



# West Ada

## SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES** **January 12, 2016**

Date, Place & Time	The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, West Ada School District, convened at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at the District Service Center, 1303 E. Central Drive, Meridian, Idaho.
Trustees in Attendance	Chairman Tina Dean, Dr. Russell Joki, Dr. Julie Madsen, Carol Sayles, Mike Vuittonet
Staff in Attendance	Dr. Mary Ann Ranells, Jackie Thomason, Eric Exline, Dave Moser, Trish Duncan, Troy Stephens
Guests	Sue Darden, Tanya Elmer, Mary Ollie, Kevin Leishman, Ronda Hanson, Bill Suggs, Phil Neuhoff, Ryan Gonzalez, Diane Ogiela, Donell McNeal, James Buschine, Eian Harm, Geri Gillespy, Jill Wrem, Sarah Holt, Julie Prince, Eric Eschen, Liz Batey, JD Sexton, Michael McDonagh, Bob Learsch, Lynda Learsch, Dustin Barrett, Amy Brown, Keith Krone, Connor Drabek, Mike Segrist, Misty Sterk, Ty Hanover, Shelly Green, Tanya Koyle, Kendra Wisenbaker, Sharon Cates, Breck Seininger, Elaine Eberharter-Maki, Vaughn Heinrich
<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Chairman Dean
Motion for Executive Session	Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to move into executive session, the motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Trustee Vuittonet asked to amend the motion to include the reasons for moving into executive session: to consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual agent wherein the respective qualities of individuals are to be evaluated in order to fill a particular vacancy or need under Idaho Code 74-206 (1) (a); and to communicate with legal counsel for the school district to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated. The mere presence of legal counsel at an executive session does not satisfy this requirement under Idaho Code 74-206 (1) (f). The amended motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Chairman Dean proceeded with a roll call of the board: Trustee Joki voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes, Trustee Madsen voted yes, Trustee Vuittonet voted yes and Chairman Dean voted yes. The board convened in executive session at 5:36 p.m.
Trustees in Attendance	Chairman Tina Dean, Dr. Russell Joki, Dr. Julie Madsen, Carol Sayles, Mike Vuittonet. Trustee Joki was excused from the meeting at 5:40 p.m.
Guests	Breck Seininger, Elaine Eberharter-Maki, Vaughn Heinrich, Trish Duncan, Joe Yochum, Jackie Thomason

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Discussions were held pursuant to Idaho Code section 74-206 (1) (f) regarding the legal options of a pending lawsuit.

Trustee Joki joined the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Mr. Yochum and Ms. Thomason were excused.

Discussions were held pursuant to Idaho Code section 74-206 (1) (a) regarding the superintendent contract and to fill a vacancy.

The board recessed from executive session at 7:04 p.m. and reconvened in open session.

**Amended Agenda Approved** Trustee Madsen made a motion to add an action item regarding board travel, the motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. There is a pending deadline regarding this issue which came to light after the posting of the agenda.

**Spotlight** Sharon Cates, representing the Idaho Science Teachers Association presented the Secondary Teacher of the Year award to Tanya Elmer, Eagle High School. Ms. Elmer is recognized for her work on the Biology and Chemistry assessment and the new state science standards.

**Consent Agenda Approved** Trustee Joki made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, the motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen and passed unanimously. Approved items are as follow:

Payment of bills dated December 1-31, 2016;

P-card payments dated November 1-30, 2015;

Monthly Budget Report;

Minutes of the:

- November 17, 2015 regular board meeting;
- November 19, 2016 special board meeting;
- November 30, 2015 special board meeting;
- December 3, 2015 special board meeting;

Associated Student Body Reports;

Employment Recommendations;

Requests for leave without pay for:

- Chelsi Shields, nurse, 6.4 hours;

Requests for professional leave for:

- Ann Biason and Barb Oldenburg, three (3) days to attend the National Professional Development School Conference in Washington, D.C.;
- Kelly Hahs, two (2) days to attend the Grand Canyon University Counselor Fly In in Phoenix, Arizona;

**Consent Agenda cont.**

- Angie Neal and Dean Pengilly, three (3) days to attend the Utah Statewide Teacher Fairs in Logan and Provo, Utah;

Non-resident student enrollment requests for the 2015-2016 school year;

Request to seek Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New from the State Department of Education for Jennifer Foster to teach Natural Science at Eagle High School;

Request for approval of student tours, excursions or overnight trips during the 2015-2016 school year;

Request to consider the elimination of the Uniform Policy at the alternative middle and high schools and allow Central Academy to run a pilot during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of the 2015-2016 school year to collect comparison data;

Request to remove the brick wall in front of Central Academy;

Request to allow the backing of a bus on West Gurdon Court;

Bid awarded for gravity irrigation at the Star Middle School site to Alta Construction, in the amount of \$58,000;

Recommendation to move the February 9, 2016 regular board meeting from the District Service Center to Meridian Middle School;

Request from Dr. Diane A. Ogiela and Dr. Jeanne Johnson to recruit students from West Ada School District elementary schools to conduct a research project on language processing in children with language-learning difficulties;

Recommended student expulsions.

**DISCUSSION**

**Pathways Middle School Presentation**

Assistant Superintendent Joe Yochum presented a proposal to pursue the construction of a permanent structure to house Pathways Middle School. The middle school academy has been housed in portable classrooms since opening in 2006. Mr. Yochum cited the lack of a gymnasium, cafeteria, safety concerns and a shortage of restrooms as conditions that make this proposal in the best interest of students. The building would be constructed on a 4.368 acre parcel located next to the existing structure, the current parking lot will be repurposed and they will continue to use the current outdoor field for activities. The first step in the process will be to write an RFP (request for proposals) for architectural service, bring a recommendation to the board for approval, and then go into the design phase. **Trustee Joki** asked that a board member be part of the architect selection and that staff expand

notification to ensure as many qualified architects are aware of the RFP. **Trustee Vuittonet** asked for a cost estimate on the project and a time line for construction. **Mr. Yochum** stated the cost estimates were preliminary at this point, but using Crossroads Middle School as a model with the addition of two classrooms to accommodate the addition of six graders, the cost would be under \$5M including the architect and construction management fee. The project could be scheduled to begin in June once everything is in place. In response to a question from Trustee Madsen regarding the portables and the excess property, **Mr. Yochum** explained the maintenance department was working on an audit of all the portables owned by the district so they could determine how many will be kept and which ones will be brought to the board for disposal. The district did try to sell the excess property and they could revisit selling it again. **Trustee Joki** commented that selling the land would add to development of more homes, which would impact schools in the district. **Eric Eschen**, principal of Pathways, expressed his thanks to the Board for considering the project.

**New Policy Code No. 403.10, Use by Employees of School District Owned Vehicles Authorized Employees (First Reading)** – **Dave Roberts**, HR Administrator, read through the policy with trustees and explained there are currently over 100 vehicles in the district, some with district logos and some without. There are some procedures in place to copy employee driver's licenses and file them with the insurance company and a vehicle use form is being created for the board to review. **Trustee Sayles** asked if any vehicles are being used to commute and **Mr. Roberts** replied there were none to his knowledge. **Chairman Dean** asked Dr. Ranells to direct staff to look into placing a copy of the new policy in every vehicle and to determine which will need district logos. The policy will come before the board at the January 26, 2016 board meeting for a second reading.

**Revised Policy Code No. 300, Superintendent of Schools (first reading)** – Mr. Roberts continued with a review of proposed revisions to this policy which has seen only minor modifications since 1995. The policy will come before the board at the January 26, 2016 board meeting for a second reading.

**Revised Superintendent Job Description** – Mr. Roberts discussed revisions that were made to the job description, trustees suggested additional modifications and asked Dr. Ranells to assist staff with the revisions and to bring the job description to a future meeting.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Recommendation to approve or deny discontinuation of class fees**

Chairman Dean opened the floor to public comment:

**Miah Brown**, PTO president at Joplin, discussed funds their PTO has spent to purchase items for teachers the district can't provide. He wondered where the money would come from to fill in the gaps if the board removes class fees. **Dr. Ranells** replied the district staff had been

discussing the issue, asking themselves what is best for kids. There is no perfect answer as to where the funding will come from right now, but staff will look at funds from the sale of land, at the plant facilities levy for some items, use the increase in discretionary dollars from the state, and look at things that might be cut. They could also go to the legislature with the data on cost and programs. This is an opportunity to examine current practice and make good decisions down the road. Dr. Ranells expressed her appreciation of Mr. Brown's input and hoped he could help with the process. **Mr. Brown** agreed there shouldn't be fees, but he did not want to sell land to pay for books, someday the district will run out of land. Finding out real costs and taking the information to the state is a good start.

**Misty Sterk**, a high school Science teacher, reviewed the lab costs associated with the honors biology and crime scene classes stating these were the costs associated to run the classes. Ms. Sterk has received \$10,000 in grants to help pay for supplies over the last three years and she would love for parents not to have to pay. However, she has zero faith in the legislature and if the classes don't get funded, the costs will come out of her pocket. **Chairman Dean** thanked Ms. Sterk for coming, however, the decision is out of their hands, and they cannot violate the law. **Trustee Madsen** assured Ms. Sterk that in advance of a decision tonight, the superintendent and staff have been reviewing the issue. They are operating to keep the system whole and intact, they won't sacrifice teacher jobs and don't expect teachers to supplement what the legislature or district should fund. **Ms. Sterk** replied they might not be able to offer advanced placement courses that require a lab if there is no funding. **Trustee Joki** stated Ms. Sterk had given them examples of the hidden cost of education, which has been avoided and ignored for too long. Parents have been paying more than their fair share because of the legislature. He believes there is money in the budget to properly fund the curriculum. **Trustee Vuittonet** stated his concern with the final price tag, how much money the district has and how much they can pay for. He wants to continue offering the opportunities to students but the cost of multitudes of programs causes him some apprehension. **Trustee Sayles** thanked Ms. Sterk for her testimony and her passion, they are fortunate to have quality teachers in the district. She agreed her testimony gives them information to discuss with legislators.

**Trustee Madsen** asked the superintendent for reassurance that in their analysis of costs, they understand what the cost of some programs are and that programs such as these will still be funded. **Dr. Ranells** replied they are working to get a handle on the total cost. They have discovered nuances to some of the programs and have asked principals to do a more thorough evaluation of the number of students enrolled in current classes, what is charged and why, and if there is any way to reduce without jeopardizing the class. They will need time to work with staff to give an accurate accounting before they can give an answer on costs.

**Trustee Vuittonet** asked Mr. Simpson for the cost of covering potential fees. **Mr. Simpson** replied he had gone back to the amount of fees

collected in 2014-15 for middle and high schools and it was just under \$900,000. In conversations held earlier in the day, they talked about other costs that might be involved that are not part of the \$900,000 and how much the district will cover. It appears that will depend on the parameters the board decides. **Joe Yochum** stated the one thing he has learned while listening to Ms. Sterk, if the current fee charged does not cover the cost of the lab, there might be a problem with only looking at fees and not the grants a teacher may have written. **Trustee Madsen** asked Mr. Yochum that if they are talking about the elimination of fees only, shouldn't they know how much they are changing the budget? **Mr. Yochum** replied they would be able to come close to a number, and the review with principals is the best way to get the most accurate number.

**Breck Seiniger**, counsel for the district, reviewed the court decision for those in attendance and clarified the board cannot put a fee between a student and graduation.

**Trustee Sayles** made a motion to direct the superintendent and administration to look into and discontinue class fees that are part of the credit toward graduation in those classes. The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen. **Trustee Vuittonet** asked if they are only talking about fees related to credit that is necessary to graduation. **Trustee Sayles** replied that was her intention. **Trustee Madsen** asked to make a friendly amendment, to approve discontinuation of class fees effective with the 2016-2017 school year. **Chairman Dean** asked if Trustee Sayles would accept the amendment to the motion. **Trustee Sayles** asked if the administration had looked into the discontinuation of fees for second semester of this school year. **Dr. Ranells** replied they had looked into the costs and it would be better to have this in place for the fall than trying to have it ready in the next two weeks. Trustee Sayles accepted the amendment and Trustee Madsen accepted the second as amended. **Trustee Joki** stated students will not have access to second semester classes due to the fees which doesn't meet the requirements for a free education. He opposed continuance of any fees for the remainder of this year and he will respectfully oppose the amended motion. **Trustee Madsen** stated her appreciation of Dr. Joki's comments. She agrees there will be some hardships, but they are in an awkward position as they endeavor to strike a compromise. **Trustee Vuittonet** agreed with Trustee Madsen's statement. This is very complicated and the staff needs time to reconcile all of the issues that will come up. **Trustee Joki** stated he could support this motion if they could send a printed message to students that they are free to enroll despite the fee and there will be free access to the curriculum and they will not have to request a waiver. **Chairman Dean** asked Trustee Joki if students have not paid fees by the time second semester starts, the administration and teachers would assume they could not pay. **Trustee Joki** replied that was correct. There needs to be an announcement this is a recommended fee and could be considered a donation. The fees would not be required but recommended. Trustee Sayles did not accept Trustee Joki's suggestion for an amendment to the motion and the Chair called for the vote. Trustee Madsen voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes,

Trustee Vuittonet voted yes, Chairman Dean voted yes and Trustee Joki voted no. The motion passed on a four to one vote.

**Amendment of agenda**

Trustee Sayles made a motion to add an item to approve or deny the appeal to the litigation so they can direct counsel. This item was not included in the agenda because the board did not have the benefit of counsel prior to the meeting and the decision would need to be made by January 18<sup>th</sup>. The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen. The motion passed unanimously.

**District will forego appeal of the fees lawsuit**

Trustee Madsen made a motion to direct counsel to forego appeal of the judge's decision regarding the fees lawsuit. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Trustee Joki abstained from the vote, Trustee Madsen voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes, Chairman Dean voted yes and Trustee Vuittonet voted no. The motion passed on a three to two vote.

**Revisions to the 2016-2017 course description handbook**

Trustee Madsen made a motion to approve revisions to the 2016-2017 course description book without fees included. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles. Trustee Joki voted yes, Trustee Sayles voted yes, Trustee Madsen voted yes, Chairman Dean voted yes and Trustee Vuittonet abstained from the vote.

**Revised 2016-2017 modified and traditional school calendars**

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to approve revisions to the 2016-2017 modified and traditional school calendars as recommended by administration. The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen and passed unanimously.

**Items #4 (Superintendent job description and #6 (Policy Code No. 33, Superintendent of Schools) tabled to next meeting**

Trustee Joki made a motion to table items #4 and #6 until the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen and passed unanimously.

**Negotiated superintendent contract**

Trustee Joki made a motion to accept the negotiated superintendent contract. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles and passed unanimously.

**Special project assignment**

Trustee Vuittonet made a motion to approve the appointment of a special project assignment to assist the principals at Victory Middle School and Hillsdale Elementary with the opening of their schools. The motion was seconded by Trustee Madsen and passed unanimously.

**Board Travel**

**Trustee Madsen** discussed suspending board travel for a period of time and conserving the funds for local training or new board members.

**Trustee Vuittonet** spoke to the training offered by the National School Board Association, but understood the reality of current events in the district. Chairman Dean asked if Trustee Vuittonet would contact the Idaho School Boards Association to see if one of their staff could report on the convention later in the spring. Trustee Madsen made a motion to suspend board travel for the remainder of the academic year. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sayles and passed unanimously.

## REPORTS

### **Board reports/assignments:**

Trustee Joki reported that Dr. Ranells has been well received at the schools. This is a new era to bring promising practices and warm working relationships with all employees.

Trustee Vuittonet reported that Representative Daley has shown interest in running the flooring bill again.

Chairman Dean stated her appreciation for Dr. Ranells hard work and loved that she had jumped in with both feet.

### **Superintendent's report:**

Dr. Ranells stated it has been an honor to continue the legacy in this district. Everyday has brought renewed friendships and she appreciates the staff for their dedication to the district.

## ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Vuittonet moved, Trustee Madsen seconded and the vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

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Chairman

Clerk