



Board of Directors, Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, November 22, 2022
RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
BENTON COUNTY, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON

The Board of Directors of Richland School District No. 400 met for a regular meeting Tuesday, November 22, 2022, at 6:30 P.M. via Zoom due to water leak at TLAC building, West Richland, Washington. School Board President Jill Oldson presided. Board members participating via Zoom: Kari Williams, Audra Byrd, and Rick Jansons. Administrators present via Zoom: Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Brian Moore, Executive Director of Information Technology Mike Leseberg, Executive Director of Operations Richard Krasner, Executive Director of Special Education 6-12 Robert Sorensen, Executive Director of Special Education Pre-K-5 Zach Carpenter, Executive Director of Behavioral Health Services Tory Christensen, and Director of Communications Ty Beaver.

The Board meeting was called to order at 6:33 P.M.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

1.2 Roll Call-Mr. Bird was excused due to illness.

2.0 COMMUNICATIONS

2.1 Good News-Benton/Franklin Transit/Community Based Transition Classroom (CBTC)

Postponed until December 13, 2022 due to weather and water leak at Teaching, Learning and Administration Center (TLAC).

2.2 Parent/Guardian Committee Report

Tamra Harrison stated the committee met on November 21, 2022 to discuss learning loss in the district. Ms. Harrison shared some recommendations from the group including but not limited to:

- allowing all students to access recovery services without having to qualify
- district wide communication to families regarding services offered
- timeline to ensure proper staffing is available
- current tutoring/study time offered by district after school be learning focused

Ms. Oldson asked to send the list to the board feedback email.

2.3 Requests and Comments by Visitors (2 minutes per individual)

Oliver Okerman, Student, shared concern regarding the removal of pride flags in classrooms.

Ethan Gotthold, Student, shared his concern regarding the proposed changes to Policy No. 2331 and feels these changes are not in the best interest of students.

Dawn Schoepflin, Teacher/Parent, shared concern regarding the Controversial Issues policy and stated the system is not broken so changes are not needed.

Kellyanna Brooking, Student, asked to only allow the American and State flag in classrooms and to stop pushing the liberal agenda.

Sara Stoothoff, Student, stated any conversation can be labeled controversial and asked that the students share their input.

Sara Flores Anderson, Teacher, shared concern with changes to Policy No. 2331 and asked the Board to read the letter received from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) before continuing.

Kristen Christensen feels the only flag that should be displayed is the American flag since it represents all.

Dusty Howard stated concern with the Controversial Issues Policy changes and feels the Student Representatives have done an amazing job with many students energized.

Toni O'Connor, Parent, shared concern regarding the removal of pride flags in classrooms. She feels LGBTQ students feel safe and less likely to commit suicide if they have an accepting adult.

Janie Romine, Parent, shared visibility of flags matter for LGBTQ students and thanked the ACLU for responding to the proposed changes to policy.

Paul Burnett, Parent, stated more counselors should be hired to support students but feels only the American and State flags should be displayed.

Shelly Burt, Parent, agreed with only displaying the American and State flags and feels the District should concentrate on recovery services and hire staff for summer school now.

Ms. Oldson asked others who wished to speak to send their comments through the Board feedback email on the District website.

3.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3.1 Resolution No. 951-Capital Projects Levy-Second Reading

Clinton Sherman, Executive Director of Finance, shared information on the Capital Projects Levy for safety and security improvements and high school facilities evaluation and design for second reading.

It was moved by Audra Byrd and seconded by Kari Williams –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 951-CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY FOR SECOND READING.

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

Mr. Sherman will move forward with the filing and shared a calculator can be accessed on the District website to show cost per \$1,000 assessed valuation (.31 cents/1,000). He also stated pro and con statements are needed for the Voter's Pamphlet. Election date is February 14, 2023.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Assessment Report

Brian Moore, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, reviewed benchmark data and Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) data from last year. Mr. Moore explained iReady tests are completed in grades K-8 and do not use a standard bank of questions but rather adapts questions as a student progresses through the test.

Tory Christensen, Executive Director of Behavioral Health, reported SBA tests are completed in third, eighth, and tenth grades. Mr. Christensen shared information showing math and reading data from Pre-COVID (spring 2019), Post-COVID (fall 2021) and Spring of 2022. He also shared comparison from local districts and Central Valley School District (Spokane) whose demographics are similar to Richland. Board discussion followed including:

- interest in plans for future-what is needed for improvement
- follow-up report in January/February
- recovery resources available for all students/advertise resources
- look for creative options

Dr. Redinger shared using the data dashboard, staff members can assess much more information such as attendance, behaviors, course completion, failing grades, and test scores so intervention can take place earlier. Discussion followed.

4.2 Policy No. 2331-Controversial Issues

Galt Pettett, General Counsel, shared the District's current policy with changes by Ms. Byrd, and the current Washington State School Directors' Association's (WSSDA) policy.

Mr. Jansons stated the District is raising students who need to hear differing viewpoints and feels any issues have been addressed by the process in place (parents first contacting teachers, then administrators). Mr. Jansons referred to the letter received from the ACLU and feels the District has already spent funds on attorney fees this year and these changes trample on student and staff civil rights. He does not support any changes.

Ms. Byrd stated the goal of these changes is to have a focus on belonging for all rather than segregating and labeling. Nowhere in the changes does it say teachers can't teach controversial issues. Teachers are to exercise professional judgement and determine appropriateness and respect the right of parents and guardians to be informed of controversial issues. Ms. Byrd stated District Legal Counsel advised all policies need to be objective and not so broad as to be discriminatory in any way. Ms. Byrd suggested removing all the last section and adding "*controversial issues are defined as any issues not included in current District approved curricula or and have been discussed in the local newspaper with opposing viewpoints within the last three years*".

Ms. Williams stated these changes do not restrict the discussion of controversial topics. She feels teachers should be facilitators and remain unbiased. She likes the addition of "free from prejudice

and political bias” in the first paragraph. Ms. Williams wants robust conversations and for parents to be involved and informed.

Ms. Oldson is hoping everyone read the WSSDA policy as it is similar to the District’s original policy but emphasizes unbiased. Controversial issues are personal to each family. Ms. Oldson doesn’t want teachers to feel there may be backlash for certain topics. Teachers need to inform parents, but many topics can be controversial. She encourages critical thinking. She does not support adding definitions since they are too broad.

Karrin Wierzchoski agreed with Ms. Oldson regarding definitions.

Leif Carman also agreed with definitions and stated the ACLU letter stated controversial issues could be applied to almost anything. He feels this is a disservice to students and does not encourage critical thinking. Board discussion followed.

Ms. Byrd defined controversial as *“Not in current District approved curriculum or in local newspaper in the last 3 years”*. Discussion followed.

It was moved by Kari Williams and seconded by Audra Byrd –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE POLICY NO. 2331-CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES FOR FIRST READING WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:
REMOVING THE FIVE BULLETS SUGGESTED BY MS. BYRD AND ADDING A SENTENCE AT THE END: *“REGARDING THIS POLICY, CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES CAN BE DEFINED AS TOPICS THAT ARE USUALLY COMPLICATED, WITH NO CLEAR ANSWERS BECAUSE THEY ARE ISSUES ON WHICH PEOPLE OFTEN HOLD STRONG VIEWS BASED ON THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES, INTERESTS, VALUES, AND PERSONAL CONTEXT”*. ALSO *“ADD POLITICAL BIAS”* IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH.

Discussion:

Mr. Jansons like the District’s current policy and will vote no. Mr. Jansons feels incidents are rare and parents can reach out to teachers, principals, and further if needed. The process has been working.

Ms. Byrd asked what guidance the principal uses in determining if it a topic is controversial? Mr. Jansons stated he trusts the principal’s professional judgement.

Vote: Jansons, no; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, no.
Motion did not pass.

4.3 Performance Audit Update

Dr. Redinger advised the District will begin the process to receive bids for a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Food Services as well as a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for an architect in the near future and would like to have one Board member involved on each of these committees. Ms. Williams suggested a student participate on the Food Service Committee and Mr. Jansons stated his interested in the Facility Committee.

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA (approval by a single vote of the Board)

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Audra Byrd –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (5.1) THROUGH (5.7) INCLUDING AN UPDATED PERSONNEL ACTION.

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

5.1 Personnel Actions

CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

INCREASE IN FTE FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Monks, Kirah, .20 FTE, French, Richland High School, effective 11/14/2022 (non-continuing)

TERMINATIONS FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Bittinger, John, Science Teacher, Richland High School, effective 11/21/2022

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Bailey, Wendy, Paraeducator, Jefferson Elementary, eff. 11/14/2022 (corrected from 11/9/2022)

Carrier, Kyle, Assistant Director, Transportation, effective 11/14/2022

Contreras, Isabel, Routing Manager, Transportation, effective 11/21/2022

Martinez-Nelson, Juliet, Nutrition Services, Carmichael Middle School, effective 11/7/2022

Rice, Amy, Fiscal Budget Analyst, Administration, effective 11/14/2022

Salazar, Adriana, Secretary, Enterprise Middle School, effective 11/28/2022

Warren, Shonna, Paraeducator, Jefferson Elementary, eff. 11/14/2022(corrected from 11/9/2022)

Witwer, Alisha, Paraeducator (Rehire), Lewis & Clark Elementary, effective 11/10/2022

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Jackson, Janine, Paraeducator, Jason Lee Elementary, effective 11/2/2022-8/31/2023

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Howard, Christine, Paraeducator, Hanford High School, effective 11/30/2022

Schlotman, Paul, Paraeducator, Sacajawea Elementary, effective 11/10/2022

Schuman, Kathleen, Paraeducator, Lewis & Clark Elementary, effective 12/16/2022

Sprueill, Stephanie, Paraeducator, Sacajawea Elementary, effective 11/14/2022 (will Cert Sub)

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

DePeel, Kelli, Secretary, Hanford High School, effective 7/31/2022

5.2 Approval of Minutes (October 25, 2022)

5.3 Resolution NO. 952-Resolution of Authorized District Personnel

5.4 Policy No. 4120-Dangerous Weapons on School Premises

5.5 Enrollment Monthly

5.6 Budget Monthly

5.7 Payroll and Warrant Information

ASB Fund Warrant Nos. 40007143 through 40007146 for \$ 1,526.13

Nos. 54000496 through 54000501 for \$121,299.34

Nos. 40007147 through 40007165 for \$12,876.34

Nos. 54000502 through 54000505 for \$148,825.96

Nos. 74000158 through 74000160 for \$9,603.75

Capital Projects Fund Warrant Nos. 20001902 through 20001907 for \$203,467.74

No. 52000308 for \$2,176.72

No. 20001908 for \$45,235.06
Nos. 52000309 through 52000311 for \$120,586.81
General Fund Warrant Nos. 10083647 through 10083740 for \$314,153.69
Nos. 51001922 through 51001935 for \$949,144.58
Nos. 71003088 through 71003103 for \$48,132.11
Nos. 10083741 through 10083808 for \$338,447.09
Nos. 51001936 through 51001948 for \$444,783.15
Nos. 71003104 through 71003114 for \$59,478.03

6.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 Future Agenda Items

- Policy No. 2331-Controversial Issues-Ms. Byrd will make some edits and bring back on December 13, 2022
- Discipline Workshop-planned for early January-agenda planning expectations, discipline and behavior, District to bring a sample policy, procedure, include dates evaluated, assess progress, data
- Parent/Guardian Committee Recommendations/Expectations
- Learning recovery/summer school/growth assessments
- Modified calendar-reach out to other Boards/Superintendents in the region
- HomeLink-one year plan, now three-year plan
- Flag survey results-December 13, 2022
- WSSDA Conference recap
- Board Docs discussion
- Student Representatives-Advisory Vote

6.2 Approval of December 13, 2022 Agenda

- Move Policy No. 8900-Nondiscrimination to January
- Curriculum Committee Procedures-December 13, 2022-more parents needed
- Add Flag Survey Report-Student Representatives
- Add Student Representative Advisory Vote
- Add Discipline Workshop Planning

It was moved by Kari Williams and seconded by Audra Byrd –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE DECEMBER 13, 2022 WITH CHANGES MENTIONED ABOVE.

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

7.0 BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Shelley Redinger stated there was a water leak on Keene in front of the TLAC building so the water had to be turned off to the building. Without water, the fire sprinkler system was not available, so the building was closed for the day. A temporary fix was completed but more work will be needed over winter break.

All Board members attend the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) Conference in Spokane.

Jill Oldson attended the Thanksgiving Luncheon at River's Edge High School.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 P.M.

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400

SECRETARY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS