

**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 22, 2023  
WORK SESSION OF THE  
WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

August 22, 2023

**1. Opening Items**

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER**

The work session of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 11:03 a.m. in the Board Room of the Central Administration Building, located at 425 East Ninth Street in Reno, Nevada.

**1.02 ROLL CALL**

President Beth Smith and Board Members Adam Mayberry, Diane Nicolet, Joe Rodriguez, Colleen Westlake, and Alex Woodley were present. Board Member Jeff Church was present via video conference. Superintendent Susan Enfield and staff were also present.

**1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Pablo Nava Duren led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1.04 LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

President Smith read the land acknowledgement.

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

**2.01 DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION TO UPDATE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON PROGRESS, PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND SCHEDULE OF THE DISTRICT-WIDE FACILITIES MODERNIZATION PLAN (FMP)**

Adam Searcy, Chief Operating Officer, provided an overview of the Facilities Modernization Plan (FMP) and the collaboration with CannonDesign.

Paul Mills, CannonDesign, reviewed the work previously completed and conversations with the community through forums, new school tours, and surveys. He emphasized, with regard to the draft options to be presented, there were no preconceived outcomes, and the Board would eventually be provided with options that were developed in collaboration with district and community stakeholders. He highlighted that there were various possibilities that would be available for review and eventual acceptance by the

Board. He reviewed the potential outcomes that the options were based on, with each school following into at least one of the following outcome categories: new schools, general maintenance, renovation/revitalization, reconstruction, new programs, grade reconfiguration, consolidation/repurpose, long-term reconstruction/consolidation, continued study and engagement, and attendance re-zoning. Examples of how individual schools fit into the outcome categories were presented. Information on how current educational specifications differed from previous educational specifications was provided to show how consolidation could occur with existing facilities. The areas in need of continued study and stakeholder engagement included Incline schools, Natchez Elementary School, and Gerlach K-12. The next steps in the FMP process were reviewed.

Trustee Mayberry noted closing schools was not one of the outcome categories listed. Mr. Mills indicated closures would be akin to consolidation since it would require multiple schools coming together. Consolidation would only be recommended as part of a "trade up" benefit for students and staff, such as improved facilities and/or additional programming.

Superintendent Enfield wondered if some of the renovation/revitalization opportunities could be completed with students present or if the students would need to be temporarily relocated. Mr. Mills remarked the process could be completed either way. There were some locations with extra capacity that would allow for the movement of students to a different area of the existing school, while there were other locations that could require the temporary use of portables when renovations occurred.

Trustee Westlake mentioned she was interested in seeing additional security features at the "sheep shed" elementary schools so they were more one continuous building instead of three separate buildings. Mr. Mills provided information on the different options explored for the sheep shed schools and the opportunities for enhanced education at the schools.

Trustee Nicolet asked what data was used to determine any consolidation of schools. She understood the idea of density of resources and being able to provide additional programming, but she was hesitant to agree that "bigger" was always better in terms of school size. Mr. Mills noted CannonDesign used the District's current educational specifications to show how elementary and middle schools inside the McCarran ring in Sparks would have the District building 8 schools versus the current 15 schools.

President Smith inquired if the new educational specification used by Cannon Design were the same used in the construction of the new schools, such as JWood Raw Elementary School. Mr. Mills responded in the affirmative.

Trustee Rodriguez wondered what would happen to the school site staff if schools were consolidated. Mr. Searcy mentioned the consolidation process would occur over the

course of many, many years so there would be ample opportunities for the movement of staff as needed. It was important to remember that the teachers would follow the students. The Board discussed the possibilities of how school site staff could be moved to new sites and other opportunities if schools were consolidated.

Trustee Church requested clarification on what continued studies needed to be conducted for the rural schools. Mr. Mills mentioned it was important for the community and district to understand the challenges associated with schools with small scale enrollment. The intention was to provide additional time to study the unique demographics, enrollment trends, and community priorities before making final decisions related to these areas while at the same time ensuring they were included as part of the final FMP.

President Smith emphasized that the board should not shy away from discussions regarding the consolidation of some schools. The community and education were not the same as it was when many of the schools were built and it was important for the district to look at what was best for all students, while seeking input from the community on prioritizing what should be done with the spaces.

Trustee Woodley appreciated the proactive approach CannonDesign had taken when looking at all schools and their usage. He was not interested in waiting to make decisions until schools were below 40-50% capacity and wanted to be forward thinking in what could occur. He wanted to ensure the district was nimble enough to change with the needs of the community.

Trustee Mayberry thanked everyone for the information. There was a lot to consider and he would have to set aside time to review everything because it was important to understand the options and how those options impacted the communities of students surrounding the schools.

Trustee Nicolet asked if student voice was involved in the process. Mr. Mills highlighted that the process actually began with a conversation with the Student Advisory Council. CannonDesign was interested in continuing working with the group on the implementation of the FMP.

Superintendent Enfield inquired how students in the schools were being engaged since each school community was unique. Mr. Searcy provided information on how the district engaged the students at E. Otis Vaughn Middle School with the idea of rebuilding the school based on the needs of the students and the community. He indicated a similar conversation with students at a different middle school would likely produce variations on the current middle school design.

Superintendent Enfield expressed an interest in seeing even more conversations with students on what they wanted to see in terms of school designs, to include colors. She

believed it was critical to listen to what students wanted in terms of their educational setting because they often had ideas that were very different from what adults wanted to see.

Trustee Rodriguez wondered what work had been done with the Natchez and Gerlach communities. Mr. Mills remarked both communities deserved a more custom approach than CannonDesign had been able to provide them with in a short time frame. He wanted to see more work and outreach occur with these communities as well as the Incline community.

Trustee Westlake asked if staff housing in some of the outlying areas was a consideration. Mr. Mills mentioned that was a topic that should be considered. He used Hawaii as an example of how staff housing could be incorporated into the district's conversation.

President Smith closed the agenda with comments on how the buildings were community buildings and should be considered community centers for their neighborhoods. She emphasized the importance of adding community rooms and family engagement centers to the new schools, such as Procter R. Hug High School and the design for the new E. Otis Vaughn Middle School

### **3. Closing Items**

#### **3.01 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pablo Nava Duran expressed appreciation for the information provided at the meeting. He provided his thoughts on the middle school options for Sparks, Edward L. Pine Middle School, and Earl Wooster High School. He was concerned about many of these schools being land-locked and there not being enough room to build a new school.

#### **3.02 ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business to come before the members of the Board, President Smith declared the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

---

**Elizabeth Smith, President**

---

**Joseph Rodriguez, Clerk**