

REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SCHOOL DISTRICT #6
JANUARY 10, 2022

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of School District Six was held at 6:00 P.M., Monday, January 10, 2022, in the Boardroom of the administration offices at 501 Sixth Avenue West, Columbia Falls, Montana.

PRESENT:

Jill Rocksund..... Board Chair
Dean Chisholm..... Vice Chair via zoom
Larry Wilson..... Trustee
Barbara Riley Trustee via zoom
Gail Pauley Trustee
Heather Mumby Trustee via zoom
Keri Hill Trustee
Wayne Jacobsmeyer Trustee
Dave Wick..... Superintendent of Schools
Dustin Zuffelato Business Manager/Clerk

Chair Rocksund called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

Motion by Hill, second by Pauley, to approve the agenda as presented.

Chair Rocksund provided the following pre written explanation of the rationale for not including social emotional learning on the agenda.

Last month we were asked to consider adding an agenda item to discuss Social/Emotional Learning. We have listened to these concerns during public comment for 4 months now and have done quite a bit of research about SEL and the objections and concerns about SEL instruction. Administrators have visited with parents and community members about their concerns and worked toward resolutions. At this time, we have decided not to add an SEL agenda item for the following reasons: 1. We don't have the ability to 'unadopt' SEL instruction, just as we don't have the authority to disregard Montana State Standards. Standards and learning competencies are constructed by OPI, and local districts do not have the authority to disregard them. 2. Local districts do have the authority and duty to select learning materials and create instructional lessons that align with these state standards and learning competencies, and that is what has been done. 3. Right now we are living in unprecedented times. People are struggling.... Adults are struggling.... Lost jobs, insecure housing and food, stress in the home, dealing with illness and even death.... These are the times that our children are living in and they, too, are struggling. Approximately 20% of our Columbia Falls JrHi and HS students have contemplated suicide within the last year according to Montana's Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Our students need support to cope with these times, they need this support so that they can learn. That is what SD6 teachers and staff are doing, helping them learn and also learn to cope in these stressful times. Now is not the time to reduce our support to our students. 4. To date, we are aware of 10 people who have signed a petition expressing concern with SEL, only 2 of which have children in our schools (that we know of). 5. We will continue to work with individual parents who have concerns and would like an alternative or to opt out. And if parents want to opt out of this instruction, they should contact their building principal for other alternatives besides the late arrival already being offered. 6. While 'Off the shelf' SEL programs could be purchased and implemented, it is not clear how replacing locally developed/Columbia Falls community-oriented instruction with a nationally developed program would be an improvement. Local control of our

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVE AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2022
PAGE 2

instruction and curriculum seems preferable. We are always interested in hearing the perspectives of individual members of the community; however our review of the concerns expressed in this instance don't appear to warrant further board actions at this time for the reasons stated. A majority of the board has expressed support for this decision.
Motion passed 7-1. Jacobsmeyer - No

APPROVE CONSENT
AGENDA

Trustee Jacobsmeyer requested discussion concerning the December 13, 2021 Board Meeting minutes.

Motion by Pauley, second by Mumby, to approve the consent agenda as amended to simply include the December bills and the investment report. Passed 7-1 No-Jacobsmeyer
Trustee Jacobsmeyer contended the December 13, 2021 Board Minutes do not accurately portray the discussion during the final thirty minutes of the Board Meeting. Specifically one sentence to summarize the discussion does not provide enough detail. Chair Rocksund requested the Board Clerk to review the notes from the meeting and revise the minutes to include more detail of the discussion. Specifically depicting the reasons why a separate Board meeting or Board agenda item regarding social emotional learning was not warranted.

MOTION TO TABLE
APPROVAL OF THE
DECEMBER MINUTES

Motion by Jacobsmeyer, second by Mumby, to table the approval of the December minutes until revisions are made and presented for consideration. Passed 8-0

PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION:

Public Participation:

Approximately fifteen (15) people participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Approximately twenty (20) people attended the meeting in person.

Chair Rocksund requested public participation on any agenda or non-agenda items.

Megan Upton expressed concern with the School Board's reluctance to place Social Emotional Learning as a discussion item on the meeting agenda.

Anika Fraley contended that social emotional learning is critical race theory in disguise. Mrs. Fraley expressed concern that the Junior High Principal has too much autonomy regarding the content of this curriculum. This lack of transparency facilitates data mining, monitoring, and surveying of our students. Community member Joe O'Rourke requested oversight of the curriculum including the process for who reviews and selects curriculum. Community member Lisa Tate expressed concern that Columbia Falls School District is teaching values that should be the responsibility of individual parents or families. Community Member Joy Hunter noted that the mental health of students should be treated by licensed counselors/therapists as opposed to teachers. Parent Cori Albrecht contended that teachers don't have enough time to devote to this new SEL program. Community member Judy Territo noted that devoting thirty minutes every Wednesday to SEL demonstrates that it is a priority of the Columbia Falls School District and as such the Board should make it a priority to discuss the social emotional learning curriculum as a formal agenda item. Community member Rosie Eppelstein requested transparency and recommended a Committee to review and propose changes to the curriculum.

Teachers Paula Koch and Allyson Reamy-Butts expressed the dedication and extensive knowledge and experience that teachers possess to effectively educate students.

There was no additional public participation.

REPORTS:

Reports:

K-8 Facility Bond Project – Owners Representative Dave Jolly provided an update. The Ruder Elementary project is substantially complete but HVAC system commissioning and engineering is still ongoing with an estimated completion date of mid-February. Mr. Jolly noted that progress on the Glacier Gateway project has been slowed by recent adverse weather.

REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2022
PAGE 3

The Elementary School Principals provided the Board with written reports. The Junior High is currently experiencing high absenteeism as a result of illness.

High School Principal Scott Gaiser provided the Board with a written report.

District Business Manager/Clerk provided the Board with a written report. Mr. Zuffelato provided an update regarding the Health Insurance Committee. Veza Health continues to provide significant cost savings as a result of second medical opinions and steering participants to low cost providers. The Committee recommended providing financial incentives to plan members who utilize Veza Health in the form of premium reductions/credits. Mr. Zuffelato cited the financial details of a large claim charged by Logan Health that was recently repriced in accordance to the new Direct Provider Agreement that resulted in a savings of 44% off billed charge.

Special Education Director Michelle Swank provided the Board with a written report.

Superintendent Dave Wick provided the Board with a written report. Mr. Wick expressed concern with the public comments and would like to work to regain trust with the members of the community concerned with the District's curriculum. Mr. Wick noted the District is expecting and preparing for a surge in Coronavirus transmission during the latter half of the school year.

Action/Discussed Items:

The Board considered a revised Agreement related to the School Based Health Clinic. The District established the School Based Health Clinic in 2016 in an effort to provide primary care services to students that don't otherwise have a primary care physician. The current agreement provides the District with \$25,000 annually to support the School Nurse Program. The remuneration was provided primarily in recognition of the time and effort the school nurse contributed to operate the School Based Clinic. Subsequently Logan Health has devised similar programs in other schools within the Flathead Valley. Logan Health contacted the District in 2020 to consider aligning our agreement with the terms of the other schools. Effectively eliminating the financial support to the District. The District conveyed to Logan Health the importance of the financial support. Logan Health committed to continuing to provide the financial support in the form of a charitable contribution, which helps their business model as a critical access facility. Trustee Riley expressed concern regarding the facility use term in the agreement, specifically providing \$20 per use is not commensurate to market value for commercial office space. Superintendent Dave Wick informed the Board that some minor changes to the terms of the agreement including billing dates, etc. should be made to ensure clarity and ease of administration.

Motion by Wilson, second by Mumby, to approve the School Based Health Center Space Use Agreement with Logan Health affording the ability of the District Administration to make some immaterial changes. Passed 6-2. No – Jacobsmeyer and Riley

Superintendent Dave Wick reviewed the inclement weather procedure. Trustee Wilson noted that he does not believe #4 – closing schools based solely on the reason that school buses can't safely operate is valid. Many students that live in town or don't need a school bus should still be served at school.

Superintendent Dave Wick reviewed the Safe Return to Schools and Continuity of Services Plan.

ACTION /
DISCUSSION ITEMS:

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE SCHOOL BASED
HEALTH CENTER
SPACE USE AGREE-
MENT WITH LOGAN
HEALTH

INCLEMENT
WEATHER
PROCEDURE REVIEW

REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2022
PAGE 4

Mr. Wick specifically reviewed the strategies implemented to return to in-person instruction.

ARP AND ESSER PLAN
REVIEW

Superintendent Dave Wick reviewed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) Plan. Business Manager Dustin Zuffelato presented the ARP ESSER funding and expenditures to date. The District has been appropriated \$9,173,342 in federal ESSER since March 2020. The ESSER funding has come in three phases in accordance to three separate legislative bills. As of December 31, 2021, the District has expended \$3,570,240 including completely spending ESSER I. The District appears poised to expend ESSER II prior to the end of the current fiscal year. The District has until September 2024 to spend ESSER III. The District plans to use the majority of ESSER III to upgrade the HVAC system at the High School.

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE APPLICATION
FOR ACCREDITATION
VARIANCE FOR JH
LIBRARY

Superintendent Dave Wick presented an application to the State Office of Public Instruction regarding an accreditation variance for the Junior High Library. The District currently employs 1.0 FTE Certified Librarian at the junior high as well as a full-time Library Aide. The application contends the 2.0 FTE staffing level is appropriate and provides as much educational value as the required 1.50 FTE Certified Librarian.

Motion by Wilson, second by Hill, to approve the application for accreditation variance related to the Junior High Library. Passed 7-1. No-Jacobsmeyer

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE ADMITTANCE OF
G.J.G. AND H.L.J. TO
KINDERGARTEN FOR
21-22 SY

The Board considered the exceptional circumstances regarding students recently enrolled in Columbia Falls.

Motion by Wilson, second by Jacobsmeyer, to admit students G.J.G and H.L.J to Kindergarten for the 2021/22 school year. Passed 7-0

PERSONNEL:

Personnel:

The Board acknowledged the following resignations previously accepted by the Superintendent: Samantha Domp-Special Education Para-Educator and Scott Gaiser-High School Principal.

MOTION TO APPROVE
DISTRICT-WIDE/HIGH
SCHOOL HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion by Wilson, second by Hill, to approve the following High School/District Wide hiring recommendations: Paula Foster-Special Olympics Coach, Gretchen Miller-Health Liaison, Heather Gilchrist – Health Liaison, and Rachael Clemens-Para-educator. Passed 8-0

MOTION TO APPROVE
ELEMENTARY HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion by Wilson, second by Hill, to approve the following Elementary District hiring recommendations: Autumn Spann-Para-Educator, Chloe Tozzi-School Nurse, Lindsey Andrachick – Part Time Junior High Secretary, and Rick Lawrence – Junior High Girls Basketball Coach. Passed 7-0

MOTION TO APPROVE
THE SUBSTITUTE
HIRING
RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion by Wilson, second by Hill, to approve the substitute hiring recommendations. Passed 8-0

MISC / FUTURE
PLANNING

Miscellaneous and Future Planning:

The Board scheduled a Negotiations Committee Meeting to discuss the extension of the Certified Teacher Memorandum of Agreement. The meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2022 at 11 AM.

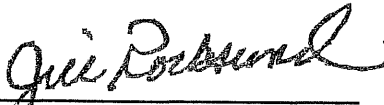
A Long Range Planning Committee Meeting was scheduled to discuss the high school HVAC and other facility deferred maintenance. Additionally, the Board will discuss the restrictive covenants regarding the Glacier Gateway building sale to Ruis Holdings. A Long Range Planning Committee Meeting was scheduled for January 24, 2022 at 5PM.

REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2022
PAGE 5


Health Insurance Committee Meeting January 27, 2022 4:00 P.M.
Regular Board Meeting February 14, 2022 6:00 P.M.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Chair Rocksund adjourned the meeting at 8:36 P.M.

MEETING
ADJOURNED:



Board Chair



Business Manager/Clerk