

Douglas County School District

Regular Meeting
Douglas High School
Minden, Nevada

Tuesday, December 11, 2007
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved
January 8, 2008**

MINUTES

Present were:

Trustees:

Teri Jamin, Vice President
Cindy Trigg, Clerk
Karen Chessell, Member
Sharla Hales, Member
Thomas Moore, Member
Keith Roman, Member

Personnel:

Carol Lark, Superintendent
Nancy Bryant, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services
Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Holly Luna, Director of Business Services

Absent:

Trustees:

John Louritt, President

Others Present:

Mike Malloy, Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

Mrs. Jamin, Board Vice President, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

A. Mrs. Jamin led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Jamin announced that Mr. Louritt, Board President, was absent this evening. Following an inquiry as to whether or not there were any requests to change the agenda, Mrs. Hales asked that public comment for Item 4-B, Administrative Salary Schedules, be heard prior to the information slated to be presented to the Board for Item 4-B, in Executive Session.

Mrs. Hales moved that Item 4-B be placed under Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Mr. Malloy verified this motion was to pull Item 4-B from the Consent agenda.

Mrs. Hales stated her intent was to hear the item as a negotiations briefing and action would be taken at the next regular meeting.

Motion carried unanimously, 5/0.

- B. Mrs. Trigg moved to approve the agenda with the modification, seconded by Mrs. Chessell. Motion carried unanimously, 5/0.

Mrs. Jamin announced Azzi Romero was to be an addition to the list of GED requests on the Consent Agenda. There were no further requests or public comment on the Consent Agenda.

Mrs. Chessell moved to approve the Consent Agenda with modification of Item 2-F, Request to Take the GED Examination, seconded by Mr. Roman. Motion carried, 5/0.

2. Consent Items (Action)

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of November 13, 2007.
- B. Approve AB280, Corrective Action implementation by the school and teacher.
- C. Approve AB280, Corrective Action implementation by the school and teacher.
- D. Approve payments contained in Voucher No. 1012 for the FY 2007-2008 fiscal year.
- E. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 07-12.
- F. Approve the requests submitted by Lauren Kelly, Tristan Brandt, Kevin Paulson, and Jerod Watts to take the GED examination.
- G. Approve the Interlocal Agreement between Douglas County Redevelopment Agency and Douglas County School District regarding \$50,000 in funding in FY 07-08 and \$50,000 in funding in FY 08-09 (provided adequate funds are allocated) for the capital projects of HVAC and new roof at Jacks Valley Elementary School.
- H. Approve Business Services to move forward with the engagement of Bickmore Risk Services' to review Douglas County School District's Other Post Employment Benefits. Actuarial review to be funded through the General Fund, and currently estimated at \$10,300.00.

3. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews¹

3-A. Principals' Report – (Piñon Hills Elementary School)

Mrs. Cronin, Principal, Holly Harvey and Karen Sullivan, teachers, presented the 2007-2008 School Improvement Plan (SIP). Their single goal was stated as, "To enhance, improve and increase staff and student performance." Improvement in English Language Arts and Math was to increase to a level of 90% proficiency as recorded through District and State testing. Mrs. Cronin reviewed Excel charts of testing data used to show Adequate Yearly Progress in English Language Arts and Math, including the IEP students, for the previous two years; Nevada State Writing Proficiency Exam results as compared to all District schools and the State for two years; and CRT assessments that showed growth over time. The Math CRT category, for IEP students, was an area of focus.

Reviewing Teach For Success data, Mrs. Cronin reported Instructional Time had been maximized with data proving an increase year over year.

Additionally, thirteen Actions Steps were reported. Some highlights were that Literacy specialists were focusing on at risk students, grades 3-6; remediation and enrichment opportunities were available for students before and after school; SB185 grant money was slated for a variety of uses including upper end students and parent education supplies;

interactive white board training was provided for staff, as well as, math training with a focus on writing and journaling in math; and parent education opportunities were being offered to help students learn at home.

4. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action)

4-A. Presentation and Acceptance of Financial Audit for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2007

Dave Silva, CPA for Solari and Sturmer, LLC, presented the final audit for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2007. The draft audit Trustees received prior to this meeting was noted to be the same as the final printed copy. Mr. Silva provided a systematic examination of the audit, first summarizing accounting policies. The capitalization of fixed assets was reported to have changed from \$500.00 to \$3,000.00 relieving staff of inventorying and reporting minimal assets.

Financial statements were awarded a "clean opinion" rating. This was noted to be the highest level of assurance given by the firm. Discussion ensued as to the appropriate amount of money allocated to the Unreserved Fund Balance. While there was not a defined amount, 8.3% of annual expenditures was stated as a target amount. Mr. Silva reported on instances of potential budgetary violations, as required by law, stating there were two expenditures above budgeted amounts that equaled less than .25 of 1% of all governmental expenditures.

Areas chosen by the auditors for review for the Fiscal Year June 30, 2007 were Title I, Part A and Nutrition. There were no findings reported with respect to federal funds. Mr. Silva reported no findings resulted from the audit, overall.

Newly required standards would be in place for future audits, including a focus on assessing risk areas and an actuarial evaluation that would be implemented based on a tiered approach. Wrapping up, Mr. Silva stated the firm would produce an internal control letter for the Superintendent, within 60 days, that describes the work put into the audit and suggestions for strengthening the process.

Discussion ensued as to the most desirable ending fund balance that should be maintained.

Mrs. Jamin called for public comment on this item. There was none.

Mrs. Hales moved to accept the 2006-2007 Independent Audit Report, seconded by Mrs. Trigg. Motion carried, 5/0.

3. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews (Continued)

3-B. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Lark reported on recent and upcoming events. A workshop for Board members was announced. Topics to be covered were budget, personnel, and a potential Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) system for reviewing Administrative Regulations not typically requiring Board approval. Trustees were asked to mark their calendars for January 17th, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. Mrs. Lark reported on the following events and issues currently being addressed:

- 1) Washoe Tribe evening meeting regarding student progress

- 2) Implementation of the new database software, PowerSchool that created a strain on staff due to training needs. Mrs. Luna and Mrs. Bryant were commended for addressing concerns and for their assistance in creating the on line forum used by staff as a reference.
- 3) Teach For Success protocol (T4S) site visits were completed for the year, as of this week.

At 4:35 p.m., Mr. Moore arrived.

- 4) Administrative observation logs were being reviewed in order to express the importance of administrators being in classrooms.
- 5) A teleconference regarding changes to the grading system was reported to be upcoming with the final grade point system decided upon by the State Board of Education. Mrs. Lark offered to share subsequent information via email with Board members.
- 6) Mrs. Lark's involvement on the Professional Standard's Commission was reported to include reviewing of alternative routes for licensing professionals in order that they might switch fields and teach.
- 7) Consortium Grant funds were stated as being cut.
- 8) A Lake Town Hall meeting was held the previous night regarding changes at the Lake due to the consolidation of schools. Board members, as well as, Mrs. Lark stated a key issue addressed was radon mitigation at Zephyr Cove Elementary.

3-C. KIDS Committee Update

Mrs. Lark stated Mrs. Trigg and Mr. Moore had attended KIDS meetings. Mrs. Luna was reported to have coordinated and presented budget information in order that priorities could be set based on criteria set by the Committee. The next meeting was announced as December 20th at Zephyr Cove Elementary School. The Committee was expected to have a recommendation for the Board by the February Regular Board Meeting.

5. Information and Discussion

5-A. Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) Report-Keith Roman

An NIAA meeting held in Las Vegas during the previous week was reported on by Mr. Roman. One issue discussed surrounded the AA vs. AAA designation allowance for Laughlin, Nevada that would assist with the success of their football program. A decision would reportedly be made in the future as to Laughlin's placement in the leagues. Another issue was the eligibility of out of state students to compete in playoff games. Advantages obtained by private schools with undefined attendance zones and equity in scheduling, were additional items of discussion.

5-B. Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) Report

Mrs. Hales reported for Mr. Louritt, in his absence. Mrs. Hales stated that Bonnie Parnel invited School Board members to provide input on a School Board agenda item relating to the use of assessments. Board members were being used as a source of information on this topic due to the attempt by Senator Beers to eliminate assessments that included MAP testing used in the DCSD.

5-C. Superintendent Management By Objective's (MBO's)

Mrs. Lark reviewed the status of the 2007-2008 MBO's currently in place. Common Assessment implementation was reported to be in progress. The impact to students, through use of Common Assessments, was due to the ability of this form of assessment providing staff with data relating to a student's precise knowledge, in a given course. New report cards, "Comprehensive Progress Reports (CPR's)" were reported to be evolving with the onset of the database, PowerSchool. DesCartes software training, relating to assessments, was underway for teachers. Breaking Ranks in the Middle School, was stated as being in progress to address collaboration issues between middle and high schools through a series of conferences provided by the Nevada Administrators Association. Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) class training, a SpringBoard series, would be starting within the English Language Arts program, incrementally. The Pre-AP program would be embedded throughout the English Language Arts curriculum. Alternative Education was being held during the day this year and included the newly purchased Odyssey software for students needing credit retrieval. Counseling had been offered to students in the ninth grade at the end of last year for the first time. This counseling had recently been mandated by the legislature and it was noted to be in place again for the current year.

Support was solicited regarding changes or input to the 2007-2008 Superintendent/Board MBO's. There were no further suggestions at this time.

Mrs. Jamin inquired if it was appropriate to take public comment on Item 4-B. Mr. Malloy replied that Item 4-B was taken off the agenda, and administratively, public comment on the item could be heard.

4. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action) (Continued)

4-B. Administrative Salary Schedules

Public comment only was heard at this time. Item 4-B was addressed in Executive Session with no action taken.

The Nevada Education Representative, Randy Cahill, interpreted the proposed administrative salary schedule increases and reported what he ascertained were changes from the 2006-2007 schedule as listed on the District Web site. Following review of changes to responsibility factors, percentage increases and removal of steps, the salary increase for administration was not belittled; rather Mr. Cahill asked that the Classified and Certified groups receive similar increases.

Mrs. Jamin stated that input from the public was requested for consideration of the Board, and while the Board would not have open dialogue, she wanted everyone to understand the door was open and negotiations could continue at any time. Mrs. Jamin announced that the Executive Session was not to be understood as a reflection of the Board's position.

Issues brought forth by teachers and administrators included:

- 1) Fiscal responsibilities
- 2) Salary increases were based upon satisfactory evaluations for administrators.

- 3) Review of the surrounding districts' pay offerings placed the DCSD administrative pay scales lower than average, as compared to these other neighboring Districts.
- 4) Extensive job requirements included weekend and after hour commitments, and lack of other offerings such as signing bonuses, stipends, time for summer jobs, and no allotment for 1/5 retirement credit or substitutes.
- 5) The incentive to become an administrator was minimal.
- 6) The cost of living was higher than surrounding areas.
- 7) The quality of life was noted to be high in the valley and administrators sought to be paid for the quality of their work.
- 8) Teachers expressed administrator concerns that were stated, were the same for teachers, and asked for equal compensation in order to recruit quality teachers.
- 9) The change of past practice relating to raises offered to teachers being equivalent to administrative increases was expressed as not being understood by teachers.

A break was taken at 5:50 p.m.

Public Comment

At 6:12 p.m., Mrs. Jamin called for Public Comment. Greg Felton, parent, thanked the Board members and Mrs. Lark for having attended the Lake Town Hall meeting held the previous night.

4. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action) (Continued)

4-C. First Reading of Board Policy No. 529(a), "Weapons, Fighting, Intimidation/Prescription Drugs"

Mrs. Bryant, Assistant Superintendent for Education Services, presented information gathered from the District's Leadership Team regarding a parent who had approached the Board, at a previous meeting, asking that disciplinary actions be reduced for elementary students bringing knives to school. The Leadership Team was reported to support the Policy as written, and believed that young students were aware of the Policy and realized weapons at school were inappropriate. Administrators did not support the opportunity for use of their own discretion depending on the student or incident. This was due to a concern of parents using one decision against another as appropriate action taken.

The number of elementary students having brought knives to school in the previous year was reported to be four, with no reoccurrences, following the resulting ten day suspension.

Procedures used to make students aware, including review of their handbook at the onset of each new school year and signage in schools for students was reported to heighten awareness. Consistency regarding severity of penalties students incurred was expressed as necessary for safety.

Mrs. Jamin called for public comment. Several administrators spoke to support the Policy as written, offering various reasons, in order to assure safety within schools.

Discussion ensued as to assurance that sites were informing students on a reoccurring basis, students were aware that a knife could be turned in to any adult upon realizing they had one at school, and additionally, Back To School Night could be used as a reminder for parents about this important issue.

In conclusion, Board members supported the policy as written based on safety and all reasoning provided. No action was taken.

5. Information and Discussion (Continued)

5-D. First Reading Administrative Regulation No. 529, “Procedures for Suspension of 10 Days or Less”

Mrs. Bryant addressed Administrative Regulation No. 529, with regards to the amount of schoolwork to be credited upon suspension of a student for ten days or less. Reporting that this had been discussed with the District’s Leadership Team, Mrs. Bryant stated reasoning for the change she would be recommending.

Administrators were reported to have had various opinions, with all agreeing that student participation through class attendance was important. Presenting the dual prospective heard in Leadership, Mrs. Bryant noted credit was not being interpreted equally and was therefore being applied to student grading unequally due to current verbiage. The decision to remove the word “maximum” in order that teachers award a flat 75% of credit to students who were suspended was made to the final decision.

Prompted by concern, affects incurred to a student’s GPA was discussed by Board members due to the reduction in credit of assignments during a period of suspension.

Administrators gave public comment supporting the removal of the word “maximum” to set a consistent standard for credit regarding homework received during a student’s suspension.

Reflecting consensus of the Board, Mrs. Jamin thanked Mrs. Bryant for the information collected.

5-E. First Reading Administrative Regulation 518(d), “Transfer Students, Grades 7-12”

Mrs. Bryant reviewed the history of requirements for transfer students as gathered through middle and high school counselors. Assessment of transcripts for counselors was being streamlined in order that student requirements for courses and competencies were consistent. Mrs. Bryant offered changes to Administrative Regulation 518(d) with respect to the Narrative requirement, in order that a link could be made. The use of these guidelines by counselors would provide consistency for transfer students.

Mr. Roman expressed concerns regarding senior transfers into the current competency based system. It was noted that a competency appeal process was available.

Mrs. Trigg stated she would like to see the competency appeal process made available within the transfer regulation.

Mrs. Bryant stated verbiage within the regulation supported that students were responsible for all competency requirements during the time they were in attendance in Douglas County schools. She offered that suggestions made would be incorporated and the revised regulation would be provided in a future Board packet.

4. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action) (Continued)

4-D. First Reading Board Policy No. 226, "Parent Involvement"

Mrs. Bryant along with Mr. Frazier, Director of Assessments and Grants, reviewed Title I mandated additions to Board Policy No. 226, "Parent Involvement." The required standards were incorporated at the end of the current Policy, included nuances for Douglas County, and were reviewed with the Board. Title I schools were reported to have been notified of the changes and parents were being afforded the opportunity to receive this information.

Mrs. Hales expressed disapproval of the dictation of policy requirements to districts. She questioned the addition of the information to the bottom of the Policy, stating she would propose a policy with footnotes in order that parents received equal, clear information.

The information mandated was noted to be required in order that Title I funds were received.

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve for first reading, changes made to Board Policy No. 226, "Parent Involvement," seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Motion carried, 5/1, Mrs. Hales nay.

4-E. Consideration of 2007-2008 Budget Augmentations and Amendments

Mrs. Luna stated three Resolutions incorporating budget changes were going to be reviewed and were listed to be adopted by separate actions at this time. Resolution No. 07-03, the general fund, having the most activity and therefore, the most changes, would be reviewed first. Resolution Numbers 07-04 and 07-05 were noted to as need little explanation. The final budget amendment was announced as occurring in July. Funds necessary for the Superintendent Evaluation service contract, if voted in, during future board meetings, were included in this budget amendment for the General Fund.

Mrs. Luna reviewed the amended budget with regards to the general fund including the addition of salary and benefit changes for Confidential employees/Classified supervisors, and bus drivers.

Other changes included movement within the class size reduction area, for compliance purposes, due to increased expenses and staff changes. Additional funds were allocated for a JROTC instructor and related expenditures (travel and drills). Funds were added into Instructional Services for Alternative Education due to loss of grant funding. Professional Development for PowerSchool was included as an additional expense in Business Services due to the difficult transition for staff. Additional funds were allocated for Planware software to assist the Transportation Department and Business Services with planning, due to declining enrollment. Increased expenses for audits had been added in, as well as, the JNA Consulting, LLC contract. Additional funding was also added to the District Grounds and Maintenance budget, with respect for current ESCO and KIDS Committee considerations underway.

Next, Mrs. Luna explained the resulting increase of 1.2 million dollars to the ending fund balance. Through discussion, Mrs. Luna and Mr. Alexander reviewed the status of unsettled negotiations, hold harmless, and ad valorem taxes. It was noted that Board Policy dictated a 4% ending fund balance, the auditors stated 8.3% allowed for one month of operations, and

the current 7% balance was higher than past practice, but a recommended amount to maintain.

Mrs. Jamin called for public comment. There was none.

An inquiry was made as to whether or not the 4% ending fund balance should be increased within Board Policy. Mrs. Luna recommended that the Board not make changes within this period of arbitration that the future was hard to predict. Future events could result in violation of Policy, if trying to maintain a 7% ending fund balance.

Alternative Education needs were discussed. Board members expressed desires to promote development of the Alternative Education program.

Mrs. Hales moved to adopt Resolution No. 07-03 to amend the general fund budget of the 07-08 Fiscal Year with change of moving \$100,000.00 in the ending fund reserve balance to Alternative Education, as further implemented in the Strategic Plan, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Discussion ensued regarding the change in fund allocations. Appropriation of the funds within Alternative Education was not designated. The intent was to earmark the funds for use, as needed, within the Alternative Education program.

Motion carried, unanimously, 6/0.

Mrs. Trigg moved to adopt Resolution No. 07-04, seconded by Mr. Moore.
Motion carried, unanimously, 6/0.

Mrs. Trigg moved to adopt Resolution No. 07-05, seconded by Mr. Moore.
Motion carried, unanimously, 6/0.

4-F. Superintendent Evaluation Process

Mrs. Jamin announced that the Board had received input in written format from Mr. Louritt, Board President, as well as, from District Administration on this item. Mr. Louritt submitted in writing, that he had contacted seven school districts who provided input regarding Mr. Thomas' approach to the Superintendent Evaluation. The information he received was positive and all of the Districts contacted, felt the program was beneficial.

In a move to strengthen and broaden the scope of the Superintendent evaluation, Board members considered the value of receiving information from an external source, cost effectiveness, the timeframe, and method used for data gathering. While there was general agreement to pursue more complete information on the process from Mr. Thomas, concerns were also expressed regarding having to evaluate the Superintendent, in an attempt to produce viable information, under the Open Meeting Law format.

Following this discussion, it was decided that a scope of services would be necessary from Mr. Thomas. The Board requested that staff obtain this information and to specifically find out how much time would be required of District staff to gather data. The Superintendent Evaluation would therefore be listed on the January agenda following receipt of the requested information.

4-G. District Improvement Plan

Reporting on the District Improvement Plan (DIP), Mrs. Bryant, Assistant Superintendent for Education Services, stated a meeting was held on November 9th to evaluate data collected from the previous year. The overall achievement status for English Language Arts (ELA) and math within the District was reported. The goal of increasing ELA and math PAC rates by 3%, with the exception of one sub population, American Indians, in the ELA designation, at the elementary level, was achieved. Sites needing to increase ELA PAC rates within that subpopulation were noted. The ELA goal status at Middle School was reported as having met the 3% goal with the exception of the white and IEP groups. Middle School math groups not meeting the goal were American Indians, Whites, IEP, and Free and Reduced sub populations. All populations at the High School level met the 3% goal with the exception of Whites and IEP groups for both ELA and math.

The District Improvement Planning process was reviewed and included an explanation of the following SAGE process:

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment (Inquiry)
- Data Elements - utilized
- Inquiry Process
- Planning Process
- New Goals
- Action Steps

PAC rate requirements, reported for No Child Left Behind, were stated as increasing 10%. This resulted in a new goal of 5% growth for each of the next two years, in all areas. Populations achieving a 10% growth rate for Adequate Yearly Progress would be given the "Safe Harbor," designation. Subpopulations not benefiting from a "confidence interval" or 2% IEP flexibility would be expected to achieve an annual 10% increase.

Mrs. Bryant stated specialists, such as an ESL and special education strategist, would be helping at risk populations. Training for teachers would be provided at the Professional Development Center (PDC) in order that strategies were embedded in curriculum. Mrs. Bryant offered to supply a list of PDC training dates to the Board. With regards to Career and Technology Education content and academic standards are being crosswalked. Collaboration for teachers that would allow for common course mapping, or sequenced teaching, was an area of concern due to lack of time in the school day. The Technology Task Force was reported to have impacted sites, ultimately improving teaching. A new, written, Professional Development Plan for teachers, was currently underway.

Mr. Roman asked to see data on the Science Inquiry process. Mrs. Bryant reported Science HSPE would be incorporated into the Plan upon receipt of new Science cut scores that would correlate with our MAP scores.

An explanation of Plans governing the District was provided. The Strategic Plan was reported to be a five year plan providing MBO's for the Superintendent. The District Improvement Plan stems from student achievement data and School Improvement Plan's and is the basis for Education Services' goals revised annually.

Mrs. Hales commented the new practical format was an improvement over the theoretical layout maintained for the document in the past. The availability of the District Improvement Plan, while working through the Strategic Planning process, was noted. Mrs. Bryant stated the DIP was a result of No Child Left Behind and was in place as an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) shared governance, improvement based document.

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve the District Improvement Plan, seconded by Mrs. Chessell. Motion carried, unanimously, 6/0.

6. Correspondence

Mrs. Jamin verified that all Trustees had received a letter from a staff member in their red folders.

7. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings

Mrs. Trigg inquired about reviewing field trip policies in light of a discussion held the previous evening at the Lake Town Hall meeting, seconded by Mrs. Chessell. Mr. Moore stated that field trip funding was the concern. Mrs. Luna responded that funding was done outside of the Policy. Mr. Moore requested a briefing from the administration regarding this issue.

Mrs. Hales inquired as to when the Board would review the Policy relating to high school course counseling, as mandated by the legislature. Mrs. Bryant stated the Nevada Administrative Code was being written and the presentation would follow. Next, Mrs. Hales requested a report on curriculum for science, by grade level. Mrs. Bryant stated she would address this with the Director of Curriculum.

Mrs. Trigg requested a review of small school opportunities including donations that could support staff, such as, a Spanish teacher. Mr. Alexander stated he would speak with Mrs. Trigg regarding this issue.

Mrs. Jamin addressed the letter from a staff member regarding early retirement and buy out of employment. Mr. Alexander responded that the letter is asking for an exception that would require a change to Board Policy. Currently, Board Policy stated to qualify for Early Retirement an individual would need to complete their contract period.

8. Executive Session

At approximately 10:30 p.m., Mrs. Hales moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of considering employer/employee negotiations pursuant to NRS 228.220(4), seconded by Mr. Moore.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned following the return to Open Session, at 11:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Carolyn Moore
Secretary to the Superintendent and
Board of Trustees

Approved:

Clerk of the Board

Note: Upon approval by the Board of Trustees in a public meeting, these minutes become the official minutes of the meeting held on the above date. Board minutes are kept on a permanent basis and are available for public review in the office of the Superintendent.