



Board of Directors, Special Meeting/Facility Workshop Minutes, Thursday, June 24, 2021
RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
BENTON COUNTY, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON

The Board of Directors of Richland School District No. 400 met for a special meeting Thursday, June 24, 2021, at 3:00 P.M. via Zoom and in person, 6972 Keene Road, West Richland, Washington. School Board President Rick Jansons presided. Board members present: Heather Cleary, Kari Williams, Jill Oldson and Ken Gosney.

The Board meeting was called to order at 3:00 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Personnel, Legal, Real Estate)

The Board adjourned to executive session at 3:00 P.M. to discuss qualifications of an applicant for employment or review of performance of an employee (final actions must be taken in public and discussions affecting employees generally must be held in public) 42.30.110 (1) (g), acquisition of real estate, if public knowledge might increase the price 42.30.110 (1) (b), and discussion with legal counsel, of enforcement actions, litigation, or potential litigation, if public discussion might result in an adverse legal or financial consequence. (Does not permit an executive session solely because attorney is present.) 42.30.110 (1) (i). The executive session was projected to last sixty minutes, with no action expected. Executive session recessed at 4:00 P.M.

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 4:04 P.M.

1.0 FACILITIES PLANNING

Richard Krasner, Executive Director of Operations, introduced Melissa McFadden, NAC Architects, who shared details of the Facility Workshops that took place prior to COVID. Ms. McFadden shared the process began by reviewing the 2013 and 2017 bonds. Feedback was gathered from three workshops to prioritize needs and budget. The Study and Survey portion of the process was completed, but the long-range portion of the process was not. Workshops included:

- what does the 2040 Richland School District student need to succeed and stay in the community?
- discussion of programs, magnet schools, tour of Tri Tech, community needs, addition of a third high school.
- curriculum discussions, meeting with students (over 200 students shared input)

Board questions and discussion followed including:

- future growth
- new high school capacity
- magnet programs
- student input-likes/dislikes (continue to include as many students as possible)

Ms. McFadden explained it is critical to have buy in from committee members as they will be communicators for the bond committee in the future. Smaller task force groups may be formed to help with this process.

There was consensus from Board members to move forward with facility planning workshops this fall.

1.0 Agenda Items

1. Resolution No. 931-Local Control Resolution (Regarding Local Control of Curriculum)

Mr. Jansons explained the Board will not be meeting again until the fourth week in July (July 27, 2021.) He explained the goal is to share the values clearly set forward and attempt to correct the misunderstandings in the community. He stated the five Board members can only meet all together during scheduled Board meetings. He explained the need for Resolution No. 931 which was just written today in draft form. Mr. Jansons read Resolution No. 931 in full. This statement sets forth what the Board has been saying and what has always been done.

Ms. Williams stated this is important since new laws were put in place, but both allow for local control. She feels it is important for the Board as elected officials to stay aware and involved. The District has a rigorous process for approving curriculum involving the Instructional Materials Committee (IMC) made up of staff, students, and the community who review all materials. This process also encourages review of materials by any member of the public, along with the ability to share their input. Curriculum adoptions are on a seven-year rotation schedule. The process encourages public involvement.

Ms. Cleary advised there is much confusion surrounding these topics in the community. Ms. Oldson thanked all for putting this together and stated the importance of transparency.

Mr. Jansons advised this Board has also been committed to equity as individuals. With many different cultures, languages, and programs, the question is always “*what do students need?*”. The direction to staff is to equitably serve kids to reach their highest potential.

Resolution No. 931 states “equity of opportunity should be provided to all, but equity of outcome is up to the individual achievement”.

Dr. Redinger stated, regarding the Comprehensive Sex Education Bill, there are many misconceptions. Nicki Blake, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, stated the District’s curriculum was already aligned with the law, with age-appropriate instruction. Mr. Jansons agreed that the District is already in compliance-no changes are required, with parents allowed to opt out of any instruction.

Ms. Williams agreed that the current Board has stated our curriculum will stay the same; however, she stressed the importance of parents being involved and continuing to be vigilant with these controversial topics and stated that parents have every reason to be concerned about the recently passed state laws.

It was moved by Heather Cleary and seconded by Jill Oldson –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 931 – REGARDING
LOCAL CONTROL OF CURRICULUM.

Vote: Cleary, yes; Oldson, yes; Williams, yes; Gosney, yes: and Jansons, yes.
Motion was approved.

2. Modifications of COVID Restrictions for Summer and Fall in Schools

Mr. Jansons stated these five Board members want to open regular school in the fall with no masks or social distancing, unless specifically prohibited by law. Dr. Redinger has been working with staff at the state level and communicated what the Board has been saying. Dr. Person, Benton Franklin Health District, is also advocating for this change. The only restrictions right now are in schools. The west side of the state is very different where many districts did not return to in-person instruction this year. This motion is an effort to push for this normal beginning.

Ms. Oldson asked the public to advocate for this change to state lawmakers in Olympia, as well as the State Department of Health. Ms. Williams suggested reaching out to fellow Board members to join our action.

Mr. Jansons advised this is not disregarding safety or science. It appears that the rules are different if you are outside a school building and he feels they should be the same and questioned why students should be required to continue these protocols.

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Kari Williams -

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' STATED GOAL IS TO OPEN SCHOOLS NORMALLY IN THE FALL UNLESS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED BY LAW OR BY AGENCIES WITH LEGAL RIGHT TO DIRECT SCHOOLS OTHERWISE. THE BOARD ALSO DIRECTS SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH OUR REPRESENTATIVES, THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, AND STATE AND LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO REACH THIS GOAL.

Vote: Cleary, yes; Oldson, yes; Williams, yes; Gosney, yes: and Jansons, yes.
Motion was approved.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 P.M.

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400

SECRETARY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS