

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL 12, 2022
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

April 12, 2022

1. Opening Items

1.01 CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 3:37 p.m. in the Board Room of the Central Administration Building, located at 425 East Ninth Street in Reno, Nevada.

1.02 ROLL CALL

President Angela Taylor and Board Members Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, and Beth Smith were present. Superintendent Kristen McNeill, Student Representative Victoria Gomez, and staff were also present.

1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vangie Russell led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.04 ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA

President Taylor noted staff was requesting Consent Agenda Item 2.09, Approval of request for qualifications for engineering services, be pulled from the agenda. The item would return to a future meeting for consideration.

It was moved by Trustee Rodriguez and seconded by Trustee Mayberry that **the Board of Trustees pulls Consent Agenda Item 2.09 and approves the agenda as revised.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

2. Consent Agenda Items

Trustee Church requested Consent Agenda Item 2.03, Approval of the minutes of the February 22, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, be pulled for additional discussion.

It was moved by Trustee Nicolet and seconded by Trustee Rodriguez that **the Board of Trustees approves Consent Agenda Items 2.02, 2.04 through 2.08, and 2.10 through 2.14.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

- 2.02 The Board of Trustees approved the minutes of the February 22, 2022 Work Session of the Board of Trustees.
- 2.04 The Board of Trustees acknowledged receipt of notification of declared emergency repairs pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes 332.112 and 338.011(2), contracts related to emergency, for the replacement of the chiller at Spanish Springs High School for the estimated cost of \$250,000.
- 2.05 The Board of Trustees approved the purchase of the second phase of Intelitek LearnMate System and Job Master Equipment from Paton Group for the Career and Technical Education Program at the new Procter R. Hug High School in the estimated total amount of \$177,876.
- 2.06 The Board of Trustees approved Renewal #3 of Request for Bid (RFB) #054-03-02-18, District-wide Pumping Services, to Waters Vacuum Truck Service for an estimated annual total of \$100,000 for an additional term of one (1) year beginning May 1, 2022 and ending April 30, 2023.
- 2.07 The Board of Trustees approved the award of Request for Bid (RFB) #87-B-01-22-LR, Refrigerated Delivery Trucks for Nutrition Services, to Silver State International in the estimated contract amount of \$561,048.96.
- 2.08 The Board of Trustees approved the award of Request for Bid (RFB) #22-91-B-02-AA, Replacement of Tennis Courts at Spanish Springs High School, to Spanish Springs Construction, Inc. for \$511,444.
- 2.10 The Board of Trustees approved Renewal #3 of Request for Bid (RFB) #054-04-02-18, Certain Plumbing Repair, to NDI Plumbing, as the primary supplier, and Savage and Son, as the secondary supplier, in the estimated amount of \$190,000 for a term of one (1) year beginning May 1, 2022 and ending April 30, 2023.
- 2.11 The Board of Trustees approved the contract to purchase four (4) new black and white production machines and one envelope machine, and the associated maintenance and service, for the Print Shop to Canon Solutions America in the estimated amount of \$603,405.36 for a term of 5 years beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2027.

- 2.12 The Board of Trustees approved the purchase of air purifiers from School Specialty through joinder Omnia Contract #R191815 for an estimated total of \$150,956.41.
- 2.13 The Board of Trustees approved the State Competitive Career and Technical Education (CTE) grant for Washoe County School District CTE programs to the Nevada Department of Education for \$300,753.95.
- 2.14 The Board of Trustees approved and adopted changes to the negotiated agreement between the Washoe County School District and the Washoe County School Police Officers' Association.

2.03 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 22, 2022 REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trustee Church indicated he was interested in seeing more detail included in the minutes related to Board Reports, similar to how the comments from the public were provided.

It was moved by Trustees Church that the Board of Trustees sends the minutes of the February 22, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees back for additional editing of the Board Reports section. The motion died for lack of a second.

Trustee Church asked if the current draft of the minutes were compliant with Nevada Revised Statutes. Anthony Hall, Board Legal Counsel, stated the minutes were compliant.

President Taylor noted that traditionally, Board Reports were used as a time where the Trustees could report on their activities as part of their duties as a member of the Board of Trustees. She highlighted the language was similar to what was also provided in the minutes for the Student Representative's Report and the Superintendent's Report. She was comfortable with the current status since all the reports were not germane to the running of the District. The Board could consider something different but since there was no second to the motion, there did not appear to be a desire to change them.

Trustee Church countered that he would then have to provide his remarks during the General Public Comment Period to ensure they were entered into the record.

Trustee Smith remarked the meetings were live streamed and recorded so anyone interested in knowing more had the ability to watch the meeting.

It was moved by Trustee Mayberry and seconded by Trustee Rodriguez that **the Board of Trustees approves the minutes of the February 22, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.** The result of the vote was 6-1: (Yea: Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Jeff Church.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

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

3.01 INFORMATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPOINT A MEMBER OR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO THE FOLLOWING NON-WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PUBLIC BODIES FOR 2022: DIANE NICOLET TO THE WASHOE COUNTY DEBT MANAGEMENT COMMISSION; JEFF CHURCH TO THE NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS; ELLEN MINETTO TO THE NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE; AND ELIZABETH SMITH TO THE TRUCKEE MEADOWS REGIONAL PLANNING GOVERNING BOARD

It was moved by Trustee Rodriguez and seconded by Trustee Mayberry that **the Board of Trustees approves the Board Member appointments to non-Washoe County School District public bodies for 2022 as presented.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

3.02 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2023-2027, FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CAPITAL FUNDING PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Adam Searcy, Chief Facilities Management Officer, presented the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to the Board for consideration. The CIP was required annually by both Nevada Revised Statutes and Board Policy. The Capital Funding Protection Committee had reviewed the report and were recommending approval by the Board. The CIP was a short-term plan that provided information on planned capital projects and equipment purchases, as well as identifying options for financing the projects. Approval of the CIP would not provide authorization for the individual projects, which would still be required to be presented and approved by both the Capital Funding Protection Committee and Board of Trustees. The process for selecting projects included within the CIP were based on enrollment demands for new schools, capital renewal projects, and core/existing school investments. All projects included in the Five-Year CIP aligned with the previously approved 20-year Facilities Master Plan. Additional information on specific projects included within the CIP was provided. It was important to note, the CIP was only a plan and would continually be updated as

additional information became available, especially related to any new school construction. The investments for the core/existing schools would be determined through a modernization study the District would conduct in the near future.

Mark Mathers, Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the sources of funding available for capital projects within the CIP. The District utilized a mixture of debt financing and pay-as-you-go to fund projects, with the primary revenue sources being the WC1 sales tax and property taxes. The Government Services Tax was used to a lesser extent but did provide \$6 million during the 2022 Fiscal Year. He reviewed the estimated revenues for WC1 sales taxes and property taxes from the Public Schools Overcrowding and Repairs Needs (PSORN) Committee versus the actual collected amounts. It was important to remember the revenue from WC1 could only be used for capital projects and capital projects outlays.

Trustee Church asked if private schools had the same impact on District enrollment as charter schools. Mr. Searcy mentioned the District did take into account enrollment for both charter schools and private schools. The number of students enrolled in private schools was much smaller than the number of students enrolled in charter schools.

Trustee Nicolet requested clarification on how staff determined which existing schools and facilities would be renovated, reconstructed, modernized, etc. Mr. Searcy explained the modernization study would provide an in-depth look at the needs of the existing schools, specifically those schools and facilities constructed between 1948 and 1988. Renovation was intended to create parity for existing schools with new schools and could include increasing capacity through the addition of space, such as the changes to Darrel Swope Middle School. Reconstruction was the total, or almost total, reconstruction of a school with a new school building, such as William O'Brien Middle School or what would occur for the new Debbie Smith Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academy.

President Taylor wondered what would be coming before the Board in terms of the modernization study. Mr. Searcy mentioned the next agenda item would provide the funding for the modernization study. From that study, the District would determine the specific projects and the order of those projects, which would first go to the Capital Funding Protection Committee and then to the Board of Trustees for final approvals. The intention was to begin the study in July 2022 and provide updates to both public bodies prior to the final report being submitted for approval around February 2023.

Trustee Smith requested additional information on the ability of the District to be agile enough to act quickly on projects identified through the study, if the study were to show an urgent need. Mr. Searcy highlighted that during Year 1 of the CIP, the intent was to provide funding for the study and around \$4.5 million to allow for the ability to begin the design phases of projects, rather than wait until the next fiscal cycle. He was

hopeful the study would provide early, obvious needs that could quickly be addressed. Any possible projects would first be presented to the Capital Funding Protection Committee and then the Board of Trustees for approval.

Trustee Nicolet wondered if the CIP should be considered a “master plan” for Capital Projects, which included both the qualitative and quantitative reasons behind projects. Mr. Searcy mentioned one of the guiding documents the consultants would use for the modernization study were the current educational specifications (edspecs). The edspecs would be used to determine how or if older schools were deficient and what would need to occur to bring the schools to current standards.

Trustee Nicolet remarked that distance education resources should also be included as part of the study. She wanted to ensure the study was forward thinking and considered some of the lessons learned during the pandemic.

Trustee Smith wondered if the study would include looking at existing elementary schools to determine if schools could be combined into a new school based on enrollment levels. Mr. Searcy stated part of the information in the Request for Proposal would include language related to efficiencies and if school enrollment zones should be changed or consolidated to improve academic outcomes. Every site would be analyzed individually and the needs of each community considered.

Trustee Mayberry inquired as to what Mr. Searcy meant when he had stated that the community was not meeting its development goals. Mr. Searcy remarked the area was facing a residential housing crisis and was unable to meet the housing needs of the growing population. The lack of supply and higher costs for housing were problematic and created housing insecurity in a large portion of Washoe County.

Trustee Mayberry asked if the CIP would come back to the Board for revisions if changes needed to be made during the 5-year period of the plan. Mr. Searcy noted the District would return annually with an updated CIP for the Capital Funding Protection Committee and Board to review and approve. While the necessity for a specific project was unlikely to change during the first year of the CIP, staff could bring the CIP back for revisions, if needed.

Trustee Mayberry wondered if the public had the ability to comment on the CIP, or just specific projects. Mr. Searcy mentioned the primary avenue for community input in the CIP was through meetings of the Capital Funding Protection Committee and Board of Trustees.

Trustee Mayberry asked if the District was concerned about a possible recession. Mr. Mathers indicated the District had modeled recession scenarios at the start of the pandemic, which were largely alleviated through the numerous federal stimulus actions.

Generally, during a recession, the District saw about a 10% decrease in revenues. One of the reasons the information provided showed zero growth in sales tax income for 2023 was due to the modeling. Some additional protections included the high reserves held by the District and the amount of debt coverage the District still had.

Trustee Minetto wondered if there were any considerations to providing overcrowding relief to North Valleys High School sooner than what it would take for a new high school to be constructed in the Cold Springs area. Mr. Searcy commented the District could look at placing additional temporary portable buildings on the campus. The challenge when looking at overcrowding and new schools was that the District needed to balance the need for a new school with enrollment projections and other overcrowding relief options, such as rezoning.

Trustee Church expressed concern that the numbers on slide 34 related to WC1 revenues did not add up to the total on slide 32 of \$836 million. Mr. Mathers stated the projection of \$836 million was for resources, which was revenues plus bond proceeds. The PSORN Committee did assume, just as the District did, that projects would be paid for through multiple sources. Slide 32 included only the information from one part of WC1 and did not include the proceeds from bonds issued against WC1.

Trustee Church asked if the District would continue to need the money for capital projects or if a plateau would be reached and the District would be receiving more money than they were spending. Mr. Searcy noted the needs in the District would continue because of the age and number of buildings, at least through the 20-year projections.

Trustee Church remarked that he continued to have concerns with WC1 and the CIP. He believed many residents of Washoe County were unaware of where sales tax revenues went and were going to other counties to make large purchases, such as automobiles. He continually heard that enrollment was down because the number of charter and private schools were increasing, and felt the District should be looking at the need to close schools instead of build schools, especially since the District did not have the funds to pay to staff the schools. He was frustrated with the Capital Funding Protection Committee because they did not meet monthly and believed they did not thoroughly review projects. He wondered why the District was not considering having schools share campuses to reduce costs like other counties were and why the individual Trustees were not able to add specific items to the CIP, such as a live-in academy and teacher housing. The report did not meet his needs and desires. He asked about school capacity and if John Bohach Elementary School was overcrowded enough to justify a new elementary school in that area. Mr. Searcy cautioned that Bohach Elementary School was located in one of the fastest growing areas of Washoe County and the District was looking at adding additional temporary classrooms to the campus because the school was already overcrowded.

Trustee Smith expressed disappointed in the characterization of the Capital Funding Protection Committee. She believed the Committee was able to conduct their meetings extremely efficiently and knew each member conducted their own extensive research, as well as met with District staff independently. She knew members of Board committees were volunteers and they were taking time away from other things to help provide recommendations to the Board.

President Taylor reminded the Trustees that when new schools were construction, the teacher allocations for the schools went with the students. The revenues from WC1 could only be used for the building and repair of school facilities and could not be used for housing. It was also important to remember the funds had gone through an external audit and received an unmodified opinion.

Trustee Nicolet agreed with Trustee Smith's remarks regarding the Capital Funding Protection Committee. She had watched their meetings and read their minutes. She believed all members of the Committee came to their meetings prepared which allowed the meetings to be very efficient. She asked if future CIPs would be developed using the information from the modernization study. Mr. Searcy responded in the affirmative.

Trustee Church reiterated the information he previously provided from the car dealers association that he believed showed people were "voting with their wallets" and purchasing cars in Carson City or other surrounding counties because the sales tax in Washoe County was so high. He would like to see the sales tax lowered to be more competitive with other counties and for the Board to be provided with the ability to allocate revenues as they saw fit, such as for teacher salaries. He wondered how members of the Board would be able to provide input or recommendations to be included in the CIP and if capital projects funds, aside from WC1, could be used for teacher housing. Mr. Mathers stated he had reviewed the total sales taxes collected over numerous years from Carson City, Lyon County, and Washoe County. While there were probably some people who would travel outside Washoe County to make a vehicle purchase, there were some years where taxable sales of car purchases were higher in Washoe County than in Carson City or Lyon County and vice versa. Additionally, other entities within Washoe County contributed to the 8.265% sales tax rate and not just the District's WC1 0.54% sales tax rate. The District's Bond Counsel had opined that legally, the District did not have the ability to unilaterally lower the sales tax rate due to the Impairment Clause included in both the United States Constitution and the Nevada Constitution. The Impairment Clause stated no government entity shall impair the contract rights of a contract holder, to include bond holders. Meaning the District would have to pay off all bonds before they could even consider lowering the WC1 sales tax rate. Additionally, teacher or staff housing was not included as part of the WC1 ballot measure and Bond Counsel did not believe any of the proceeds could be used as such.

It was moved by Trustee Rodriguez and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Capital Funding Protection Committee and approves the Washoe County School District's Fiscal Year 2023-2027, Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.** The result of the vote was 6-1: (Yea: Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Jeff Church.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

3.03 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE 2021/22 'D' MAJOR PROJECTS PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO THE ATTACHED LIST OF PROGRAM PROJECTS AND ASSOCIATED COSTS FOR EACH PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,100,000, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CAPITAL FUNDING PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Adam Searcy, Chief Facilities Management Officer, reviewed the 2021/22 'D' Major Projects Program, as recommended by the Capital Funding Protection Committee. The recommendation included two separate recommendations to (1) fund another external audit and (2) fund the modernization study. The Capital Funding Protection Committee was interested in continuing the external audit process every other year as a best practice.

It was moved by Trustee Smith and seconded by Trustee Nicolet that **the Board of Trustees approves the Washoe County School District Capital Improvement Program, to include the 2021/22 'D' Major Projects Program in the amount of \$2,100,000 to provide for projects throughout the District, as recommended by the Capital Funding Protection Committee.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

3.04 WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN BRIDGE YEAR REPORTING OF METRICS FROM THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING GOALS AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROVIDE DIRECTION TO UPDATE OR REVISE ASSOCIATED 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR RESPONSE TO RECOVERY MEASURABLE OUTCOMES AS NEEDED: GOAL 1, TO ENSURE ANNUAL STUDENT ACADEMIC GROWTH THROUGH A SYSTEM OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT THAT IS ALIGNED, RIGOROUS, AND RELEVANT; GOAL 3, TO ENGAGE FAMILY, STAFF, TRUSTEES, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN STRONG RELATIONSHIPS, PROVIDE MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERTISE AND TRUST, AND TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS; AND GOAL 5, TO

ENSURE OUR SCHOOLS ARE SAFE, SECURE, SUPPORTIVE, AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS WHERE STUDENTS AND STAFF ARE ABLE TO SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY AT THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE LEVELS

Dr. Troy Parks, Chief Academic Officer, began the presentation with metrics related to Objective 1.2, Close opportunity gaps through culturally competent practices, effective strategies, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports to meet the needs of English Learner students, Special Education students, students impacted by poverty, and all racial/ethnic groups. He reported on the measurable outcome regarding increasing the English Learner (EL) exit rate by 6th grade. The areas of success and barriers related to the metric were provided. The information was generally presented in October; however, due to the pandemic, the state delayed the WIDA testing, which assessed the reading, writing, and speaking abilities of EL students. While the District did not meet the target of 67%, staff was pleased with the successes, especially the continued implementation of the English Learner Development coaching model.

President Taylor asked how the District mitigate the barriers caused by the pandemic and start to see increases in the number of students exiting the program. Dr. Parks believed the continued implementation of the new instructional model would provide increased opportunities and outcomes for students. The data from the new model showed it did out preform the traditional pull-out model. He reminded the Trustees the new model had all teachers taking responsibility for providing EL instruction. Additionally, improvements to chronic absenteeism and the ability to safely remove masks should increase the ability of students to learn a new language as well.

Trustee Nicolet requested clarification on what was meant by “combating beliefs” as a barrier and what strategies the District was using related to the phrase. Dr. Parks mentioned there was sometimes a mistaken assumption that students who did not speak the language were automatically learning at lower levels. The District was using culturally responsive practices and encouraging teachers were not making assumptions of students based on socio-economic status, country of origin, or other areas. The new model was intended to ensure students were not being removed from their core lessons and all teachers were able to meet their needs in learning the language.

Superintendent McNeill added the ability of the District to use the federal stimulus funds to provide extra supports for summer school and tutoring should help mitigate many barriers associated with the learning losses from the pandemic.

Dr. Paul LaMarca, Chief Strategies Officer, presented the metrics related to Objective 3.2, Family Satisfaction – Increase meaningful partnerships between the District and families with a focus on student success. The measurable outcomes were related to family satisfaction rates within the District as a whole and Parent University classes

satisfaction rates. Prior to COVID, the District had begun developing a Family Engagement Index, which would include multiple data points such as responses to the family climate survey, Infinite Campus use, and use of Parent University classes. Due to COVID, the District was unable to obtain reliable data for various index points so baseline data had yet to be established; however, the District felt they would be able to set the baseline based on 2021-22 School Year data. Even without the baseline data, the District believed there had been numerous successes in terms of family engagement and satisfaction rates, as well as experiencing different barriers. In terms of satisfaction rates for Parent University classes, the District did not meet the target, but did see successes during the pandemic.

Joe Ernst, Chief Accountability Officer, provided measurable outcomes related to employee workplace satisfaction and engagement under Goal 5, Objective 5.1, Provide and continuously improve a climate of belonging, self-worth, and justice amongst students, families, staff, and the community that was centered around an inclusive, collaborative, equitable and engaging learning environment by providing equitable practices, strategies, and materials. The District did meet the target of seeing a decline in workplace stress from September 2020 to May 2021; however, the numbers remained higher than prior to the pandemic. The successes and barriers related to the measurable outcomes were reviewed.

President Taylor asked what the plan was to improve staff satisfaction especially related to stress and burnout. Mr. Ernst indicated there were different layers to the issue. The District had been able to provide additional staffing in schools through the Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds and they were working on fortifying external supports to schools so the schools could focus on improving student learning. One aspect teachers were focused on was time and having more time to prepare or more time to work with students. He believed through the additional supports, teachers would be able to find more of that time, which would in turn decrease the amount of stress and burnout felt.

President Taylor emphasized that it was critical that the District do whatever it took to ensure teachers felt supported. While the circumstances might not change a whole lot, it was important to acknowledge that everyone knew the work teachers were doing and that the District was their to provide as much support as they could.

Trustee Nicolet agreed it was important to show support; however, it was also important to acknowledge that people needed to take time for themselves and not feel guilty about that. She wanted to continue to focus on what was best for students, but the District also needed to look at what could be taken off the plates of teachers and all staff so they were not feeling overwhelmed.

Trustee Smith remarked one of the most common pieces of feedback she had received from teachers, as related to burn out, were class sizes. It was important to honor the feedback and determine how the District could act on the feedback, while at the same time not adding to someone else's duties.

Trustee Church agreed with Trustee Smith that class sizes were the main thing he heard from teachers. He was also hearing a lot of concerns related to discipline in the classroom and feeling safe. He noted that even prior to COVID, the District was over 50% in the number of teachers feeling burnt out. He wondered what was occurring prior to COVID for teachers to feel that way. Mr. Ernst mentioned teachers were being asked to do more and more with either the same amount of resources or less. Additional administrative responsibilities had been added due to new legislation and policies.

Superintendent McNeill highlighted the District did have a behavior task force that was looking at issues concerning increase discipline and behavioral concerns. The task force was comprised of teachers, administrators, and counseling staff. She stated it would be critical moving forward for the District and state to look at class sizes and ways to reduce them in Nevada.

Trustee Minetto added class size made a huge difference in how teachers were able to provide instruction, so it was important to address the concerns. She explained how she was able to provide three times the amount of instruction to a class of 15 verses a class of 28.

Dr. LaMarca reviewed the data related to Chronic Absenteeism and Disproportionality. The District did not meet the target in terms of chronic absenteeism during the 2020-21 School Year due to COVID, but they were beginning to see improvement in the numbers for the current school year. The successes and barriers related to both chronic absenteeism and disproportionality. The District did see some success in terms of disproportionality as related to accessing advanced coursework but did not meet the target in terms of suspensions.

President Taylor opened the meeting to public comment.

Shannon Coley believed there had always been challenges students faced outside of the classroom, such as divorce and mental illness, and she wondered how the District dealt with the challenges prior to the utilization of social and emotional learning and social justice curriculum. She would like to see the District return to prior practices because the current system was not working and the violence in the classrooms had to stop. She wanted to ensure students were safe and able to learn without the distraction of disruptive students.

It was moved by Trustee Minetto and seconded by Trustee Rodriguez that **the Board of Trustees accepts the updated measurable outcomes as presented related to Goal 1, Objective 1.2, Goal 3, Objective 3.2 and Goal 5, Objective 5.1 for the 2020-21 School Year.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

President Taylor recessed the meeting for 25 minutes.

3.05 RECEIVE UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION FOR DIRECTION BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ADDRESS THE CRITICAL LABOR SHORTAGES IN THE AREAS OF TRANSPORTATION, NUTRITION SERVICES, SPECIAL EDUCATION AIDES & ASSISTANTS, CUSTODIAL, AND OTHER POSSIBLE AREAS. THE PRESENTATION WILL INCLUDE AN UPDATE TO THE BOARD ON ATTENDANCE IMPACTS DUE TO THE TRANSPORTATION ROTATION SCHEDULE THAT WAS IMPLEMENTED DUE TO THE SHORTAGE OF BUS DRIVERS

Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent, began the presentation with a review of the critical labor shortage of education support professionals within Transportation, Nutrition Services, Special Education Aides and Assistants, and Housekeeping. The intent of the presentation was to provide the Trustees and community with information on the current labor statuses and actions already taken by the District to address the challenges, the service level impacts due to the current shortages, possible compensation changes, and how the possible changes could be funded.

Pete Etchart, Chief Operating Officer, reviewed the current situation in the Transportation Department. He noted the District was not required to provide transportation for general education students, only special education students, newcomer English learners, Children in Transition, and foster students. The required transportation programs utilized 130 driver allocations, out of the over 300 allocations provided to the Transportation Department.

Emily Ellison, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented the recruitment efforts undertaken by the District and the number of new hires made since the Board had approved various incentives and taken other actions. Improvements were made to the application process, including providing additional supports for prospective employees who might have difficulties with the application. The number of new hires from July 1, 2021 through April 6, 2022 were as follows: Transportation – 74, Nutrition Services – 64, Housekeeping – 80, and Special Education aides/assistants – 148.

Trustee Church wondered how many employees had left Transportation during the same timeframe. Scott Lee, Director of Transportation, indicated the number of drivers

for Transportation had remained fairly flat. Ms. Ellison remarked that the District began the school year with 45 vacancies in Transportation and now had 87 vacancies.

Mr. Etchart explained the actions taken by the District allow them to continue to provide transportation services to as many general education students as possible. Some of the actions included Double Runs, a Hub System, and an Area Rotation Plan.

Kyle Kemp, Accountability Coordinator, presented the impacts to student attendance when the Transportation Area Rotation Plan was in effective for each of the 5 areas. The District looked at the average absentee rates during the 3 weeks prior to an area being on the non-service week, absentee rates during the non-service week, and the rates the week after the non-service week. The absentee rates were broken down between Title I and non-Title I schools and then the four schools with the greatest impact were shown. Since the District had only 1 week of data, it was difficult to determine trends because different factors could also be impacting attendance, such as a short week due to a holiday.

Trustee Rodriguez wondered how the absences were coded in Infinite Campus and if the absences were considered unexcused. Deborah Biersdorff, Deputy Superintendent, explained the schools were working with the students and families who were unable to secure transportation during the non-services weeks so the students would be able to continue to focus on learning. The District was able to code the absence in a way so it would not impact chronic absenteeism.

Trustee Mayberry requested clarification on how "School Counts" were determined. Mr. Kemp indicated the "School Counts" were the total number of schools impacted by non-service weeks. The District then looked at the number of Title I schools that were impacted.

Trustee Nicolet asked if the absentee numbers were solely related to students not having transportation. Mr. Kemp remarked that the schools might not always know why a student was absent. One of the reasons the District looked at the absentee numbers the weeks before and after the non-service week.

Mr. Etchart continued with the presentation and provided information on the options being considered moving forward for the Transportation Department. It was important to note there were service-level disruptions, no matter the option ultimately selected. One advantage when looking at the options was that the District had additional time to consider changes to service-levels and work to optimize the different choices, especially if they had utilized them during the past year already. He provided examples of improvements that could be made to the Hub System and the ability of the District to offer "combo" positions, where an employee could drive a bus in the morning, work in a cafeteria for lunch, and then go back to driving a bus in the afternoon.

Trustee Rodriguez wondered if the District would compensate current employees to receive a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). Ms. Ellison noted the intention would be to compensate current employees, but it would be important to look at the association agreements and work through some other details.

Trustee Church asked for additional information on what the consultant would look for. Mr. Lee articulated that the consultant the District was interested in utilizing was focused on route optimization, nothing more.

Mr. Etchart continued and explained that the District would need a total of about 260 drivers to operate the Hub System, which translated into an additional 43 drivers than currently employed. The Hub System would also reduce the number of Transportation positions by 43. He stressed the District would only be eliminating positions that were currently vacant, so there would be no current employees impacted by the change. A wage comparison with other local transportation agencies and school districts was provided to show where the District stood in terms of starting salaries for bus drivers. It was also important to consider other items in the negotiated agreements, such as benefits and wage increases, for different agencies because that would provide a more complete picture.

President Taylor asked if the Board approved the Hub System, would it remain in effect indefinitely or would there be an opportunity to return to "normal" service at a point in the future when the labor market was in a better position. Mr. Etchart remarked that the intent was to have the system in place for at least the next school year, but the District would not add the vacant positions back until there was funding available.

President Taylor clarified that the Hub System would be the new service level in the District moving forward until additional funding was available to add the 43 positions back. Mr. Etchart responded in the affirmative.

Trustee Smith wondered if there were currently opportunities during the summer for bus drivers. Mr. Etchart mentioned there were but not all drivers were interested in the additional opportunities available during the summer months because they only wanted to work during the school year. There were also various opportunities for overtime; however, many drivers were retirees and not interested in the additional hours. The District was also looking at other areas that had increased workloads during the summer month, such as Facilities Management and Capital Projects.

Mr. Etchart presented information on the Housekeeping/Custodial and Nutrition Services Departments. While not as great a need as Transportation, the District did have 59 Custodial vacancies currently and were looking at changing the service level to a daily "Process Cleaning" that focused on trash removal, disinfection of high-touch surfaces,

restroom cleaning and disinfection, and vacuuming once per week. The change would allow the District to reduce the number of permanent allocations by 50 currently vacant positions. Similar information related to Nutrition Services was provided. A lot of questions remained with the status of Nutrition Services, with the top question being the end of federal Universal Free lunch and comments made by Governor Sisolak to continue Universal Free lunch. A reduction in service levels for Nutrition Services meant reduced menu offerings, fewer serving lines, and limited catering availability. He highlighted that an additional challenge to the ending of Universal Free lunches meant the District would have to once again encourage families to sign up for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) and consider how to return to collecting outstanding lunch debts from families.

Ms. Ellison reviewed the information related to Special Education Aides and Assistants. Currently, the District had 191 vacant positions out of 635 allocations. Comparable information on local childcare wages was reviewed. She noted there were over 500 related entry level positions advertised online and the current unemployment rate in Washoe County was about 2.8%, which translated into approximately 7,100 people. The Offices of Human Resources and School Leadership were looking at adopting new staffing guidelines based on classroom needs and the experiences of current employees in the positions. Ideally, the District would like to try to combine positions to allow for additional hours for the employees, which would provide additional benefits for employees.

Trustee Mayberry requested additional information on the aide and assistant positions, including the starting salaries and benefits. Ms. Ellison explained the current starting salary for an entry level position as an aide was \$10.72 per hour; however, depending on the applicant's skills and qualifications, an individual could start at a higher step. Some of the positions were under 27.5 hours per week, so they did not qualify for benefits. District leadership had been having conversations regarding changes to the steps. Part of the challenge was salary schedules were subject to negotiation with the associations.

President Taylor wondered if there would be a point where the Board would be involved in the conversations with the associations. Ms. Ellison mentioned the Board would partially be involved. The Office of Human Resources would work with the associations and then bring information to the Board as appropriate and needed.

Ms. Ellison provided information on considerations related to any compensation changes. The state funding was inadequate, with the money from the state increasing 1.3% but the agreed cost of living increase provided by the District was 2.8%. Additionally, the unsustainability of federal stimulus funding was problematic because certain positions would end in 2024 when the funding ran out, which could create morale issues for employees. There were also challenges in changing the steps for

some employee groups within a department, but not being able to provide the same opportunities for other positions within that same department. It would be necessary to work with all the employee associations to ensure isolated compensation changes did not cause animosity between different employee classifications. The District had created a conceptual framework to address some critical shortages for the Board to consider and provided some preliminary information on the framework to the Washoe Education Support Professionals Association (WESPA) so they were not caught off-guard by the presentation.

Trustee Rodriguez wondered why the District had only focused on WESPA and not some of the other groups who were also facing labor shortages, such as School Police. Ms. Ellison indicated that while the District was seeing a shortage within School Police, the shortage was not considered critical at this time. The formula used by the District to determine where the focus should be was provided. Because School Police was looking for candidates with specific qualifications, the recruitment efforts were different than what the Trustees might see for the positions being discussed.

Mr. Mathers and Mr. Etchart reviewed the funding considerations and recommendations for the Board to consider. The ability to provide additional funding for salaries and wage increases, without receiving additional revenue from the state, was dependent on decreasing service levels in certain areas, any savings identified during the process used to develop the budget, and some other minor sources. It was highlighted that any approved changes to service levels would be considered the "new normal" until additional and sustainable revenues could be secured.

President Taylor opened the meeting to public comment.

The Board received an email from DeeAnn Radcliff.

Trustee Church mentioned he taught recruiting and knew it was important for the District to think outside of the box in terms of what they were doing to recruit employees in critical areas. He asked what the District was doing in terms of recruiting and being innovative because he felt the information provided during the presentation was related to what the District could do and not what they were already doing. Ms. Ellison noted the District already had a number of employees working in the combo positions and had looked at ways to spread the work throughout the year. Mr. Etchart added the Transportation Department had recruited for part-time positions because there were drivers who were only interested in working in either the mornings or afternoons and would tailor the positions to the individual needs of the employee whenever possible.

Trustee Church remarked he would like the District to consider bringing on a consultant to provide additional perspective on how to improve recruitment efforts, as well as

conducting a national seminar to see how other agencies are addressing the labor challenges. While the community was interested in seeing the Nevada National Guard help with busing, it was important to remember they had other duties and jobs to perform and that they were not bus drivers. He would also like to see various other alternatives considered before agreeing to any reductions in service levels. Finally, he urged the District to consider how to provide teacher and staff housing to recruit employees.

Trustee Rodriguez countered there was a unit within the Nevada National Guard with commercial driving experience and the District had sent a request to Governor Sisolak for assistance; however, the request was denied.

Trustee Smith requested clarification on if the Board would have the opportunity to review which positions received benefits and which positions did not and if all employees would be able to see an increase in pay if one group was able to see an increase. Ms. Ellison remarked the District looked at all positions under critical labor shortages and there were some positions that did not receive benefits. Since the need was so great for Special Education aides and assistance, the intent was to work within that category first. The District would need to focus on the areas presented in terms of wage increases first and then move outward from there.

Trustee Smith asked if the District would be able to get on an agenda for the Nevada Commission on School Funding to have a conversation regarding the fact the Washoe County School District received the lowest per pupil amount in the state. Mr. Mathers mentioned the Commission could only provide a recommendation to the Nevada Department of Education. Though the Commission had agreed to relook at the current index that had Washoe County ranked lower in terms of cost of living.

Superintendent McNeill stated the District conducted weekly conversations with the Department of Education on the funding issue and would continue to push the Department on making changes to the index. She knew the District would continue to be hurt if the index was not changed. The Department of Education would have to approve any recommendation from the Commission and send it to the Nevada Legislature as part of the recommended budget during the 2023 Legislative Session. Changes could not be made mid-biennium.

Trustee Mayberry expressed concern over the loss of bus driver positions because he was not sure the District would ever bring them back. He was hopeful the Legislature would be willing to consider the impacts to the District, but knew there would be challenges because the Clark County School District might not want their per pupil position altered through a change to how the index was calculated.

Trustee Nicolet thanked staff for the information and conducting thorough research. She believed it would be critical for the District to maintain the current workforce and ensure their morale improved because the best advocates for the District were happy employees and fulfilled with the work they did.

It was moved by Trustee Nicolet and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees accepts the new Level of Service for the Transportation Department that utilizes the 5-day/week 'hub system' for middle school and high school student transportation for the 2022-23 School Year.** The result of the vote was 6-1: (Yea: Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Jeff Church.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

It was moved by Trustee Smith and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees directs the Superintendent to move forward with the Transportation Department options being reviewed as outlined by staff including: continued routing optimization, elementary school reduction in bus stops, utilization of "combo positions", scheduled double runs, a weighted area rotation plan based on attendance and hardship data, school bell-time changes, and walk zone changes and to provide periodic updates to the Board of Trustees on these items.** The result of the vote was 5-2: (Yea: Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Jeff Church and Joe Rodriguez.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

It was moved by Trustee Rodriguez and seconded by Trustee Mayberry that **the Board of Trustees accepts the new Level of Service for the Facilities Management Department in reducing vacuuming to once-per-week for all schools effective for the 2022-23 School Year.** The result of the vote was 6-1: (Yea: Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor. Nay: Jeff Church.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

It was moved by Trustee Mayberry and seconded by Trustee Rodriguez that **the Board of Trustees directs the Superintendent to work with the Washoe Education Support Professionals to reach an agreement regarding implementation of a Critical Shortage Compensation Adjustment process in the areas of Transportation, Nutrition Services, Special Education Aides and Assistants, Housekeeping, and other possible support staff areas.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

3.06 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES TO AUTHORIZE AN ADDITIONAL RETAINER AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$35,000 FOR SERVICES THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022 FROM THE DISTRICT'S FY22 GENERAL FUND CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT FOR TO**

THE LAW FIRM OF SIMONS HALL JOHNSTON PURSUANT TO BOARD POLICY 9165, TO CONTINUE TO REPRESENT THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR OPEN MEETING LAW PURPOSES AT MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AS WELL AS OTHER ADVICE REQUESTED BY TRUSTEES PURSUANT TO BOARD POLICY 9165

Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent, explained the Board was required to approve any transfer of funds out of the District's Contingency Account.

President Taylor mentioned the Board had previously spent \$70,000 when utilizing outside Board counsel, so the additional amount would be consistent with previous costs. Additionally, the Board would also be conducting a number of special meetings within the next month related to the Superintendent Search, so it was important to have the funds available.

It was moved by Trustee Rodriguez and seconded by Trustee Smith that **the Board of Trustees approves an additional \$35,000 retainer for services through June 30, 2022 from the District's FY22 General Fund Contingency Account to the law firm of Simons Hall Johnston to continue to represent the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees for open meeting law purposes at meetings of the Board of Trustees as well as other advice requested by Trustees pursuant to Board Policy 9165.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jeff Church, Adam Mayberry, Ellen Minetto, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Beth Smith, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

4. Reports

4.01 BOARD REPORTS

This item was not heard.

4.02 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

This item was not heard.

4.03 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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

5. Closing Items

5.01 PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Church mentioned the Board would be conducting a meet and greet opportunity soon for the community with the finalists of the Superintendent Search process. The meeting would not be a formal Board meeting. The Board would then conduct a meeting on April 20 where the candidates would be interviewed by the Board of Trustees. He advocated for the Trustees being allowed additional time to ask questions of the candidates because he was not comfortable with the current recommendation of each Trustee only being provided the opportunity to ask one question.

5.02 NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The next Regular Meeting would take place on Tuesday, April 26, 2022.

5.03 ADJOURN MEETING

There being no further business to come before the members of the Board, President Taylor declared the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Angela D. Taylor, President

Ellen Minetto, Clerk

From: Dee Ann Radcliffe
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2022 9:23 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Transportation Black Out Weeks

Dear Members of the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees,

I would like to thank you for volunteering for this role in these dynamic and challenging times. I am a parent of 3 children who attend Washoe County Schools - Verdi Elementary, Billingshurst Middle School and McQueen High School. I am writing you to ask for consideration of all ideas to eliminate the Transportation Black Out Weeks. Our second Black Out week will be starting on April 11th and to say that it is crazy to get all 3 children to and from school each day would be an understatement. As you are likely aware, many schools are located in quiet neighborhoods and were never intended to have every parent drop-off and pick-up students (Verdi is a great example of this) and the neighborhoods are simply overwhelmed. For children that are not able to be taken to school, having a packet for them to complete seems like an educational failure at this moment in time.

I would like to provide kudos to Mr. Mattick and Billingshurst for allowing students to complete an array of activities during the Black Out weeks and be picked up later than 2 pm. This was an amazing gift to parents.

Kudos too to Verdi Elementary staff for having a wonderfully simple drop-off procedure in the parking lot. They wore costumes, danced and were SO welcoming!

Ideas to recruit AND retain Bus Drivers:

Increasing the salary - due to the great need for workers, billboards advertise \$18 for Housekeepers! Bus drivers are critical for students who live outside of walk zones.

Monetary bonuses for sign-on, longevity and for completing x number of weeks!

Charging parents for bus passes for their children to ride (this was done in Plumas County, CA approximately 8 to 10 years ago).

Volunteer on a bus - these people would have to complete screening etc, but I think that it would encourage better behavior by the students. The Las Vegas school district is putting Dad's in Schools to help support good behavior.

Is flexible scheduling already in place - i.e. are some bus drivers part-time? Are there per diem (as needed) bus driver positions?

Campaign for the important role that Bus Drivers have in Education - students/parents could show appreciation!

Thank you again for all that you do!

Sincerely,
Dee Ann Radcliffe