

**Douglas County School District**  
Regular Meeting  
Douglas High School  
Minden, Nevada  
Tuesday, November 10, 2009  
3:30 p.m.

*Minutes Approved  
December 8, 2009*

## **MINUTES**

Present:

**Trustees:**

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

**Personnel:**

Carol Lark, Superintendent  
Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services  
Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer

**Others Present:**

Mike Malloy, Legal Counsel  
Jim Huge, Consultant  
Susan Lacey, President Douglas County Professional Education Association

### **1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Trigg called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m.

- A. Mr. Roman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- B. Mrs. Chessell moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Ms. Jamin. Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

### **2. Consent Items (Action)**

Mrs. Trigg asked if any items were to be pulled from the Consent Items.

Mr. Moore stated he would be pulling Item 2-D to abstain from voting on the "Personnel Report No. 09-11," due to having a personal relationship with someone listed therein.

Mrs. Hales requested that Items 2-A, "Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 8, 2009," and Item 2-F, "New Position Request – Clerical Support (Secretary II Position) for Food Services and Maintenance Departments," be pulled.

Ms. Jamin moved to approve the Consent Items with the exception of Items 2-A, 2-D, and 2-F, seconded by Mr. Green.

Motion carried 6/0, Mr. Moore abstained.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 8, 2009.
- B. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 13, 2009
- C. Approve payments contained in Voucher No. 1113 for FY09-10.
- D. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 09-11.
- E. Approve the creation of an Athletic Trainer stipend for Douglas and Whittell High Schools.
- F. Approve additional Secretary II position.
- G. Approve the creation of a grant funded ASPIRE support stipend for the ASPIRE alternative education program.
- H. Approve for second reading Board Policy No. 809, "Transportation."

A transcript was provided for the DARE item addressed at the September 8, 2009 Board Meeting. Mrs. Hales discussed language recorded regarding the motion made by Mr. Green and the friendly amendment as stated by Mr. Moore. Consensus was that the friendly amendment would replace the motion. This was supported by Mr. Green.

A vote was taken to amend the Minutes of September 8, 2009 to reflect this change.

Motion carried, 7/0.

Item 2-F, "New Position Request – Clerical Support (Secretary II Position)...," was addressed next. Mrs. Hales offered transparency to the public with regard to the addition of this position. Mrs. Luna supported this request, stating due to increased reporting requirements over time, a need had arisen for further clerical assistance in the Food Services and Maintenance/Custodial divisions. This was supported by additional requirements of the Wellness Program including nutrition based, rather than food based menus for Free/Reduced Lunch participants. Maintenance was reported to need assistance with the budget management process in the custodial department, as well as, tracking of Web based radon reporting.

Following this explanation, Mrs. Hales moved to approve the new Secretary II Position, seconded by Mr. Moore.

Motion carried, 7/0.

### **3. Consideration of Terms of Superintendent's Separation (Action)** **Discussion and Action**

Mr. Moore disclosed that his wife is the Secretary to the Board and Superintendent, is employed on a contract basis and could be terminated only for "budgetary reasons or for failure to perform in a manner satisfactory to her employer." In summary, Mr. Moore clarified that his wife was not affected by decisions and information provided herein. Opinions stated were Mr. Moore's independently, and Mrs. Moore had made a conscious effort to remain neutral on matters involving the Superintendent's performance and contract. Following careful consideration that the evaluation of the Superintendent was perhaps the most important public duty of an elected Trustee, is required to be discussed in public, his constituents would be deprived of his voice if required to abstain, and that there were no material affects due to his wife being employed by the District, Mr. Moore stated he would participate and vote on this item.

Mike Malloy, Attorney, presented terms of a proposed contract Settlement Agreement between Mrs. Lark and the Trustees. The document was prepared in advance. Mr. Malloy stated copies for the public were available. The Agreement was negotiated by Mr. Malloy and Jim Huges, consultant, retained by the Board to help with the process of working out a best approach to issues brought forth in previous Board Meetings. The terms of the agreement with Mrs. Lark were explained and offered for possible approval.

Mr. Malloy reviewed the dateline and decisions resulting from meetings held regarding Mrs. Lark's evaluation, contract extension, and salary. Upon the Board's hiring of Mr. Huge as a facilitator to work out problems discussed at these meetings, Mr. Huge held discussions with Mrs. Lark, District personnel, and Board members. Following the gathering of information, Mrs. Lark determined rather than continue with the situation, Mrs. Lark would resign with terms and conditions. The Superintendent's contract was noted to have 19 months of employment remaining at this time. At the conclusion of contract negotiations, Mrs. Lark agreed to accept \$135,000, paid after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, in exchange for complete release of all possible claims. Mr. Malloy stated he did not have a position on any claims at this time. The payment would be made in a lump sum, with Mrs. Lark responsible for paying taxes in 2010. Other proposals had been considered, those agreed upon by Mrs. Lark were contained within the Agreement.

In addition, pay for unused vacation, as customary, would be paid. Thirty five days of vacation were on the books at this time; therefore, \$17,500 would be due with the termination of the contract set for November 30, 2009. In exchange for payment, Mrs. Lark offered a comprehensive release of all claims, as the quid pro quo.

The Agreement was a compromise reached by both parties and offered to the Board at this time for consideration. An involuntary termination was noted to be more expensive than the terms of the Settlement Agreement. Should a lawsuit against the District arise, additional legal expenses and loss of time could be incurred.

Mrs. Trigg called for public comment and Board discussion.

There was no public comment.

All seven Board members thanked Mrs. Lark for her work and dedication. Mr. Huge and Mr. Malloy were thanked for working through this process. The Agreement reached was stated by various Trustees to be the best option for all parties involved.

Mr. Moore moved to approve the Separation Settlement Agreement as presented, seconded by Ms. Jamin.

Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

A break was taken at 4:15 p.m. The meeting resumed at 4:31 p.m.

Mrs. Trigg stated Item 3 would be reopened for public comment. Some meeting attendees felt they did not get an ample opportunity to speak.

Mr. Malloy stated this was not the time to discuss Superintendent candidates.

Cheryl Blomstrom, parent, stated she understood the cost to continue with the situation was too expensive, and could affect education. The decision was the right one following a series of bad choices presented to the Board and the focus would now turn to educating students.

Greg Felton, parent, stated the decision made was the best for both the District and Mrs. Lark. Initially, Mr. Felton had believed the Agreement was an expensive option, but now he believed it was the best alternative and appreciated the Board moving forward with the decision.

Mrs. Trigg called for any further discussion of the motion. There was none. A vote was retaken.

Mr. Malloy stated the motion was in place.

Mr. Moore restated he moved to approve the Separation Settlement Agreement as

presented, seconded by Ms. Jamin.

Motion carried, 7/0.

#### **4. Possible Discussion of a Time Frame For Selection of Interim Superintendent Information/Discussion**

Board members discussed the time frame and purpose for setting a meeting to discuss the selection of an interim Superintendent. It was noted a time would be best chosen when Mr. Huge could attend.

Mr. Felton, parent, stated the situation offered opportunity for gathering input for solutions, possibly from the State School Board. Mrs. Trigg responded that Mr. Huge would assist the Board.

Mr. Malloy offered that a purpose for the meeting would be to consider the process the Board would put in place for selection of a Superintendent. Mr. Malloy noted Mr. Huge could help with the process, and added in Nevada, an interim Superintendent was not required by law.

Mr. Huge stated he would like to explore options, and look at a time line and process for hiring. Naming individuals would not be the goal without putting a process into place.

A Special Meeting time was determined. The meeting would be held Wednesday, November 18, 2009, at Douglas High School.

#### **5. Principal's Report – (Douglas High School) Administrative Report/Program Review**

Marty Swisher, Douglas High School Principal, presented work towards goals of their School Improvement Plan, strengths and challenges their school was facing, and student achievement data used to support decision making. Four past and present goals were reviewed. A new goal was stated, to analyze levels of rigor in instruction and incorporate appropriate levels of rigor into assignments, projects, and tests. Identify/create at least two assignments, projects, or tests that have rigor and challenge developed within them.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with regard to the High School Proficiency Exams (HSPE) was reported. DHS was placed on the "Watch List" for the current year in the area of special education – mathematics. Comparison data was provided for HSPE Language Arts, science, and math for all students and disaggregated for the various subpopulations. ACT and SAT results were provided as compared to state of Nevada and national standings.

The progress made toward all goals was reported. Mr. Swisher included DHS would be reviewing the piloting of SpringBoard curriculum as an avenue of progress.

Mr. Swisher reviewed programs in place to boost credit deficient students. A student was credit deficient if .5 or more credits behind for their grade level. Sixty three students were reported to have earned .5 credit or more in summer school this year. Graduation rates as determined by the State were reported for all student populations.

Other facts reported included the lunch tutoring program offered in 2007-08 and 2008-09 was discontinued due to loss of SB185 grant funding. Advanced Placement testing resulted in an overall pass rate of 82%. 242 students graduating in 2008 enrolled in community college or universities, a higher rate than seen previously.

Future endeavors included work to incorporate freshman at the high school, continued high expectations for student achievement, data analysis for improved credit attainment, and research

to address students choosing other high school possibilities.

Administrators were thanked for many hours of dedication and work to the students of Douglas High. The new goal aimed at rigor was noted for all additional efforts necessary to implementation.

Mrs. Hales inquired about the funding necessary to be budgeted that could reinstate lunch tutoring. Mr. Swisher responded the cost was approximately \$15,000.

Board members stated their appreciation for early intervention opportunities provided to credit deficient students prior to their senior year, as well as, data review to assist students with graduating on time.

## **6. Four Day Week Update Administrative Report/Program Review**

Sue Shannon, Principal, George Whittell High School with Mike Ashton, teacher representative, presented preliminary information regarding pilot implementation of the four day week. One third of teachers were noted to be teaching curriculum at a faster rate due to less repetition in the classroom and increased attendance by student athletes. A Student Issue Committee was reported to be meeting monthly. Completion of homework was addressed and a solution found by students, for students.

Mrs. Shannon reported that bus drivers were agreeable to schedules; teachers were adjusting curriculum within the courses for longer classes; and sports schedules had been adjusted, as well as, custodial needs for events. Improvement to staff attendance was reported to be difficult to determine with the flu strain going around this fall.

A request was made for an action item in December to incorporate scheduling changes. Snow make up days were noted to be desirable on Friday's, rather than placed at the end of the calendar year in order that finals and graduation not be affected. The movement of snow days would also allow a date to be set sooner for graduation. Holidays falling during the week, decreased the school week to three days. Mrs. Shannon stated she would like to have students in class on Friday's during those weeks with teachers already scheduled to be on site.

Mr. Ashton restated teacher support for the four day week in that curriculum was not covered twice due to athletics. The extra hour added to the day was the largest adjustment. Student comments led teachers to believe students were working harder in order to receive this four day week opportunity.

May 1<sup>st</sup> was reported to be the deadline for the application process to proceed next year with the four day week calendar.

Board members thanked Mrs. Shannon for both her leadership and the piloting of this program.

## **7. Safety Ambassadors Program Report Administrative Report/Program Review**

Carly Strauss and Tricia Wentz, counselors, presented current information on the student Safety Ambassadors Program. The program supported zero tolerance and progressive discipline for bullying. The main goal was stated to empower the silent majority of students, those who were bystanders, to prevent difficult bullying situations before they occurred. Influential students, from different social circles, were provided training by counselors in order to model behavior. Trained students were met with regularly to follow up on strategies and implementation of the program.

Grant funding history was reported. In January 2008, \$19,800 had been obtained for training

school counselors. In fall of 2007, Piñon Hills Elementary parents provided additional funding for PHES. The Rotary Club provided \$6,000 in order that training and travel could be provided to incorporate the program throughout the elementary schools. At this time, three schools were left to be trained. Funding provided manuals and staff training that enabled the program to continue with little extra funding.

Mrs. Strauss thanked Mrs. Cronin, PHES Principal, for the opportunity to travel to the schools and provide this training.

A training of trainers was scheduled for Douglas High School in the near future. Forty students were to be involved at DHS. Mrs. Wentz added with elementary students trained, the concepts would roll up to the middle and high school supporting a zero tolerance environment for bullying behavior.

Research showed five years of incorporating the Safety Ambassadors Program strategies was necessary to change behavior overall, this being year two for DCSD.

## **Public Comment**

Mrs. Trigg called for public comment at 6:13 p.m. One individual signed up, but did not come forward to speak to the Board. There were no other comments presented.

At 6:40 p.m. a fifteen minute break was taken.

## **8. Energy Services Contract (ESCO) Update Administrative Report**

Six representatives from AMERESCO and Celtic, a Third Party Consultant, shared results of a commissioning report following implementation of ten Energy Conservation Measures in the District. With repairs and upgrades having been completed in a very timely manner, savings through energy efficiencies and reductions in operations were commended. Douglas County School District was represented recently at the National Clean Energy Summit in Las Vegas as a leader in the State for implementation of the Energy Services Contract (ESCO). The seven month process from beginning of RFP through contract implementation was unprecedented. The first year's annual savings to the district were estimated initially at \$450,000. \$513,000 plus in savings had been recorded post the commissioning process.

AMERESCO and Celtic staff reported participation and communication necessary of school staff, administrators, technology, maintenance, and the District Office were all excellent. District staff was thanked for working so well together to engage the ESCO program that began October 2007.

## **9. Surebet Rebate Presentation (in conjunction with the ESCO projects) Administrative Report**

Mrs. Luna introduced several NV Energy and Surebet Program representatives including Mary Simmons, Vice President of External Affairs, and Charlene Booth, Manager, Major Accounts.

Mrs. Simmons thanked the District for the partnership and stated over three million kilowatt hours had been saved as a result of the Surebet project. A check in the amount of \$131,205.41 was presented to the District representing an energy rebate spanning two fiscal years. The amount received today differed from the amount printed in the agenda which was solely related to the ESCO savings. The check increase was due to additional energy star equipment purchases that also incurred rebates.

## **10. Master Plan – Update**

## **Administrative Report**

Dodge Cromwell and Jim Heath of MGT Consulting Inc. provided an update on the Master Planning process. Preliminary data including a demographic study were reported. The type of building assessments, scoring, and terminology used to rate structures, was explained. Kingsbury Middle School was reported to have been assessed, although occupied buildings were the priorities.

In the October report to the Board, MGT provided enrollment and demographic information for K-12, district wide. This evening, Mr. Cromwell stated the Lake and Valley were being looked at for differences.

Mr. Roman questioned information provided with regard to enrollment and capacity numbers provided for Douglas High School. Mrs. Luna offered to review and correct information listed in the presentation in order that later information would be accurate.

### **11. Workers' Compensation – Third Party Administrator Contract Aware Discussion and Action**

Following interviews conducted after the publishing of this Agenda, Mrs. Luna reported on a memo provided to the Board in their red folder this evening. The timeline for the Request for Proposal (RFP), and responses were included. Five responses came as a result of the RFP. The current Third Party Administrator (TPA), Nelson Davis and Administrators, was not interviewed due to the company not offering electronic claims filing and forwarding that was desirable to be incorporated into the process for the District. Criteria used to analyze information submitted also focused on fraud elimination of Worker's Compensation filings. The current Third Party Administrator (TPA) was noted to charge approximately \$16,000 annually for their services. The premium for Cannon Cochran Management Services, Inc. (CCMSI), the recommended TPA was similar, with additional one time fees, estimating the first year total services charges of \$23,000. Premiums were noted to be based on number and severity of claims. Indemnity and medical claims were included. Open claims would be converted by the new TPA. Mrs. Luna stated her recommendation was to offer a one year term contract to CCSMI with the option of two additional one year renewals.

Mrs. Trigg called for questions and public comment. There was none.

Mrs. Hales moved to offer a contract for a one year term, with the option of two one year renewals to CCSMI, as a result of thorough review of the RFP responses in an interview panel, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

### **12. Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) Report**

The NASB conference was reported to be scheduled for next week. Mrs. Trigg and Mrs. Gorrindo noted several raffle prizes would be provided from DCSD. Board members were encouraged to read updated information on the NASB Web site.

### **13. Superintendent's Report**

Mrs. Lark provided an update on the recent Nevada Association of Superintendent's conference. Information received, included the first two quarters of the year budget information. Mr. Rheault, State Superintendent, confirmed budget expectations had exceeded the low that had been anticipated. As a result, a special legislative session would not be held in the fall. Although in the spring, a special session could occur to address language in NRS with regard to Race to the Top funding. Medium sized school districts would support the effort to change language within the

statute.

H1N1 flu vaccinations were reported to be scheduled at school sites. Federally funded teams, supported by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Nevada State Health department, were organizing this effort.

Mrs. Lark reported AB330 had not been continued. This Bill addressed reorganization of the State Department of Education. ACR2 would replace the Bill in the form of a study run as a committee headed by Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell. The survey was not available at this time. Mrs. Chessell stated the survey related to the overlap of commissions and taskforces within the State. Mrs. Hales added the aim was to clean up convoluted organization within the department. Mrs. Lark reported that of the Governor's Commissions, the Professional Standards Commission with which she was involved would be a Commission going forward as included within the law.

An audit had been performed of SB404 funding (currently SB185). Findings included 16 major concerns of spending in six counties audited. Concerns surrounded documentation, advanced spending, and proper application of funds to student achievement. Mrs. Lark offered the report to those who might wish to review this information.

In conclusion, Mrs. Lark provided a list of upcoming public Board meetings.

#### **14. Correspondence**

Mrs. Chessell stated she had received a couple of emails today. There was no further discussion.

#### **15. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings**

Mr. Green asked that the four day week item come forward on the December agenda, as previously discussed, seconded by Mrs. Trigg. Mr. Moore asked that hard data be provided prior to further discussion. Mrs. Shannon responded to clarify what might be provided, in order to assist.

Mrs. Chessell inquired as to future technology requirements that might be necessary for Board members to receive information via email. Mrs. Moore responded this would need to be addressed as several Board members were having trouble opening information sent for their review.

Mrs. Hales suggested that parents be offered information regarding opting into the drug testing program at times when their student was receiving discipline, as well as, informed during the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student counseling review, seconded by Mrs. Chessell. Students not currently in extracurricular activities were noted to be provided this information optionally.

#### **16. Executive Session**

At 8:20 p.m., Mrs. Chessell moved to recess to executive session in order to discuss matters pertaining to negotiations pursuant to NRS 288.220(4), seconded by Ms. Jamin

#### **17. Adjournment**

At 8:50 p.m. the Board returned to regular session. Mr. Moore moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Submitted by,

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Carolyn Moore  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Approved:

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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.