

Douglas County School District
Regular Meeting
Douglas High School
Minden, Nevada
Tuesday, October 12, 2004
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved On:
November 9, 2004**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Board President John Louritt called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

Present were:

Trustees:

John Louritt, President
Sharla Hales, Vice President
Connie Wennhold, Clerk
Keith Roman, Member
Don Forrester, Member
Loren Orr, Member
George Echan, Member

Personnel Present:

Personnel:

John Soderman, Superintendent
Rick Kester, Director of Business Services
Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Roy Casey, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services
Norma Villaseñor, Personnel Director, Classified Employees
Pam Gilmartin, Principal, Jacks Valley Elementary School
Maggie Kersten, Teacher, Jacks Valley Elementary School
Kathleen Barton, Jacks Valley Elementary School
Cheryl Winter, Teacher, Jacks Valley Elementary School
Mark Van Voorst, Principal, Douglas High School

Others Present:

Mike Nivinskus, Legal Counsel

- A. Mrs. Wennhold led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Mrs. Wennold made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Orr. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

2. Consent Items (Action)

Mr. Louritt directed the Board's attention to their red folder where an explanation of the "Elko Plan" was

given as part of item 2-F, "Approval of Class Size Reduction."

Mr. Louritt called for public comment. Hearing none, Ms. Wennhold made a motion to adopt the following consent items, seconded by Mr. Roman:

- A. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 14, 2004
- B. Personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 04-10 as follows:

2004-2005 SCHOOL YEAR - HIRING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL:				
Name	Position/Location	Effective Date	Salary	Replacing
Angelyn Nichols	Special Ed Aide/Program Aide – SES	09-20-04	14EE2	Lori Pyle
Janice Hurst	Special Ed Aide/IEP – GWHS	09-20-04	14EE2	New Position
Kathie Cattanach	Special Ed Aide/IEP – GWHS	09-20-04	14EE2	Kathleen Oaks
Mickie Jo Ovrud	Head Department Secretary – Maint	10-01-04	26E4	Robbie Thorson
Alita Rogers	Assistant Cook – MES	10-01-04	14EE1	Leona Pupich
Margaret McMonagle	Bus Driver/Valley – Transportation	10-01-04	EE(P)	Julie Hayes
Shannon Henderson	Bus Driver/Valley – Transportation	10-01-04	EE(P)	Robin Hall
CLASSIFIED RESIGNATIONS:				
Name	Position	Effective Date		
Lila Ansel	Special Ed Aide/IEP - GES	10-08-04		
CLASSIFIED CHANGES:				
Name	Former Position	New Position	Effective Date	
Utahna Derbyshire	Playground Aide – JVES	Special Ed Aide/IEP - MES	10-05-04	
CERTIFIED REQUEST FOR LEAVE (SHORT TERM):				
Name	Position/Location	Date(s)	Action	
Deb Probert	Teacher/JVES	9/27/04	Unpaid Leave	
Barbara Sourikoff	Teacher/CVMS	10/7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15/04	Unpaid Leave	
Teri Howley	Teacher/JVES	10/11/04	Unpaid Leave	
Karen Green	Teacher/CVMS	10/28/04	Unpaid Leave	
Randy Green	Teacher/DHS	10/28/04	Unpaid Leave	
Curtis Bent	Teacher/DHS	11/22,23 & 24/04	Unpaid Leave	
CERTIFIED RETIREMENT FOR 2005-2006:				
Name	Position/Location	Date		
Roy Casey	Assistant Superintendent, Ed Services/DW	2005/2006		

- C. Payments contained in Accounts Payable Voucher 1015 for FY 2004-2005
- D. Excuse from compulsory attendance the following students who have requested home schooling for the 2004-2005 school year:

Ms. Gladys Hutchison – 16 year-old son, 9 th grade. First year homeschooling. Using a home educator consultant. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. Don Sullivan – 12 year-old son, 8 th grade. First year homeschooling. Using an approved correspondence program. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Karsemeyer – 12 year-old daughter, 7 th grade. First year homeschooling. Using a home educator consultant. Performance objectives delineated.
Ms. Sue Willis – 18 year-old son, 12 th grade. First year homeschooling. Using an approved correspondence program. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. and Mrs. William Senner – 12 year-old daughter, 7 th grade. Second year homeschooling. Performance objectives delineated.

D. Excuse from compulsory attendance the following students who have requested home schooling for the 2004-2005 school year (continued):

Mr. Kurt Green – 17 year-old daughter, 12 th grade. First year homeschooling. Using an approved correspondence program. Performance objectives delineated.
Ms. Myra Knight – 15 year-old daughter, 10 th grade. Third year homeschooling. Using an approved correspondence program. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. and Mrs. Chris Smithen – 10 year-old daughter, 5 th grade; 9 year-old son, 5 th grade; 7 year-old son, 1 st grade. Third year homeschooling. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. and Mrs. John Jackson – 17 year-old daughter, 12 th grade; 13 year-old daughter, 8 th grade; 8 year-old son, 3 rd grade; 7 year-old son, 1 st grade. Eighth year homeschooling. Performance objectives delineated.
Ms. Kathy McCarley – 15 year-old daughter, 9 th grade. Sixth year homeschooling. Performance objectives delineated.
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Samsel – 11 year-old son, 5 th grade; 7 year-old son, 1 st grade. Fourth year homeschooling. Performance objectives delineated.
Ms. Shari Dixon – 18 year-old son, 12 th grade. Second year homeschooling. Using an approved correspondence program. Performance objectives delineated.

E. Request submitted by Matthew T. Mason and Kathrine Rempt to take the General Education Development (GED) Examination

F. Class Size Reduction Plan for 2004-2005 (SB 653)

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 7/0.

3. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews

A. Principal’s Report (Jack’s Valley Elementary School)

Principal Pam Gilmartin began her presentation by introducing the members of her School Improvement Implementation team: Cheryl Winter, Margaret (Maggie) Kersten, and Kathleen Barton. She then explained that Jacks Valley Elementary School is in their second year of implementing their current School Improvement Plan (SIP) while beginning the process of examining data for a new School Improvement Plan. She explained that the current School Improvement Plan focused on three main areas, literacy, math, and parent involvement.

Ms. Winter introduced herself as the Literacy Specialist for JVES and explained various aspects of how the literacy portion of the SIP was implemented. She presented photographs in a PowerPoint presentation of the Library, which is stocked with resources for students, parents, and teachers, some of which was purchased by Education Foundation Grant money. She explained that the library also stocks a variety of word and vocabulary games for students to play. She described the Accelerated Reader program that students use to develop reading and comprehension skills by taking a computerized test after reading a book. This program was purchased by parent-donated funds, and over 5,000 books are available for students with this program. She concluded by describing various book clubs that she offers for both parents and staff members.

Maggie Kersten introduced herself as the head of the Family Involvement portion of the SIP. She showed photos in PowerPoint of their K-6 homework program, which consists of “Buddy Backpacks” in K-2, homework bags in 3rd grade and the Accelerated Reader Program for 4th through 6th grade. Photos of the Preschool Library where students can pick up books without checking them out were also presented. For parents, Maggie explained that she distributed the checklist of critical content from the Douglas County

School District website so that parents can understand what their child is expected to learn. She shared photos of the Book Faire, which coincides with Family Night (held once each month) in order to reach as many parents as possible. Weekly newsletters are also sent home with students to keep parents informed. She concluded her presentation with photos of an event where parents and students were invited to wear their pajamas and read bedtime stories at the school, as well as the "Run and Read" event where District and school staff read to a student between running laps.

Kathleen Barton described her work on the Math Committee and the resources available in the library for students, such as reference books and activities. She explained that their website is updated monthly for parents and that their Plato lab is licensed for all staff members to use. In addition, story problems are posted throughout the school to challenge students in math. She described the "Math Week" activity where students had a different math activity for each day of the week.

After comments from the Board, Pam was congratulated on her success in implementation of her School Improvement Plan and thanked the group for the informative presentation.

B. Annual Staffing Report – Certificated and Classified

Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, and Norma Villaseñor, Classified Administrator, summarized the certificated and classified personnel changes that have been approved for the period of October 1, 2003 through October 1, 2004.

Ms. Villaseñor provided an overview of the report supplied to the Board in their packet. She explained that there were nine retirees during the reporting period, which is the second highest number of retirees on record - last year being the highest number of retirees at 13 retirees. She explained that the turnover rate has increased by 1.6 percent due in part to rate of pay and family issues, and because of positions being discontinued. She announced that three classified personnel members became teachers.

In response to the Board's inquiry regarding how the Douglas County School District compares to other districts in regard to turnover rates, Ms. Villaseñor answered that our district compares very well to other districts in terms of our rates of pay, benefits, etc, and that the turnover rate has risen over the past years because some employees enter into positions, such as special education aides, and later feel the job is not really what they had anticipated. She explained that Human Resources makes every effort to explain the demands of the position to each prospective employee. Mr. Soderman explained that the recent growth in retail businesses in Douglas County, coupled with the rising costs of housing in the area, is contributing to rising turnover rates for classified employees.

Mr. Alexander reviewed the Certified Staffing report with the Board, drawing attention to the fact that the Douglas County School District will be facing a rise in the number of retirees as the "Baby Boomers" reach retirement age and warned that some of these retirees will be District Office administrators. He also noted that three of the District's new hires are graduates from the Douglas County School District – one from Whittell High School and two from Douglas High School.

Mr. Alexander explained that teachers today do not stay in the profession as in years past. Teachers come into the teaching profession, leave to raise a family, then either return to try administration or enter into another career. He stated that many people are motivated to come out of retirement for health care insurance costs reasons. He mentioned that secondary math positions, as well as Administration positions, are becoming exceedingly difficult to fill.

In response to questions from the Board regarding certified turnover rate, he suggested that some teachers enter into the profession because they think they will get their summers off, but don't realize the difficulty of the position. However, most newly hired certified employees complete probation and stay in our district.

Regarding the absence of terminations in the report, Mr. Alexander explained that most probationary teachers choose to resign if they are not successful during their probationary period, so terminations are absent from the report.

After a brief discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Alexander and Ms. Villaseñor for their report.

Mr. Louritt introduced the candidates for Douglas County School District Board of Trustees seats who were present in the audience: Teri Jamin, Lawrence Howell, Eric Eakin, Cynthia Trigg, and Ron Beck. He also introduced Mr. Orr, a candidate and currently serving as interim Trustee for District 1.

C. Enrollment Report for 2004-2005

Mr. Rick Kester, Director of Business Services, reviewed the District's official student enrollment data for the 2004-2005 school year and stated that the official student count day for this school year was September 17, 2004. He explained that our total district enrollment has increased by 18 students, but warned that within the school areas, there are different patterns of increasing and declining enrollment. He clarified that one strong trend in loss of enrollment is the Rancho's elementary schools where both Scarselli Elementary and C. C. Meneley Elementary School are down in enrollment. However, the areas of Minden and Gardnerville continue to increase in enrollment. He reminded the Board of the rezoning that was necessary four years ago and advised that the District may be facing the same rezoning situation in the near future if the current trend continues. Rezoning would likely involve student's moving from Gardnerville Elementary to Scarselli Elementary and C. C. Meneley Elementary.

Mr. Kester explained that a more challenging enrollment pattern is emerging at our Lake Tahoe schools where the official student count at Lake Tahoe in the 1997 – 1998 school year was 942 students, but for the 2004-2005 school year, it is only 631 students. Lake schools have lost 1/3 of their students in the last eight years. He clarified that there are currently fewer students in the Lake Tahoe schools than there were in the mid '70s when Kingsbury Middle School was built, and young families aren't moving to the Carson Valley or the Lake Tahoe area primarily due to the high cost of housing. It is not anticipated that this pattern will change at Lake schools given the fact that elementary school classes are currently smaller than the middle and high school classes. Consequently, we are going to need to begin looking at a consolidation plan for Lake Tahoe schools. That plan could possibly feature the closing of Kingsbury Middle School students currently attending Kingsbury Middle School going to the existing sites of Zephyr Cove Elementary and Whittell High School. Currently, 6th – 8th grade enrollment at Kingsbury Middle School is 154 students. He said that it is important to maintain neighborhood schools, and we are always going to have schools at Lake Tahoe. The District has no plan to bus students to the valley. Currently, Kingsbury Middle School has shown the most significant decline in enrollment between last year and this, dropping 11 percent from 173 to 154 students. At some point, Kingsbury Middle School's student population will fall to a level that would not make it a viable middle school in terms of the possible curriculum offerings to students.

He concluded by illustrating that the pattern of declining enrollment district-wide over the past ten years and informing the Board that data will be collected and analyzed in the event rezoning is necessary. If one were deemed necessary, it would be before the Board in January.

After further discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Kester for his presentation and proactive approach in planning for future of Douglas County School District students.

4. Information and Discussion

A. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent John Soderman reported to the Board regarding activities of the past month and upcoming District events that may be of interest to them, such as the Aspiring Administrators meeting that was held by

Mrs. Bryant, Principal of Piñon Hills Elementary School, for those teachers considering entering Administration, and the District Inservice day where secondary and elementary schools held various inservices and workshops. He concluded by displaying a plaque received by Piñon Hills Elementary to the Douglas County School District in recognition for their contributions towards the "Garden Project."

B. NASB Director's Report

Mrs. Hales announced that there was no Director's meeting since the last report, but invited the candidates who were present in the audience to attend the NASB Conference to be held November 11 – 14, 2004. She explained that the dues paid to NASB cover the registration fee for attending this conference.

5. Items Requiring Discussion and Action

A. NASS/NASB Position Statements Regarding iNVEST and the Education First and National Average Initiatives

Mrs. Hales reminded the Board that this issue was before them at last month's meeting and directed their attention to the position paper that she presented to them at the beginning of this meeting. Mr. Roman asked if there was any documentation available regarding iNVEST. Mr. Soderman explained that the document was not in its final form, but would be completed in the very near future.

Ms. Hales stated that it was not mandatory to take any formal action on this item, but one reason to take action would be to inform people of the Board's formal position on these two initiatives issues if they asked a question about the Board's position on them.

Mr. Forrester agreed that the Board should take a position on the issue, indicating that iNVEST has not changed significantly from what was drafted two years ago in that it simply shows how much money Nevada students need.

Mr. Roman stated that he likes the iNVEST Plan, but cannot vote on the item if he does not completely understand what the iNVEST document entails.

Mr. Echan made a motion to endorse the National Average Initiative. No second to the motion was made; therefore, the motion was lost.

Mr. Echan made a motion to endorse the Education First Initiative. No second to the motion was made; therefore, the motion was lost.

B. Co-curricular Incorporation of Administrative Regulation 523(a)

Douglas High School Principal Mark Van Voorst brought draft regulations for co-curricular and non-NIAA school programs that articulated eligibility and behavioral expectations. At last month's Board meeting he asked that the item be deferred until the next Board meeting so that he might receive input on the draft from other secondary schools. The contract was revised to address concerns raised by the secondary administrators and teachers, and various formatting changes were also made.

Regarding academic eligibility, he explained that if students participating in co-curricular activities were failing any class, that student would be ineligible to participate in the co-curricular activity if it interfered with the regular class day. For example, if a student were failing English, he or she would not be allowed to participate in a band event that would necessitate the student's missing his or her English period. However, if the student was scheduled to take part in a band event after the school day, the student would be allowed

to participate. Ineligibility due to disciplinary matters such as drug and alcohol use is treated in exactly the same manner as extra-curricular NIAA participants.

After further discussion, Mr. Louritt called for public comment. Ms. Lucia Mason, Drama teacher and Yearbook advisor at Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School, expressed her concern that her students' grades may suffer if they are not able to participate in co-curricular activities during the school day because participation in these activities are part of their grade in the class.

Mr. Echan stated that he was sympathetic to Ms. Mason's concerns, but added that the policy needed to be given a chance to work and that individual teacher administration was not appropriate.

Mrs. Hales stated that she is in support of most of the contract, but will vote against it because of the wording that requires parents to notify the school if their child participates in drug or alcohol activities and believed that the schools do not have the right to impose a rule that parents must turn in their children. She suggested a change to Numbers 3 and 4 of the contract to read, "We agree that our son/daughter must notify our school administrator... and "we understand that our son/daughter... " respectively.

After further discussion, Mr. Louritt called for public comment. Hearing none, Mr. Forrester made a motion to adopt the guidelines with modifications by Mr. Van Voorst that align the NIAA eligibility and behavioral expectations for students participating in extra- and co-curricular activities in grades 9 – 12 and make necessary changes to Administrative Regulation 523(a). Motion seconded by Mr. Orr.

Motion carried by a vote of 6/1 (Sharla Hales, dissenting).

Mr. Louritt called for a brief recess at 5:52 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:09 p.m.

Mr. Orr left the meeting during this recess at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Louritt called for public comment at 6:09 p.m. There was no public comment.

5. Items Requiring Discussion and Action - continued

C. Revisions to Board Policy 428, "Unpaid Family and Medical Leave"

Mr. Alexander explained that this policy change is requested in order to align payment of premiums for dependent insurance coverage under FMLA with payments of premiums for insurance coverage under COBRA policies. This will ensure that payments for dependent insurance payments will be paid at the beginning of the month of coverage.

Mr. Kester added that it is common practice to have employees pay for the insurance before the coverage month, not after as is the current practice in the Douglas County School District.

Mr. Louritt called for public comment. Hearing none, Mr. Echan made a motion to approve for first reading the revisions to Board Policy 428, "Unpaid Family and Medical Leave," seconded by Mrs. Wennhold.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

D. Consideration of Selling Approximately 15 Acre Parcel of Land Adjacent to Piñon Hills Elementary School

Rick Kester, Director of Business Service, presented the Board with his research regarding the possibility of selling the acreage that is adjacent to Piñon Hills Elementary School. He reminded the Board that the District originally purchased 29.08 acres at a cost of \$401,670.00 in 1993 to serve as a site for Piñon Hills Elementary School. A smaller parcel was not available at that time. Piñon Hills Elementary was built on the northern part of the site consuming a total of approximately 14 acres of the parcel. The remaining portion of the property is nearly 15 acres and is not included in the District's plans as a future additional school site. This parcel of land is not large enough for a middle school site, has difficult drainage issues for large buildings such as schools, and does not fit into District plans for an school site. The District has an excellent 20-acre middle school site next to Jacks Valley Elementary School in Northern Douglas County.

He further explained that NRS 393.220 through NRS 393.320 specify the conditions in which school districts can sell property and the procedures that must be followed. He directed the Board's attention to the copy of those statutes in their agenda packet. He told the Board that the preliminary estimates of the value of the 15-acre parcel are over \$1 million and that proceeds from the sale of the property must be deposited in the District's Building and Sites fund and would be used to advance projects that are on the District's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. He explained that the property is currently zoned for public facilities, but all of the surrounding property is zoned SFR1, or "one home per acre." He stated that it is unclear whether asking for a rezoning of the property from public facilities to SFR1 would increase its value, but that he would research the possibility.

There was some discussion about the requirement of hiring appraisers for the property. Mr. Nivinskus concurred with Mr. Kester that it looks as if Douglas County would hire one appraiser and the state would hire another, but Douglas County would be responsible to pay for the appraisal fee for both. It was unclear whether the appraisers work together, or independently.

Mr. Louritt called for public comment. There was none.

Mr. Echan commented that a rezoning of the property would be in the District's best interest and that a buffer zone between the school and any planned development must be considered.

After further discussion, Mrs. Hales made the following motion, seconded by Mr. Forrester:

1. Authorize the commencement of the sale process of District property adjacent to Piñon Hills Elementary School
2. Authorize Rick Kester, Director of Business Services to hire an appraiser for the property and to notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the need to appoint a second appraiser of property.
3. Authorize Rick Kester to spend up to \$4,000 for the hiring of the appraiser.
4. Direct the administration to prepare a property sale resolution declaring the Board's intention to sell the property to the highest qualifying bidder to be acted on at a future Board meeting.
5. Authorize the property to be sold by public bid as specified in NRS 393.250 and NRS 393.300.

There was some discussion that the appraisal fee limit of \$4,000 would not be enough for two appraisers.

It was moved in amendment by Mrs. Hales to substitute "\$8,000" in place of "\$4,000", seconded by Mrs Wennhold. Amending motion and main motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

6. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

7. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings

Ms. Hales and Mrs. Wennhold announced that they would like to take a look at a district-wide community volunteer program at a future Board meeting.

8. Executive Session

At 6:44 p.m., Mr. Echan made a motion to move into executive session for the purpose of receiving information from the attorney retained by the District regarding potential or existing litigation and/or to deliberate toward a decision the matter. Motion seconded by Mr. Forrester.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

At 7:10 p.m., Mr. Echan made a motion to return to public session, seconded by Mr. Forrester. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

9. Adjournment

At 7:17 p.m., Mr. Forrester made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Roman. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

Submitted by:

Rebecca C. Winter
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.