



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Mead School District Board of Directors
Wednesday, November 6, 2019

The Board of Directors held a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, November 6, 2019. The meeting began at 3 pm and was held at the Mead School District Administration Office. Directors Green, Burchard, Olson, Denholm and Wylde were present. Also attending were Superintendent Shawn Woodward, Chief Financial Officer Wayne Leonard, Assistant Superintendents Ralph Thayer, Kevin Peterson, Jared Hoadley and Heather Havens and Executive Directors Doug Edmonson and Ned Wendle.

I. Approval of Agenda

Director Denholm made a motion to approve the agenda, as presented. Director Burchard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

II. 10th Elementary School

Before sharing *pros* and *cons* associated with moving forward with building a 10th elementary school on Five Mile Prairie, Superintendent Woodward acknowledged the disappointment associated with the failure of the November 5th Supplemental Levy and the need, in the coming days/weeks, to learn from the loss and carefully consider what the community is telling the district.

Superintendent Woodward shared the following list of *pros* and *cons*, put together by the District Leadership Team, for the board to consider as they contemplate whether or not to move forward with building a 10th elementary school on Five Mile Prairie on the same 67-acre site where Highland Middle School is currently being constructed. Superintendent Woodward reminded that last spring the district learned they qualified for unexpected *State Match* monies (approximately \$20 million) because of changes in the state's unhoused students funding formula. The use of this money is restricted to capital projects. It is not part of the General Fund and therefore cannot be used to cover day-to-day, general operating costs.

Pros

- Utilizes available *State Match* funds for unhoused students on Five Mile Prairie. The district has \$20 million that can only be spent on capital projects.
- From a boundary standpoint this would be less disruptive for district students. Building a 10th elementary school means approximately 300 students could be moved at the elementary level. Without it the district will move between 400 and 1400 elementary students.
- Accommodates future growth with today's construction costs. Because of inflation, construction costs typically increase each year. Therefore, the district will need additional taxpayer approved dollars the longer we delay building the school.
- Moves to a neighborhood school model. Without a 10th school we will move approximately 300 students off of the Prairie for elementary school.
- Smaller (student population) elementary schools provides the space needed for smaller class size.

Cons

- Perception . . . The Levy failed but district is still moving forward with building another new school.
- In 2021 the district would need to fund additional new school staffing costs of approximately \$650,000 (partial offset with increased enrollment revenue).

Additional information shared and discussion items included:

- With the levy failure the district estimates needing to reduce its budget \$4.5 million for 2020-2021 as compared to the current 2019-20 school year. This reduction must be made with or without building a 10th elementary school.
- The impact to the district's budget because of SEBB.
- Based on current student numbers equal K-5 enrollment at 10 elementary schools would be 425 students.
- A detailed list of the non-teaching support staff and other costs for a new school were shared. Positions include admin assistants, custodians, kitchen workers, maintenance, utilities, etc. No new administrators would be added as the district would reallocate current resources.
- There is no time limit on spending the \$20 million *State Match* money. The only restriction on the money is that it must be used to fund capital projects, like building a new school.
- The district conservatively estimates it has the money to move forward and build a 10th elementary school. Delaying construction, in good economic times, will increase costs 3-5% annually. A recession could decrease construction costs.
- Location of a 10th elementary school - Architects are currently designing the 10th elementary for the site adjacent to Highland Middle School on Five Mile Prairie.
- The need to determine boundaries for Fall 2020, and adhere to the publicized timeline, so that families know where their children will be attending school by the first of the year.

Questions/comments from community members in attendance included enrollment projections, size of elementary schools, K-3 class size legislation, new housing construction, the number of students shuttled and the cost of shuttles, money for the new stadium and school boundaries based on geography.

Each board member shared his/her current thinking on whether or not to move forward with building a 10th elementary school on Five Mile Prairie. Following comments, Director Burchard made a motion to table a decision on moving forward with building a 10th elementary school for up to twelve months. Director Denholm seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The decision was tabled to allow time to gather additional information on the 2020-2021 school year budget. The board wants to make sure the district can afford the non-teacher costs of approximately \$650,000 associated with opening a 10th elementary school before moving forward with construction.

Regarding direction for the Boundary Committee the board asked for a 9 Elementary School Plan as well as a 9 Elementary School Plan that can transition easily into a 10 Elementary School Plan.

Additional dialogue between community members in attendance and the board included teacher raises, town hall meetings, long-term vs short-term boundary revisions and the need to better educate the community.

III. Adjourn

The meeting was immediately adjourned at 5:10 pm.

President

Secretary