

### SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

A Special Meeting of the Springfield School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on May 18, 2020. In order to comply with the Governor's executive orders, the Board conducted this meeting by video conference only. The public was invited to watch or listen to the board meeting via Zoom Webinar or Zoom Phone. Information for participating was shared with the public on the district website.

#### 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Zach Bessett called the Springfield Board of Education virtual special meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

##### Attendance

Board Members attending the Zoom webinar included Board Chair Zach Bessett, Board Vice Chair Naomi Raven, Lisa Barrager, Dr. Emilio Hernandez and Todd Mann.

District staff and community members identified included Superintendent Todd Hamilton, David Collins, Brett Yancey, Judy Bowden, Don Lamb, Jeff Michna, Jeff Mather, Dustin Reese, Lesa Haley, Mindy LeRoux, Linda O'Shea, Brenda Holt, Tim Stephens, Elizabeth Gabriel, Shana McOmie, Debbie Jennings, Amber Howe, Trudy Waddell, Shelley Nurre, Amber Mitchell, Jen McCulley, Charlie Clark, Suzanne Price, Sherry Moore, Whitney McKinley, Becky Dopps, Michael Schlosser, Karri Thiele, Joan Bolls, Anne Goff, Jonathan Gault, Susan Wright, Paul Weill and Brian Megert. There was also one community member who attended using Zoom Phone and that name was not available.

#### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Bessett explained that members of the public were asked to electronically share their ideas and opinions with the Board by noon on the date of this board meeting. One email was received from Colleen Thompson, 6863 Ivy Street. The following is the email that was submitted for public comment:

Good evening,

I'm absolutely dismayed and deeply disappointed to read in the Oregonian today that Springfield Public Schools is planning to use the same shady loophole Portland Public Schools found, and exploited, to rob Peter to pay Paul (a sizeable bonus for Paul, no less). I expect so much more of our District, and am – for the first time in my 23 years as a Springfield resident – ashamed of my home town.

I write to you as:

- A parent of two students at Thurston High School;
- A 22-year resident, taxpayer, and homeowner in Springfield;
- A longtime contributor to the Springfield Education Foundation;
- A hardworking citizen who considers herself a Springfield Booster in every way.

Please reconsider your decision – for any and all of the following reasons:

- The potential budget savings to SPS is a mere .2% of the total operating budget – yet the total cost to ALL Taxpayers is exponentially higher, factoring in unemployment compensation and the \$600 weekly bonus. While shifting costs to the federal government may be tempting, it certainly sits wrong with taxpayers.

- This has huge potential to backfire the next time SPS seeks a bond levy or other public support. The thousands of Springfielders who are legitimately out of work, and without any benefits, will not soon forget this move.
- This is completely out of character for our community: a city proud of its bootstrapping history, with an enviable record of public/private partnership and collaboration among its public entities (i.e., Team Springfield). An action like this is likely to create negative impact by association for the other members of that collaborative.

This action is completely, utterly unnecessary. Instead of taking this step to potentially save \$1.5 million for next year's (reduced) budget, let's consider other avenues, such as:

- Look to the Springfield Education Foundation to help even more than they already do. The business leaders in our community would rather be asked to give even more generously than they already do, to avoid a costly – and in many minds, unethical – tactic like the one under consideration.
- Look for federal funding specifically allocated to public education to plug the gap. It's evident that our federal government is eager to distribute trillions of public funding to stem the impact of COVID-19, so not unreasonable to expect a special allocation for education in the coming months.
- In a worst case scenario, find ways to cut that \$1.5 million – along with the rest of the anticipated budget shortfall – as next year gets underway. If schools operate anything like businesses, then SPS is undoubtedly finding new ways to work more efficiently during this interruption in life-as-usual, with work from home, remote learning, and even cuts to nice but not essential programs/services.

It would be far more honorable to take any of these steps, than to continue on the path toward the one-day-a-week furloughs now, when virtual classroom time – and even work assignments – are at such ridiculously low levels. And when public sentiment about those who are gaming the benefits system is scathing.

Thank you for considering this feedback. Should anyone wish to discuss these concerns further, you are welcome to call or text me at 541-510-2549.

Colleen Thompson

### **3. ACTION ITEMS**

Chair Bessett invited Superintendent Todd Hamilton, Chief Operations Officer Brett Yancey and Assistant Superintendent David Collins to share a brief overview and to inform the board about the context for the conversation that would follow.

Superintendent Hamilton shared this action would allow the district to save approximately \$1.4 million in current staffing costs, by implementing furlough days and carrying over the savings to use in the 2020-2021 school year. This approach would help mitigate likely reductions to the State School Fund from the impact of COVID-19 on Oregon's economy.

The savings would result from reducing the school year calendar by four (4) days – one Friday per week from May 18 through June 12. Eleven and twelve-month employees would continue to furlough one day per week through July 31.

Mr. Yancey shared that the district's priority in considering this action would be to protect the number of teachers and classrooms for the 2020-2021 school year. He added that the district could either decrease

the number of employees or decrease the number of days in the classroom. He said it was made very clear through the community engagement meetings last fall that our community wants more adults in the classroom. He wanted to assure the board that meals would continue to be served to our families on the furlough days.

Mr. Collins said that the district would continue to work with community partners to provide mental health and wrap around services for families on furlough days. He echoed Mr. Yancey's statement that the community wants more adults in classrooms. Mr. Collins read the resolution for the board's consideration.

#### **1. Approve 2019-2020 Academic Calendar – Amended**

The following amended 2019-2020 academic calendar was presented to the Board for approval.

As a result of anticipated budget shortfalls due to COVID-19 closure, the amended student calendar includes Non-Student/Furlough Days for the remainder of the school year. Furlough days would be:

Friday, May 22, 2020  
Friday, May 29, 2020  
Friday, June 5, 2020  
Friday, June 12, 2020

Due to furlough days, the last day of school will move to June 10, 2020 with June 11, 2020 as a grading day.

David Collins recommended that the Board of Directors approve the amended 2019-2020 academic calendar as presented.

**MOTION:** Ms. Barrager moved, Dr. Hernandez seconded the motion to approve the amended 2019-2020 academic calendar as presented.

Chair Bessett called for discussion. Superintendent Hamilton, Mr. Yancey and Mr. Collins answered a few questions from the board members. The board came to a consensus that the potential savings gained from the four furlough days which would be moved to next year's budget was the appropriate action to take.

Chair Bessett called for a roll call vote. He asked each board member to indicate if they supported the motion to approve the amended 2019-2020 academic calendar as presented: Ms. Raven – Yes, Ms. Barrager – Yes, Dr. Hernandez – Yes, Mr. Mann – Yes and Mr. Bessett – Yes.

Motion passed, 5:0.

#### **4. NEXT MEETINGS**

Mr. Bessett said that this was the conclusion of the business portion of the meeting. He shared that the next meeting was scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business, Chair Bessett adjourned the meeting at 5:43 p.m.

*(Minutes recorded by Judy Bowden)*