

Douglas County School District

Regular Meeting
Douglas High School
Minden, Nevada
Tuesday, August 12, 2008
3:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved
September 9, 2008**

MINUTES

Present were:

Trustees:

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

Personnel:

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

Others Present:

Mike Malloy, Legal Counsel

1. Call to Order

Ms. Jamin called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

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

2. Consent Items (Action)

Mrs. Trigg moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mr. Moore.

- A. Approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on July 8, 2008.
- B. Approve the request submitted by Tanner Taylor Cooper to take the GED examination.
- C. Approve personnel actions described in Personnel Report No. 08-08.
- D. Approve payments contained in Voucher No. 1032 for FY2007-2008 fiscal year and Voucher Number 1002 for the FY2008-2009 fiscal year.
- E. Approve a change on record for the Strategic Planning Meeting date to January 30, 2009
- F. Approve the annual Audit of Compliance for Sierra Crest Academy

Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

3. Administrative Reports and Program Reviews

3-A. Principal's Report – (C. C. Meneley Elementary School)

Mrs. Zona, Principal, C. C. Meneley Elementary School reported on progress toward goals of their School Improvement Plan. During the 2007-2008 school year Balanced Literacy and Balanced Math teaching skills were an instructional focus and refined through professional development. Teachers were able to group students in order to focus on areas of need through the use of the Measurable Academic Progress (MAP) assessment tool, as well as, through use of PLATO, Orchard, and DesCartes computer software. In 2008-2009 DesCartes will be used more extensively to identify specific areas of weakness in student learning. This focus on instruction was noted as being included in upcoming collaboration days. During this year, student data was collected and shared amongst instructional teams. Lunch time assistance was offered and approximately 30% of students were involved. Teams problem solved to identify best intervention strategies.

Mrs. Zona shared MAP, Criterion Reference Test (CRT), and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data that reflected statistics enabling staff to focus on individuals and pockets of students in need of assistance. The reading IEP sub group would be targeted in the next year due to results obtained below the 51% Percent Above Cut (PAC) rate necessary for AYP. With the allowance of a confidence interval factor figured into this sub population, CCMES met AYP requirements for 2007-08.

Goals of the School Improvement Plan were reported and the new goal is to achieve 3% gain in both reading and math. The goals would continue to be met through grade level analysis of data and student interventions.

Parent involvement included a variety of family literacy, math nights, and parent oriented events sponsored by the Parent Teacher Organization held in the evening. Written parent communication was reported to include newsletters generated in the classrooms, monthly newsletters, and an updated school Web site.

Collaboration day topics were stated. They included grade level oriented Instructional Consulting (IC), data disaggregation, common assessment development, spelling, reading, balanced math, and use of writing prompts.

3-B. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Lark announced that the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD) team had cleared Zephyr Cove Elementary School (ZCES) as safe enabling the school to open as scheduled. Congratulations were given to District staff for all of their efforts in completing the radon mitigation necessary to the safe opening of ZCES.

Mrs. Chessell requested that any feedback received from parents, be provided.

Mrs. Cauley, Principal, ZCES thanked the Board for their efforts and stated she would make a concerted effort to provide information on the opening of school to the community.

Next, Mrs. Lark stated a Bond Summit was held in Fallon wherein various Districts shared information. Board members were invited to be as involved as they wished to be in supporting the

upcoming bond initiative for DCSD. Mrs. Lark reminded Trustees they could provide information, but not state to individuals how they should vote. Board members were welcomed to attend KIDS Committee meetings in the future. The Committee was reported to have created a PowerPoint to be shared at various community club meetings. Mrs. Lark reported she would also provide this information to all District staff. Douglas County staff was reported to have committed to providing a Resolution in support of the KIDS Committee for publication.

Mrs. Trigg stated that a donation of \$250.00 had been made in support of the KIDS Committee from the Douglas Democratic Committee. Douglas Democrats had also produced and circulated flyers in support of the bond initiative.

Informational meetings with a variety of town board members were held over the summer by Mrs. Lark wherein general discussion had been conducted. Mrs. Lark reported being in attendance at a variety of meetings including: Big George Ventures regarding possible donations to JVES; the annual district administrative Forum; and Balanced Literacy, Investigation and SpringBoard trainings for administrators and teachers held at PDC. Future events noted included an iNVEST 2009 workshop for Superintendent's and Board members regarding budget strategies; the dedication of Wennhold Way at GES; district picnic; various club speaking engagements wherein bond information would be provided; AVID volunteer meeting; and the first Employee Group meeting for the new school year.

Mrs. Lark stated the Grand Jury report recently released contained no official complaints about the school district. She noted having been interviewed during the Grand Jury process. Items of interest listed by the Grand Jury were stated.

Mrs. Chessell inquired as to what happens next with the Grand Jury Report. Mrs. Lark responded that she would provide a formal response to each of the points listed.

3-C. Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) Report

The excitement of completion of negotiations for future occupancy of the NASB office within the Hawkins House was reported by Mrs. Hales. This building had been provided to the NIAA, who had in turn offered office space for \$500.00 a month to the NASB. A business plan to generate grant funding from large foundations for online professional development to be provided to board members was underway. Additionally, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee was reported to have voted to begin preliminary adequacy litigation studies.

3-D. Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) Report

Mr. Roman reported on several items discussed following two days of NIAA meetings held this summer. Meetings were noted to have been held at the Hawkins Mansion for the first time. A lawsuit regarding Girls Soccer was discussed. Depending on the outcome, this could affect the NIAA in the amount of thousands of dollars. The lawsuit pertained to the timing of Girls Soccer within the seasons.

The Rite of Passage was reported to now be recognized as a private school within the NIAA. The wrestling season was extended one week due to wrestlers also being involved in football playoffs. Team designation changes were stated, as well as, raises for the NIAA staff had been awarded.

3-E. Secondary Literacy Report

The District Improvement Plan was noted to have included secondary literacy in an action step, the last two years. Lyn Gorrindo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Laura Parks, PDC trainer presented a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Parks had researched secondary literacy intervention programs and instructional strategies. Foundational reading skills had been incorporated into effective strategies as a result of her research. In 2006-2007 a grant was received in the amount of \$50,000 that allowed for critical content development, instructional materials, and ten days of training for ten 7th and 8th grade English and special education teachers. State standards were reported to have been the guide for critical content created by Ms. Parks with literacy teachers.

Two levels of secondary literacy courses were included at both the middle and high schools entitled Essential Literacy I and II. Students were placed according to MAP scores as needed skills were identified. Students were exited upon attainment of the proper grade level target score. Special education and ESL students were noted to predominantly be enrolled in these courses. A focus on reading strategies, vocabulary development and an emphasis on technical and non-fiction text was reported. DesCartes software was used to assist students with remediation efforts.

Implementation of SpringBoards, a Pre-AP CollegeBoard interactive editing program, being introduced in the 2008-2009 school year for 7th – 9th grades was reported to support high expectations for all students. English, ESL and Special Education teachers were provided professional development in support of the SpringBoard program. The focus was on strategies including key writing, critical thinking, and reasoning skills. Four units would be taught in this first year of implementation. Future additions to the SpringBoard curriculum were noted as online lessons, lesson plans, and templates. Spring MAP scores would be reviewed for achievement gains in correlation with implementation of the new strategies.

Mr. Malloy, attorney arrived at this point in the presentation.

Additionally, Mrs. Gorrindo stated several competency and benchmark placements that would be reviewed for possible grade adjustment following implementation of the new components.

A break was taken at 5:45 p.m.

Public Comment

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

3-F. Report on Adequate Yearly Progress Designations

This Item was heard following Item 4-C.

4. Items Requiring Discussion and Action (Action)

4-A. Creation of Douglas County School District Advanced Diploma

This Item was heard following Item 4-C.

4-B. Administrative Regulation 518(f), “Graduation Ceremony Regulations”

This Item was heard following Item 4-C.

4-C. Budget FY2008-2009 Impact of SB185 and Special Session

Mrs. Lark began by stating the budget was a “fluid process,” as the amount requested by the State to be cut from the budget had increased steadily over the summer. Following careful review of programs and staffing, Mrs. Lark stated reductions for review were offered in a list format at this meeting as suggestions for discussion. While decisions were needed as soon as possible, 100% implementation of cutting the entire amount of 1.3 million did not necessarily have to be determined immediately, unless consensus was reached by the Board.

Next, Distributive School Account (DSA) fund distribution from the State was explained by Mrs. Luna, Chief Financial Officer. Mrs. Luna reported that funds were being distributed based on cash flow received by the State and paid on a per student, hold harmless weighted enrollment basis, now being received monthly rather than quarterly. K-12 education in Nevada overall would realize a 25 million dollar reduction in funding. This figure did not include the 4.5% reduction previously implemented spanning both FY2007-2008 and FY2008-2009. A reduction in the amount of 1.3 million dollars (an additional 3.6%) would be required for the 2008-2009 school year. Upon recent Board approval of the FY2008-2009 budget, a \$75,000 reduction had already been incorporated. FY2008-2009 reductions mandated by the state included textbook allotments having been cut in half. This reduction was included with Information from the Legislative Special Session that reduced per student funding equating to a mandated reduction of \$891,843. To date, July and August DSA funding had been received and reduced accordingly.

A reduction of 14% was expected for FY2009-2010, with an additional 14% reduction to be implemented in FY2010-2011. The type of services or programs that might be reduced enabling carry over of items cut that would be incorporated into those percentages for future years, was explained.

Board members decided public comment would be taken after a discussion of the following:

- 1) Reduction of Full Time Equivalent’s (FTE’s) through attrition or combination of positions
- 2) SB185 Remediation Funds
- 3) Site Discretionary Funds – 10% reduction
- 4) District Support Discretionary Funds – 15% reduction
- 5) Textbook Reduction by Curriculum and Instruction Department
- 6) Pass-through of new employee fingerprinting
- 7) Educational Field Trips – elimination
- 8) Site Staff Development Days – elimination of .5 day/staff
- 9) Reduction of Special Programs – Summer School, Remediation, Night School.

Mrs. Lark reported reductions in staffing had been, and would continue to be made, based on attrition and reorganization of duties that would least affect services. Teaching positions were not slated to be reduced as student achievement was the number one priority. Funding for

SB185 was reported to include salaries for one full time and several part time tutors. Additional information was provided listing the second year allocation of SB185 funds for FY2008-2009.

Mr. Moore requested that sports funding be provided to the Board for consideration. Condensing of travel was one area suggested for consideration.

Reduction of site discretionary funds was reported by Mrs. Lark to have been reviewed with administrators. Each site would make decisions accordingly. Item Number 5, textbook reduction by Curriculum and Instruction was explained as a category independent of the textbook funding received with the DSA allotment discussed earlier. Computer hardware and supplies were noted to be included within the DSA textbook fund portion, while the Curriculum and Instruction Department maintained a budget strictly for purchase of textbooks. Previous years textbook purchases were noted to have kept grade levels up to date, allowing for a reduction at this time. Tenth grade English books were stated as the only necessity for replacement this year. Fingerprinting costs were noted to be paid by employees in various other agencies upon employment. The funding of Educational Field Trips was controversial. This discussion included equity concerns for the various sites, as well as, possible Board Policy changes that might allow parents or parent organizations to assist with funding. Mrs. Luna stated NRS did not contain a transportation requirement; therefore Board members could review Policy and make changes if desired, such as increasing the radius requirement from students living 1 mile to 2 miles away necessary for students to ride a bus to school. Some routes were reported to have been eliminated or combined incorporating a minimal savings already this year.

Mr. Roman inquired as to the figures that would support conference attendance for staff included under the category of Site Staff Development Days. Additionally, Mr. Roman stated the hiring of consultants for contract services should not be automatically renewed or initiated.

The last item for consideration, reduction of alternative or remediation programs, was reviewed. Mrs. Bryant reported that passing some expense to families would assist in maintaining programs. Waivers would be available for those with financial needs.

Ms. Jamin called for public comment.

Brandon Swain, Principal, Scarselli Elementary School, supported keeping the SB185 grant funds due to MAP data obtained proving the tutoring program to be highly successful. Five teachers from SES spoke to the Board asking that the grant funding remain intact for the 2008-2009 school year as awarded.

Mrs. Lark reported that an Employment Management Relations Board (EMRB) complaint had been filed by both the Douglas County Professional Educators Association (DCPEA) and the Douglas County Support Staff Organization regarding revocation of the Early Retirement Incentive (ERI). Clarification was made that the lawsuit filed was on behalf of employees seeking early retirement payments. This amount was approximately \$265,000 based on FY2007-2008 payments.

Discussion ensued regarding funding options that included a possible allocation of money from the contingency fund. It was noted a 1% balance should be maintained as contingency funds. Another option reviewed, was transferring up to \$500,000 from the self insurance fund if needed.

Mr. Malloy, attorney, stated the EMRB lawsuit could result in an additional budget impact of approximately \$294,000, including \$20,000 - \$40,000 of attorney fees, if pursued.

Prioritizing budget cuts, the following motion was made:

Mrs. Trigg moved that items listed as 1,3,4,5, 6 and 9 be cut from the budget as of this date, and the staff provide the Board further information on Items 2,7, and 8, as well as, information regarding other suggestions that have been brought forth, seconded by Mr. Moore.

Following further discussion, Mrs. Trigg amended the motion.

Mrs. Trigg moved that we eliminate items 1,3,4,5,6, and 9 from our budget, seconded by Mr. Moore.

Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

Mr. Moore moved to direct staff to fund Item number 2 and come back with a recommendation on other Items as requested by the Board, seconded by Mrs. Chessell.

Through discussion, clarification was made that the intent of the motion was to secure funding for SB185 and that staff would provide further information on Items 7 and 8 in order that further budget decisions could be made.

A vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

A break was taken from 8:35 – 8:55 p.m.

3-F. Report on Adequate Yearly Progress Designations

Brian Frazier, Director of Assessments, Grants, and Special Programs reported Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) achievement data for the District and Schools as received for the 2007-2008 school year. Results reflected that the District achieved AYP in all categories, though District Elementary and District Middle School ELA were areas of concern. Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School and Minden Elementary were placed on the Watch List. The area of concern for MES was the Limited English Proficient (LEP) in English Language Arts (ELA). PWLMS was placed on the Watch List for two areas, IEP math and IEP ELA. All other schools achieved satisfactory growth. High Achieving designations were obtained by Zephyr Cove Elementary, Kingsbury Middle and George Whittell High Schools for 2007-2008.

In addition to academic achievement, school and district AYP accountability met requirements that included a participation percentage greater than 95%; attendance for all subpopulations of 90% or greater; a graduation rate requirement of 50% or greater; and subpopulations consisting of 25 or more students for reporting purposes.

The Percent Above Cut (PAC) rate for all schools was reported by Mr. Frazier to remain at the same level for 2008-2009. In the new school year, focus will be placed on 1) IEP, LEP, and Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) areas in both ELA and math, 2) subpopulations currently

designated adequate based on confidence intervals and/or Safe Harbor and, 3) changing school demographics.

4-A. Creation of Douglas County School District Advanced Diploma

Recent legislation mandated the creation of an advanced diploma that offered an advantage of automatic admission to Nevada State colleges for students. Mrs. Bryant explained the NAC 389.663 qualifying credit requirements and added that the current DCSD honors distinction would still be offered for DCSD students.

Ms. Jamin called for public comment.

Mrs. Hales moved to approve the creation of a Douglas County School district Advanced Diploma which will follow requirements outline in NAC 389.663, seconded by Mrs. Trigg.

Motion carried, 7/0.

Mrs. Bryant stated seniors would be receiving a letter explaining the credit requirements for the advanced diploma.

Following the Board Meeting we learned the advanced diploma requirement would be required beginning with the class of 2010. DCSD, for the class of 2009, would follow the existing criteria: In addition to having passed the HSPE's students must have completed 17 units of credit for required courses and 7 units of credit for elective courses for a total of at least 24 units of credit; and maintained at least a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale, for all units of credit applicable toward graduation.

4-B. Administrative Regulation 518(f), "Graduation Ceremony Regulations"

Recommended changes to Administrative Regulation 518(f), "Graduation Ceremony Regulations," were provided to Trustees. Mrs. Bryant explained that changes made incorporated the issuance of an Advanced Diploma for DCSD graduates beginning with the class of 2009 as outlined in NAC 389.663.

4-D. Contingency Funding Request

An explanation was provided by Mrs. Luna, as to the results of a recent PERS audit that identified a need for repayment of funds to PERS for substitutes who had worked over 719 hours in FY2006/07 and FY2007/08. Total expenses to the District were estimated to be \$50,123.

Mrs. Luna reported she had consulted with District auditors regarding their recommendations as to what year(s) the PERS fees would be encumbered. The Board having approved the FY2008-09 budget understood that the amount would be paid through a line item transfer from the contingency fund, due to this payment being an unknown expense. Therefore, the Department of Taxation would not implement a penalty for the budget adjustment.

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

Mrs. Hales moved to approve repayment to PERS for employees from the FY2007/08 contingency funds with the understanding that safeguards have

been put in place so this would never happen again.

A clarification was made by Mrs. Luna that a software change request had been submitted to the company, Infinite Visions, in order to correct the current omission of an early warning system.

Mrs. Hales amended the motion to approve a repayment to PERS for employees from the FY2007/08 contingency funds with the understanding that safeguards will be put into place so this will never happen again, seconded by Mr. Moore.

Mrs. Luna reiterated that a warning mechanism was requested to be incorporated into the software system in order that this would not reoccur. The estimated time of incorporation was approximately 1 year.

Motion carried, 7/0.

5. Correspondence

There was no correspondence discussed.

6. Possible Agenda Items for Future Board Meetings

Although not a new agenda item, Mrs. Hales requested that administrators include in their monthly Principal's Report to the Board, the amount of time they were able to spend in classrooms, as well as, what could be taken off of their plates that might better enable them to get into classrooms. Mrs. Hales referenced the recent speaker, Dr. McNulty as recommending the practice of administrators spending more time in the classrooms.

Additionally, Mrs. Hales reminded Board members that the new Superintendent evaluation process was in place that included Trustees taking notes throughout the year for their reference. The next Superintendent evaluation was slated to be scheduled for December or January.

7. Executive Session

There was none.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Submitted by,

Carolyn Moore
Secretary to the 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.