

Douglas County School District
Regular Meeting
Kingsbury Middle School
Stateline, Nevada
Wednesday, May 18, 2005
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved On:
June 14, 2005**

MINUTES

Present were:

Trustees:

Sharla Hales, President
Connie Wennhold, Vice President
John Louritt, Member
Keith Roman, Member
Cynthia Trigg, Member
Teri Jamin, Member

Personnel:

John Soderman, Superintendent
Rick Kester, Director of Business Services
Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
Roy Casey, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services
Nancy Bryant, Principal, Piñon Hills Elementary School
Janie Gray, Principal, George Whittell High School
Edward Perkins, Vice Principal, George Whittell High School
Mark Van Voorst, Principal, Douglas High School
Susan Lacey, DCPEA President
Jasmine Gouviea, DCPEA Vice President
Steve and Gail Wilcox, Teachers, Douglas High School

Others Present:

Robert Cox, Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

Mrs. Hales called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

- A. Mrs. Wennhold led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Mr. Louritt made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

2. Special Recognition

Mr. Steve Wilcox was honored for having received the Athletic Director of the Year Award for the state of Nevada. Mrs. Hales recounted Mr. Wilcox's numerous contributions over his 13 years as Athletic Director and over 31 years coaching more than 4,000 athletes. Three Douglas High School students, (Bryan Brady, Tyson Estes, and Kyle Luken), thanked Mr. Wilcox for his dedication and commitment to Douglas High School athletes. Mr. Mike Rippee and Mr. Ernie Monfiletto (Douglas High School teachers and coaches) shared some of their experiences working with Mr. Wilcox and expressed their gratitude for his many years of service to the DHS Athletics Department. Mr. Van Voorst, Mr. Soderman, and Mr. Roman also expressed their appreciation for Mr. Wilcox's service to the students, staff and community of the Douglas County School District.

Mr. Wilcox returned the sentiment of each speaker and stated that being the Athletic Director for Douglas High School had been a dream job for him and was very grateful to have had the opportunity to serve in that capacity for the past 13 years.

3. Board Training

Mrs. Hales provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding Board member interaction with district staff, quizzing Board members on appropriate responses to various situations.

4. Election of Clerk

Nominations were declared open for the office of Clerk, which was vacated by Mr. Orr's resignation. Mrs. Wennhold nominated Ms. Jamin. Hearing no other nominations, nominations were closed. Mrs. Hales called for public comment. Hearing none, Ms. Jamin was elected Clerk by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

5. Consent Items

Mrs. Hales then called for public comment on the consent items. There was none.

Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to approve the following consent items, seconded by Mr. Louritt:

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on April 12, 2005.
- B. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 05-05.
- C. Approve payments contained in Voucher No. 1040 for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.
- D. Approve the request submitted by Jacob Hall, Christopher Heath and Ashley Nichole Borchers to take the GED examination.
- E. Excuse from compulsory attendance the students described in the Home School Report for May 2005.
- F. Award a contract for the upgrade of a science classroom to a science lab at Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School in the amount of \$98,689.00 to K-W Western, Inc. as the lowest responsive

and responsible bidder meeting District specifications. Funding to come from the District's 2005-06 general fund major maintenance accounts.

- G. Award a contract for the replacement and upgrade of the heating and air-conditioning system at C.C. Meneley Elementary School to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting District specifications as specified in the bid summary, and reject all previous bids received for the replacement and upgrade of the mechanical system at C. C. Meneley Elementary School as not in the best interest of the Douglas County School District. Funding to come from the District's 2005-06 Capital Project fund.
- H. Award a contract for the installation of a new ceiling in the gymnasium at Carson Valley Middle School in the amount of \$50,970.00 to K-W Western, Inc. as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting District specifications. Funding to come from the District's 2005-06 general fund major maintenance accounts.
- I. Award a contract for the installation of new lighting in the Carson Valley Middle School gymnasium in the amount of \$18,000.00 to United Electrical Services as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting District specifications. Funding to come from the District's 2005-06 general fund major maintenance accounts.
- J. Accept the AB280 Investigation Summary Report conclusion that the emergency use of physical or mechanical restraint was in compliance with Statute and not a violation of the student's rights.
- K. Award a contract for asphalt sealing at Minden and Piñon Hills Elementary Schools in the amount of \$27,972.00 to Scott Sealing and Striping, Inc. as the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting District specifications. Funding to come from the District's 2005-06 general fund major maintenance accounts.
- L. Approve the Cooperative Agreement between Douglas County and the Douglas County School District to provide a school resource officer for Douglas County schools.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

6. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews

A. Principal's Report (George Whittell High School)

George Whittell High School Principal Janie Gray presented a PowerPoint report on the progress made towards their School Improvement Plan. She shared some of the successes as evidenced by assessment results, as well as some areas in the sub populations that require more focus. Ms. Gray concluded her presentation by sharing plans for goal attainment in the 2005-2006 school year, such as examining data to identify strengths and needs, implementing research-based solutions, and striving for excellence and equity for all students.

After questions and discussion, the Board thanked Mrs. Gray for her presentation and her strong focus on student achievement.

7. Information and Discussion

A. Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

Mr. Mark Van Voorst, Principal, Douglas High School, provided a PowerPoint overview of the ROTC program and what is needed to implement the program at Douglas High School. He shared some of the successes that have been experienced in other ROTC programs in the

state, such as communication skills, higher graduation rates and test scores for sub populations, and drug abuse prevention. He explained that general elective, physical education, speech, applied communication, and occupational education credit can be obtained through participation in the ROTC program, which integrates very well with Douglas County School District's competency-based system. He explained that in a preliminary survey of students, approximately 50 students have already expressed interest. Regarding staffing requirements, one officer and one non-commissioned officer would be needed. The Department of Defense reimburses one-half of the salary of each instructor based on each instructor's retirement salary, while the District must pay the remaining half, as well as benefits.

Mr. Van Voorst described the facility that would need to be provided to house two classrooms, uniforms and training aids, textbook and weapon storage, drill areas, and office space (approximately 9,000 square feet.) He also provided a summary of the estimated cost of implementing the program, including the facility, which totaled approximately \$1.4 million. He then outlined the timeline for full implementation of this program at Douglas High School.

Mr. Van Voorst introduced four students from the Incline Highlanders ROTC, who described the benefits they received by participating in the program. Sergeant Porter and Lieutenant Colonel Sprinkle, instructors for the Incline ROTC program, shared their successes in the program and answered questions from Board members about ROTC. Brad Johnson, a current Douglas High School senior, expressed his desire to have the program available to Douglas High School students.

After further questions and discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Van Voorst, the Incline Highlander ROTC students, and instructors of the Incline ROTC program for their very informative presentation.

8. Items Requiring Discussion and Action

A. Public Hearing on the District's 2005-2006 Tentative Budget and Adoption of Final Budget

Mr. Kester, Director of Business Services, informed the Board that all revenue and expenditure numbers in the recommended final budget are identical to the previously discussed tentative budget except for the tax rate for debt service, which dropped by 2 ½ cents from \$0.2030 to \$0.1780. This drop in debt service rate is less than the 4.8-cent drop in the 2005-06 tentative budget because of the tax relief passed by the 2005 Nevada Legislature with A.B. 489 and the District needs a slightly higher tax rate to meet the debt service payments because of the proposed tax relief. The final budget had been reviewed by the Department of Taxation and was found to be in full compliance, with a warning that we may have to adjust the property tax revenues as a result of AB 489.

He reviewed the budget assumptions and the summary of the general fund, noting that the enrollment in the proposed final budget is 6,639.2 weighted students - the same enrollment that currently exists in the District in 2004-05. He explained that the only new positions in the proposed tentative budget are 3.5 new teaching positions necessary to meet the District's normal student-to-teacher ratio and three new State-funded special education unit teachers. The proposed final budget includes no salary increase, nor does it include an increase for health benefit costs, as those would require additional funding from the 2005 Nevada Legislature in order to be incorporated into the budget. He further explained that the tentative budget has a

combined property tax rate of \$0.9280 per \$100 of assessed valuation, \$0.7500 in the District's general fund as required by State law and \$0.1780 in the District's debt service fund.

Mr. Kester concluded his report by warning that, while the District is financially sound at the present time, the loss of students to charter schools, increasing costs of utilities, and under funded legislative mandates have taken a toll on contingency funds this year, which means financial tightening next year as we have less carryover and will need to replace the contingency fund.

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

After further discussion and questions from the Board, Mr. Kester concluded his report by assuring the Board that it would receive an update to the budget once the Legislature had concluded.

Ms. Jamin made a motion to approve the final budget and authorize the Director of Business Services to alter the property taxes with the corresponding offset of state support, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

Mrs. Hales called for a brief recess at 5:50 p.m. and advised all present who were planning to address the Board for public comment to sign in, and that each speaker would be allowed three minutes for his/her comment. She warned that the Board could not interact with the public during public comment, and that comments regarding the competency and/or character of individuals would not be permitted.

The meeting reconvened at 6:15 p.m.

Public Comment

Sue Scharer and Kelly Gardner shared their concern that a number of parents are unenrolling their children from Kingsbury Middle School because skiing is not recognized for physical education credit, and that this matter was expected to be on the agenda by now and is disappointed that "Ski P.E." had not yet been addressed. Mrs. Hales responded that this matter is still, "on the radar."

The following parents of George Whittell High School students voiced their support for Karen Boulet, a counselor for George Whittell High School, whose contract was not renewed for the 2005-2006 school year, as well as share their concerns about the current GWHS administration:

George McKool
Les and Janice Shaw
Kelly Ferris
Bob Poet
Rick Lusby

Bob Scaduto
Jack Carrerow
Rhonda Van Duesen
Chean Hsiao

Jamie Baines asked the Board to explain why the principalship at Kingsbury Middle School would be replaced by an Assistant Principal position. Mr. Soderman committed to contacting her by telephone to answer her questions.

Mrs. Hales thanked the speakers for sharing their concerns with the Board.

8. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (continued)

B. Class Size Reduction Plan

Mr. Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, described Nevada's class size reduction program as a plan that allows school districts to carry out an alternative program for reducing the ratio of pupils per teacher in grades 1 through 6. He explained that this program allows more flexibility for school districts as long as the pupil-teacher ratios do not exceed 22 to 1 in grades 1 through 3 and 25 to 1 in grades 4 through 6, and that each school district participating in the alternative program must evaluate the effectiveness of the program and submit a report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction on or before December 1 of each year. The evaluation must include the effect of the program on team teaching, pupil discipline, and academic achievement.

He finished his explanation by assuring the Board that principals, teachers, and the DCPEA had approved the move to the alternative model for class size reduction for the 2005-06 school year. He warned that the fate of the alternative program is being discussed in the Nevada Legislature and it may take some time before the District hears the eventual outcome. This item was being presented to the Board in order to be prepared to move to the alternative plan quickly if the State Legislature continues the program.

After further explanation and discussion on class sizes and student to teacher ratios, the Board expressed their appreciation to Mr. Alexander for his clarification of this program.

Mrs. Hales called for public comment. Mrs. Bryant, Principal of Pinõn Hills Elementary School, explained how she was able to raise class sizes in first grade to 22 to help lower the size of her fourth grade classes where students needed more individualized instruction.

Ms. Jamin made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to file the Class Size Reduction Alternative Program Plan with the understanding that the program must first be approved by the Nevada State Legislature, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

7. Information and Discussion (continued)

B. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent John Soderman reminded the Board that the minutes of the Communications meetings held since the last Board meeting were in their red folder for their review.

He announced that Mr. Randy Green, Douglas High School teacher and Grad Night coordinator, would appreciate any volunteers for this year's Grad Night event, and encouraged the Board's participation.

Mr. Soderman provided an overview of other meetings and events he had attended since the last Board meeting and provided the Board with a list of upcoming events that they might wish to attend, such as scheduled Communication meetings and various end-of-the-year ceremonies.

C. NASB Director's Report

Mrs. Hales stated that the National School Board Association's conference that she attended along with Mr. Soderman, Mrs. Trigg, and Ms. Jamin, was very worthwhile and informative. She stated that she learned many cost-effective strategies for implementing one-on-one tutoring programs, and distributed a copy of the notes from a presentation entitled, "20 Questions You Need to Ask to Get Student Achievement." She also learned that there is a definite correlation between school libraries and student achievement.

Ms. Jamin described the presentations she attended, one of which was the presentation by Mikhail Gorbachev in which he described himself as a poor boy from rural Russia who rose to become the leader of one of the world's great superpowers, then had the courage to steer it from totalitarianism toward democracy. Because he reached out to former enemies, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Ms. Jamin was also very impressed by Dr. Ben Carson's presentation on teaching young people to value art and learning. The son of an illiterate mother and a bigamist father, Carson rose from the slums of Detroit and Boston to make medical history in the first successful operation to separate conjoined twins who were joined at the head. He led a 70-member team in a 22-hour operation in 1987.

In his presentation, Dr. Carson gave credit to his mother, who worked three jobs and required them to read two library books every week and submit book reports. She would mark up the reports, even though she only had a third-grade education and couldn't read. In 11 states and the District of Columbia, Carson and his wife sponsor a scholarship program that puts \$1,000 in a college fund for secondary students who demonstrate academic excellence and good citizenship. Ms. Jamin concluded by quoting Dr. Carson, "Although all of our ancestors came off different boats, we're all in the same boat now."

Mrs. Trigg shared her experience with presentations dealing in levels of trust between the Superintendent and Board members, and how to build cohesion between the Board and administration. Another class Mrs. Trigg enjoyed dealt with how to create a well-balanced school. Many great publications were introduced, such as, "Whatever It Takes." Overall, she enjoyed the presentations and the opportunity to get to know her fellow Board members.

Mr. Soderman displayed an overhead on building professional learning communities, taken from the book, "Whatever It Takes." He displayed the different "schools of thought" described in the book: The Charles Darwin School, "We believe all kids can learn...based on their ability," Pontius Pilate School, "We believe all kids can learn...if they take advantage of the opportunity we give them to learn," the Chicago Cub Fan School, "We believe all kids can learn...something, and we will help all students experience academic growth in a warm and nurturing environment," and the Henry Higgins School, "We believe all kids can learn...and we will work to help all students achieve high standards of learning." He reminded the Board that this book had been purchased for each Board member and they would be receiving it in the near future.

9. Correspondence

Mrs. Hales presented Board secretary Rebecca Winter with a card and gift certificate in honor of Secretaries' Day, and read a "Thank You" card from Rommy Cronin, which expressed her gratitude for the donation from the Board to the Marty Cronin Scholarship Fund.

10. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings

Ms. Jamin informed the Board that she had a discussion with County Manager Dan Holler, who would like to address the Board in June regarding future land acquisition. Mrs. Hales supported this agenda item for June 2005.

11. Executive Session

At 8:00 p.m., Mrs. Wennhold made the following motion, seconded by Mrs. Trigg:

"Pursuant to NRS 241.015(2)(b), the Board will meet in closed session to receive information from the attorney retained by the District regarding potential or existing litigation and/or to deliberate toward a decision on the matter. In addition, pursuant to NRS 288.220(4), the Board will recess to executive session for the purpose of considering employer-employee negotiations.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

12. Adjournment

At 10:10 p.m., Mr. Louritt made a motion to return to public session, seconded by Mrs. Wennhold.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 6/0.

Mrs. Wennhold made a motion to adjourn at 10:11 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

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.