

KENNEWICK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING / Remote Board Meeting
October 21, 2020

M I N U T E S

MEMBERS PRESENT

Board Members: Dawn Adams, President of the Board; Heather Kintzley, Vice President of the Board; Ron Mabry, Legislative Representative of the Board; Michael Connors, Board Member; Diane Sundvik, Board Member; Long Doan, Student Representative to the Board; and Dr. Traci Pierce, Superintendent and Secretary of the Board.

Cabinet Members: Dr. Doug Christensen, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources; Matt Scott, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Assessment and Professional Development; Jack Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education; Rob Phillips, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Vic Roberts, Executive Director of Business Operations; Robyn Chastain, Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations; Ron Cone, Executive Director of Information Technology.

Other Guest(s): Attorney Susan Winkelman
Attorney Bronson Brown
Becca Anderson, Director of Special Services

CALL TO ORDER

President Dawn Adams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance with approximately 425 staff and guests in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARENTS, STAFF, AND RESIDENTS

Rebecca Luttrell, 1709 S. Currant St. Kennewick, speaking on behalf of her husband, who teaches at Kamiakin High School. He would like the District to wait on opening schools for hybrid learning.

Sheila Smith, 170 Meadow Hills Drive Richland, Southridge High School teacher, shared that she spoke on behalf of those who would like to see children return to school. Ms. Smith shared that many students want and need to return to school as they are battling depression and failing classes.

Lacey Kadinger 2812 W. 43rd Court Kennewick, Desert Hills Middle School teacher, shared that even though she is considered high risk, she will be returning to work as she believes having students stay home does more harm than good. Ms. Kadinger urged the Board to open middle schools and high schools.

Ronda Lauderdale 2432 S. Arthur Court Kennewick, Highlands Middle School teacher, commented that she is against sending students back to school amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nicole Sand 1505 W. 37th Pl. Kennewick, teacher, and parent, stated concerns regarding remote learning, asynchronous learning, and Dual Language for high-risk students.

Tia McCartney 275 Rachel Road Kennewick would like the Board to reconsider moving to hybrid learning.

Amber Dawn McCall 2510 S. Jefferson Court Kennewick shared that due to the CDC's new guidelines regarding close contacts and the steadily rising number of COVID cases in Kennewick, the Board should reconsider their plans for hybrid or in-person learning.

Laura McLeod 2010 W. 19th Kennewick, speaking on behalf of her husband, Scott McLeod, a teacher at Kamiakin High School. Ms. McLeod shared her concerns with cohorting in the high schools and noted that over 400 teachers have died of COVID-19.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion by Heather Kintzley to approve the consent items as presented.

Seconded by Diane Sundvik.

Roll call vote:	Adams	Yes
	Kintzley	Yes
	Mabry	Yes
	Connors	Yes
	Sundvik	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

The consent items were as follows:

- Minutes of Regular Board Meeting October 7, 2020
- Personnel Actions – Certificated, Classified and Extracurricular
- Payroll and Vouchers Ending September 30, 2020

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce reported on the first week of hybrid learning for all K-5 students, noting that she saw all staff implementing all the safety protocols. Students were appropriately distancing, wearing face coverings, and washing hands frequently. Dr. Pierce recognized the elementary classified and certified staff and principals and assistant principals for their leadership during this challenging time. Dr. Pierce added that October is National Principals Month and expressed appreciation for their exceptional leadership.

Student Representative to the Board, Long Doan reported that November 4 would be the first Superintendent-Student Advisory Group meeting. Mr. Doan commented on what a great job the District did in providing everyone a Chromebook.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Middle School – High School Hybrid Learning

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce reviewed the current plan and timeline for opening the middle schools and high schools. Dr. Pierce then shared that she had contacted Dr. Person with the Benton-Franklin Health Department late this afternoon, who shared that her recommendation to open schools for hybrid learning had not changed. Dr. Pierce also shared an October 20 news briefing from the Tri-City Herald regarding the rising spread of COVID in Tri-Cities linked to social gatherings without face coverings. Board discussion followed.

Mr. Mabry asked at what point the Board would say no parties or other gatherings going on in the Tri-Cities. Mr. Mabry went on to say that parents are split on wanting students back in school, and he has heard from parents that their children who used to get A's and B's are now failing classes.

Ms. Sundvik commented that she knows she can't control other people's behavior and reminded everyone that Dr. Person said high school students' behavior would be difficult to control. Ms. Sundvik added that she doesn't want to control students, but if students have parties in the community with 300 people or 25 people, it will continue to put everyone at risk.

Mr. Mabry shared that safety is the primary concern but wondered at what point students will stop having parties. He questioned whether the Board was going to wait for a cure before deciding to open schools. Mr. Mabry reminded the Board that, at a prior Board meeting, Dr. Person said everyone should go back to school, but mid-meeting, she expressed concerns about secondary students and cohorting.

President Adams asked if the Board should hold off opening school for secondary students until the end of the semester, adding that Dr. Person shared additional information with the School Board in Richland regarding secondary students and cohorting.

Mr. Mabry stated the Board might need to rethink the opening, but would have to decide at some point. He expressed that parents and teachers want to get back to school; half will not be pleased at any decision.

President Adams shared that she would like to see the cohort issue looked at again. She stated that she does not believe the District has secondary schools as controlled as elementary schools.

Mr. Connors shared that doctors say there will be higher infection rates due to a higher number of people getting tested. Doctors also say students need to go back to school for emotional and mental reasons. Mr. Connors added that his children are struggling with online schools and their grades are down. He stated that we can't stop parties, but we can guide and educate students about social distancing and wearing facial coverings.

Ms. Kintzley shared that Dr. Person is a professional, and her recommendation has not changed. Ms. Kintzley added that she is not in favor of retreating from the Board's decision. However, if the administration says they can solve the cohort problem, she would be open to giving the administration more time. Ms. Kintzley went on to say that the Board cares about safety, but she fears there is no solution. She stated that the governor gave no guidance to re-open schools, and Board members are not medical experts. Ms. Kintzley ended by saying she is concerned about delaying the opening of secondary schools.

Dr. Pierce stated that she knows how much the Board cares about both staff and students' safety, both physically and emotionally. She added that this is the most challenging situation she has faced. Dr. Pierce shared that our students are not thriving purely from an educational standpoint; she indicated that the hybrid model is not ideal, but better than no days onsite. She has talked with students, administrators, teachers, and parents, but relies on the local health department's recommendation. Dr. Pierce shared how sanitizing issues were resolved, but fears there is no perfect solution for cohort concerns. Dr. Pierce suggested looking at class schedules, possibly three classes per day instead of six per day, limiting the number of times students change classes. Dr. Pierce shared concerns about not wanting to over promise and under deliver.

Mr. Mabry commented that the Board has already said that, whatever is decided, if it's not working, it would be revisited.

Dr. Pierce shared that, during her follow-up with the Benton-Franklin Health Department, Dr. Person talked in-depth about how the secondary schools work. Dr. Person recognized the cohort part as being a challenge, but not a barrier to moving forward. She stated that Dr. Person continues to emphasize the importance of social distancing, wearing face coverings, washing hands, cleaning, and sanitizing.

Ms. Sundvik asked about the MOU, teachers being required to clean, how Wednesday sanitizing would work in the buildings, and if there were enough staff to complete the cleaning.

Dr. Pierce replied that the MOU wording is for students and teachers to clean and sanitize desk areas between class changes and for custodians to sanitize throughout the day, making that a priority.

Mr. Christensen reminded the Board that high schools have four or five custodians and possibly other PSE members that might help support where needed; bus drivers that will not have routes to drive on Wednesdays will help.

Mr. Roberts commented that custodians would need to prioritize, as Dr. Pierce touched on, and some things might have to take a back seat; cleaning surface areas may be a higher priority than vacuuming.

Mr. Mabry asked if the cost was why the District doesn't have sanitizing done by professional sanitizers, which would also bring some relief to the custodial staff.

Mr. Roberts replied that he believes sanitizing is the job of the custodial staff; they will just be doing more of it.

Mr. Mabry shared that NV5 uses professional cleaning spray guns, etc., added that his comments were not against our staff.

Mr. Roberts explained that the District ordered professional sanitizing equipment but didn't know if it is the same equipment that NV5 uses.

President Adams stated that, if the District delays, the purpose and expectations should be clear. Ms. Adams noted that she believes there are some creative ways to solve cohort issues and possibly change from semesters to quarters.

Ms. Kintzley replied that there might be some limitations from the state level for switching from semesters to quarters.

Dr. Pierce replied that she would have to look into that, as she does not know all the implications.

Ms. Sundvik stated that she would like the District to check on using NV5 Dade Moeller to conduct a safety assessment.

Dr. Pierce replied that she would speak with Dr. Shelley Redinger, Richland School District Superintendent, to see how they are using NV5 Dade Moeller.

President Adams asked if there is a motion; if not, she would move on to reports.

Ms. Sundvik asked about making a motion and about ending dates for the quarter and semester classes.

Ms. Kintzley replied that a motion would need to be made with all parameters, then if the motion is seconded, there can be a discussion.

Dr. Pierce shared that November 6 is the end of the 1st quarter, January 29 is the end of the 1st semester, and February 2 is the beginning of the 2nd semester.

Motion by Ms. Sundvik that the District change secondary schools starting date to February 2 to begin hybrid learning, contract with NV5 Dade Moeller to evaluate the District's sanitizing processes, and develop a schedule to better cohort at the secondary level.

Seconded by Mr. Mabry.

Mr. Mabry asked what the Board thinks the result of delaying will be.

Ms. Sundvik replied that she knows the cohort issue will be difficult if not impossible, but hopefully, there can be a way to reduce the cohorts at secondary. Ms. Sundvik added that she believes NV5 Dade Moeller will provide professional guidance and review for our

custodial staff.

President Adams commented that in her opinion, February 2 is a good time because of the semester break, and the District's number one objective is safety.

Mr. Mabry replied that he has concerns with students staying home for another three months. He expressed concern over what three more months at home will do to children's mental and emotional needs. He indicated that he is not sure COVID concerns outweigh all other considerations.

Mr. Connors shared that students have been out of school since March, and he has concerns with students being isolated and concerns for their social, emotional, and mental health. He emphasized that students need interaction.

Ms. Kintzley questioned the notion that the District is not ready. She highlighted that Board members are not the health professionals. She indicated concern that the Board would be delaying hybrid learning for secondary schools to February of 2021, even though health officials are saying students can be in school.

President Adams shared that Dr. Person stated she had concerns about middle and high school students cohorting.

Dr. Pierce commented on cohort size, explaining that it would be relatively easy to have students attend three periods a day instead of six. Attending three periods a day would still allow half the students onsite without requiring a huge shift. She stated that a three period per day schedule is the current model in remote learning. In this model, students see their first, second, and third period teacher one time per week in hybrid learning but would see that teacher for a longer period. Dr. Pierce went on to say that even if we wait until February to open schools, there is no guarantee that the numbers or metrics will look better or if the health department would change their recommendation.

Mr. Mabry questioned why the Board is hesitating if everything is in place. He questioned whether the issues will be the same in February if the decision is made to delay.

Ms. Sundvik replied that the Board would have a better picture of things by waiting to open in February.

Dr. Pierce shared that there have been many conversations tonight regarding sanitization and PPE. She emphasized that the District has everything in place to sanitize and clean schools. She highlighted that the District has had students on campus since September 8, and sanitization and PPE have been in place.

Mr. Connors expressed his concerns that the Board is doing more harm than protecting by keeping students out of school until February 2021. He stated that there is a risk that children will get hurt every day and get sick; they can't avoid bad things. He stated that he strongly feels the Board needs to open schools and move forward.

President Adams asked for the roll call on the motion that the Board revise the secondary school start date for hybrid learning to February 2, 2021, have NV5 Dade Moeller evaluate the District's sanitization process, and have the administration develop a schedule that reduces cohorts at the secondary level.

Roll call vote:	Sundvik	Yes
	Mabry	Yes
	Connors	No
	Kintzley	No
	Adams	Yes

Motion carried 3-2.

Dr. Pierce asked to change the order of the reports, and President Adams agreed to the change. Board member Michael Connors left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Instructional Best Practice in Hybrid Learning

Superintendent Dr. Pierce and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Assessment and Professional Development, Matt Scott, presented schedules and logistics for the hybrid model adopted on July 29, 2020. They shared best practices in hybrid, including the definition and purpose for asynchronous teaching; KEA agreements; time, tools, and teachers' training; and, concrete examples. Mr. Scott ended by explaining the remote only option.

Ms. Sundvik commented that some students in the AA/BB model would be getting fewer hours of class time due to the school calendar having more no school days on Fridays than on Mondays.

Dr. Pierce replied that the AA/BB model would not be equal. Looking at the whole school, one group will have five days of no school, and the other group will have seven days of no school.

Mr. Scott shared that the District is looking at what they can do to support the Online Academy families that don't want to give up dual language and that resources would be coming soon.

District Equity Team

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce began by reminding the Board of the July 29, 2020 proclamation where the Kennewick School District Board of Directors issued a proclamation focused on a Districtwide Commitment to Equity, which included commissioning the superintendent to establish a District Equity Team, to include diverse members of the Kennewick community including students, teachers, staff, administrators, families and community members. Dr. Pierce explained that the District Equity members would represent diverse communities who would dialogue and collaborate with the District to deepen and enhance understanding of equity-related issues with the District and collaborate with the District to develop and implement data-informed, equity-focused plans

designed to address racism and bias where it exists and promotes equity-focused strategies. For all areas, the ultimate goal is to help the District determine and implement strategies, allocate resources to promote equity, address opportunity and achievement gaps for students, and support all students in reaching their highest potential. Dr. Pierce shared the Equity Team make-up and structure, subcommittees, and timelines.

Building Safety Goals

Superintendent Dr. Pierce, Jack Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, and Rob Phillips, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, presented past practices and the updated approach to district strategic and building goals. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Phillips shared the 2020 – 2021 annual objectives with building focus on staff training, building emergency plans, and social-emotional learning.

Dr. Pierce asked for clarification from the Board regarding the current KSD Safe Start Plan, specifically if the timeline for Tier 2 and Tier 3 grades 6-12 students to attend in-person learning four days per week would still begin on November 2.

Mr. Scott added that the District is struggling to meet the needs of Special Ed. Students.

President Adams replied that Tier 2 and Tier 3 students were not part of the earlier motion to extend the secondary start date to February 2. Ms. Adams asked if the Board would agree that the timeline could continue for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. Board members agreed.

District staff confirmed that the District is ready for Tier 2 and Tier 3 grades 6-12 students to begin attending in-person learning for four days per week on November 2.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Dawn Adams announced an end to the business portion of the meeting at 8:31 p.m. and moved the Board into executive session per RCW 42.30.110 (1) (i) to discuss a legal issue for approximately 30 minutes. Ms. Adams noted that no further formal action would be taken.

OTHER BUSINESS AS AUTHORIZED BY LAW.

Ms. Adams reconvened the regular session of the Board at 9:00 p.m. There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

RECORDING SECRETARY

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

Approved: November 18, 2020