

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL 23, 2019  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

April 23, 2019

**1. Opening Items**

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 2:01 p.m. at the Washoe County School District's Central Administration Building, 425 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

**1.02 ROLL CALL**

President Katy Simon Holland and Board Members Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor were present. Superintendent Traci Davis, Deputy Superintendent Kristen McNeill, Chief of Staff David Lasic, and staff were also present.

**1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Melissa Boesen led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1.04 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kelly Roper expressed concern and frustration over the proposed zoning recommendations for Huffaker Elementary School students. She felt it was unfair that a small group of students at Huffaker Elementary School would no longer be zoned for Darrel Swope Middle School and Reno High School, but instead zoned for Edward Pine Middle School and Galena High School. She mentioned many parents had attended the meetings of the Zoning Advisory Committee and requested the students either remain zoned for Swope Middle School or be zoned for the new Marce Herz Middle School, but staff continually told the parents and the Committee the proposed scenarios would not work, though she felt clear and convincing numbers had never actually been shown to the Committee or the community. She believed there were additional options that could be considered to alleviate the overcrowding at Swope Middle School that would have a greater impact than moving a small group of students from Huffaker Elementary School.

Kim Garback expressed concern over prior budget discussions by the Board to outsource some of the duties of the Education Support Professionals (ESP) in the District. She praised the efforts of association president Melissa Boesen to continue to advocate on

behalf of ESP employees in the District and urged the Board to put the employees first and not profits.

### 1.05 **ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees approves the agenda as presented.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

## **2. Consent Agenda Items**

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Darla Lee provided comments related to Consent Agenda Item 2.13, Approval of the contract to H&K Architects/Cunningham Group Architecture in the amount of \$2,404,000 for the construction documents and bidding phases of the architectural/engineering design services for the new Wildcreek area high school. She wondered if the \$3 million for the design would be for a prototype design or if it would be site specific. She expressed her disagreement to the proposed location for the new school and felt the \$3 million on the design would be better spent on finding an alternative location for the high school.

President Simon Holland requested staff provide information on the question of if the design would be a prototype. Pete Etchart, Chief Operations Officer, stated the design would be for a prototype design that would be able to be modified to fit other sites as needed, similar to the designs of the new elementary and middle schools. He anticipated the design would be used for at least two more high schools in the future.

George Lee expressed concern that the new high school in the Wildcreek area would not alleviate the overcrowding at Spanish Springs High School and the District would soon install portable classrooms on the property. He believed that since Spanish Springs High School was currently overcrowded, the proposed high school would be forced to absorb the additional students as well as the students currently zoned for Procter R. Hug High School, resulting in a school with over 3,000 students.

President Katy Simon Holland requested staff provide information on the projected enrollment for the new high school. Mr. Etchart remarked that the current enrollment projections for the Wildcreek area high school would have the students from Procter R. Hug High School, about 1,400 total students, and a portion of the students from Spanish Springs High School, about 700 students, for a total of around 2,100 students with a capacity of 2,400 students. With the passage of WC-1, the District had the ability to

construct new schools to alleviate overcrowding and did not anticipate the utilization of portables at schools as a long-term solution.

Trustee Minetto requested Consent Agenda Item 2.13, Approval of the contract to H&K Architects/Cunningham Group Architecture, be pulled for additional questions and discussion.

It was moved by Trustee Calvert and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees approves Consent Agenda Items 2.02 through 2.12 and 2.14.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

- 2.02 The Board of Trustees approved the Family Resource Center grant application to Join Together Northern Nevada (JTNN) for State General Fund Substance Abuse Primary Prevention Program (SAPP) funding for \$39,752.
- 2.03 The Board of Trustees approved the three-year grant application to the E.L. Cord Foundation from Washoe County School District Nutrition Services for school lunches at Gerlach K-12 for \$48,600.
- 2.04 The Board of Trustees approved the grant application to the Nevada Department of Education, 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) Competitive Supplemental Grant - Cohort 5 for \$738,000.00.
- 2.05 The Board of Trustees approved the Washoe County School District Department of Counseling's grant application to Join Together Northern Nevada (JTNN) State General Fund Substance Abuse Prevention Program (SAPP) funding for \$36,399.
- 2.06 The Board of Trustees approved the grant application to the Regents Service Program (RSP) for FY 2020 through the University of Nevada, Reno for funding for Volunteer Services tutors and mentors for \$113,000.
- 2.07 The Board of Trustees accepted the "Budget Transfer Report" and provided authorization to include budget transfers between functions or programs for a total amount of \$16,714.84 for the period March 1, 2019 through March 31, 2019 in the official Board minutes, as required by Nevada Revised Statute 354.598005.

- 2.08 The Board of Trustees approved change order 1 to Neeser Construction for the Replacement of Rooftop Units at Elizabeth Lenz Elementary School in the amount of \$40,253.01.
- 2.09 The Board of Trustees awarded Bid #63010A, Relocation of Portable Classroom Building from George Westergard Elementary School to B.D. Billingham Middle School, to Silver Knolls Electric, Inc. for \$246,868.
- 2.10 The Board of Trustees awarded Bid #63010B, Relocation of Portable Classroom Building from Double Diamond Elementary School to Archie Clayton Middle School, to Silver Knolls Electric, Inc. for \$244,882.
- 2.11 The Board of Trustees awarded Bid #63010C, Relocation of Portable Classroom Building from Jerry Whitehead Elementary School to George L. Dilworth Middle School, to J Slash B Enterprise, Inc. for \$248,000.
- 2.12 The Board of Trustees awarded Bid #63010D, Relocation of Portable Classroom Building from Sun Valley Elementary School to Nancy Gomes Elementary School, to Bruce Purves Construction, Inc. for \$235,688.
- 2.14 The Board of Trustees approved the Third Quarter Fiscal Year 2018-19 Reduction of Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Certain Classes Report and Requests for Variance Justification to be filed with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**2.13 APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACT TO H&K ARCHITECTS/CUNINGHAM ARCHITECTURE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,404,000 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS AND BIDDING PHASES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE NEW WILDCREEK AREA HIGH SCHOOL**

Trustee Minetto expressed her concern about the proposed location of the new high school in the Wildcreek area. She had heard from a number of constituents that the location would create additional traffic congestion in the area and that the District did not fully consider alternative locations. Pete Etchart, Chief Operations Officer, explained the process used in determining the location for the new high school. The District conducted alternative analysis on five sites, after narrowing the number down from 17, and brought in planners, engineering, contractors, cost estimators, and others in the construction trades to provide input. All those involved agreed the Wildcreek site was the best site

for the new school. He noted that even if the District had identified a different location as the best site, there was no guarantee the District would be able to acquire the property. He mentioned that the next site on the list when the process began was where Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) was constructing their new sports facility.

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Raymond that **the Board of Trustees approves the contract to H&K Architects/Cunningham Group Architecture in the amount of \$3,404,000.00 for the architectural/engineering design services for the Construction Documents and Bidding phases of the new Wildcreek area high school.** The result of the vote was 6-1: Pass (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Ellen Minetto) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

### **3. Items for Presentation, Discussion, Information and/or Action**

#### **3.01 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE PRELIMINARY APPROVAL TO THE PROPOSED REVISION OF BOARD POLICY 9065, BOARD OF TRUSTEES' COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES, (FORMERLY "BOARD OF TRUSTEES' TRAVEL AND OTHER EXPENSES") WHICH ADDRESSES TRUSTEE COMPENSATION AND LIMITS TO EXPENSE BUDGETS FOR TRUSTEES WHOSE TERMS ENDS HALFWAY THROUGH A FISCAL YEAR; AND INITIATION OF THE 13-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD**

David Lasic, Chief of Staff, presented the proposed revisions to Board Policy 9065, Board of Trustees' Compensation and Expenses. The Policy had previously been discussed at a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees and additional changes requested to include references to the return of equipment purchased with taxpayer funds.

It was moved by Trustee Caudill and seconded by Trustee Taylor that **the Board of Trustees provides preliminary approval to the proposed revision of Board Policy 9065, Board of Trustees' Compensation and Expenses (formerly entitled, "Board of Trustees' Travel and Other Expenses"); and initiates the 13-day public review and comment.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

#### **3.02 CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF WASHOE COUNTRY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD RESOLUTION 19-004, A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THAT NOTICE BE GIVEN TO THE DEBT MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF UP TO \$100 MILLION IN GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS (ADDITIONALLY SECURED WITH PLEDGED REVENUES), AND AUTHORIZING OFFICERS OF THE DISTRICT**

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**TO TAKE OTHER ACTIONS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE ISSUANCE AND RELATED MATTERS**

Mark Mathers, Chief Financial Officer, explained agenda items 3.02 and 3.03 were similar in that they were both related to the issuance of bonds for capital projects. The difference between the two resolutions was one was associated with WC-1 revenue and the other with rollover bond revenue. The resolutions were the first step in the issuance of the bonds. The revenue from both bond issuances would go towards the construction of the Wildcreek area high school, Darrel Swope Middle School expansion, and a new elementary school in the Cold Springs area. The District did not intend to issuance the entire amounts included in the resolutions at once, but parse the actual issuances based on need. The current agenda item was the resolution associated with WC-1 revenue. If approved, the District would still be able to issue additional bonds related to WC-1 revenue.

Trustee Caudill wondered when it would become too much of a financial risk to continuing issuing bonds against projected WC-1 revenues. Mr. Mathers mentioned the District's long-term capital funding plan through 2028 totaled about \$2 billion and, with the issuance of the two agendas, the District would have issued about \$1 billion in bonds. While the authorization for the rollover bonds were currently set to expire, the revenue from WC-1 did not have an expiration date so the District was confident in the ability to continue to funding capital projects in the future.

President Simon Holland asked about proposed renovations and an expansion to William O'Brien Middle School and if they were included in the projects. Mr. Mathers noted the funds associated with the O'Brien Middle School project would be from property tax or rollover bond revenue, not WC-1.

Trustee Caudill remarked that the Debt Management Commission would be requiring entities to report on their overall financial health prior to approving any additional debt moving forward. He felt it would be helpful for the Board to hear the presentation the District would provide in advance of the Commission meeting.

It was moved by Trustee Raymond and seconded by Trustee Caudill that **the Board of Trustees adopts Board Resolution 19-004, A Resolution to notify the Debt Management Commission regarding the proposed issuance of up to \$100 million in General Obligation Bonds, and authorizing officers of the District to take other actions necessary to complete the issuance and related matters.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

**3.03 CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD RESOLUTION 19-005, A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THAT NOTICE BE GIVEN TO THE OVERSIGHT PANEL FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES AND THE DEBT MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED ISSUANCE OF UP TO \$200 MILLION IN GENERAL OBLIGATIONS BONDS, AUTHORIZING OFFICERS OF THE DISTRICT TO TAKE OTHER ACTIONS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE ISSUANCE AND RELATED MATTERS**

Mark Mathers, Chief Financial Officer, explained the agenda item would allow the process to begin for the District to issue up to \$200 million in bonds related to property tax revenue that was associated with the rollover bonds.

President Simon Holland asked what the District's current bond rating was. Mr. Mathers stated the District was currently split rated, with Standard & Poor's (S&P) rating the District as AA and Moody's as a high A, but on a positive watch.

Trustee Caudill wondered if the District would have the ability to cover the debt if the rollover bonding ability was not reauthorized after 2025. Mr. Mathers indicated he was confident the District would be able to cover the debt. If the bonding ability was not reauthorized, the District would continue to receive the revenue from the property taxes but would not be able to bond against future revenue.

It was moved by Trustee Caudill and seconded by Trustee Calvert that **the Board of Trustees adopts Washoe County School District Board Resolution 19-005, A Resolution to notify the Debt Management Commission and Oversight Panel for School Facilities regarding the proposed issuance of up to \$200 million in General Obligation Bonds, and authorizing officers of the District to take other actions necessary to complete the issuance and related matters.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

**3.04 WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION AND REPORTING OF METRICS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES: OBJECTIVE 1.1, RIGOROUS AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICE FOR ALL STUDENTS; OBJECTIVE 1.2 , CLOSE OPPORTUNITY GAPS THROUGH CULTURALLY COMPETENT PRACTICE, EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES, AND MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS; OBJECTIVE 1.5, PROVIDE AND CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE PATHWAY TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS THROUGH AN ALIGNED PRE-K-16 SYSTEM; OBJECTIVE 2.1, ATTRACT, RECRUIT, HIRE, AND RETAIN HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PERSONNEL;**

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**OBJECTIVE 3.1, EXPAND THE SCOPE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF TRUSTEE, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS; OBJECTIVE 3.3, STRENGTHEN STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDING OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND CONSTITUENT SERVICES; AND OBJECTIVE 5.2, PROVIDE AND CONTINUOUSLY IMPLEMENT A DISTRICT-WIDE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR SCHOOL SAFETY AND CRISIS RESPONSE INCLUDING TRAINING, FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS, AND THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY, SCHOOLS, FAMILIES, AND STUDENTS**

Erica Olsen, OnStrategy, explained the agenda item was the first of three strategic performance reports related to the Goals and Objectives in the Strategic Plan, *Envision WCSD 2020*. The reporting data was associated with the 2018-19 School Year. District staff would provide information on 20 performance measures at the current meeting, then on an additional 20 in both August and October, with a full report also presented in October.

Dr. Kristen McNeill, Deputy Superintendent, began the review of metrics related to Goal 1, Ensure annual student academic growth. The actual data related to student growth would not be complete until October, but the information provided would review the targets, highlights, challenges, and strategies associated with the Initiatives.

Debra Biersdorff, Chief Academic Officer, presented Initiative 1.1.2, Percentage of students meeting SBAC/ELA (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium/English Language Arts) and Math Standards. The target for SBAC/ELA for the 2018-19 School Year was 49%, up 1% from the 2017-18 School Year actual percentage. The highlights, challenges, and strategies to improve the number of students meeting the standards are presented. She believed that with the recent adoption of the new ELA curriculum and the additional opportunities for educator professional development, the District would see an increase in students meeting standards. The target for math for the current school year was 45%, which would represent a 4% increase over the 2017-18 School Year actuals. She felt the District should come close to the target since the District was now utilizing an updated math curriculum.

President Simon Holland mentioned she was extremely concerned about the data and students not meeting standards, especially in grades 3 and 4 where the District numbers were lower than the rest of Nevada. She encouraged staff to come up ways to improve student achievement and meet the standards because having less than half of students meeting standards was not acceptable. Ben Hayes, Chief Accountability Officer, agreed the numbers did need to improve; however, he reminded the Board the District's numbers had been relatively flat over the past few years and the effect was other school districts and states had moved past Washoe County School District in terms of elementary school data. The District had been looking into why the numbers had remained relatively flat,



determining that some of the issue was the accessibility of grade level instruction and materials for students. Staff was working to provide additional professional development opportunities to ensure teachers were teaching the standards and that students were responding positively to the curriculum. The District wanted to ensure the most difficult material students worked on throughout the year was not the assessment at the end of the year, but was the materials leading up to the assessment.

Dr. McNeill added the District would be rolling out benchmark assessments in 16 pilot schools to determine if the current assessments were measuring what they needed to so the students would be prepared for the SBAC assessments. The District was not adding more assessments, but looking at what was currently being used to determine what improvements to daily classroom instruction and curriculum could occur to help improve the number of students meeting the standards.

Ms. Biersdorff reviewed the data related to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading standards. The target for the 2018-19 School Year was 47% and, if achieved, would represent a 2% increase over the 2017-18 School Year. The District was hopeful in proposed changes to the Read by Grade Three legislation from 2017 that would allow school districts greater ability to work with students and families, instead of automatically retaining students who did not meet the standards. She added that various departments were beginning to work together to develop the digital learning access to curriculum, professional learning, and strategies for teachers in support of the new ELA curriculum. The intent was to have all curriculums updated over the next few years and included the digital side, which would be strengthened within Microsoft Teams so all educators able to access the same supports. The data related to Initiative 1.1.3, Percentage of students meeting the state science assessment, was explained. The target for the 2018-19 School Year was 37%. The greatest challenge for the District related to the science standards was not the recent adoption of new standards by the Nevada Department of Education, but that the District's textbooks and materials were so out of date. The District had been supplementing the curriculum for close to 20 years and would begin the process of adopting new textbooks soon, but the District would have to rely on professional development to improve the results until the curriculum adoption was completed.

Dr. Troy Parks, Lead Area Superintendent, explained Initiative 1.1.4, Core credit attainment in high school. The metric was directly related to sophomores to ensure they were on-track for graduation by completing specific required classes, namely two English, two math, two science, and one social studies class. The target for the 2018-19 School Year was 65% of sophomores obtaining the core credit requirements. Some challenges in the coming years would be the increase in credit requirements for graduation beginning with the Class of 2022 and a transition to a new online and credit recovery platform.

Dr. McNeill stated the intent with looking at credit attainment for sophomores was to have a more proactive approach to ensuring students were on-track to graduation and

conducting credit recovery sooner instead of waiting until students were seniors. The process did take a lot of staff time since the individual schools would review transcripts with every student and develop remediation plans as soon as a concern was evident.

Trustee Taylor requested additional information on Portrait of a Graduate, which was one of the strategic activities related to the initiative. Dr. McNeill mentioned the Board would receive a full presentation on Portrait of a Graduate at a future meeting. A simple explanation of the project was that it was the pathway to graduation for an individual student, beginning with pre-K through grade 12. Mr. Hayes added staff would be able to pull up a particular student and see all data related to that student in one place. The program would allow teachers and counselors to quickly and easily see the progress of the student and what classes the student should be taking and possible career or college paths after graduation.

President Simon Holland asked who would be responsible in the high schools for the constant monitoring of the students. Dr. Parks indicated the principal would have the ultimate responsibility to ensure the monitoring was occurring, but the process would be similar to what was now occurring, with teams of teachers and counselors working together to review transcripts and assist students and families. Dr. McNeill indicated the District would also utilize the graduation advocates in the schools to work directly with students who were credit deficient.

Trustee Taylor thanked staff for their efforts in being proactive to ensure students were on-track to graduate sooner. She knew if students began falling behind in their credit attainment as freshmen and sophomores then they would be even more behind when they were seniors.

Dr. Paul LaMarca, Chief Ombudsman & Strategies Officer, began the review of initiatives under Objective 1.2, Close opportunity gaps through culturally competent practice, effective strategies, and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). The data did show an overall increase in reducing the achievement gaps in math and remained flat for ELA. He was encouraged with the results of specific groups of students, such as students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and English Learners (EL). He reviewed what the District had been doing to improve the achievement gaps and the challenges facing the District. One of the highlights that was making a difference was the Equitable Access Task Force that was a cross-departmental effort to look at the entire District to ensure all students had equitable access to programming and removing barriers that limited students. For example, did all students have access to Advanced Placement (AP) classes at their schools and were they able to take not only the class, but the exam as well due to the fee structure.

Ms. Biersdorff reviewed the metrics for Initiative 1.2.2, EL exit rates by 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The District knew that the sooner an EL student was able to exit the program, the greater

success they would have in their academic future; however, it was also important to continue following the students to ensure they continued to show improvement or if additional supports were required. The target for the 2018-19 School Year was 63% and the District was hopeful they would see the increase based on the new English Language Development model being expanded to additional schools.

President Simon Holland asked how students exited the EL program. Ms. Biersdorff explained the students would have to achieve a certain score on the Access Test, which was a national, standardized test for EL students.

Trustee Taylor wondered if there were students who had to re-enter the EL program after they had exited. Ms. Biersdorff indicated there were not, but it was important to remember that learning a language was a long-term process and very complex so the District would continue to provide supports as the students moved into higher grades with more complex materials.

Mr. Hayes reviewed Initiative 1.5.1, Remediation rates for graduates. He was concerned about the utilization of the metric because the information from the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) had changed how they tracked students and the data the District had been receiving was no longer reliable. The District continued to collaborate with the University of Nevada, Reno and Truckee Meadows Community College to provide opportunities for students but the District was looking at alternative ways to provide better data on remediation rates to the Board. The last year of data the District was confident in reporting on was for the 2015-16 School Year, which showed 46.7% of Washoe County School District students required some remediation efforts at NSHE institutions. As a comparison, 55% of students from the Clark County School District and 48% of students from the Carson School District required remediation efforts. The best national data he could find was that about 44% of students in public universities required remediation.

Trustee Caudill remarked that it would be important for the District to emphasize getting the best possible score on the ACT and SAT exams because the results would determine placement in classes. He would encourage the District to work with students to retake the exams or look at other opportunities available to students prior to moving on to college.

*President Simon Holland recessed the meeting for 15 minutes.*

Emily Ellison, Chief Human Resources Officer, began the presentation related to objectives and initiatives under Goal 2, Develop and retain highly effective personnel who are driven to support students and their academic success.

Dr. Mike Paul, Human Resources Executive Director, reviewed Objective 2.1, Attract, recruit, hire, and retain highly effective personnel. Initiative 2.1.1, Decrease number of 1<sup>st</sup> day of school vacancies of certified positions by 2%, had been accomplished, with 23 vacant certified positions at the start of the 2018-19 School Year, which was 10 fewer vacancies than the prior school year. It would be important to continue the recruitment efforts and leverage internal efforts to build ways for current, non-certified employees to become certified. Additional information was presented on recruitment efforts.

President Simon Holland asked if long-term substitute teachers were included in the count. Ms. Ellison explained the 23 vacancies represented truly open positions that had not been filled. Long-term substitutes used on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school were generally new teachers who had not received their physical license yet since the process could take 10 weeks. If a new teacher was hired in July, they probably would not have received their license by the start of school but they did have a substitute license.

Dr. Paul presented Initiative 2.1.2, Increase diversity among new hires. The District had shown an increase of about 4% in diversity of hires over the prior year; however, racial and ethnic diversity was self-reported so the numbers might not be exact. The District would also look at gender, multilingual ability, and veteran status when considering diversity. Additionally, one person could be counted in multiple categories used by the District, such as a male veteran who was multilingual would be counted in at least three categories.

Trustee Taylor wondered if there were ways to ensure people were not counted in more than one category. She did not want to see the data inflated because it was important to show a diverse workforce. She also appreciated that gender was a category since the teaching profession was female dominated. Ms. Ellison mentioned staff would have to look at how the data was accessed to determine if there were additional opportunities to ensure an accurate count.

Trustee Raymond asked if the metric represented all new hires or just certified positions. She recalled the previous conversations were focused on ensuring diversity in the classroom so students would see themselves. Ms. Ellison agreed and noted the District's Grow Your Own and Alternative Route to Licensure programs were showing increased diversity in those seeking to become teachers.

Trustee Caudill wondered if the District had information on the number of student teachers who remained in the District after receiving their license. Ms. Ellison indicated the District should be able to compile the information.

Superintendent Davis cautioned that the information being requested could be conflicting with other initiatives in the Strategic Plan. She mentioned the District had information on the population at the University of Nevada, Reno so hiring from only that group might

not achieve the Board's goal of increasing diversity. Additionally, it was the individual principals who made the final decision on the hiring of teachers in their schools, with the District working to provide a diverse applicant pool for the principals to select from. She wanted to ensure principals were hiring highly qualified persons and not hiring someone so they could check a box that they were diverse.

The Trustees discussed alternative metrics that could be used to track the information they were interested in seeing. They agreed with Superintendent Davis that they did not want to see schools hiring teachers just to check a box, but were interested in knowing if student teachers were interested in working for the District once they received their degrees. The Trustees were interested in determining if a large percentage of student teachers were not seeking employment in the District after they completed their degrees and if there were challenges that should be addressed by the Board. Ms. Ellison remarked that there were some anecdotal trends that the District was aware of, such as students from rural counties interested in returning to teach in their hometowns or some student teachers waiting to apply for a full-time position for 6 months to a year after they complete their student teaching.

President Simon Holland asked if the District provided mentoring to new teachers. Ms. Ellison mentioned mentors were provided for new teachers for at least one year. If a new teacher felt they needed additional assistance, the District would continue to provide supports.

Dr. Paul reviewed the metrics for Initiative 2.1.3, Increase percentage of new certified staff from Education Support Professionals (ESPs) and substitutes. Unfortunately, the District did not meet the goal over the prior year; however, the overall numbers of new certified hires from ESPs and substitutes had increased and represented over 50% of new certified hires. The challenge with the metric was there had been a larger increase of new hires with the opening of three new schools and attrition rates so the percentage was lower, even though the overall numbers were higher.

Superintendent Davis asked if principals were aware of the status of an applicant as a former ESP, substitute, or student teacher. Ms. Ellison mentioned the individual's application should provide enough information for a principal to discern what their prior status with the District or licensure was based on prior work experience.

Trustee Raymond wondered if staff had suggestions for possible revisions to the metric to ensure what the Board was intending to track was actually captured. Ms. Ellison indicated it would probably be better to look at actual numbers, such as how the 1<sup>st</sup> day vacancies were reported.

Irene Payne, Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer, opened the review of Goal 3, Engage family, staff, Trustees, and community members in strong relationships.

Megan Downs, Communications Manager, reviewed Initiative 3.1.1, Employee view rate of superintendent communication. The target for the 2018-19 School Year was to have a 20% view rate of the Superintendent's Friday Minute and the District was able to exceed the goal with a 28% view rate. Possible reasons for the increase in viewership included more employee focused content and employee highlights. She cautioned that the industry average was around 18% so the current year could be an anomaly and additional years would need to be tracked for a true comparison.

Trustee Raymond wondered if the target for the metric should be reviewed. She did not want to see the District fail to reach the target next year if the current year was an anomaly. Ms. Downs stated it would be a challenge for the District to match another 10% gain; however, the goal was to increase readership so while a smaller percentage might be more realistic, it would still be important to show an increase.

Trustee Raymond asked if part of the increase could be attributed to negative stories and low employee morale. Ms. Payne mentioned that could be part of the reason. Employees might be more interested in reading the Superintendent's response to negative media stories and if morale were higher, they might not be as interested in reading about good things happening in the District.

President Simon Holland thanked Communications for their efforts with the information being sent to employees. She appreciated hearing the employee stories and what was occurring in the schools.

Ms. Downs presented Initiative 3.1.2, Increase social media engagement. The numbers did not show a large increase, but that was more due to how Facebook reported on the numbers. Previously, Facebook reported on the number of "shares" a post received and they were now reporting on a more comprehensive engagement rate standard that measured likes, comments, and shares. To reach additional communities, the District had also started a Spanish language page that was continuing to grow through word of mouth.

Trustee Taylor asked if there were easier ways for the Trustees to share media releases on social media. She found it difficult to share information the Trustees would receive in an email on social media because she would forget or the format was not compatible. Ms. Downs mentioned the best option was to share a post directly from the District's social media accounts, but if there was something that did not show up the Trustees should contact Communications. The District was in the process of developing a mobile

app so once complete, the Trustees should be able to share items from the website on social media easier.

Ms. Downs explained the metrics for Initiative 3.1.3, Increase online video views. The actual number over the target for the 2018-19 School Year was much higher because the District now included not only YouTube videos, but also Facebook, the District's websites, and other ways videos could be imbedded in content. Communications was interested in developing more videos related to complex issues, such as allocations, that could be shared because they had proven popular. The final metric under Communications was Initiative 3.1.4, Positive media coverage and stories. The target for the current school year was 93 stories and the District was able to have 105 positive stories covered. It was important to remember positive was defined as a story that was objective, accurate, and fair, not just the reporting of good news.

Samantha Fredrickson, Board Community Engagement Coordinator, reviewed initiatives under Objective 3.3, Strengthen strategic community partnerships including other government agencies and constituent services. Initiative 3.3.1, Board of Trustees attendance at regular meetings, policy committee meetings, and spotlight ceremony, showed Trustees had attended 95% of the meetings/events. The next metric was Initiative 3.3.3, Response to Constituent Concerns within 48 hours, which currently stood at 90% but it was important to remember the number included letters received through mail that were not always easy to respond to as quickly as emails. The target for Initiative 3.3.4, Trustee Media Tracking, had not been set, but she anticipated the numbers would be similar to the 2017-18 School Year. She cautioned there were concerns with the metric because it did not track individual Trustee social media accounts and if #WCSD or #WCSDTrustees was not tagged then the article or post was not counted. If the Trustees were interested in seeing more accurate social media data reported, they would have to provide the District with the ability to look at the backend data of their individual accounts. The final metric for Objective 3.3 was explained, Initiative 3.3.5, Government and Community Meetings attended. The Trustees had attended 67 events out of 75 invitations received. Both numbers showed an increase over the prior year and included the additional events hosted by the Trustees. While the target for the metric was 100%, she felt the Board should focus on the actual numbers since they showed greater interaction with the community.

Ray Price, Deputy Chief of School Police, presented the metrics related to school safety under Goal 5, Ensure our schools are safe, secure, supportive, and welcoming environments. Initiative 5.2.3, Emergency Ops Plan Complete, was the primary metric measured by School Police and the District had completed the plan, remaining in compliance with state requirements related to emergency management.

Superintendent Davis presented additional information for the Board and community to consider while reviewing metrics of the Strategic Plan. The biggest indicator for her were

the graduation rates. Over the past 5 years, the District had increased, not only the overall graduation rate, but also the graduation rates for all subpopulations as well. She believed the numbers showed the District had become much more proactive in supporting students since those who would be walking the graduation stage in June would have benefited from the initiatives put in place in the current Strategic Plan. She felt the ongoing investment in the students, with new textbooks and safety features, would continue to show positive results for the students and the community. She had some concerns with the way some of the initiatives were tracked and that the information the Board was receiving was not what the intent of the metric was so she would continue to work with the Trustees to ensure they had the information they needed to move the District forward. She appreciated the work the Board and District staff had put into the reporting process because it would prove valuable for anyone who served as Superintendent of the Washoe County School District, not just her.

President Simon Holland agreed with Superintendent Davis that there were some metrics that needed to be reviewed by the Board to ensure the correct information was being collected. She wondered what the next steps in that process would be. David Lasic, Chief of Staff, noted a work session would be scheduled to continue to refine the metrics and changes would be made for future reporting years.

#### **4. Reports**

##### **4.01 BOARD REPORTS**

Board Members reported on their attendance at District and community activities and shared announcements of dates and times of upcoming events.

##### **4.02 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Traci Davis reported on her activities including meetings with staff, community leaders and the media.

#### **5. Closing Items**

##### **5.01 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS**

Trustee Caudill requested the presentation that staff would be providing to the Debt Management Commission be presented to the Board prior to the Commission's meeting.

President Simon Holland requested an update on employee morale and turnover rates.

##### **5.02 PUBLIC COMMENT**



There was no public comment at this time.


**5.03 NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

The next Regular Meeting would take place on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria at North Valleys High School.

**5.04 ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business to come before the members of the Board, President Simon Holland declared the meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

  
**Katy Simon Holland, President**

  
**Angela D. Taylor, Clerk**