



**Board Work Session Minutes
Monday, March 25, 2024**

The Board of Directors held a Work Session on Monday, March 25, 2024. The meeting began at 6 pm and was held at District Office. Directors Cannon, Gray, Burchard, Nolan and Killman were present. Also attending were Superintendent Travis Hanson and Chief Financial Officer Heather Ellingson.

I. Approval of the Agenda

Director Killman made a motion to approve the agenda, as amended (*WSSDA Discussion* was added to the agenda). Director Burchard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

II. 2024-2025 Budget Discussion

The primary purpose of this agenda item was to lay the groundwork for a more in-depth budget discussion that will take place at the April 22, 2024 Work Session.

In providing the following overview information on the things taken into consideration when building a budget, Chief Financial Officer Heather Ellingson noted, for the most part, there is ample time to made adjustments to the budget prior to adoption in August. Even after the budget is adopted adjustments can be made. Regarding certificated staff, May 15th is the deadline for notifying this employee group if there will be a reduction in force (RIF). The district is confident any reduction in the number of certificated staff for 2024/25 can be taken care of through attrition avoiding the need to issue RIF notices.

- **Enrollment** - Estimating enrollment for the upcoming school year is the first step in the budgeting process. This process, post COVID, is more challenging than it used to be. This past year kindergarten enrollment was down and more high school students enrolled in Running Start. The district will be budgeting very conservatively for next year. For 2024/25 the district will budget for 9,982 K-12 students, down 160 from 2023/24.
- **Staffing** - The staffing allocation for each building is based on enrollment. Schools are currently in the process of working through staffing for next year. Discussion on this topic included a request that the board be provided with a copy of the district's Org Chart and notation that there are currently 280 certificated staff members with 16+ years of experience placing them, from an experience standpoint, at the top of the salary schedule.
- **Assumptions** - A number of assumptions are made when developing the budget. These include next year's IPD (3.7%), the fact that principals took a 1% pay reduction in 2023/24 and, therefore, their 2024/25 increase will be 4.7%, the fact that the reduction of 1.5 principal days for MEA members will be restored in the 2024/25 school year, retirement contribution rates and benefit (health insurance) costs. Additionally, while overall budgeted enrollment will be reduced by 160 students, the allocation for Special Education will need to be increased because that segment of the student population continues to grow. Other than MEA (teachers) and the MECA (coaches), all other employee group contracts are open for bargaining this spring. Prior to the start of bargaining the board will meet to establish bargaining parameters.
- **Revenue** - In the next couple of weeks OSPI will release updated tools to assist the district in determining revenue for the upcoming school year. It is anticipated there will be a little extra money for support staff, MSOCs and Special Education (funding cap increased to 16%). Noting increased levy dollars will not be collected until April 2025,

early estimates indicate needing to use \$2-3 million from fund balance in 2024/25 as the district works towards the long-term goal of building back fund balance and making investments in new curriculum and safety/security upgrades. In the 2025/2026 school year, with the new levy fully funded, the additional monies will backfill what has been needed from fund balance the past few years, restore fund balance, and provide funds to purchase curriculum and invest in safety/security upgrades.

In preparation for the April Work Session, the board asked Ms. Ellingson to prepare an alternate budget proposal for 2024/25 that includes sufficient reductions to remove the need to access \$2-\$3 million from fund balance. On the topic of building budgets Ms. Ellingson indicated she would, via email, share a spreadsheet showing how the building budget allocation is determined, along with a document showing what expenses are paid for out of the building budget and what are covered by the district. At the end of each year building budget balances, both positive and negative, carry forward to the next school year.

III. March 11, 2024 First Reading Policy Adoptions Discussion

At the March 11, 2024 Regular Board Meeting, Policy 5201 (*Drug-Free Schools, Community and Workplace*), Policy 5240 (*Evaluation of Staff*), Policy 5400 (*Personnel Leaves*), Policy 5409 (*Unpaid Holidays for Reason of Faith or Conscience*) and Policy 5005 (*Employment and Volunteers: Disclosures, Certification Requirements, Assurances and Approval*) were presented for first reading adoption consideration.

Following discussion regarding, in particular, the evaluation process for various employee groups, President Cannon confirmed all five policy adoptions can be brought forward for action via Consent Agenda on April 8, 2024.

IV. Potential Board Retreat Discussion

In seeking board feedback on the potential of having a Board Retreat at some point this spring, President Cannon shared his opinion that having a retreat would be helpful for a variety of reasons including providing dedicated time for strategic planning conversation and discussion. Following discussion, a Board Retreat was scheduled for Thursday, June 27th starting at 5 pm. This will replace the previously scheduled June 24th Board Work Session.

V. Superintendent Evaluation Tool

President Cannon, sharing this is Travis Hanson's first year serving as Mead's superintendent, noted the importance of establishing how the board will evaluate his performance. The Employment Agreement between the district and Superintendent Hanson states that in the first year the annual evaluation will occur no later than June 1st and no later than January 31st in subsequent years.

Sample evaluation documents were shared with board members. These included copies of what was used for the past two Mead superintendents and the "checklist" tool that was used in Deer Park where Superintendent Hanson served prior to coming to Mead.

Following discussion, the "checklist" tool was selected. The board will meet in Executive Session on April 8th to work as a group on Superintendent Hanson's annual evaluation.

VI. WSSDA Discussion

The board discussed two WSSDA related items. The first was a resolution regarding prioritization of local control and no unfunded state mandates. Following discussion, the board asked that this resolution be brought forward for action/adoption at the April 8th board meeting.

The second included five proposed amendments to existing WSSDA positions and two proposed new WSSDA positions. Existing positions with proposed amendments included *Local Board*

Control of All Instructional Materials, Local Control, Goals, WSSDA Equity Statement and Diversity. Proposed new positions included *Local Control Legislation* and *Unfunded Mandates*.

It was shared that in order to meet WSSDA timelines the board would need to take action on the proposed amendments and new positions prior to April 8th. Following discussion, a Special Webinar Board Meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2024, starting at 3:30 pm where the board will consider and take action on the seven amendments/new positions.

VII. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Hanson shared the following:

- Recognition/notation of the good progress that has been, and is being, made on each of the four board goal areas was reviewed. Goals, and associated Strategic Plan Priority Areas, include:
 - Educational Technology (Strategic Plan Priority Area 1)
 - Governance and Fiscal Stewardship (Strategic Plan Priority Area 3)
 - Community Connection and Engagement (Strategic Plan Priority Area 4)
 - Safety and Security (Strategic Plan Priority Area 5)

In particular Superintendent Hanson highlighted the upcoming community event where the documentary *Screenagers Growing Up in the Digital Age* will be shown, his plans to continue, as he did in the fall, offering community engagement opportunities like *Soup with the Superintendent* and the ongoing efforts, like the removal of 26 restroom main entrance doors at Mt. Spokane HS and Mead HS, to improve safety and security throughout the district.

- An update on a Title IX/sexual assault situation at Mead High School.

Discussion included consequences associated with the Mead High School situation and additional conversation regarding the recent Mt. Spokane High School library book situation.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

President

Secretary