

**Douglas County School District**

Regular Meeting  
Douglas High School  
Minden, Nevada  
Tuesday, February 9, 2010  
3:30 p.m.

*Minutes Approved  
March 9, 2010*

**MINUTES**

Present:

**Trustees:**

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

**Personnel:**

John Soderman, Superintendent  
Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent, Education Services  
Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer

Absent:

Rich Alexander, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

**Others Present:**

Mike Malloy, Legal Counsel

**1. Call to Order**

Mrs. Trigg called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

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

**2. Consent Items (Action)**

Ms. Jamin stated there were minor changes requested to Item 2-A, "Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 12, 2010, and Item 2-B, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 28, 2010." No other Consent Items were pulled for review.

Mr. Moore moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of Items 2-A and 2-B, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Motion carried 7/0.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 12, 2010.
- B. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 28, 2010.
- C. Approve the Minutes of the Strategic Plan Meeting of January 29, 2010.
- D. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 2, 2010.
- E. Approve payments contained in Voucher Numbers 1121 and 1122 for FY09-10.

- F. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 10-02.
- G. Approve a decrease in the District's employee mileage reimbursement rate from 55 cents per mile to 50 cents per mile effective January 1, 2010.
- H. Approve for second reading, Board Policy No. 216, "Cocurricular and Extracurricular Activities."

Mrs. Luna clarified a reference to Mr. Anderson in Item 2-A, in order that he not be represented as a consultant, but rather the former Carson City School District Director of Fiscal Services who was temporary, and paid on an hourly basis. Additionally, a word was corrected and the meeting location listed was changed.

Mrs. Hales moved to approve Item 2-A, "Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 12, 2010 as revised, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Motion carried, 7/0.

Ms. Jamin stated a word needed to be changed in Item 2-B, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 28, 2010.

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve Item 2-B, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 28, 2010 as revised, seconded by Mr. Moore

Motion carried, 7/0.

### **3. Principal's Report - (Jacks Valley Elementary School)**

Pam Gilmartin, Principal, Jacks Valley Elementary School, along with Kathleen Sherbon, Dave Giorgi, and Cris Jezek. Teachers presented data highlights and new technology upgrades resulting from a large donation to the school. Assessment data, including State Writing Scores and Criterion Reference Tests (CRT's), were reported to be flat at this time. A concern for the lower Percent Above Cut (PAC) scores was stated. The transiency rate for the student population was noted to have increased. Enrollment is now 531 students. Teach for Success (T4S) goals attained included a 94% student engagement rate in the classroom and that 85% of teachers had maximized instructional time.

Installation and implementation of ActivBoards, an active engagement technology method of teaching, was reported. Professional development for teachers was noted to be available on the Web for informed usage of Promethean Boards. Additionally, a sound system using speakers and microphones to enhance instruction had been installed in classrooms. Teachers in grades K – 3 were using Thinking Maps in all content areas as a visual tool. Examples were provided to the Board to explain higher level thought processes involved.

Core Literacy, based on state standards and critical content, incorporated reading strategies with Thinking Maps and Technology.

Questions and discussion surrounded changes that might have related to lower test scores.

### **4. General Obligation Bond Discussion and Action**

Marty Johnson, JNA Consulting, explained the financial impact of Resolution #10-01 and reported if approved, would allow the District to sell \$15 million dollars of bonds. Mr. Johnson believed the excellent rate received from Standard and Poors from the last bond sale would continue at this time. The proposed Resolution would save the District \$1 million as compared to tax exempt bonds, providing an end result of taxpayer savings. While additional borrowing capacity was available, the bond availability was over a ten year period, through 2018. Based on growth

recovery rates and assessed land values, \$15 million was believed to be available to borrow. An additional \$2 million would be available to the District over the next two fiscal years in Pay as You Go money for preliminary work.

Mr. Johnson responded to Board member questions regarding possibilities of interest earnings, the timeliness of borrowing, and an explanation of why the amount of \$15 million was recommended at this time.

Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer, stated this amount of funding would provide the flexibility necessary to accommodate the number of projects that could be supported by District staff at one time within the pending Facilities Master Plan approval. Fees associated with obtaining the bond were discussed with relation to possible savings, should the bond sale process be repeated more quickly with the implementation of the Master Plan. Fixed costs associated with selling bonds were reported to be approximate \$100,000. Future project timelines would be aligned with future bond sales. The Board was informed the rate of interest earned on money, if money in excess of \$15 million was borrowed at this time and placed in an interest bearing account, would not be enough to regenerate the debt service fees charged over time. Fees charged for an additional bond issuance were minimal as compared to losses due to debt expense. Motor Vehicle and Residential Building Permit taxes, in the Capital Projects Fund, were noted to be subject to legislative direction resulting from the upcoming Special Session.

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

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve the 2010 School Improvement Bond Resolution, #10-01, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Motion carried, 7/0.

## **5. Sierra Crest Charter Discussion and Action**

Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent for Education Services, presented the timeline involved with the Sierra Crest Academy closure. In January, the Sierra Crest Board of Trustees voted to not commence the charter renewal application process. The Board would reconvene February or March to "act on closure." It was reported the Sierra Crest Charter Board would not have to act on the closure, as they could choose not to renew and allow the charter to expire June 28th. In May, written notices would be provided to the Nevada Department of Education, parents, and the DCSD School Board. DCSD counselors would meet with students in May to assist in their transition. In total, 69 students are attending Sierra Crest, seven of which are seniors.

A letter had been received and copied to the Board from David Brackett, Sierra Crest Principal, stating their intent to not renew the charter.

Discussion surrounded whether or not the District was required to oversee charter schools and the role that the State of Nevada played in the process. Mrs. Gorrindo reported having met with a State Charter School representative. The State was reported to currently sponsor Charter Schools, had more experience with oversight, and could provide more benefits through best guidance and direction. Various details were explained including that the filing process for a charter application spanned a year regardless if the school was District or State sponsored. Audits performed by the District had produced areas of concern. Areas found to be non-compliant and in need of improvement, continued over time, with little change due to the District not having the authority to force compliance to the original charter. Mrs. Gorrindo stated that in the last legislative session, there were discussions of creating a separate district for charter schools. State incentives for Districts to oversee charters were lacking. The time and effort necessary for monitoring curriculum, lesson plans, budgets, special education, and personnel was extensive.

Mrs. Chessell stated her concerns for State oversight and the closing of a door for this educational opportunity for kids.

Ms. Jamin called for public comment.

Angela Gertie Refsland inquired whether or not the process would allow for a re-charter rather than filing of another application through the long process to reopen the doors. Mr. Malloy responded that the NRS stated anyone seeking a charter would have to apply and go through the process. Mrs. Gorrindo added the only other option allowed within the NRS, was revocation. Ms. Refsland supported local control of charter schools.

Melissa Staff, Sierra Crest parent, supported renewal of the Sierra Crest charter. She questioned if Sierra Crest was to go for renewal, would a 30 day time period be allowed for fixing of non-compliant areas listed in an audit.

Mr. Malloy stated his belief the charter would expire; therefore it would not be necessary to revoke the charter based on noncompliance, although an application could be considered if submitted in a timely fashion.

Renee Sweeney, parent, stated while issues written concerning non-compliance were negative, many positive results had been obtained by her student.

Patrick and Elizabeth O'Hara stated their grandsons grades had improved in the charter school setting and supported continuing offering a charter school for those needing a different setting, regardless if District or State sponsored.

Mrs. Trigg reiterated that Sierra Crest made the determination to not renew the charter, and that DCSD had no authority regarding enforcement of non-compliant areas, other than to revoke the charter.

Mrs. Gorrindo restated that should the charter not be renewed, it would expire.

Mr. Moore moved that the Board does not sponsor, but supports charter schools, and future applicants will need to pursue state sponsorship and monitoring, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried, 6/1, Mrs. Chessell, nay.

Mr. Roman stated governance of a charter school was problematic for the District, although the concept was sound. He mentioned we had oversight responsibilities but no real authority.

### **Public Comment**

Karen Heine, Douglas High School teacher, commented regarding the SpringBoard textbook being piloted for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade English. Ms. Heine began using the 11<sup>th</sup> grade text at the beginning of this year. Although the text met State Standards, she believed the text did not offer rigorous vocabulary development or the best instruction necessary for ACT and SAT achievement. Ms. Heine's concerns included grammar and writing instruction, as well as, the text contained many errors yet to be refined by CollegeBoard. The text was stated to be undesirable as it was a consumable product teachers were supplementing, due to differences in the format, as compared to district competencies and the more traditional system in place at this time. A student copy of the textbook was left with Board members for their review. The Board was provided a written copy of Ms. Heine's statements.

## **6. Adoption of the Revisions of the Douglas County Strategic Plan Discussion and Action**

Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent for Education Services, presented main goals that incorporated Strategic Plan strategies. Teach for Success Data, assessment data used to inform instruction, scope and sequence, and ASPIRE were discussed in order that measurable goals could result. The goals would be refined and presented in a final form at the March meeting. The top five goals would manifest in the District Improvement Plan. A “data dashboard,” including a number of student achievement other key elements necessary to measure goals, would be created to use as a monitoring system.

Discussion surrounded progress underway. Efforts were centered on creating common formative assessments, an equivalent of semester finals, for all courses. The incorporation of scope and sequence for courses was noted to be a current District focus. The scope and sequence for English Language Arts (ELA), using data to inform instruction, is a top priority. New ELA State Standards were set forth this year that were addressed at the Administrative Forum. Board members were asked to provide input they felt necessary to be incorporated into goals or data dashboard measurements. Site Administrator contributions to the data dashboard process would also be included.

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

There was no action taken.

## **7. Approval of Board/Superintendent Protocols Discussion and Action**

Mr. Soderman stated the Board reviewed protocols from other entities and made changes to their Bylaw No. 070, “Code of Conduct,” following discussion in a recent Board Workshop. These results were reflected for review at this meeting. Additional discussion resulted in the request to letter the bulleted list for easy reference. Also, the last two sentences written in paragraph number five were requested to be deleted. Discussion ensued regarding upcoming work necessary to review and revise the Superintendent evaluation and other Bylaws; create a data dashboard; develop a monitoring and enforcement system for Board protocols; review the Mission Statement; and create a Vision Statement.

Possibilities discussed included both incorporation of topics within the Regular Meeting Agenda and creation of committees among the Board.

Mr. Malloy noted Board committees would need to be publicly noticed, although the meetings could be recorded and brief Minutes written.

The use of Mr. Huges, Board consultant, to address the various areas of concern was discussed.

Mrs. Hales moved to approve the Code of Conduct as revised tonight, seconded by Mr. Moore.

There was no public comment.

Motion carried, 7/0.

In order to implement Board objectives consensus was Mr. Huges would be consulted in order that all areas were addressed and tied together for best implementation.

Mr. Soderman offered to make the necessary arrangements with Mr. Huges to facilitate another

workshop.

## **8. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Soderman outlined progress concerning a number of areas of focus at this time. He reported MGT America, Master Planning consultants, would provide more details and Appendices supporting the recent Master Plan recommendations in order to clarify their recommendations. Secondary and Elementary Principals would be providing input at their upcoming meetings to aide in producing a data dashboard. The Gifted and Talented (GT) Committee would present their vision and attributes of a strong program to the Board within the next couple of months. A couple of GT Committee members would use some of the money set aside to attend a workshop to gain new program ideas.

Budget considerations would be forthcoming in April, following determinations made by the State in a Special Session beginning February 23rd. The hope is that the district would get a clear number regarding the cuts, flexibility and local control so they could continue with independent budget planning. The plan for impending cuts was to share with the Leadership Team, areas of the budget where the district will suggest broad cuts, rather than through program cuts or numerous smaller changes. Recommendations would then be presented to the Board. Under spending was one category where money could be regained for future needs. A goal for Mr. Soderman was to have the budget organized as best possible for an incoming Superintendent.

Teach for Success (T4S) data would be used in upcoming principal meetings and walk-through protocols reinstated to improve classroom instruction in using classroom observation data. English curriculum and scope and sequence was being reviewed with teachers, as well as science Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) score appeals, due to students passing State assessments but not attaining MAP score requirements. Mr. Soderman was looking at the best approach for raising scores. Currently, special seminars were held to increase MAP test scores. Special seminars may not necessarily be the best answer for students.

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

The recent Interim Finance Committee meeting was reported to be an event of interest for the NASB. The NASB Web site was noted to be a source of announcements and venue for linking of legislative conferences.

## **10. Correspondence**

Board members mentioned they would like to send something to Mr. Alexander who was off due to medical.

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

Ms. Jamin stated the Board goals recently decided upon would need to be reviewed in relation to the list they had recently received of future agenda items. Mrs. Chessell suggested backup materials could be labeled accordingly, possibly through the use of a cover sheet she obtained.

## **12. Executive Session Discussion and Action**

At 7:33 p.m., Mrs. Hales moved to recess to executive session in order to discuss matters pertaining to negotiations pursuant to NRS 288.220(4), seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried, 7/0.

## **13. Adjournment**

At 7:43 p.m., Mrs. Chessell moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Motion carried, 7/0.

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.