

NORTH CONEJOS SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J
REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

August 18, 2015

District Administration Building

6:30 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the District Administration Office was called to order at 6:33 pm by Mark Bahr, President.

ROLL CALL

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

PREDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

FALCON AWARD

Mr. Andy Price was presented the falcon award by Curt Wilson. Andy went above and beyond his normal course of duty to repair broken phone lines for the district, broken by the insertion of a drain for the CMS parking lot. He stayed after his normal work day to make the repairs so NCSD could have immediate phone service to begin the school year, and made great efforts to repair the lines in a large amount of water, mud and cold. We greatly appreciate Andy and all he does for the North Conejos School District community, a former graduate of Centauri High School and indicative of the type of person we want to produce as a district.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA/CHANGES TO CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Robert Chavez to approve the consent agenda items as presented, seconded by Joseph Baroz. **(attachments #1 - #5)**

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

A motion was made by Joseph Baroz to approve the agenda with no additions, seconded by Robert Chavez.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/ACTIVITIES

Achievement Reports:

Principals reported on CMAS Scores.

Mr. Ricky Salazar reported LJE was very close to moving into the 'strong command' category with respect to CMAS scores. His staff discussed with him the specific improvements to be made and the standards students need to improve upon to make his discussed goals. He feels LJE has very positive numbers and is relatively pleased but articulated the need to concentrate on weaknesses while not dropping in LJE's strong categories.

Mr. Denny Fringer reported Manassa Elementary scored above state average in all categories on the CMAS assessment. ME does well traditionally, and Mr. Fringer noted the pleasure of seeing another great year in assessment outcomes. Mr. Fringer noted that the traditionally challenging fifth grade is making improvements. His staff will evaluate and determine what they need to do to assist students to progress across the board as he presented the specifics of his plan.

Mr. Tyler Huffaker, principal at CMS, showed the board members a power point showing the CMS scores on the CMAS assessment. He noted and expressed gratitude for all students were willing to take the test as CMS had 100% participation, a true rarity in Colorado with consideration to the parent opt-out option. His staff is using cross curriculum strategies and planning to teach students the necessary skills to score well and learn at the most efficient level, and he feels this is proving successful. Mr. Huffaker expressed how proud he was of his students as the results are a marked improvement over prior years.

Mr. Brian Loch reported to the board that he has not yet received the results from the Senior CMAS scores; they are to be released in November. He discussed the ACT scores with board members and noted a slight decline in the composite score but did note a very low achievement gap. He expressed that there was excessive testing the last three months of school and demonstrated the duration via a chart constructed for the promethean board. His stated plans to do more ACT prep testing this coming year were explained in the plan to raise ACT scores to a higher cumulative composite score.

Mrs. Susan Hamilton reported concerning the CDE which occurred in July on the North Conejos Alternative Program, specifically the AEC audit. Since that audit the schools plan and rating have been approved by CDE with complete approval without any noted deficiencies, and is now considered an official alternative program. Mr. Wilson expressed that Susan has done an amazing job with our alternative program and her preparation and work earned the distinguished approval. On August 11th of this year, Mrs. Hamilton demonstrated how the Federal Programs Grant was approved. The district can now begin using federal funds to pay for salaries and programs within the parameters established in the grant.

BOCES Report:

Mark Bahr reported that there is a Colorado State Board of Education vacancy in District 9. He mentioned that grants can be written through BOCES and stated how the director will share those plans with superintendents. Mr. Bahr also asked if NCS D wanted to send a delegate to CASB delegate assembly in October and then discussed BEST grant school information with the board members shared with him at the BOCES meeting.

NCEA Report:

Bonnie Keller reported that she will meet with Mr. Wilson to tackle the "G" section of district policy in September and will work with him to reconstruct a policy index and structure district policy should have.

Administration Report:

Mr. Wilson reported that the district calendars are out for this school year and is pleased with the calendar and distributed the new look calendar to BOE members.

Mr. Wilson shared the enrollment trends for the past five years with the board and declared our unofficial enrollment in 2007 was 1231 students, 2008 enrollment was 1156 students, 2009 enrollment was 1156 students, 2010 enrollment was 1014, 2011 enrollment was 1011, 2012 enrollment was 987 students, 2013 was 964 students, and 2014 enrollment was 986. He noted the relationship of enrollment to the economy and the trend with the enrollment in the NCS D in terms of where it will likely be in future years as he specified the small and larger grade levels currently in the district, as well as the reports from local preschools.

Mr. Wilson also discussed the state financial negative factor, its historic and current impact on finances in the district and statewide, then spoke to the significant cuts to education overall and demonstrated some sample cuts, directly related to the negative factor in the last four years, as shared by districts across the state of Colorado by sharing graphics for the entire board and audience. Districts are struggling to retain and attract teachers, and Mr. Wilson stressed the desperate need to do those things that would entice teachers to want to work in the NCS D and also stated the need to retain them once here, through finances, insurance and a quality school environment among other strategies.

In referencing the BEST security grant selection process, NCSD had five entities send proposals and three were chosen to interview this coming Friday. Mr. Wilson and the committee members will make their selection and notify the successful candidate, with negotiations with the selected group to commence with our security implementation.

Mr. Wilson made the decision to have gravel hauled in to preserve the new CMS parking lot that was paved this past year as drainage was poor and damage was imminent. Long and continuous rains and watering this year have caused many issues with the parking lot flooding and presenting the danger of ruining an expensive investment. The Conejos County commissioners dispatched help to dig the problem area and Romeo Sand & Gravel brought in rock to fill the void, and allow proper drainage and alleviate our flooding issue to preserve the parking lot for many more years.

Curt Wilson and Bonnie Keller, NCEA Board President, will go through the G policies in the coming month and will present their recommendations at the next board meeting in September starting with those policies that need to be repealed immediately, then discuss those policies that need implementation immediately.

Mr. Wilson illustrated the current situation at CDE right now, concerning SB191 (teacher evaluations), assessments and timelines. He described how it is a challenge as NCSD is not getting test results before evaluations need to be completed. Curt called Toby King at CDE and asked if we could use state assessments and will they be available and his response was that results would not be available two weeks prior to school ending and offered suggestions of assessments and data to utilize instead. Mr. Wilson suggested we use our other testing, specifically NWEA and those already in place at the elementary level, to complete staff evaluations. In fairness to staff, the administration will put together a plan to evaluate teachers which is rigorous and achievable. When NCSD considers the Colorado parent opt-out option in terms of student testing, the state of assessment is intimidating to some teachers.

Curt attended the CASE conference and shared an update of LGBTQ in relation to NCSD and those changes in terms of court rulings and educated the board on those things presented at the conference. The board and administration may be approached with questions from our community members, and wanted all to be educated with state law. Our district is trying to promote unity and will train staff with what can and cannot be done/said, and how to address all issues with the due respect they deserve in order to be fair to all students and promote a safe and welcoming environment conducive to learning. Curt discussed sticking with our current dress code and gave samples of the need to do so, and the need to respect student choices within appropriate parameters, and never discriminate based on gender, and will enforce the dress code for all with equity and fairness, with reasonable expectations.

It came to the attention of Mr. Wilson that the school district owns one acre of land in the old town of Gomez that NDSD and the county assessor did not know beforehand. He asked the board if the board desired to sell the property to an adjacent land owner or what options they wished to pursue. It will take a board resolution to act upon any decision. The board directed Curt to ask the adjacent land owner if she (identified) was interested in purchasing the property in order to seek an interest and possible action for the board to act upon.

There are three (3) vacancies on the NCSD Board of Education for consideration in the November election. Information concerning the vacancies and the election has been posted on the district website and in the Valley Courier.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

District Opt Out Policy for Assessment (IKA & IKA-R):

With directive from CDE, the board is being asked to temporarily approve the passing of policy IKA and IKA-R concerning the parent opt out of state testing. The board will need to review and vote through the 2nd and 3rd readings for official adoption. The school district needs to inform parents of their rights and give them description of testing and testing schedules as mandated by CDE.

Outside Entity Bus Rental:

The board discussed the renting of district buses to outside entities. The district needs to be careful, according to the wishes of the BOE with this practice as it can set improper precedence. When an outside entity approaches the school district about using district vehicles, the board requests board approval before a vehicle is used by any such group.

Mill Levy Information (attachment #6):

Mr. Wilson showed the board a power point concerning mill levy information for Conejos County. He told the board that small districts have the biggest failure rate for passing a mill levy as illustrated in the power point.

High School Survey Results:

Curt told the board that there was interesting feedback and stated he would not recognize nor report inappropriate, anonymous comments not germane to the survey questions or those which took the opportunity to criticize BOE members or other school personnel. He presented a power point showing current the current results from the surveys. He asked to re-visit survey results again when more surveys come in. The board suggested that there may be a need to put together a committee at this point for future consideration. Curt will call Dustin Guerin to see the likelihood of securing a BEST grant to build a new school with respect to what resources might be available to CDE to distribute in the coming year(s).

ACTION ITEMS

Present and discuss board policies AC: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity, AC-R-2: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (complaint and compliance process), AC-E-1: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (compliance officer for the district), AC-E-2: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (complaint form) for the third and final reading - attachments #7, #8, #9, #10

A motion was made by Chuck Finnegan to approve policies AC, AC-R-2, AC –E-1 and AC-E-2 for the third and final reading, seconded by Robert Chavez.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed.

Present and discuss board policies ADC: Tobacco Free Schools, BAA: Evaluation of School Board/Board Self-Evaluation, BB: School Board Legal Status, BBA: School Board Powers and Responsibilities, BBBA: Board Member Qualifications, BBBB: Board Member Oath of Office, BBBC/BBBD: Board Member Resignation/Removal From Office, BBBE: Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies, BBBG: Board Elections, BBBG-E: School Board Elections (boundaries of director districts), BCA-E-1: Code of Ethics for School Board Members, BCB: School Board Member Conflict of Interest for the second reading – Attachments #11, #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18, #19, #20, #21, #22

A motion was made by Robert Chavez to approve policies, ADC, BAA, BB, BBA, BBBA, BBBB, BBBC/BBBD, BBBE, BBBG, BBBG-E, BCA E-1, BCB for the first reading, seconded by Steve Sorensen.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed.

Present and discuss board policies IKA: Grading/Assessment Systems and IKA-R: Grading/Assessment Systems (exemption procedure and information to parents/guardians) to temporarily approve revision of policy to meet emergency conditions and for the first reading – Attachments #23 and #24

A motion was made by Joseph Baroz to approve revision of policy IKA and IKA-R to meet emergency conditions and for the first reading, seconded by Robert Chavez

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Robert Chavez to go into executive session per (CRS section 24-6-402 Sub 4R), to discuss privileged information and personnel issues, Curt Wilson was asked to attend, seconded by Joseph Baroz.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, absent.

The motion passed.

The board met for 17 minutes on topic one .

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm

Next Board meeting September 15, 2015 at 6:30 pm