

February 8, 2023 Board Meeting

Meeting Location: District Office and Virtual

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2023

Members present

Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally, Nan Barton

Others present

9:45 am Superintendent Ron Nielson, Business Administrator Tyrel Pemberton, Human Resources Director Laura Palmer, Aaron Brewer, Jared Brown, Eva Ewald

3:00 pm *above*, and Christine Fitzgerald, Julie Holt, David Brown, Stefnee Turk, Ryan Palmer, Ryan Nielson, Janna Rogers, Craig Swenson, Jonathan English, Monique McDermott, Jeff Winget, Shannon Dewsnap

Meeting called to order at 9:45 AM

A. Approval of Agenda 9:45 AM

1. Approve Agenda

Motion to Approve the Agenda.

Motion by Merri B Shumway, second by Nelson Yellowman.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Nan Barton

Not Present at Vote: Colleen Benally

2. Interview Overview Discussion – Laura Palmer – 5 min

Human Resources Director Laura Palmer gave the interview panel directions and procedural council on proceedings for the in-house interviews for Superintendent of Schools.

B. Interviews for Superintendent Position- Closed Session 10:00 AM

**see item J for Closed Session procedural details*

- 1. 10:00-10:45 AM – Interview Candidate A – Closed Session**
- 2. 10:50-11:35 AM – Interview Candidate B – Closed Session**
- 3. 11:45-12:30 PM – Interview Candidate C – Closed Session**
- 4. 12:35-1:20 PM – Interview Candidate D – Closed Session**

5. 1:30-3:00 PM – SJSD Board Deliberation – Closed Session

C. SJ Quest Update

1. Spotlight Report- Mental Health/Crisis Team/Counselors- Ron Nielson- 3 min

Superintendent Nielson highlighted School Counselors Month this month, and added his gratitude to the professionalism and impact our school counselors have on our students and in our schools.

D. Board Discussion Items *(Note, discussion items not discussed before 5PM break will be discussed later in the agenda at the board's discretion)*

1. Capital Plan Follow-up - Tyrel Pemberton - 10 min

Merri Shumway recommends reviewing the current action item for rebuilding Blanding Elementary School and consider remodeling if the cost savings could facilitate the construction of a new, larger gym. Superintendent recommended the district send a survey to the stakeholders to consider the potential of remodel or rebuild of the school and needs surrounding a gymnasium and options to consider.

Business Administrator Tyrel Pemberton noted that Blanding Elementary School is nearly 70 years old, and that the cost for evaluation of comparable projects from an agency would be approximately \$80,000,000. He also noted that the district may apply for legislative funding in November 2023 and will benefit to have an evaluation of costs to submit to the state in our application.

Merri Shumway also commented that max capacity and safety is also a concern in the current San Juan High School gym.

Tyrel Pemberton noted that there may be concerns regarding investing in a gymnasium instead of an educational facility. He noted there are structural concerns in both facilities but they are not unusable.

Superintendent noted that the legislative budget did show \$50 million may be earmarked for capital projects in the next session.

2. Final 2021-22 School Land Trust Final Report Summary

Assistant Superintendents Julie Holt and Christine Fitzgerald presented the summary of the Land Trust 2021-22 Final Report including total allocations, uses and any carryover balances if applicable. It was noted that Tse'pii'nidzsigai Elementary has some remaining data to submit and

the board will be updated when the data is received. Board President Lori Maughan inquired regarding goals not met and how the principals and administration will address those unmet marks moving forward.

3. Superintendent Search Process Discussion- Ron Nielson- 10 min

The board will continue to discuss in house applicants.

4. Proposed 2023-24 Fee Waiver & Spend Plans/Program Sustainability Fees & Policies 6130 Students, Tuition, Fees and Fines & 1145 Relations with the Public and Fundraising and Donations - Discussion- Ron Nielson- 30 min

Superintendent Nielson presented the Proposed Spend Plans and Program Sustainability Fee Schedules to the board for a second reading. He noted that the proposed changes to the Program Sustainability Fee Schedule have not been reflected into the spend plans until they are approved, and will be applied respectively throughout the Spend Plans if the adjustments are approved in the Sustainability Fee Schedules.

The board discussed various details throughout the Spend Plans that will be discussed with principals in the upcoming principals meeting.

5. Secondary Schools Spring Sports/Activities – Ron Nielson – 5 min

Secondary Schools Spring Sports and Activities, along with applicable UHSAA 150-Mile forms were presented to the board for review. Board members were reminded to review classes missed for extracurriculars, as well as overnight and long-distance schedules for any questions or concerns they may have.

6. 2023 SJSJ Graduation Dates – Ron Nielson – 5 min

The current 2023 Graduation Dates were presented by Superintendent Nielson. Updates and travel schedules will be shared in the upcoming meetings. Board members are expected to attend commencement events in their respective areas, and encouraged to attend any other advancement ceremonies they choose, travel budgets permitting. Board members were also urged to share events they planned to attend so that schools can plan their programs accordingly.

7. Proposed 2023-24 SJSJ Board of Education Meeting Schedule – Ron Nielson – 10 min

The school board meeting schedule for the 2023-24 school year was presented by Superintendent Nielson. Board meetings will continue to follow the 2nd Wednesday of each month format, with a

few exceptions including Impact Aide Hearing (January 2024), Spring Break (March 2024), and the State Tax Information release date (June 2024).

It was recommended to adjust the proposed schedule date for the March 2024 Board Meeting from March 20th to March 6th, to conduct the meeting prior to Spring Break. This is an action item later in the meeting.

8. Lawsuit vs. Social Media Platforms – Franz Law Group – Ron Nielson – 10 min

Superintendent Nielson opened the discussion stating that the district has been contacted by a legal firm who is taking legal action against social media companies (Facebook, Tik Tok, Snap Chat, etc.) for targeting youth to use their platforms all while knowing the negative effects it will have on student performance and well-being. This law suit is very much like the Vaping Law Suit the board chose not to join in previous years. The same company is leading out with this law suit. He further noted that the previously discussed vaping suit that the Board opted out of was successful, with an award to the participating entities in Utah being awarded a 10 million + payout to the state of Utah.

Board Member Steve Black noted that his continual stances on lawsuits is still hesitancy, but he is supportive of the Social Media Platforms suit as he has seen and feels strongly that such social media platforms are highly impactful on our students.

E. School/Director - Board Reflection Opportunity 4:00 p.m.

1. San Juan High School Report - Ryan Nielson - 10 min

Principal Nielson shared the San Juan High (SJH) School report to board, and the floor was opened for questions. The emphasis of the discussion revolved around the gymnasium use at SJH and capacity concerns, scheduling issues and discussions regarding repair and upkeep in the current gym. Principal Nielson reiterated the public concern for the lack of gym use availability and the disparity between our student facilities vs. other facilities statewide.

Another concern for SJH included the safety issues with the location of the front office of the building and public accessibility.

Principal Nielson briefly shared celebrations, including a repeat State Football Championship and very successful wrestling season. He noted that recent Heritage Language events held by and at the school have been well attended and successful as well. Some challenges include a need for more behavior and emotional support for students, mental health has been an ongoing and increasing concern. He also noted a school-wide initiative to increase student engagement and motivation thru offering various activities during and after school to include as many students as possible in things that interest them and keep them engaged in positive activities. The board presentation slides also included an update on the 90-day plan progress and student achievement data.

2. Albert R. Lyman Middle School Report- Ryan Palmer- 10 min

Principal Ryan Palmer also expressed an overload of gymnasium requests and the system utilized to prioritize gym use for ARL students, SJH students and then other programs as requested. He noted that it is in constant use, including evening hours. He shared an added element of working with a schedule that coincides with the student activity busses.

Principal Palmer shared school proficiency goals for Language Arts and Math, as well as a goal for a 92% pass rate for all core classes for the year. He shared current data and action steps towards set goals.

Celebrations include progress in ELL scores, core class pass rates are increasing and the first Miss ARL Heritage Pageant in over 30 years. He also expressed gratitude for the newly installed and much needed HVAC system. Challenges include attendance, and building and safety security in entry and drop off zone, as well as the camera system.

3. Technology Department Report – Aaron Brewer – 10 min

Technology Director Aaron Brewer shared Goals, Celebrations and Challenges from the Technology Team. Superintendent Nielson noted that the RRLA system is funded from the Economic Department of the Governor, ESSER funds and the district cannot maintain the system long-term without help. Superintendent Nielson advised the board that unless assistance of funding can be secured, there may be issue providing the RRLA system in the future. Mr. Brewer added that other systems have also taken note and there have been other connectivity offering developments in the area for students and households to use.

F. Break - @ 5:00 p.m.

G. Welcome and Recognition of Guests - 6:00 p.m.

H. SJ-2 Recognition Awards

1. San Juan Sweet Job Award: Kade Palmer

2. San Juan Sweet Job Award: Robin Henderson

I. Citizen Comments

1. Citizens' Comments

Board President Lori Maughan read the guidelines for Public Comment.

Logan Monson expressed concerns regarding adherence the district mission statement, asking the district to reevaluate decisions regarding non-renew employees. He further pointed out discrepancies in Policy 4330 pertaining to a Joint Evaluation Committee for non-renewal reviews. He noted that he felt students needed consistency at administrative levels.

Rachel Kowallis requests a review and concern regarding policy and practices, including Policy 4510 (due process).

Amy Reeve requests for increased mentorship and training for teachers and other positions within the district.

Liz Adams requests more stakeholder input and request for stakeholder surveys. She shared personal experiences with behavior issues and concerns and requests that positions of leadership of stakeholders have more staff input.

Jason Nay expressed concern regarding changes in administration at Blanding Elementary School. He expressed an opinion of a need people from outside communities to bring more perspective.

Loni Harris expressed that inconsistency in school leadership is frustrating and difficulty for the school community and can negatively affect morale.

Cheryl Bowers expressed her feeling that administrative turnover is a concern. She shared her understanding of potential facts that may not be available to the public when it comes to hiring, but ultimately the non-renew positions responsibility should fall entirely on the board.

Corrine Johnson expressed support as an "outsider". She hopes that mentoring and providing constructive feedback will help others grow in their careers. She states that those who move from outside the community are making a big sacrifice to be here and that should be considered.

Superintendent Ron Nielson thanked those present for their comments. He shared statistics specifically regarding the administrative changes at Blanding Elementary and reasons related. He noted that there appears to have been a great deal of misinformation regarding the non-renewal and the perceived turnover "problems" and changes in Blanding Elementary administration. He noted that there have been six principals at BES since 2006, with the Assistant Principal being an added position since 2019. He shared that there is not one name on the list that was not presented a contract to sign, and for their personal reasons. He could not speak specifically to Mr. Kowalli's position, as it is a current and unfinalized situation. He noted that there are certainly areas that can be improved upon, but that the misconceptions are necessary to address and that in clearing misinformation, a better understanding and progress to solutions can be made.

Craig Swenson thanked the CTE Director Jeanna Grover and Pathways Coordinator JJ Grover for a VERY successful CTSO competition held recently. He commended them for a and well-planned conference with great participant and organization and believed they certainly deserved public recognition for their efforts.

Merri Shumway thanked the parents that came to board meeting. She requests board members to extend further input per public demand and requests more information to make decisions.

J. Closed Session 9:55 AM (at Board discretion, Closed Session may be moved)

1. Purchase, exchange or lease of real property

2. Litigation

3. Personnel

Colleen Benally arrived at 9:55 am, while she didn't vote for Closed Session the remaining board members constitute a quorum and she was included in the Closed Session.

Steve Black voted to go into Closed Session, but noted he would abstain from participating in the Candidate Interviews and discussion, due to perceived conflict of interest.

Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss Personnel 9:55 AM.

Motion by Merri B Shumway, second by Nan Barton.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Nan Barton

Not Present at Vote: Colleen Benally

Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss Personnel to address concerns expressed during Public Comment 7:00 PM.

Motion by Merri B Shumway, second by Nan Barton.

Final Resolution: Motion Fails

Yea: Merri B Shumway, Nan Barton

Nay: Nelson Yellowman, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally

K. Consent Agenda

1. Minutes

2. Revenue Reports

3. Expenditure Reports

4. School Expenditure Reports

5. Monthly Checks

6. Board Travel Reports

7. Personnel Report(s) and Information

8. Home School Requests

9. Student Hearings

10. School Land Trust Amendments

11. SJSD Revised School Spend Plans

12. Approval of all Consent Agenda Items

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Steve Black, second by Nan Barton.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Nan Barton, Colleen Benally

L. Possible Action Items

I. Capital Project Recommendations

No Motion.

2. Business Administrator's Contract July 2023-2025

Motion to approve the Business Administrator's contract for July 2023-July 2025.

Motion by Steve Black, second by Colleen Benally.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally, Nan Barton

3. Spring 2023 Secondary Schools Activity Schedules and 150-mile forms

Motion to accept the Spring 2023 Secondary Schools Activity Schedules and 150-mile forms.

Motion by Nelson Yellowman, second by Colleen Benally.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally, Nan Barton

4. Superintendent Search Next Steps

No Motion; directive given to Administration during Discussion item 3.

5. 2023-24 SJSB Board of Education Meeting Schedule

Motion to approve the proposed schedule with the change of the March 2024 meeting from the March 20th to March 6th.

Motion by Merri B Shumway, second by Nan Barton.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally, Nan Barton

6. Frantz Law Group Social Media Law Suit

Motion to explore lawsuit for more information and potential meeting with representative.

Motion by Colleen Benally, second by Nan Barton.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Nelson Yellowman, Merri B Shumway, Lori Maughan, Steve Black, Colleen Benally, Nan Barton

7. School Land Trust Final 2021-22 School Reports

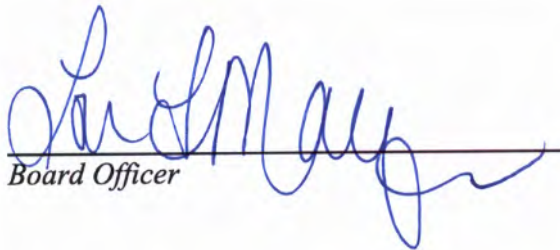
No Motion. Item moved to March 2023 Board Meeting Agenda.

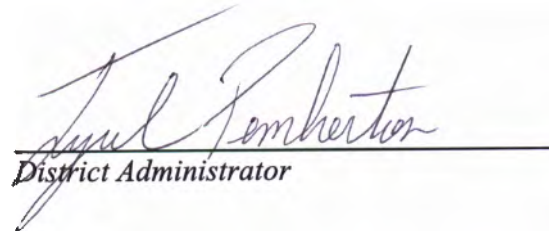
M. Information Items

1. Next Board Meeting-March 8 @ District Office and Virtual
2. Student Success Night – February 16, 5 PM @ White Mesa
3. No School – February 20 – President’s Day
4. USBA Regional Board Meeting – March 21, 6 PM @ District Office

N. Adjournment

1. Adjournment


Board Officer


District Administrator