

**Douglas County School District**

Regular Meeting  
Douglas High School  
Minden, Nevada  
Wednesday, May 19, 2010  
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved  
May 19, 2010**

**MINUTES**

Present:

**Trustees:**

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

Absent:

Thomas Moore, Vice President

**Personnel:**

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

**Others Present:**

Rick Hsu, Legal Counsel  
Susan Lacey, President, Douglas County Professional Education Association  
Richard Spence, President, Douglas County School District Bus Drivers, Chapter 6 of  
the Nevada Classified School Employees and Public Workers Association, AFT/PRSP  
Local 6181

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Jamin called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

- A. Ms. Jamin led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Soderman recognized Mrs. Gorrindo by awarding her a 20 year District service pin. Douglas High School Leadership students attending were welcomed.

- B. Mrs. Chessell moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mrs. Hales. Motion carried, 6/0.

Ms. Jamin announced Mr. Moore had a work conflict, was not feeling well, and would not be attending this meeting.

**2. Consent Items (Action)**

Ms. Jamin called for items that might be pulled from the Consent agenda.

Mrs. Chessell pulled Item 2-B, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 19, 2010;" Item 2-C, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 22, 2010;" Item 2-D, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of

March 23, 2010;" Item 2-E, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 24, 2010;" Item 2-F, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 29, 2010;" Item 2-H, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 14, 2010;" Item 2-I, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 21, 2010;" Item 2-J, " Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 26, 2010;" and Item 2-K, "Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 3, 2010."

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve the Consent Items that were not pulled, Item 2-A, 2-G, 2-L, 2-M, 2-N, and 2-O, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Motion carried, 6/0.

Mrs. Chessell stated she pulled the above items, due to Mr. Moore's disclosure statement having been written in an abbreviated form. Her request was to include that Mr. Moore "feels that there are no material affects" within the statement. Mrs. Chessell added that Item 2-H did not contain a disclosure reference and she would like to check to be sure that was not an oversight.

Mr. Hsu, attorney, stated he had prepared the model disclosure, reviewed the statement, and noted a change could be made by changing the wording to "he feels that..," in order that the abbreviated statement more accurately reflect the model disclosure.

In Mr. Moore's absence, a motion was made to postpone the change as requested.

Mrs. Trigg moved to postpone this discussion about the Minutes, until the June Meeting, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

There was no public input.

Board discussion continued regarding possible changes to the Minutes with regard to Mr. Moore's disclosure statement.

Motion carried 5/1, Mrs. Hales nay.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 10, 2010.
- B. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 19, 2010.
- C. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 22, 2010
- D. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 23, 2010
- E. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 24, 2010
- F. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 29, 2010
- G. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 13, 2010
- H. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 14, 2010
- I. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 21, 2010
- J. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 26, 2001
- K. Approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 3, 2010
- L. Approve payments contained in Voucher Numbers 1128 and 1129 for FY 09-10.
- M. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 10-05.
- N. Approve the additional member of the Family Life, Sex Education, AIDS (FLSEA) Advisory Council.
- O. Approve the requested MOUs (one for summer 2010 between BGCWN and DCSD – contingent on Business Services receiving agreement and signed originals of the MOUs from BGCWN prior to usage of DCSD facilities. Additionally, appoint the Chief Financial Officer to act as designee to annually update MOUs between DCSD and BGCWN.

Ms. Jamin informed those present there were three sign in sheets for public comment. The sheets were labeled for Items 4 and 7, as well as, for comments to be made on items other than those listed on the agenda.

### **3. Principal's Report - (Scarselli Elementary School) Administrative Report/Program Review**

Brandon Swain, Principal, Scarselli Elementary School, reported data supporting progress towards their School Improvement Plan goal. Scarselli's goal is to increase student achievement in mathematics. 2008-2009 Adequate Yearly Progress, (AYP) results were shared that included positive results in all areas with the exception of special education math. Efforts for math improvement included implementation of Rocket Math and an academic focus on key vocabulary in math. Additionally, a focus was placed on flexible grade level grouping, IEP goals and objectives changed to align with standardized tests, best utilization of grade level content incorporated, use of tutoring grant money, and making lesson plans available on the server to improve teaching. To promote learning math, professional learning communities based around math facts were used along with Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) data to target students for earliest intervention for students. An emphasis on improving reading in the primary grades was stated.

Criterion Reference Test (CRT) data for 2008-2009 reflected that reading and math scores were high, as compared to all of Douglas County, with the exception of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade math. Writing scores for 5<sup>th</sup> grade were reported to be in need of improvement. Support for writing improvement included the creation of common assessments for school wide writing prompts. Staff collaboration time included gaining successful initiatives through working with other elementary sites. Collaboration time was used to incorporate a system approach of teaching writing traits, unwrap English Language Arts (ELA) standards, add lesson plans to the computer server, for ELA scope and sequence document review, and to create common assessments. Training on Thinking Maps, specific to content areas, was provided to teachers. Teach for Success data was reported including site strengths, and areas in need of growth.

### **4. Sierra Crest Charter Revocation Discussion and Action**

Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent, provided data and audit history in support of revoking the Sierra Crest Academy Charter. The importance of offering alternative education for students was noted, although the school, in operation for six years, was out of compliance with their charter in a number of areas. Information was provided through annual audits that detailed suggested improvements, many of which have not been addressed. A letter was sent to Sierra Crest in accordance with NRS 386.535, listing areas of non-compliance. The following is a summary of main areas of non-compliance reported in curriculum, instruction, and assessments:

- The charter was written with a curriculum focus of project based learning, which was not currently underway. The charter had not been amended to reflect a different setting. A curriculum content guide was not available.
- EdVisions Project Foundry online program, was reviewed but not implemented to support project based learning.
- The charter was not amended to reflect the uniform grading scale mandated by NRS 378-0195.
- An audit of assignments for courses in PowerTeacher included participation grades not properly weighted with other assignments. In a number of courses, grades were not posted until late in the semester.
- The curriculum being used to teach English was unknown. A high percentage of assignments were repeated at all levels of the English coursework.
- There was no curriculum for the school's focus coursework, Environmental Sustainability, and no grades entered to support student receipt of one half credit for the course.
- Credit in multiple courses had been allowed for the same assignments.
- Student seat time was duplicated for classes.
- Credit was given for courses, to students, who were doing lesser work.
- Personalized Education Plans were not completed and out of compliance with the charter.
- The charter had not been amended to reflect current student assessments.

- Leadership was incorrectly represented as the charter did not provide for an administrator. The charter was written to support a teacher led school.
- Open Meeting Law violations were reported to have occurred.
- NRS 386.535 requirements were not met.

Student High School Proficiency Exam scores reported reflected a drop in student learning overall.

District support was noted in the areas of professional development, computer software, health screenings, and the providing of a psychologist and behavior specialist. The Education Services Department assistance included classroom walk-throughs, curriculum, and assessment support.

Mrs. Gorrindo stated, in order for Sierra Crest to be accredited as they had applied for, the school would have to show students gaining credit, based on state standards.

Ms. Jamin called for public comment. Ms. Sweeney, SCA Board President, asked that Dave Brackett be allowed to speak in Ms. Sweeney's place due to her running late to the meeting.

Dave Brackett stated he resigned from Sierra Crest Academy on April 14<sup>th</sup>; therefore, he no longer worked for Sierra Crest. He was hired in 2006 as a teacher and part time administrator. He was a half time employee this year. Various points stated by Mr. Brackett included:

- 1) The SCA Board prepared the response to the revocation letter, not himself. He clarified that the letter SCA received from the District, was written by Mr. Soderman, not Mrs. Gorrindo, as stated in the presentation.
- 2) Student seat time listed within the law was 60 hours = one half credit. Mastery of content was recognized in the NAC as equivalent. A middle school in Washoe County was currently running on a competency model that did not account for seat time.
- 3) Odysseyware software used to obtain credit auto-graded students when lessons were completed in less time.
- 4) No training had been received by staff on PowerTeacher software. Grades were kept manually. 4 or 5 days training in PowerSchool software was recognized.
- 5) Relationships were emphasized to best deal with at risk students.
- 6) The uniform grading law was stated to be flawed. Resistance to compliance by other Nevada schools was offered as support for SCA not having changed their charter to reflect changes in the law. The uniform grading scale was adopted. A letter was received from Dr. Keith Rheault, State Superintendent, stating they would not have to be accountable for the new scale.
- 7) A high rate of transiency was experienced.
- 8) EdVisions was supported through a grant. Upon expiration of the grant, the services were not affordable.
- 9) Board meetings were held quarterly; therefore, Minutes were not released within 30 days to comply with the Open Meeting Law.
- 10) Comparing and noting differences in various high schools was used as an example of how SCA succeeded, through a different focus, with students earning credits and passing proficiencies.
- 11) A private LLC, owned by Roy Casey, worked independently to assist in monitoring teachers.

Mrs. Trigg left at 5:18 p.m. following Mr. Brackett's presentation.

Approximately 40 persons signed the public comment sheet for this item. Six written statements were turned in for the record. Approximately 30 parents and students spoke in support of continuing the charter and keeping Sierra Crest Academy open.

A break was taken from 6:35 – 6:50 p.m.

Renee Sweeney, Board President, arrived and read a letter written by a former Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School student in support of SCA. Teachers of SCA were stated to have offered to volunteer time during the upcoming summer, should the Board allow the school to remain open. Ms. Sweeney asked the Board to consider continuing the charter for one year.

Mr. Brackett, former SCA teacher and administrator, spoke as an individual in support of charters as a method of school reform. He asked that DCSD personnel be allowed to work closely, in a partnership, to assist SCA with improvements. The Western Regional Nevada Training Program was noted to have provided support through data based research. The prospect of a district created specifically for charter schools in Nevada, was desired for support.

Mr. Green disclosed his involvement with SCA. He had worked during the 2008-09 school year on a project with SCA, following the 90 day window of retirement due to his retirement in June 2008. Mr. Green volunteered during the first semester. He then sought an opinion from the Ethics Commission with regard to being contracted with SCA. Upon approval, he worked with SCA the second semester of 2008-09, and continued into the current school year. Due to this conflict, he would abstain from voting on this item. Mr. Green concluded that he would support the Board in whatever decision they made regarding SCA.

Mrs. Gorrindo provided datelines for various decisions that might be made with respect to the law.

Ms. Jamin stated an option was to continue this discussion at the next meeting with all 7 Board members present. She added, the two Trustees who were absent had informed her they would choose to revoke the charter, although they could not vote.

Mr. Green stated he would abstain from voting due to his position of being contracted to teach at SCA.

Board members expressed their views regarding possibilities for Sierra Crest Academy's continuance, as well as, timeframes involved with revocation and information that had been provided to assist the school to avoid non-compliance. As a result, the following motion was stated:

Mrs. Chessell moved that Sierra Crest Academy will take the recommendation (Plan of Action) presented to the Board, to their Board, and come back next month to the DCSD Board Meeting so the DCSD Board will know how they feel about the Plan. In one year, if they haven't met the Plan, SCA would volunteer to close the school, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Ms. Jamin suggested Ms. Sweeney, SCA Board President, could speak with DCSD Board members individually, regarding specifics that might be incorporated into the Plan.

Motion carried, 4/1, Mr. Green, abstained.

### **Public Comment**

At 7:55 p.m., Ms. Jamin called for public comment on items not listed on the agenda. There were none.

A break was taken. The meeting resumed at 8:34 p.m.

Ms. Jamin made a statement clarifying the Board's ability to pass an item with two members absent. A motion would be carried, action taken, provided four of the five present voted to pass an item.

Item 7 was taken prior to Item 5.

## **7. SpringBoard Adoption Discussion and Action**

Lyn Gorrindo, Assistant Superintendent for Education Services, and Kerry Pope, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, explained how implementing the SpringBoard curriculum, more rigorous and thematic than traditional English curriculum, supported the Strategic Plan goals. The textbook was piloted in grades 7 -11. Results from the Textbook Review Committee were shared in favor of adopting the program in grades 7 – 9. The committee asked that all English teachers fill out a matrix in order to vote on adoption of the program. English teachers for the 10th and 11th grades rejected the adoption. SpringBoard research based practices were developed by the College Board, and supported as 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills that included common core standards. Professional development would be offered at the Professional Development Center and would involve teacher-to-teacher mentoring, as well as, implementation of literature circles. Critical thinking skills and embedded assessments were included in the curriculum to increase student achievement. The books were scaffolded and the grades vertically aligned for fluid achievement.

Mrs. Pope stated she had solicited an independent audit for Depth of Knowledge. The audit included an English curriculum specialist and trainer from the Regional Professional Development Program. Assessments were noted to range up to the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) level 4, scaffolded, for different levels of retention. It was noted that Read 180 by Scholastic was one of the few programs regarding reading instruction that supported research based strategies for English Language Arts (ELA) instruction. The State of Florida was reported to have adopted SpringBoard, as well as, Bellevue, Washington who have experienced substantial increases in advanced placement classes. Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP), scores were stated to be the best measurement, year over year, of student progress.

Mrs. Pope stated piloted textbooks were improved in the next edition and included increased grammar and usage boxes. The teacher's edition would remain the same. A 32 page grammar handbook was added to the curriculum to provide examples and writing tips within the coursework. One novel, per grade level was incorporated, but literature circles throughout the text are encouraged. Assessments were specific to the particular grade level novel. Essay suggestions were provided for short writing assignments. A writing workshop had been added, as suggested by teachers reviewing the SpringBoard program. Also, the program provided students exposure to online work, television, a variety in forms of communication, and collaboration with other students.

District competencies would be addressed within the scope and sequence documentation. The Research Paper was a competency to be addressed in order that research topics were made available.

Providing history of the SpringBoard textbook pilot, Mrs. Pope stated initially, DCSD teachers were reviewing the textbook to be used as a supplement, choosing three units, not looking to formally adopt the program in grades 7 – 9. This school year, the program was chosen to be reviewed for adoption according to Administration Regulation 219(d), "Materials Selection and Adoption Process." Information was gathered from the pilot and incorporated into the Strategic and District Improvement Plan. Implementation was reported to be timely in a period of education reform.

Mr. Roman inquired about the availability of a 12<sup>th</sup> grade textbook. Mrs. Pope responded a 12<sup>th</sup> grade book was available, but not piloted at this time.

The public comment sign in sheet for this item included approximately 15 teachers, students, and parent names. Students submitted a petition against implementation of the SpringBoard program with 165 signatures. Approximately 13 individuals approached the Board to ask that the SpringBoard curriculum not be adopted. Reasons not to adopt the curriculum included:

- 1) Lack of relevance and interest in curriculum when taught around cinematic values

- 2) The curriculum may help as a supplemental tool.
- 3) The textbook was created with cheap paper.
- 4) District expense was increased due to having to replace materials each year.
- 5) Several students felt they learned more with traditional English.
- 6) Grammar within the program was minimal and directions were vague, lacking depth.
- 7) Answers were given within questions.
- 8) English should be taught with novels. College bound students needed more exposure to novels instead of excerpts.
- 9) SpringBoard lacked rigor and included watered down curriculum.
- 10) Vertical alignment was defined as re-teaching content, at each grade level.
- 11) Concepts were being taught, rather than English.

Karen Heine, Douglas High School English teacher, supported by a number of English Department teachers, presented a PowerPoint asking that the Board not adopt SpringBoard. Her presentation included ten main reasons not to adopt the SpringBoard curriculum. English Department solutions were offered, starting with ordering additional sample textbooks, following the process as outlined in Administrative Regulation 219(d) for textbook adoption, with an end result of a recommendation to the School Board for adoption of the best program.

Susan Van Doren, English teacher, spoke in favor of adoption. She supported rigor offered within the program, beginning in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, to grow students interested and capable of entering into the Advanced Placement (AP) literacy coursework. Enrollment in AP Literature was stated to have declined, as well as, the number of students taking the AP Literature test.

Board discussion included the desire to have the absent Board members hear the recording. This would allow for a decision to be carried forward to the next meeting and include all Trustees.

At 10:45 p.m., Mrs. Chessell moved to continue this Item until the next Regular Meeting, seconded by Mrs. Hales.

Motion carried, 5/0.

A short break was taken at 10:45 p.m.

## **5. Public Hearing on the District's 2010-2011 Tentative Budget and Adoption of 2010-2011 Final Budget Discussion and Action**

Holly Luna, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Tentative Budget for approval as Final Budget for Board approval. The Department of Tax was reported to have reviewed the Tentative budget, made suggestions, and provided required changes necessary prior to submission of the final budget. As a result, a few changes were made that included reclassification necessary in account codes, including the Community Service Programs account (3300), and the Food Service Operations account (3100). In the area of ad valorem property taxes, a revision was made to offset revenues by increased estimated under spending in the General fund. An amount of \$10,000 for mentoring the new Superintendent would be absorbed within the current Office of Superintendent professional services budget. Addressing the request for additional funding student intervention funds, Mrs. Luna stated \$40,000 had been allocated, increased by \$10,000 from the 2009-2010 school year funding. ASPIRE was currently budgeted to employ two certified teachers. To expand the ASPIRE program, there was a need to provide additional facilities for additional seats, and add funding for an additional teacher.

Additionally, Mrs. Luna reported calculated measures were taken to reduce expenditures to meet areas of reduction required by the State. An estimated ending fund balance for current year had been estimated as that is the basis of the beginning fund balance for the upcoming fiscal year.

Deliberate actions had been taken to increase that under spending for current year to allow for a large carryover to the next to offset the reductions in State support. The next budget review would occur in September or October 2010, and would reflect the final under spending amount for 2009-2010.

Board discussion, in support of increasing the ASPIRE program, included the possibility of decreasing site discretionary budgets by and additional 5%, reduced secretarial support at one site by 8 hours, and possibly not filling a counseling position.

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

Mrs. Hales moved, the Board direct that if there is funding available when the amount of under spending is known, be applied to another staff member at ASPIRE funded automatically from the .5 time position of counselor at GWHS.

Mr. Soderman explained current staffing was built into the budget. Mr. Soderman indicated that without further review of the calculations driving the staffing formulas and comparisons to similar districts / schools of same size, he would not recommend reducing the staffing positions at this time. However, this will need to be reviewed and on-hand for the upcoming year in order to make timely fiscal decisions dependent on the outcome of the legislative year. He offered that the Board could move to balance the budget by decreasing site budgets by an additional 5% that might be used to fund the additional staff position for ASPIRE.

Mrs. Hales withdrew the motion.

A need for English curriculum for the ASPIRE program was expressed by Mrs. Gorrindo. Mr. Soderman added that a budget workshop, tied to Strategic Plan goals, would be informative next year, prior to creation of the next budget. While the current hiring freeze offered flexibility, staffing formulas were in need of review, prior to additional staffing decisions.

Mrs. Hales moved if there is enough in the ending fund balance that may be greater than anticipated, that would automatically go to funding additional staff for ASPIRE, seconded by Mr. Roman.

Mrs. Luna restated the amount under spent would not be available until September of October.

Mrs. Hales clarified that timeframe corresponded with the intent of her motion.

Mr. Soderman stated future discussions would occur regarding improvements that could be made to the ASPIRE program.

Motion carried 4/1, Mrs. Chessell, nay.

Mrs. Hales moved to adopt the revised Tentative Budget as Final for 2010-2011, seconded by Mr. Green.

Motion carried, 5/0.

## **6. First Reading of revisions to Board Policy No. 529, "Suspension and Expulsion" Discussion and Action**

Item 6 was pulled by Mrs. Gorrindo to be addressed at the next meeting.

**8. First Reading of revisions to Board Policy No. 606, "Purchasing"  
Discussion and Action**

Mrs. Luna stated Items 8 and 9 were related and would be pulled from the agenda.

**9. Administrative Report-Administrative Regulation No. 606, "Purchasing  
Regulations"  
Discussion and Action**

Item 9 was pulled in order that this topic could be discussed at a future meeting.

Mrs. Chessell asked that Item 9 be provided in a redline format, clearly showing changes, at the time of the next review.

**10. Superintendent Search and possible selection – In the event that a  
Superintendent has not been previously selected, discussion and presentation of  
any additional information gathered from the second round of interviews and/or  
feedback regarding the final two candidates. The Board may take action to name  
the new Superintendent and/or make plans for a site visit to the location of the  
candidate who appears to be the best match to lead Douglas County School District  
Discussion and Possible Action**

Ms. Jamin stated Items 10, 11, and 12 would not be discussed this evening. She provided an update on communications with Lisa Noonan, Superintendent candidate, and her employment contract preparation. Mrs. Noonan was reported to be excited about the prospect of leading the District.

**11. Possible Closed Session Pursuant to NRS 288.220(1), with the Selected  
Candidate Present, to Negotiate Employment Contract**

There was no closed session.

**12. Superintendent Selection and Possible Approval of Superintendent's  
Employment Contract – Open Session  
(Discussion and Possible Action)**

There was no further discussion with regard to a Superintendent contract offering.

**13. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Soderman made the following statement to the Board. "For the record, SCA revocation and Springboards were initiatives that were underway when I got here in December and we worked to move them forward for the Board's consideration. I believe the D.O. staff did all anyone could expect to present a rationale supporting the stated goals of the Strategic Plan, particularly around rigor. It has been a long evening of the D.O. staff being characterized as uncaring, uncooperative, manipulative, lying, top-down managers. I don't believe I would be the right person to mentor the new superintendent because I wouldn't want to provide any advice that would put them in the position I put Lyn, Kerry and the Board in tonight."

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

There was no executive session.

#### **15. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

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

There were no additional items suggested in addition to the items carried forward this evening.

#### **17. Executive Session**

There was no executive session.

#### **18. Adjournment**

Mrs. Chessell moved to adjourn at 11:42 p.m., seconded by Mr. Green.  
Motion carried, 5/0.

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.