



Board of Directors, Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, March 14, 2023
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, March 14, 2023, at 5:30 P.M. via Zoom and in person, 6972 Keene Road, West Richland, Washington. School Board President Kari Williams presided. Board members participating: Jill Oldson, Semi Bird, Audra Byrd, and Rick Jansons. Administrators present: 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 Teaching and Learning Jennifer Klauss, Executive Director of Special Education 6-12 Robert Sorensen, Executive Director of Special Education Pre-K-5 Zach Carpenter, and Executive Director of Behavioral Health Services Tory Christensen.

The Board meeting was called to order at 5:33 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Personnel-RCW 42.30.110 (1) (g)-Quarterly Superintendent Check-in)
The Board adjourned to executive session at 5:33 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). The executive session was projected to last sixty minutes, with no action expected. Executive session ended at 6:29 P.M.

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 6:33 P.M.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

1.2 Roll Call-All participated in the meeting-Ms. Oldson via Zoom.

2.0 COMMUNICATIONS

2.1 GOOD NEWS

2.2.1 Classified Employee of the Year

Tim Praino, Executive Director of Human Resources, introduced Nan Duncan, Richland High School Para Educator, who has been serving Special Education students for 34 years. Mr. Praino described Ms. Duncan as selfless, committed to her work, and thanked her for her many years of service.

2.2.2 Classified Employee Appreciation Week

Mr. Praino stated this week is Classified Appreciation Week. He thanked all 875 classified employees for their role in helping students be successful. Classified employees include nutrition services staff, para educators, custodians, grounds workers, secretaries, bus drivers and technology staff.

2.2 Requests and Comments (2 minutes per individual/30-minute limit)

Ashton Stoker, Student, stated her learning was disrupted due to the mask mandate and supports the decision made by Ms. Byrd, Mr. Bird, and Ms. Williams.

Shelly Burt, West Richland, shared concern regarding summer school planning and asked for transparency with upcoming agendas.

Jeff Marzyck, Richland, is in support of the recall, stated the courts decided to allow the recall to continue, and feels the evidence speaks for itself.

Janice Haney, West Richland, feels false information was spread regarding the effectiveness of masks and school closures to control the spread of COVID while children had minimum symptoms. Ms. Haney opposes the recall.

Ken Spencer, Benton County Assessor, Richland, thanked the District for its good work disbursing information.

Jenn Smith, Teacher, stated public officials need to have consequences for their actions and be held accountable without political posturing. Ms. Smith feels the most courageous action would be for the three under recall to resign and save the District more taxpayer dollars.

Rick Jansons, Board member, stated he was silenced by a majority of the Board at the last meeting. He continues to be asked the rules about the recall as some feel the rules are not clear. Staff members have stated being afraid of retaliation after hearing of Director Byrd's threat of investigation and termination. Instead, the Board voted to silence the Superintendent to say anything more on this topic. He stated the real cost of the recall election will be \$75-\$100,000 on the August primary election. He shared information regarding the fees already spent on legal fees. He will commit to unity, but also continue to speak the truth about the recall.

Mr. Bird reported he had no knowledge of the threats mentioned above. Ms. Byrd clarified she made the statement because if a staff member violates policy, that is grounds for being fired.

Tex Bender, West Richland, feels the Emergency Declaration was unfounded and did not meet the criteria for an Emergency Declaration. He feels this violated individual rights.

Evelyn Menzel, Richland, stated her disappointment with the recall and feels Mr. Jansons and Ms. Oldson need to be held accountable. She stated Ms. Byrd, Mr. Bird and Ms. Williams stood for students' rights, for choice, and for parents in the District.

Denae Jeppson, West Richland, supports Ms. Byrd, Mr. Bird and Ms. Williams. Ms. Jeppson feels the Superintendent is not a good fit for the District and asked to hire a Deputy Superintendent as part of a succession plan.

Jodie Kleingartner, West Richland, read a social media post from Mike Hansen, retired employee. Ms. Kleingarten feels the three under recall were voted by the community to represent the people and feels they represent the majority.

Janessa O'Connor, Richland, stated she heard of the Board issues as a counselor in Richland from students. She feels Pride flags are a sign of safety for some students and would like to see more actions with students' best interest in mind.

Sara Watson, Richland, feels that integrity is lacking in certain Board members. Ms. Watson shared examples of this lack of integrity.

Debbie Savino, Teacher, was pleased to see Financial Literacy is on the agenda tonight. She encouraged the Board to invest in professional development and that this be a required course in middle school.

Eugene Nemeth, Richland, shared his concern regarding actions by Mr. Jansons and Ms. Oldson in the past regarding lack of action for marginalized students which caused him to file several lawsuits against the District. He feels Ms. Byrd, Mr. Bird and Ms. Williams have fought for these students.

2.3 Board/Superintendent/Student Representative Reports

Karrin Wierzchowski, Student Representative, reported on the recent "Conversation Cookie" suicide prevention event at both Richland and Hanford High Schools. Student Advisory members also helped. Students shared great feedback and an event at Delta High School will be planned in the future. Next steps include a survey and small groups with a professional present.

Leif Carman, Student Representative, reported on the trip to Washington D.C. with several Board members and Dr. Redinger. He stated the trip was a great experience.

Shelley Redinger shared the next Student Advisory will include counselors to further discuss suicide prevention and capital projects staff members to discuss upcoming projects. She was also asked to be a judge for the Future Chef competition.

Semi Bird shared information from the recent Washington D.C. trip to advocate for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funds. He feels the trip was successful to ensure the District will receive its share.

Audra Byrd attended Board leadership, is working to promote a modified calendar, and thanked the "resist the recall" group for their support.

Rick Jansons attended the Crystal Apple Award Ceremony where Leslie Belden, Chief Joseph Middle School Teacher, was honored. John Deichman, past "Richland Citizens for Good Schools" Chairman, was also recognized for his work on many bond and levy committees in the past. Mr. Jansons also asked Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) to leave the national organization (NSBA).

Jill Oldson shared information on the Washington D.C. trip. The PILT funds have been decreasing in recent years and felt an in person visit to meet with legislators was valuable.

Kari Williams thanked those supporting the "resist the recall", attended the Hanford High School Dessert Theatre, the English Language Arts (ELA) committee meeting, and reported all middle

schools have drama productions soon. She also reported the future agenda document is on the District website.

3.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3.1 Bond Project Timeline

Richard Krasner, Executive Director of Operations, shared the timeline for creating a bond package in time for the February 2024 election. The first presentation to the Board is estimated for the first meeting in October with First and Second Readings in November. Filing with the Benton County Auditor's Office will need to be completed by December 8, 2023 in order to be placed on the February 2024 ballot. Board discussion included use of best practices, fiscal responsibility, and a request for an earlier timeline. Mr. Krasner estimates the process will take six months with several different architects involved. Information will be communicated regularly throughout the process and monthly updates at Board meetings will be provided. .

3.2 Financial Literacy-Possible Action

Jen Klauss, Executive Director of Secondary Teaching and Learning, and Ryan Beard, Director of Career and Technical Education, provided three options for middle school financial literacy courses. Options included a required elective course, an optional elective course, or integrating financial literacy education into core classes. Also, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, all middle school students will be required to take one "term" of art each year which could include Art, Drama, Concert Band, Jazz Band, Orchestra, Guitar, Choir, or Broadcasting. After discussion it was decided to move forward with the development of a .25 credit required financial literacy course in the seventh grade. A waiver was requested for those families who wished to opt out of this class.

It was moved by Semi Bird and seconded by Audra Byrd –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE MOVING FORWARD WITH A REQUIRED COURSE IN SEVENTH GRADE AND TO ALLOW A WAIVER IF REQUESTED.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Student Representatives: Carman, yes, Wierzchowski, Yes
Motion was approved.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Performance Audit Update

Dr. Redinger shared details from the recent trip to Washington D.C with Ms. Oldson, Mr. Bird, Mr. Sherman, and Leif Carman-Student Representative. 82% of land within the District boundary is owned by the Department of Energy (DOE) and cannot be taxed. DOE pays a percentage of its funding (in lieu of property taxes) to several local agencies. Funds received over the last several years have been reduced. The purpose of the trip was to advocate for additional PILT funds. Dr. Redinger and the group met with representatives from Senator Cantwell and Murray's offices, as well as several legislators, to share the need for this continued and increased funding. All felt the trip was productive and the District will receive a portion of \$10.1M PILT dollars.

4.2 Policy No. 2005-School Improvement Plans

Galt Pettett, General Counsel, advised this policy is being updated to align with the District's practice. This policy is considered essential by the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA). Board discussion followed including timelines, data tracking, and recording.

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

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE POLICY NO. 2005 AS AMMENDED WITH A BULLET STATING: "RELATED DATA WILL BE TRACKED, RECORDED, AND ANALYZED FOR IMPROVEMENT" FOR FIRST READING.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Student Representatives: Carman, yes, Wierzchowski, Yes
Motion was approved.

4.3 Policy/RR No. 2195-Academic Acceleration

Mr. Pettett explained academic acceleration is a design to advance each student's coursework as soon as he or she is ready by making advancement automatic. Students who meet or exceed state standard in eighth grade and high school are automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous level of advanced course or program. Parents/guardians are given the opportunity for advanced courses but have the option to opt-out. This process continues so that when the student is ready, he or she is automatically enrolled in courses that offer the opportunity to earn dual credit for high school and college. Board discussion followed.

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Semi Bird –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE POLICY/RR NO. 2195-ACADEMIC ACCERLERATION FOR FIRST READING.

Vote: Bird, yes; Jansons, yes; Williams, yes; Byrd, yes: and Oldson, yes.
Student Representatives: Carman, yes, Wierzchowski, Yes
Motion was approved.

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

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Semi Bird –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (5.1) THROUGH (5.3) INCLUDING AN UPDATED PERSONNEL ACTION.

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

5.1 Personnel Actions

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Ochoa, Robert (Adrian), 1 FTE, Assistant Principal/Athletic Director Richland High School

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Veach, Jennifer, 1 FTE, Assistant Principal, Leona Libby Middle School

RETIREMENTS FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Edwards, Michael, 1 FTE, Principal (Interim), Richland High School

Whitney, Deborah, 1 FTE, Principal Jason Lee Elementary

CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Lokken, Cassandra, 1 FTE, Consultant, Three Rivers HomeLink

Martin, Kathy, 1 FTE, Kindergarten, Marcus Whitman Elementary

Nelson, Amanda, 1 FTE, 2nd/3rd Grade Combination, Pacific Crest Online Academy

Williams, Molly, 1 FTE, Language Arts, Carmichael Middle School

RETIREMENTS FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Bryan, Karen, 1 FTE, 5th Grade, Sacajawea Elementary

Cioppa, Philip, 1 FTE, Language Arts, Hanford High School

Durfee, Sali, 1 FTE, Preschool, Early Learning Center

Ellefson, Deborah, 1 FTE, 6th Grade, Leona Libby Middle School

Holst, Marie, 1 FTE, 1st Grade, Sacajawea Elementary

Hood, Pamela, 1 FTE, 4th Grade, White Bluffs Elementary

Lindberg, Blake, 1 FTE, Physical Education, Chief Joseph Middle School

Lynch, David, 1 FTE, Vocational Teacher, Richland High School

Roueché, Margaret, 1 FTE, Social Studies, Leona Libby Middle School

Zuhlke, Diane, 1 FTE, Physical Education, Enterprise Middle School

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Albright, Jacob, Paraeducator, Chief Joseph Middle School, effective 3/15/2023

Coder, Rodney, Custodian, Enterprise MS, effective 3/3/2023 (correct start date from 3/8/2023)

Diaz, Alex, Paraeducator (former Replacement Employee), Badger Mountain, eff. 3/6/2023

Enos, Kristal, Paraeducator, Jefferson Elementary, effective 3/15/2023

Hanson, Jakob, Security, Chief Joseph Middle School, effective 3/14/2023

Hyde, Melinda, Paraeducator, Jason Lee Elementary, effective 3/15/2023

Kreis, Irish, Paraeducator, White Bluffs Elementary, effective 3/2/2023

Steed, Jayna, Paraeducator (Replacement Employee), HomeLink, eff. 3/6/2023-5/26/2023

Toney, Jocelyn, Paraeducator, Jefferson Elementary, effective 3/13/2023

Underwood, Chandra Paraeducator (Rehire), Special Education, effective 3/13/2023

Warnick, Cameron, Paraeducator, Jefferson Elementary, effective 3/13/2023

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Barrows, Michael, Security Officer, Carmichael Middle School, effective 3/14/2023

March, Bethany, Custodian, Enterprise Middle School, effective 3/10/2023

Melton, Suzanne, Paraeducator, Early Learning Center, effective 3/23/2023

Noble, LaDonna, Custodian, Chief Joseph Middle School, effective 2/28/2023

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

Eagles, Debbie, Paraeducator, Jason Lee Elementary, effective 3/6/2023-6/14/2023

5.2 Approval of Minutes (February 28, 2023)

5.3 Payroll and Warrant Information

ASB Fund Warrant Nos. 40007263 through 40007290 for \$209,873.74

Nos. 54000539 through 54000542 for \$2,170.25

Nos. 40007291 through 40007299 for \$11,727.67

Nos. 54000543 through 54000545 for \$148,962.91

Capital Projects Fund Warrant Nos. 20001939 through 20001946 for \$196,631.83
Nos. 52000321 through 52000323 for \$304,361.00
Nos. 20001947 through 20001950 for \$69,156.89
Nos. 52000324 through 52000325 for \$78,60.23
General Fund Warrant Nos. 10085144 through 10085271 for \$1,001,851.02
Nos. 51002090 through 51002105 for \$140,684.36
Nos. 10085273 through 10085338 for \$297,657.98
Nos. 51002106 through 51002114 for \$897,851.11
Payroll Warrant Nos. 10084731 for \$150.00
1008426 through 10084830 for \$11,342.90
10085015 through 10085098 for \$169,675.81
10085099 through 10085141 for \$5,247,803.78
Electronic Fund Transfer for \$10,884,005.58
Total February Payroll approved in the amount of \$16,312,978.07

6.0 AGENDAS

6.1 Future Agenda Items-Planning/Prioritizing

0=not a priority; 1=0-3 months; 2=3-6 months; 3=Friday packet

Ms. Byrd suggested an in-depth financial audit to “trim the fat” with Board members involved. There was consensus from Board members to discuss with Mr. Sherman before any further action.

Ms. Byrd asked to prioritize the “Summer School” topic and place on the March 28, 2023 agenda. Ms. Byrd will meet with Mr. Moore, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, and discuss options to be presented at the next meeting.

Ms. Byrd asked to investigate seven period days or block scheduling. There was consensus to add this topic to an agenda in three to six months.

Ms. Byrd discussed the Superintendent evaluation and contract workshops. Ms. Williams asked to set dates for two Board Workshops, one each in late April and early May. Then meet to discuss Superintendent goals in June.

An Organization Chart (Org. Chart) was requested on the District website. Dr. Redinger stated the chart will be on the website by Monday.

Ms. Byrd stated an email regarding succession planning was sent to all Board members. She advised this is good business practice. She stated the previous Deputy Superintendent had retired in January and would like to prioritize this discussion to hire for this position. Ms. Byrd asked that this position be filled before summer.

Mr. Bird stated the Org. Chart and Succession Plan comes out of the Human Resources department. He fully supports a succession plan as a best practice. He explained hiring a Deputy Superintendent should be treated as a separate item. Ms. Oldson felt that Dr. Redinger would make that call if needed since the Superintendent is the Board’s only employee. Board discussion followed.

Dr. Redinger stated Richland School District is her last stop before retiring in seven years and feels hiring a Deputy would be very premature, expensive, and would rather the dollars go to classrooms. The discussion was always that the District would not replace the Deputy Superintendent position when Mr. Hanson retired. Superintendent Redinger also stated the District has not been successful when hiring a Deputy Superintendent for succession purposes in the past and stated it is not the Board's purview to hire a Deputy Superintendent.

Mr. Bird advised he is not looking to replace Dr. Redinger, just to bring this for discussion at a future meeting. Board discussion followed.

Board members discussed creating a succession plans (written document) and categorized it as a Friday packet item.

Ms. Williams shared information regarding administrators hired and fiscal responsibility. Justification should be needed for this position. Mr. Bird stated this is not a move to remove to replace Dr. Redinger. Board discussion followed including Board Roles and Responsibilities. Mr. Pettett was asked to create a Friday packet with further information.

Ms. Wierzchowski reported on the timeline to review applications for next year's Student Representative (junior). She also requested student reports be moved to the beginning so students can be released earlier.

Ms. Williams added a report on the Highly Capable Program is already scheduled to later this year.

6.2 Approval of March 28, 2023 Agenda

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Semi Bird –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE MARCH 28, 2023 BOARD MEETING AGENDA WITH THE ADDITION OF SUMMER SCHOOL UNDER UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 P.M.

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400

SECRETARY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS