

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

July 23, 2019

**1. Opening Items**

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:00 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, and Angela Taylor were present. Board Member Malena Raymond was absent from the meeting. Interim Superintendent Kristen McNeill and staff were also present.

**1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Jeana Curtis, Area Superintendent, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1.04 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carol Hines expressed concern with the decision to approve Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield as the approved health insurance carrier since they were in a contract dispute with Renown. She wondered if the Board knew about the dispute when they approved the contract. She was frustrated with all the changes the Board had approved previously related to health insurance providers because it was not easy for people to have to change doctors every few years. She also requested the Board hire a new superintendent from within the District because those selected from outside the District had not been beneficial to the District or community.

President Simon Holland stated the District was continuing to communicate with Anthem Blue Cross & Blue Shield regarding their contract negotiations with Renown Health.

Margaret Martini expressed her support for Protect Nevada Children and hoped the Board would educate parents on the "free" ed tech vendors. She felt the Board was not doing enough to inform parents about the dangers of the ed tech vendors and the

information being collected on students. She was frustrated that the Board and District had not supported legislation supported by Protect Nevada Children during the Nevada Legislature and effectively killed the additional protection for Nevada children.

Todd Taxpayer Bailey remarked that the Board had previously held the trust of the community, but because of past and pending lawsuits from prior superintendents, that trust was gone. He indicated the District was now facing a crisis because of the lack of trust in the community. He looked forward to working with the District to help rebuild the trust.

John Eppolito provided the Board with information on the data being collected on students by free ed tech vendors. According to recent newspaper articles the data being collected was being used by colleges and employers to deny admission or job offers. He mentioned the Board and District had been hearing about what was occurring for years related to third party vendors by Protect Nevada Children, yet continued to do nothing. He urged the Board to educate parents on the dangers of third party vendors and allow the parents to decide if they wanted their children using the programs.

Connie Silvera thanked the Board for beginning the meetings later, but recommended alternating between morning and evening start times so all members of the community had the ability to participate if they wanted. She also urged the Board to look locally for a new superintendent because the community was interested in seeing someone invested in the community hired for the position. She also hoped the Board would not be providing additional money for the Interim Superintendent but instead provide raises to those employees who qualified for Food Stamps.

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

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Caudill 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, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

## **2. Consent Agenda Items**

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Todd Bailey spoke to Consent Agenda Items 2.02, Approval of payment of annual membership dues to the Nevada Association of School Board for 2019-2020 in the amount of \$23,073.91, and 2.03, Approval of payment of the 2019-20 membership fees to the National School Boards Association Council of Urban Boards of Education for \$16,218.75. He requested the Board pull the items until further review could be

conducted. The organizations appeared to do the same thing, so there was duplication, and he wondered what the benefits to the District and Board actually were from the organizations. He believed all travel should be looked at in the District and submitted a public information request to review all travel information from the District since January 2017.

President Simon Holland mentioned the Board had cut the travel budget in the District over the past few years by 50% and most teacher professional development was paid for from grant funding. Around \$50,000 had been spent on travel for 8,000 employees. She added that the Board of Trustees collaborated with all other school district boards of trustees in Nevada through the Nevada Association of School Boards. She believed it was necessary since Washoe County School District was the second largest school district in Nevada that collaboration occur to ensure Trustees were trained and informed of national standards and items of interest. Additionally, Nevada Revised Statutes required all school board trustees in Nevada to receive professional development and the Nevada Association of School Boards provided that training. The Council of Urban Boards of Education provided the District and Board with relevant information on national issues impacting school districts in urban areas.

President Simon Holland indicated there was an error related to Consent Agenda Item 2.15, Possible action to approve the re-appointment and new appointments to the Sexuality, Health and Responsibility Education (SHARE) Advisory Committee. The item would be pulled from the agenda and return for consideration at a future meeting of the Board of Trustees.

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Caudill that **the Board of Trustees pulls Consent Agenda Item 2.15 and requests the item return for consideration at a future meeting of the Board of Trustees.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

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

- 2.02 The Board of Trustees approved the payment of the 2019-20 annual membership dues to the Nevada Association of School Boards in the amount of \$23,073.91.

- 2.03 The Board of Trustees approved the payment of the 2019-20 membership fees to the National School Boards Association Council of Urban Boards of Education in the amount of \$16,218.75
- 2.04 The Board of Trustees approved the grant application to The Nell J. Redfield Foundation for the Redfield Community Outreach Program for \$298,000.
- 2.05 The Board of Trustees approved Renewal 2 of Request for Proposal (RFP) #17-003, Comprehensive District-wide Middle School and High School Athletic Uniforms and Related Apparel, to Athletics Unlimited, BSN Sports and Eastbay in the estimated amount of \$1,300,000 for an additional one (1) year beginning August 9, 2019 and ending August 8, 2020.
- 2.06 The Board of Trustees approved Renewal #1 of Request for Bid (RFB) #054-04-03-17, District-Wide Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Repairs, to Quality Control Systems as the primary supplier, Gardner Mechanical as the secondary supplier and Elite Air as the tertiary supplier in the estimated amount of \$200,000 for an additional one (1) year beginning August 1, 2019 and ending July 31, 2020.
- 2.07 The Board of Trustees accepted the information collected from the Dave & Cheryl Duffield Foundation related to Nevada Revised Statute 386.390.
- 2.08 The Board of Trustees accepted the information collected from the Washoe K-12 Foundation related to Nevada Revised Statute 386.390.
- 2.09 The Board of Trustees approved the Third Amendment to Lease 1301 Cordone Avenue for the RISE Academy for Adult Achievement for \$14,578.20 per month with an annual increase of 2.5% through July 31, 2024.
- 2.10 The Board of Trustees approved the client agreement with Rethink Platform Solutions for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$150,000 for Special Education related services.
- 2.11 The Board of Trustees approved the recommendation of the Group Insurance Committee to renew the agreement with Grand Rounds, Inc. for 3 years, effective August 1, 2019, at an annual cost of \$190,000, for a total of \$570,000.

- 2.12 The Board of Trustees approved the client agreement with Ardor for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$200,000 for special education related services.
- 2.13 The Board of Trustees approved the client agreement with National Staffing Solutions for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$400,000 for special education related services.
- 2.14 The Board of Trustees approved the client agreement with Soliant Health for the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 in the amount of \$300,000 for special education related services.

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

#### **3.01 PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING BOARD RESOLUTION 19-006, A RESOLUTION OF INTENT PROPOSING THE ISSUANCE OF UP TO \$100 MILLION IN GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS (ADDITIONALLY SECURED WITH PLEDGED REVENUES), APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON MAY 28, 2019**

Mark Mathers, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed Washoe County School District Board Resolution 19-006.

President Simon Holland opened the public hearing and call for public comment.

There was no public comment at this time.

President Simon Holland closed the public hearing.

#### **3.02 OPENING OF PROPOSALS TO PURCHASE AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO SELL 29.446-ACRES OF DISTRICT-OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED ON VISTA BOULEVARD FOR A MINIMUM AMOUNT OF \$6,000,000 PURSUANT TO WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD RESOLUTION 19-007, AS ADOPTED ON JUNE 25, 2019**

Mike Boster, School Planner, stated no written bids had been received related to the property. Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), the Board had the ability to call for oral bids, which had to meet or exceed the appraised value and the terms and conditions included in Board Resolution 19-007.

President Simon Holland called for bids on the 29.446-acres of District-owned property located on Vista Boulevard. No bids were received. Mr. Boster explained the next steps in the process, which included amending the Board Resolution to re-notice the

community of the sale at a future meeting. If no bids were again received, the Board would be able to consider any oral bids offered at less than the appraised value of the property.

**3.03 OPENING OF PROPOSALS TO PURCHASE AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO SELL 10-ACRES OF DISTRICT-OWNED PROPERTY LOCATED ON WILBUR MAY PARKWAY FOR A MINIMUM OF \$2,600,000 PURSUANT TO WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD RESOLUTION 19-008, AS ADOPTED ON JUNE 25, 2019**

Mike Boster, School Planner, stated the District had received three (3) written bids for the property.

President Simon Holland opened and reviewed the bids for the public. The first bid was from Insight Education was for \$2,700,000; the second bid was from Ryder NV Management, LLC was for \$2,750,000; and the third bid was from Silverado Homes was for \$2,910,000. Any oral bids would be required to exceed \$2,910,000 by at least 5% and meet terms and conditions included in Board Resolution 19-008.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

John Eppolito wondered why the District did not list the properties they were interested in selling with an agent. He felt the District would be able to have greater interest in the properties and receive even more money than what the bids offered.

President Simon Holland explained the District was required to follow the dictates of Nevada Revised Statutes when it came to the disposal of property. Public notice was provided through postings at government buildings and offices and the *Reno Gazette-Journal*.

President Simon Holland called for oral bids.

Mark Kruger on behalf of Ryder NV Management bid \$3,055,500 including applicable terms and conditions.

Silverado Homes bid \$3,100,000 including applicable terms and conditions.

Mr. Kruger bid \$3,150,000.

Silverado Homes Bid \$3,200,000.

No other oral bids were received.

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It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Calvert that **the Board of Trustees accepts the oral bid of \$3,200,000, including applicable terms and conditions, from Silverado Homes for 10-acres of District-owned property located on Wilbur May Parkway.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

### 3.04 **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF CHANGES TO ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT DUE TO CHANGES IN FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS INTENDED TO REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM**

Dr. Bryn Lapenta, Director of Student Accounting, provided a presentation on attendance procedures. No major changes to attendance procedures between 1999 to 2018 had occurred. One of the major frustrations for staff during that time was that students were allowed an unlimited number of excused absences, so a student could miss 80 days and still move onto the next grade if those absences were excused. The United States Office of Civil Rights released a report in 2013 on chronic absenteeism in schools which showed students who missed at least 15 days of school a year were at serious risk of falling behind. Based on that information, the federal government began requiring states to report chronic absenteeism information by grade level starting with the 2017-18 School Year. The Nevada Department of Education created a state attendance committee to review the information and create state-wide standards. The District implemented the recommended changes for the 2018-19 School Year. The largest changes was that students would be considered absent if they were out more than 50% of the school day and any absence outside of school business was considered a "chronic" absence, with a medical absence only being excused if a note was received from a medical professional. To exempt an absence so it was not considered chronic, the classwork had to be made up by the student. The intent was to show parents and students the amount of work that was missed when they were absent and remove the burden from the teachers on catching up students who were absent; unfortunately, there were unintended consequences and the process did not work as envisioned.

Dr. Lapenta explained the changes, developed collaboratively with stakeholders, that would be implemented for the 2019-20 School Year. One of the biggest changes was to count an absence as an absence, with a student either being present or absent. The attendance manual was also updated, schools would be allowed to decide the consequences for absences based on knowledge of their students, and schools were able to decide how to manage changes to the way absences were coded in Infinite Campus.

President Simon Holland asked how equitable it was to allow the schools to decide the consequences for absences since one school could be doing one thing, while another

school could be doing something else. Dr. Lapenta remarked that the schools were interested in making the changes to allow them flexibility in knowing what was best for their students and their reasons for missing school.

President Simon Holland mentioned the message should then be that the intent was to keep the issue student-centered and for principals to do what was best for the individual students. She encouraged the District to collaborate with parents and students as well.

Trustee Caudill wondered if the District provided parameters for the schools to follow or if complete autonomy was allowed. Dr. Lapenta indicated there would be guidelines but schools would be encouraged to do what was best for their students.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Selena Hatch was a teacher in the District. She was encouraged by the changes but had some questions and concerns related to the number of absences a student could miss and still pass the class. She would like to see additional guidance provided District-wide to ensure standards were met.

Malia Puchta mentioned that, as a parent, she discovered that when her children were absent the teachers were not always able to provide make-up work on time or had even lost assignments so an absence was never excused. She would rather students were provided "sick days" like any job then they would not have to make up work. She believed most parents were able to determine if their children were sick and not abuse the process.

Natha Anderson, Washoe Education Association, thanked the District for working with educators on the attendance processes. She appreciated the willingness of central administration staff to collaborate with teachers. Teachers would appreciate the ability to work directly with students and families on absences instead of using a one-size-fits-all approach.

John Eppolito expressed concern over absences and other information in Infinite Campus never being deleted and containing behavioral information that parents were not allowed access to.

*Trustee Taylor left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.*

**3.05 PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR AN OVERVIEW OF STATE ASSESSMENTS AND PROFICIENCY IN WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE NEVADA SCHOOL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**



Ben Hayes, Chief Accountability Officer, provided a presentation on the state assessments and student performance in the Washoe County School District. The state and federal government required certain assessments be administered to students from pre-k through grade 12. The District would utilize many of the state assessments to monitor student progress, but also required some additional assessments to ensure students remained on-track and that they were meeting standards. Some assessments were specific to certain grades or programs, such as Advanced Placement or English Learners. The two grades with the most assessments conducted were 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

President Simon Holland mentioned the Board had heard for a couple of years about the amount of testing in the schools during the community budget forums, with comments being that reducing the amount of testing could help ease some of the strain on the budget. Mr. Hayes remarked that some of the tests were mandated by the state or federal government. While District was interested in revising the assessment schedule to ease the strain on schools and students, it was important to remember that assessments did provide beneficial information to teachers on the progress of students. The assessments were able to show if a student was on-track with their learning or if interventions needed to occur to provide additional assistance.

Mr. Hayes continued with the presentation. Since grades 5 and 8 contained the most required assessments, staff looked at the amount of time a student in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, who was an English Learner (EL), would spend taking the assessments. The total number of hours was 19.25 hours throughout the school year which amounted to 1.8% of a school year. However, that did not take into account the time teachers would spend preparing students for the tests.

Trustee Caudill remarked that schools without enough computers would take longer to complete the testing than a school with adequate technology. His concern was that an individual student might not take a lot of time testing, but the schools in general were in constant testing mode because they only had a few computers for students to test on. Mr. Hayes agreed and the age of the computer could also impact the time it took for a student to complete the test. The District was interested in speeding up the technology refresh program so schools not only had newer devices, but also enough devices to be used for testing and instruction.

Interim Superintendent McNeill noted the Office of Accountability had also been working closely with principals over the past year to provide information to everyone about the intent of assessments and how to read the data to ensure students were progressing. She agreed there was little point in conducting assessments if the teachers were not able to utilize the results to help students succeed.

Trustee Kelley wondered how much time teachers spent throughout the school year on preparing students for the tests and then reviewing the information. While the amount of time spent by a student taking the test might not be large, the amount of time teachers spent preparing the students could be a lot more and take up too much time.

Mr. Hayes reviewed the District's results on the Smarter Balanced Assessments Consortium (SBAC) tests which were based on the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Unfortunately, the District was not where they wanted to be with students testing at or above standards so improvement did need to occur, since 48% of elementary school students tested at or above the standards in English Language Arts (ELA). He did mention the SBAC tests were difficult and even high performing states, such as Connecticut, had an average of around 60%. The more important information from SBAC was the data related to achievement gaps that existed among different ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

President Simon Holland expressed discouragement that in some areas the numbers had declined since 2016. Mr. Hayes admitted the preliminary results for 2019 did not look much better. The District was also discouraged and knew they had to do better for the students. Part of the change that needed to occur would be to review the standards since the content on the SBAC was some of the more difficult content students would see throughout the year.

Trustee Caudill asked if the District was aware of the results by school site so additional supports could be provided to the schools that showed the lower results. Mr. Hayes indicated that they did and staff collaborated on ways to improve the schools through additional supports, such as the Acceleration Zone. He noted that the Title I schools and schools within the Acceleration Zone did outperform the rest of the District in terms of gains, so it was evident those schools with additional supports were able to perform better.

Trustee Kelley wondered if some of cause for the lower results were related to outdated textbooks. Mr. Hayes remarked that outdated textbooks were part of the problem and it would take a couple of years to see the results related to textbooks and curriculum. The District was moving into the third year of the math curriculum so he anticipated the numbers related to math would increase within the next year. The schools were also excited about the new ELA curriculum and using the new materials and he anticipated an increase in the scores in the next few years.

Interim Superintendent McNeill added the District was working with the schools to ensure the new ELA curriculum was implemented with fidelity. It would be important to ensure the new curriculum was followed and that teachers were able to supplement with materials they believed would benefit their students.

Mr. Hayes presented information on how the District compared with the rest of Nevada. The District out-performed the rest of the state in all grades for math, except 3<sup>rd</sup> grade which was even. The ELA results were slightly different, with the District behind for a couple of the early grades, but then moving past the rest of the state. Similar information was presented on how the District compared to other states within the SBAC Consortium for math and ELA. Many in the community would reference the Quality Counts Report Card to show Nevada ranked at the bottom nationally when disparaging the District, so it was important to remember that the rankings were not based only on academics in each state, but a variety of factors school districts could not control, such as parent education, family income, and steady employment.

Trustee Caudill requested additional information on the star-ratings of schools based on assessment data. Mr. Hayes provided background information on how student growth was measured from year to year. The Nevada School Performance Framework looked at where student growth was, where student growth should be, and if students were challenged at a particular school. If a school was rated as 5-stars, the majority of students ranked in the top 15% of all students in Nevada for their grade level, were being challenged, and continuing to show growth. A 3-star school showed the students were about average and there was growth, but not as high as other schools. The star system was really a snapshot of one year at the school and, for him, a 1- or 2-star school did not mean the students were not at grade level, showing growth, or being challenged, but that additional supports needed to be provided to the school to increase student growth.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Todd Bailey submitted a public records request for information on the cost of all computer adaptive testing since 2009. He mentioned that computer adaptive testing would increase the difficulty of questions for students when they answered correctly. He believed that part of the reason for the decline in the results was because of the adaptive testing. The District continued to spend more money and time on SBAC testing but the diminishing results showed it was not worth it. He and others had been providing information to the District and Board on the problems with Common Core and SBAC since they were adopted so it was frustrating to see the results. He would like to see the Board work with the state on the information so changes could be made.

John Eppolito mentioned about half of the states who originally signed onto the SBAC tests and dropped the tests. Additionally, other states allowed parents to opt-out of the tests. He wondered why the Board did not advocate for the removal of the test because the adaptiveness of the test did not compare students equally. Protect Nevada Children had advocated for years to allow parents to opt-out of the testing but that also remained difficult. Additionally, schools were punished with a lower star rating if too many parents opted their children out of the test, which he believed was unfair.

**3.06 DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING THE PROCESS FOR SELECTING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS FOR THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO CONSIDERATION OF TIMELINE FOR HIRING; THE PROCESS FOR SOLICITING INPUT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, STAFF, STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON THE PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE DESIRED FOR A SUPERINTENDENT; THE INTERVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS; THE SCOPE OF RECRUITMENT EFFORTS (LOCAL, REGIONAL, OR NATIONAL); SEARCH FACILITATOR OPTIONS; AND THE POSSIBLE ISSUANCE OF A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR A CONSULTANT OR SEARCH FIRM TO SUPPORT ONE OR MORE OF THE SEARCH ACTIVITIES**

President Simon Holland noted she was interested in beginning the conversation; however, she was reluctant to make a lot of binding decisions since two members of the Board were not present.

Emily Ellison, Chief Human Resources Officer, provided information on the process of selecting a Superintendent of Schools for the Washoe County School District. The process was lengthy; however, when broken down into certain milestones that should occur, it was easier to see how everything fit together. The items for consideration included a timeline, identifying desired qualifications and characteristics, scope of search, and screening, interview, and selection. The timeline would influence all other decisions that would need to be made and when activities should occur.

President Simon Holland mentioned the District needed to stabilize with all the uncertainty that had occurred over the past few months before hiring a superintendent. She would rather the Board take their time in the decision-making process and not rush to hire someone. The pool of candidates would look very different depending on when the Board wanted to have someone in place, so that was an extremely important consideration.

Trustee Caudill indicated he would not want to go any later than the start of the 2020-21 School Year. He wanted to ensure extensive community input because that had not occurred with the prior two superintendents.

Trustee Calvert wondered how long a standard contract for a superintendent of schools was and if there would be a problem for the District if the selected candidate broke a contract to take the position. Ms. Ellison stated it would depend on the candidate, their current position within a school district, any current contract provisions, and the state in which they resided. Some states or school districts might have one-year only contracts

with certain persons, while others might have multi-year contracts that allowed the ability to break the contract with a certain amount of notice. If a candidate were selected from another school district in Nevada, the candidate would have to provide a certain amount of notice to their current employer or face possible action against their professional license. If the Board were interested in having someone in place prior to the start of the 2020-21 School Year, there should be enough time for any candidate to provide enough notice.

Trustee Caudill noted that it was common for high-level executives to be hired, but not have a start date for about 3 months to allow for a transition period to occur with both a current employer and a new employer. Ms. Ellison articulated that once the Board decided on when they would want someone in the position, a revised timeline would be prepared to show when the major activities should occur related to the hiring process, which could include a transition period.

Ms. Ellison reviewed how the identification of desired qualifications and characteristics could occur, including meetings and feedback from the Board of Trustees, staff, students, and the community.

President Simon Holland added that it would be important to consider various subgroups related to the community. She would like to hear from parents and families, as well as members of the business community and other organizations.

Trustee Caudill indicated an Ad Hoc Committee could be created by the Board that would include parents, staff, and members of the community who would be able to gather feedback on desired qualities instead of a survey, then vet all the candidates, and then provide three or four finalists to the Trustees for consideration. He felt each Trustee could select a person to be part of the committee to be fair and represent all of Washoe County. Once that process was complete, the Board could interview the candidates in an open meeting so the community could watch and provide input.

President Simon Holland stated Nevada Revised Statutes required interviews conducted by the Board be completed in an open, public meeting. It would be important that any candidate interested in the position be aware of Open Meeting Law requirements because that could impact someone's willingness to apply for the position. Additionally, if the Board were to appoint a search committee, all the business of that committee would be subject to Nevada's Open Meeting Law as well. Ms. Ellison cautioned that there would be candidates not interested in applying for the position if a search committee were used because their names would not be confidential. Many candidates would not want to publicly announce they were interested in the position unless they were selected as a finalist.

Trustee Kelley mentioned members of the public could also email the Board directly with information on the qualities they were interested in seeing in a superintendent of schools, especially if they were uncomfortable taking a survey.

Trustee Caudill also expressed an interest in conducting community forums, similar to the budget forums, to allow the Trustees to gather information from the community and staff. He would rather any surveys be used to supplement information but not be the primary way the Trustees receive information.

Ms. Ellison reviewed the aspects of the screening, interview, and selection process. If the Board chose to work with a search consultant, the process would look different than if staff were used to lead the process. The differences between hiring a search consultant and utilizing staff were explained. A discussion was held on how a scoring rubric could be utilized as part of the process and how personality or other intangibles should be included in deciding on candidates. Because there were different layers to the screening process, it would be important for the Board to determine how involved they wanted the community and themselves in the different layers of the process. The Trustees were interested in seeing as much community involvement as possible, but also wanted to ensure the candidates were well aware of the priorities of the Strategic Plan and how they could work to achieve the goals.

Ms. Ellison presented options the Board could utilize for the search, including with a national or local consultant, a search committee, or District staff. The timeline, how stakeholder input could be gathered, scope of search for candidates, and candidate screening method for each option was reviewed.

President Simon Holland indicated she would prefer either a consultant or District staff be used and would lean towards a consultant. If District staff were used, they could be placed in an awkward position of setting the criteria to hire their boss and they also had enough work to do already that she did not want to add to their plates.

Trustee Minetto agreed with President Simon Holland. She believed there was a lot of expertise in the District, but felt it would be better to have an outside consultant conduct the search.

Trustee Caudill expressed concern over the potential cost of an outside consultant. He would prefer a local consultant so the community was taken into consideration and a national firm would not really care about what happened after the hiring process.

President Simon Holland countered that executive search firms at the national level were interested in providing the best candidates and had knowledge of superintendents throughout the United States. The firms would have a better idea of who was not only looking but who might be a good fit for the District. She was not as concerned with the

cost because there were 2 open Leadership Team positions at the present time and 1 position had been eliminated, resulting in a savings. She felt any decision on utilizing a consultant should be made when all Trustees were present.

Trustee Kelley cautioned that costs, especially for national firms, could increase quickly with travel arraignments that might be required. He was also concerned about a firm working for multiple school districts because it could be difficult to determine if the Washoe County School District was getting the best candidate or if a larger school district was because they were paying more money.

President Simon Holland suggested a request for proposal be drafted and then the Board could look at any firm interested in conducting a search could submit a proposal. Ms. Ellison mentioned that the Board could also look at utilizing both a national and local firm to conduct different aspects of the search process, such as a national firm recruiting candidates and a local firm setting up community meetings.

Trustee Caudill wondered what would happen if the search process, using a firm, were to fail. He wondered if the District would have any recourse against the firm if they did not meet deadlines or other expectations. Ms. Ellison indicated terms and conditions of the contract would address such scenarios.

Trustee Calvert asked how comfortable the Human Resources Department was with each of the options. Ms. Ellison mentioned the Department was comfortable with any of the options. They had worked with consulting and search firms previously or, while not ideal for reasons previously mentioned, they could facilitate the search themselves. She believed an external firm or search committee would provide more perceived objectivity from the community than a search conducted by staff.

Trustee Kelley appreciated the suggestion that the work could be split between a national firm and a local firm. While it was not something he had thought of, it sounded like it could be a benefit to the District. He wondered if other school districts had done something similar and what the process might look like. Ms. Ellison remarked that a local firm might be much more helpful in conducting outreach to the community and receiving feedback since they would have a better idea of the community than a national firm. Since the District would be the one seeking the services, they could largely dictate that aspect of the process and include the idea within a request for proposal to gage interest and feasibility.

President Simon Holland added that other consultants hired by the District and Board in the past had collaborated with local firms or contractors so they could have a deeper connection to the community input process. She summarized the discussion and reviewed the items the Trustees seemed to have consensus on, such as timeline, use of others outside the District to conduct the search, ensure the process was as inclusive as

possible and include parents, staff, students, and the community. She recommended the item be added to the agenda of the next scheduled meeting to allow for the conversation to continue with the full Board.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Ann Silver, Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce, stated the Chamber supported the education of all students in the District as they were the emerging workforce for the businesses the Chamber represented. The Chamber supported the idea of having a detailed review of the District conducted to ensure proper operation of the organization. The Chamber believed a search for a superintendent of schools should not begin until such a review had been conducted and the challenges to the organization fully addressed.

Selena Hatch appreciated the conversation the Board had conducted. She agreed with the comments related to the broken trust that had occurred with staff and it was imperative for staff to be included in the hiring process. She supported the idea of a committee conducting the initial vetting of candidates and believed that if a candidate had concerns with the openness of the committee process then they might not be as interested in transparency as the community was looking for.

Tim Zisk encouraged the Board to take their time with the search process. He urged the Board to look for candidates with a lot of leadership experience and local knowledge. He hoped the Board would require data to provide back-up information on a candidate's accomplishments and not just take someone's word that they improved a system.

Joe Rose wondered if there was a career path within the District that led to the superintendent position. He believed there were people within the District that could do the job so the Board should look from within. Additionally, he felt standards should have been set a long time ago about what the Board wanted in a superintendent. He was concerned about having a national firm, who knew nothing about Nevada or Washoe County, provide recommendations on what they believed would be good candidates for the Superintendent of Schools for the Washoe County School District.

Mary Abler commended the Board on the discussion and hoped the process occurred as discussed. She had been part of prior superintendent search processes and had been dissatisfied with the process because she did not believe the steps the Board was interested in taking had occurred. She was hopeful that would not occur for the upcoming process. She hoped a new superintendent would encourage innovation and collaboration.



Todd Bailey indicated the Board should not spend taxpayer money on a superintendent search by hiring an external consultant or firm. He recommended the Board post messages on the internet and social media, that way interested candidates could just go to the website and apply. He believed the past superintendent searches had been orchestrated to ensure a preferred candidate was hired, which were disastrous. He would rather see the Board use the standard process already in place in the District when someone applied for employment. He requested information on the total amount spent on superintendent searches since 2009 and if there were any personal connections to District staff or Board members with prior consultants or applicants.

Malia Puchta thanked the Board for the thoughtful conversation regarding the search process. She appreciated that the Board was interested in conducting a search and not just hiring the "next person in line." She was interested in being part of the search process, including helping organize a forum to allow for parent input.

Margaret Martini indicated the Board and District had been paying out prior superintendents because they left or were fired. She did not think the District paying \$100,000 if the right candidate was selected was outrageous since the District had spent hundreds of thousands to buy-out or settle with the past three superintendents. She also urged the Board to drive the conversations surrounding the contract terms, conditions, and salary. The candidates were the ones interested in working for the District so the Board should not provide anything outrageous.

John Eppolito agreed with the prior comments. He urged the Board to look internally for a candidate because the past three superintendents had come in from out of the area and had been a disaster. He was insulted to think the Board did not believe, with all the chief officers and area superintendents in the District, that not one of them was qualified for the position or could not do a better job than the past three superintendents.

President Simon Holland recommended the timeline goal be voted on at the current meeting to allow the process to move forward.

It was moved by Trustee Kelley and seconded by Trustee Caudill that **the Board of Trustees sets the goal of having a Superintendent of Schools for the Washoe County School District for the start of the 2020-21 School Year.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, and Ellen Minetto.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

3.07 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE DIRECTION TO DETERMINE THE COMPENSATION TO BE PAID TO DR. KRISTEN MCNEILL FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF WORK AS ACTING AND INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT**

President Simon Holland remarked that Dr. McNeill had taken on additional when she was named Acting Superintendent and then as Interim Superintendent duties, which far exceeded what she had been doing while in the position of Deputy Superintendent. Additionally, it had been decided to leave the positions of Deputy Superintendent and Chief of Staff open for the time being so the District was saving money.

Emily Ellison, Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed Board Policy 9082, Continuity of District Daily Operations and Succession Planning for the Superintendent. The Policy allowed for compensation for an Acting Superintendent of up to an additional 10% of their daily rate of pay and the Board was required to take formal action to determine the compensation of an Interim Superintendent. For the past two interim superintendents, the compensation was an additional \$3,000 per month on top of the employees' current salary. She noted Dr. McNeill had declined to take the additional compensation when she was named Acting Superintendent and had agreed to an additional \$2,500 per month on top of her current salary as compensation for the position of Interim Superintendent.

President Simon Holland felt the request was reasonable. She appreciated Dr. McNeill's willingness to not accept compensation while Acting Superintendent, as well as requesting less than she had previously received as Interim Superintendent.

Trustee Caudill also believed the request was fair in light of the budget situation the District was facing.

Trustee Minetto agreed but also felt that \$3,000 was also fair.

It was moved by Trustee Kelley and seconded by Trustee Calvert that **the Board of Trustees provides Dr. Kristen McNeill with an additional \$2,500 per month, on top of current salary, as compensation while serving as Interim Superintendent of the Washoe County School District.**

President Simon Holland opened the motion for public comment.

Todd Bailey stated the Board needed to have a serious conversation about pay equity in the District. He believed the teachers and hourly employees deserved to hear what the Board thought and the reasons they had not received raises in line with inflation. He also requested additional information related to the shutting down of the District for two days in June, including emails referencing possible safety concerns, especially from law enforcement.

The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, and Ellen Minetto.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

**3.08 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO DIRECT THE SCHOOL NAMING COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE NAMES OF THE FUTURE HIGH SCHOOL AT WILDCREEK AND THE FUTURE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CAMPUS AT THE EXISTING PROCTER R. HUG HIGH SCHOOL TOGETHER AS ONE NAMING RECOMMENDATION**

Riley Sutton, School Capital Needs Public Relations Specialist, explained the naming process for the new high school was different than the previous naming actions taken by the Board since the students from an existing school would be moved into a new school and the existing school repurposed. While current Board Policy did not preclude the naming of both schools at the same time, the School Naming Committee was requesting additional authorization and clarification from the Board on the process. There was also confusion on if the new high school at Wildcreek were to be named first, the Committee would not be able to consider "Procter R. Hug High School" as a potential name since it was currently in use, which could also be problematic if the existing facility were to be renamed first.

It was moved by Trustee Kelley and seconded by Trustee Caudill that **the Board of Trustees directs the School Naming Committee to consider the names of the future high school at Wildcreek and the future career and technical education campus at the existing Procter R. Hug High School together as one naming recommendation.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, and Ellen Minetto.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

**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 INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Interim Superintendent McNeill 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 a comprehensive review of action taken by the Board of Trustees on February 14, 2016 to place the authority of the day to day operations of the District in the hands of the superintendent, specifically with regard to approving separation decisions and the hiring of any staff in District positions that earn over \$100,000 per year and approval of District-wide decisions that impact all schools and facilities. He also requested an agenda item related to the changes in the reporting of the Chief General Counsel to the Superintendent from the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Minetto requested a presentation on the use of ed tech vendors in the District.

## 5.02 PUBLIC COMMENT

Todd Bailey requested information on all contracts between the Washoe County School District and KPS3 Advertising since January 2017. He was concerned about the amount the District spent on an advertising firm during the firing of Superintendent Davis when they already had a Communications Department. He mentioned KPS3 had been involved in the campaigns of two sitting members of the Board of Trustees: Katy Simon Holland and Dr. Angela Taylor. He was also concerned about a sitting superintendent contributing to the campaign of a sitting Trustee, which also occurred with Ms. Traci Davis donating to Dr. Angela Taylor's campaign.

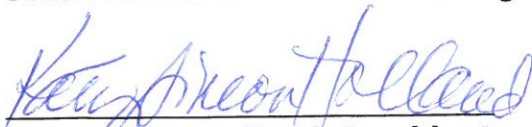
Natha Anderson, Washoe Education Association (WEA), mentioned she had been able to meet with Interim Superintendent McNeill twice since the beginning of July. WEA appreciated the willingness of Dr. McNeill to meet and her commitment to listening to the concerns raised. One thing Dr. McNeill had stated in their meetings was that the District did employ a large number of teachers, but also employed the same number of non-teaching positions, such as counselors, bus drivers, assistants, and others so improving employee morale was not only related to teachers.


## 5.03 NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The next Regular Meeting would take place on August 13, 2019 beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Central Administration Building.

## 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 8:11 p.m.

  
**Katy Simon Holland, President**

  
**Angela D. Taylor, Clerk**