Mike Hassler

Mike Hassler shared the proposal for a Work-based Learning Committee. The state has said the program is not compliant without the committee. He said the District is seeking approval for a Work-based Learning Committee to be formed. It will include all schools in the District as well as businesses, administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and students. The guiding principles will be developed when the committee is put in place. Evidence will be developed with IEP, plans for College and Career Readiness, 504 requirements, etc. Career Exploration starts at the kindergarten level. Many students don't know what they want to be when they reach the high school level. This work will provide students with a bigger scope of understanding. The committee can drill down and offer more experiences for students. Dave Gardner shared that on the elementary level, parents could come in explain what they do as their career. David Stirland suggested conversations could be had to help promote the CTE high school as well. Kelly Blake suggested possibly having two committees that could address the needs of younger students and older students. Mike Hassler said counselors have taken on the role as the career coach. Now we need to help everyone see how we can all work together. The committee will help the counselors understand the direction that we need to move. David Gardner said it would also help our internship program. The state rules include the action items of what they would be doing. Mike Hassler mentioned that parents have already reached out to be part of the committee. It will also be put out for community involvement. This is new for us and will help the District to be in compliance with the state rules.

COVID Update – Larry Bergeson

Superintendent Larry Bergeson briefly reported on the Mayor's Meeting with the Washington County mayors, Dr. Blodgett of the Southwest Utah Public Health Department, Dixie Regional Hospital, and the county leaders. The general COVID number trend is going down. Those in the hospital are generally unvaccinated. They still continue to push for vaccinations. The District has reported 48-70 cases this past week. Superintendent Larry Bergeson said we have not had any outbreaks and have not had to test to play. It appears that the District will not be forced to mandate vaccinations. We did lose an employee this past week. Our numbers are low, and the District is focused on learning. We are testing higher in most other areas in the state. He mentioned that the schools continue to sanitize.

2022-23 Early Open Enrollment Designations – Richard Holmes and Nate Esplin

Nate Esplin reported on the open enrollment designations. Becky Dunn pointed out that most of the middle schools are closed.

2023-2024 Calendar – Richard Holmes and Nate Esplin

Richard Holmes shared the proposed draft calendars for the 2023-2024 school year. Option A starts on Monday, August 14 and ends on Thursday, May 23. Option B starts on Tuesday, August 15 and also ends on Thursday, May 23, but includes a half-day before Christmas. The state has temporarily eliminated the 180 days and is currently allowing for additional teacher prep days. Teachers can enjoy the breaks and have a day to come back and prep. If the state brings back the requirement the District plans to schedule some half-days given to allow teachers to prep. Richard Holmes said he is sure that most teachers are using the days appropriately. The calendar will be shared with principals to get their feedback. Kathleen Cheshire said teachers would prefer not to start on a Monday. If the state continues with the eliminated 180 requirement, the calendar could be adjusted to start on Wednesday. Early-out days still count for the 180-day requirement.

OPEN DISCUSSION OF THE BOARD

Healthy Dixie Update – Craig Seegmiller

Craig Seegmiller asked if the District would be willing to come up with \$12,000 to subsidize the bike program at Washington Fields Intermediate School. Healthy Dixie will contribute \$12,000 as well. He is meeting with them on Thursday. He feels it is a great program and the District could expand it if it works. He suggested the District could target students that really need it in the beginning and then expand to other students. Cheri Stevenson said there is a teacher at Washington Fields that would really like to support this. Studies show that when students get outdoors it helps with learning. Craig Seegmiller said we would have flexibility from their program. The District would own the 20-25 bikes

for the program. He is not sure yet how much training the teacher would receive. Cheri Stevenson said risk management was concerned about including a whole grade level of students and having them ride in the street. This will help mitigate some of their concerns by taking over the program. Lyle Cox said they will cover us, but we must have rigorous training for students and maintenance of the bikes. LaRene Cox said we would also need to include helmets for the students. Cheri Stevenson said students would receive lessons on how to use the bike and how to maintain the bike before they even ride the bike. Craig Seegmiller said scaling the program down is helping to mitigate the risk. Washington Fields will store the bikes. The program will not be implemented until next year. The Board agreed to support the program.

USBA Update – Becky Dunn

Becky Dunn said the Board had discussed sending a letter to USBA on the NSBA. She feels that the Board needs to discuss the drafted letter further. Kelly Blake said the USBA should respond to the concerns of the Board. David Stirland said 21 states have sent letters of concern to NSBA and two have disassociated from NSBA. Terry Hutchinson asked if they should be called on to disassociate from them and at a minimum hold funds from NSBA. He feels that we need to express our displeasure to the NSBA letter asking for federal assistance. He said our District is an example throughout the state. He would like a statement from USBA to know their plan going forward. Brent Bills shared that USBA will be doing JLC differently this year at Granite School District. They will stream it, but only those participating there will be allowed to vote. David Stirland would like to know USBA's response before determining our reaction and decision. The Board would like to know why they were not quick to respond. Becky Dunn and Craig Seegmiller agree that they deserve a chance to respond. Kelly Blake said the expectation can be clear in the letter. Becky Dunn said they meet again on November 12th. Terry Hutchinson will put the letter together and he suggested it also be released to the media. A response will be expected by November 15th.

MBA Update – Laura Hesson

Laura Hesson said all members need to enter items in PowerUp by the end of November.

Dixie Tech Update – Terry Hutchinson

Terry Hutchinson said Dixie Tech is not requiring vaccinations. He will have more to report after their next meeting.

Foundation Update – David Stirland

David Stirland said the Golf Tournament raised about \$90,000 this year. The tournament is an amazing experience. There were 883 classroom grants submitted. To award all the grants, the Foundation is about \$120,000 short. The Foundation is going to work to bring in additional funds for the grants. Having more teachers apply for the grants shows the success of the grant program. Spreading the word throughout the community will help bring in funds. The Kite Festival will continue to happen and is scheduled for April 2, 2022. It is held on the Dixie State University campus. Dixie Power will continue their partnership. What the Foundation has done in the past three years is remarkable. The volunteers for the Golf Tournaments make it a success. Steven Dunham shared that this year the schools were asked to create gift baskets for the tournament. It brought in an additional \$10,000. It was shared with parents and the community to bid on the baskets. Kelly Blake said our community is amazing at stepping up for the kids.

FCAOG Update – LaRene Cox

LaRene Cox said she had nothing to report this month.

Audit Committee Update – Kelly Blake

Kelly Blake said they are meeting with the administration this evening to review the results of the audits. Results were received on two audits.

ITEMS FOR BOARD REVIEW

1. Enrollment
2. Safe Schools
3. GRAMA Requests
4. 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 Kelly Blake called the meeting to order and welcomed all visitors. Board members present were Craig Seegmiller, Laura Hesson, Becky Dunn, David Stirland, LaRene Cox, and Terry Hutchinson. Staff members present were Superintendent Larry Bergeson and Business Administrator Brent Bills.

OPEN MEETING – 4:30 p.m.

Reverence – Member Stirland

Welcome – Board President Kelly Blake

Pledge of Allegiance – Member Dunn

Recognition

Pamela Christensen was recognized for being selected as the Utah Science Teacher Association's 2021 Region 9 Elementary Teacher of the Year.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Minutes

- a. October 12, 2021 – Meeting of the Board of Education**
- b. October 25, 2021- Special Meeting of the Board of Education**

2. Financial Report

3. Personnel and LEA Specific License Items

4. Panorama Elementary SLT Plan Change

5. Dixie Middle School TSSA Plan Change

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

WHAT'S RIGHT IN WCSD SCHOOLS

Panorama Elementary School – Principal Chris Barrett

Chris Barrett thanked the board for the new assignment to work at Panorama. The school has a special group of paraprofessionals and a great reading program. They are all trained and are a great team. They spend time helping with WIN time and are always willing to help where needed. Kindergarten had one of the highest rates for learning names and sounds. He took a moment to recognize Lora Madison, Librarian, at the school. She knows the students and parents and makes a great difference for the school. He shared how the Breakfast Club is giving extra help for students. It is a happy place for students to come in the morning. There are games and things to help the students start the day off right. He reported on the Harvest Hop recently held. There was a great turnout from parents. Each grade level did a dance. He also mentioned the grandparent's lunch each year. They are working on the advocacy of PLC Teams. This year they are able to have parents in the school helping. He also has a principal forum lunch and invites parents to have lunch and give feedback and input on how the school is doing.

Pine View High School – Principal Mike Mees

Mike Mees thanked the board for the remodel at the school. Students and staff are ready to use that space. It will be a wonderful addition. Adam DeWitt, Language Arts teacher, said they wanted to improve literacy and start Sophomores off strong. Students have literacy every day. They have purchased a program to help students on things that they are struggling with. They get at least one hour a day reading. At the end of the year, students will have read at least 8 books. Ben Luce, Language Arts teacher said results have been positive. The practice is paying off. Students are tested and receive a Lexile score. About 60% showed growth and 50% showed growth in the grade level having the students in daily literacy. They will soon be able to see if it increases the ACT and the test scores in other courses.

Mike Mees said Pine View High is doing their accreditation this year and they want to spread similar programs throughout the school. They feel that this will make a difference. Students are given time to read during the day.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON BOARD ACTION ITEMS

No public comments were given on Board Action Items.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Work-based Learning Committee – Mike Hassler

Mike Hassler said he is seeking approval from the Board to organize a Work-based Learning Committee. Currently, the District doesn't have a committee. There will be one committee that represents all schools. There is no specific number of committee members but would like to address the need as they move forward. Initially it will be on a volunteer basis. Approval allows District to receive funds by having the committee and is keeping the District in compliance. The committee will adapt as the District changes. The committee will serve the needs of the program. Kelly Blake suggested that sub committees could also be formed as needed.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve the Work-based Learning Committee. Board Member Hesson seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 3635 Student Overnight Activities – Lyle Cox

The policy approval was tabled.

Policy 7020 In-State Field and Activity Trips - Lyle Cox

The policy approval was tabled.

Policy 1130 WCSD-LEA-Specific Teacher License/Endorsement – Lyle Cox

Lyle Cox said the policy change is a compliance change. The state is no longer allowing LEA specific licenses for Special Education. The District does have some that have already received the license. They will be given an elementary or secondary license as they work on the Special Education license through the state. The license was only for one year which gave flexibility for those who were close to finishing. Most of the positions are hard ones to fill.

Board Member Hutchinson presented a motion to approve Policy 1130 WCSD-LEA-Specific Teacher License/Endorsement. Board Member Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Policy 3600 Distribution and Posting of Promotional Materials – Steven Dunham

Steven Dunham shared the need to provide electronic advertising to parents. It will allow flexibility to maintain partnerships in the community. The policy is being brought up to date. The changes primarily allow the electronic advertising. The SendOut program was created by our Technology Department. School communication will also be asked to move to the system as well. An email will go out to parents every two weeks with a link to communication from the school and advertising. The policy also clarifies what vendors are required to do to become an approved fundraiser with the state. The District maintains control of the emails sent. The fee for advertising goes to the Foundation.

Board Member Seegmiller presented a motion to approve Policy 3600 Distribution and Posting of Promotional Materials. Board Member Stirland seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

2022-23 Early Open Enrollment Designations – Richard Holmes and Nate Esplin

Nate Esplin said it is time to designate the open enrollment schools and shared a list of the schools. Terry Hutchinson pointed out that most of the growth has been in the middle schools.

Board Member Hesson presented a motion to approve the 2022-23 Early Open Enrollment Designations. Board Member Cox seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Health Curriculum Compliance – Amy Christiansen

The Health Curriculum Compliance approval was tabled.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2023-2024 Calendar – Richard Holmes and Nate Esplin

Richard Holmes reviewed the proposed options. The options will be put on the website for review. There will be some discussion on prep days or virtual days, where students would work virtually, and teachers could be at the school doing prep work. Principals will be asked to discuss it with their staff. Richard Holmes explained that teachers used the days following the break for prep times. Other districts in the state have done virtual days and the state has given approval for that. We are still waiting to see if the state will waive the 180-day requirement next year. Superintendent Larry Bergeson has requested information from the state to see how long it will be extended.

INFORMATION

There were no information items.

REPORTS

Superintendent

No report was given.

Board

No report was given.

Association

Amy Barton shared a teacher response to the prep days. Teacher's mental health was boosted by having the days to prep. She said she appreciates that the District is working to find ways to continue to support teachers with the prep days. The preparation time and hours are huge for instruction and moral. Teachers are able to work as PLC to determine what they will be teaching.

PTA/PTO/Community Council

Superintendent Larry Bergeson read a statement from MarChe Hindes who was unable to attend. She shared some of the events such as White Ribbon Week, Red Ribbon Week, and Reflections that have kept them busy. They encourage parents to support and volunteer in the classrooms.

PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE BOARD – 3 minutes each

Jordan Clay said the wisdom of the ages is that there is no free lunch. He is concerned about the District taking federal, state, or commercial funds. Those who give the funds will own those they pay for. He said that federal money does not come without strings attached. There is concern in the community about CRT, SEL, mandates for masks, and mandates for vaccinations. He is willing to help support the students in Washington County. He asked the board to stay away from the freebees and protect the local rule and local authority.

Clare Clay shared a resolution voted on by County Commissioners. The commissioners support us making the best decisions for our own health and the health of our families. She said the State School Board, County Sheriff's Office, and the city police department have all take the same stance that they will not enforce masks or vaccination mandates. She asked the Board to guarantee the constitutional rights of the citizens and let them choose for themselves what is best for their families.

Erika Hodges said parents and educators have a great trust placed on them. She asked that everyone be more vigilant and not promote anything that presents immorality and violence as acceptable. We should not rationalize providing books with explicit language, sexual descriptions, and vulgarity. She said we need to be intentional with the material provided students. We need to make sure the curriculum provided comply with Utah Code against obscenities. She thanked the Board for addressing the matter so quickly. She would like the District to post what books are beings used. She said we need to help kids make

connections to what matters. We need to provide good literature for our students and help them develop a deep love for literature.

Jake Peart thanked the Board for their hard work and hopes they have the courage and strength to continue doing what they are doing. He read statement by Harmony Vanderhorst asking for a forum to communicate both directions. She would like the opportunity for town hall meeting to share feedback and suggested it could follow a regularly scheduled board meeting.

Deborah Palmer, adjunct teacher at Success Academy, thanked Board for all they do. She talked about nullification and the power of the constitution. She asked the Board to guarantee students and parents the fundamental rights to choose for themselves.

Helena Chamberlain

Did not address the board.

Dana McCabe thanked the board for covering the hard topics such as material provided to students and the NSBA letter sent to the Biden administration. She asked if the Board knows the impact if vaccine is mandated for employees and students. She asked if the Board would take a stand with any vaccine mandates. Parents know what is in the best interest of her children. Board was one of the first to lift the mask mandate and asked if the Board would do the same with the vaccine. We need to consider if it is worth all the strings attached to receive federal funding.

Sofia Chamberlain

Did not address the board.

Rhanda Todd wanted to offer help for mandates. She shared Utah Constitution articles that give unalienable rights to people. We support the Board in guaranteeing the staff and students their rights to protect against the vaccines.

Board President Kelly Blake adjourned the meeting at 5:42 p.m. as there was no further business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT