



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

Community gives input regarding alternative schedule Board votes to keep plan in place to ensure student safety

Parents, students and teachers filled the limited space in the auditorium for the regular Davis School District Board of Education meeting Tuesday, followed by a special board meeting Thursday.

Participants in the extended public comment period Tuesday evening spoke for and against the district’s move to an alternating-day schedule.

With that schedule, students with a last name beginning with A-K will attend classes in-person on Mondays and Wednesdays with remote learning on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Students with a last name beginning with L-Z meet in-person on Tuesdays and Thursdays with remote learning on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Alexis Davis, a teacher at North Davis Junior High, was among those who thanked the Board and Davis School District for considering employees.

She said she has been teaching for 40 years and she, like others, struggles with the thought of only seeing her junior high students once a week. But, she said, she knows the district made a decision that focuses on safety.

“It all pretty much boils down to safety,” she said. “I know it’s best. It’s best for them. It’s best for us. It’s best

for everyone.”

Kate Lee, whose father died of COVID-19, said the virus is causing a lot of harm — to the economy, mental health and communities. Even with the impact she’s seen, she said she would still urge school districts to open schools like normal.

“I think we can do better than two days, I really do,” Lee said. “I appreciate what you guys are doing. I don’t think you did anything wrong. I think people are

doing the best they can. I really do, but I think we can do better. There are people that cannot make this work for them.”

At the end of Tuesday’s meeting, Board Member Julie Tanner called for a special meeting for the full board to specifically vote on the alternating-day schedule.

At the Thursday meeting, Board President John Robison said the Utah State Board of Education required each district to adopt a school opening plan. During a previous July 14 board meeting, the full board reviewed that plan. The plan included a regular opening, alternating schedule and fully remote learning.

Robison said the board was aware when it adopted the plan that it was still six weeks before school was scheduled.

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“These people that are working on this, I consider them part of the District and I trust that they are going to make the right decision.”

— Board President John Robison

Bountiful High to consider request to change current mascot

Bountiful High School will form a committee to consider the request to change its current mascot, the Braves.

Principal Aaron Hogge updated the Board of Education of the Davis School District during its regular meeting. He said the school has established a timeline, which begins with a committee meeting on Sept. 2. Committee members will be selected and notified by Aug. 18.

Hogge said he had a long his-

tory with Bountiful High even before he was appointed principal three years ago. His wife’s family all went to Bountiful High and he has spent more than a decade supporting the school.

“I’ve come to see the unifying effect of a community and a mascot can have an impact on that unifying effect,” he said.

“I’ve been thrilled to see how kids thrive together and come together with different walks of life, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status. It’s come

to our attention that some do not feel our mascot is that unifying.”

The process, Hogge said, includes multiple committee meetings, opportunities to hear from expert presenters and open community listening sessions.

The committee will be made up of faculty members and student representatives, including four Native American students. It also includes parents, district consultants and spe-

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uled to open. He said the board was also aware that the rate of possible COVID-19 infection would be a pivot point to consider moving to one of the other phases in the plan.

He added that the Board legally adopted the plan and does not need to vote each time its determined that another phase should be considered.

“These people that are working on this, I consider them part of the District and I trust that they are going to make the right decision,” he said.

Board Member Julie Tanner said she looked forward to an open discussion about the plan. She made a motion to consider an alternating schedule that would give students more in-person attendance with every other Friday being for one group or the other.

In a substitute motion, Vice President Liz Mumford

proposed that the Board affirm the district’s decision to move to the alternating-day schedule already adopted in the school opening plan.

After some discussion, the Board unanimously offered its support of the schedule.

In other business, the board in its regular meeting approved updates to several policies:

- In the recruitment and selection policy, changes outline the credentials required by educators applying for a teaching position.
- In the School Attendance and Truancy policy, the changes clarify excused absences and truancy guidelines.
- Revisions to the Student Conduct and Discipline policy and Student Sexual Harassment Policy were also given final approval.

MASCOT, from Pg. 1

cialists, including tribal representation.

The committee will make a recommendation to Hogge. He will then bring a recommendation to the Board on Dec. 1.

The Board would consider adopting a resolution which recognizes the recommendation, Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen said. The school would then move forward with its next steps following the recommendation.

Zurbuchen added that the dis-

cussion is not about the long legacy of the school or its mascot. Rather, he said, it is about the feelings of the current student body and community there. Alumni will be given the opportunity for input during the listening sessions.

Board Vice President Liz Mumford asked Hogge to be protective of the student representatives and ensure that they don’t become targets.

Hogge said as the process moves forward, the school will also

ensure that practices and traditions are respectful as the mascot will remain for at least the 20-21 school year. Any traditions deemed not respectful will end.

“I have a lot of confidence in our school administrators in this process,” Mumford said. “As a former Bountiful graduate, I have a lot of strong connections in this community and see it as a really good opportunity for us to grow and learn as a community through the process.”