MINUTES
Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors – 6:00 p.m.

This meeting was held in the Cheney High School auditorium and electronically via Zoom Webinar and was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Swenson.

In attendance: Directors, Nicol, Dolle, Estrellado and Swenson

Also present: Superintendent Rob Roettger,
Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt, and
Finance Director Jamie Weingart

Director Dolle made a motion to excuse Director Browne from the meeting. Director Nicol seconded the motion and it was approved.

ROLL CALL AND WELCOMING OF GUESTS

President Swenson expressed the Board’s appreciation to those in attendance.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Director Estrellado.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Superintendent Roettger shared, as an additional item, a congratulations to teachers Mary Pratt, Kyle Loughery, and Stephanie Yanuszeski for renewing their National Board Certifications.

PACE Character Trait of the Month – Diligence: Persistence, dedication and hard work.

PARTICIPATION BY PUBLIC

Mr. Bill Johns provided the following statement to be shared with the Board of Directors:

Comments on item 8A, Policy No. 5117 Civility, agenda 3/24/21

Policy 5117 called Civility is a threat to free speech and liberty even though it says it isn’t. Proponents of these kind of policies and laws always claim it is not a threat. It is full of undefined, procedures and rules on what is “uncivil conduct”. I have two examples of what has happened with these kind of policies:
Board Minutes  
March 24, 2021  
Page Two

1. As a Veteran of the Viet Nam war, I worked with soldiers of the Republic of Viet Nam. When the communists took over these soldiers ended up in “re-education camps” for uncivil conduct.

2. I was walking in Worms, Germany. Embedded in the sidewalk were small brass plaques in front of several dwellings. They were so small I had to kneel down to read them. They read “arrested: and a name and date. The dates were in 1938 close to what is called Kristallnacht (night of broken glass). The uncivil conduct was not attributed to the glass breakers.

It is impossible to define reasonable limits on what uncivil conduct is in just one and a half pages.

Comments on 9C: I do not think it is a good time to cut 4 days from the school year especially considering the disruptions to education caused by COVID.

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES APPROVAL

Director Dolle moved that the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 10, 2021 be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Nicol and passed unanimously.

GENERAL CONSENT

Under the general consent agenda, the following items were approved on a motion by Director Estrellado, seconded by Director Nicol, and passed unanimously.

A. Personnel - Resolution No. 16-20-21, covering the Personnel Status Report for the month of March 2021, including Leaves and Resignations, and Out-of-Endorsements

B. Auditing of Bills and Signing of Vouchers

General Fund vouchers No. 238019 through No. 238039 .................. $227,794.63
ASB Fund vouchers No. 238040 through No. 238043 .................. $13,236.93
Accounts Payable ACH .......................................................... $2,918.92
General Fund Comp Tax .......................................................... $293.17

REPORTS

A. Financial Report

Finance Director Jamie Weingart shared the Fund Balance projection has been slightly adjusted since the last meeting. The updated projection assumes the lack of transportation funding.

ESSER Funds has three different buckets that are receiving funds. The first is ESSER Funds (CARES Act). The second allocation is ESSER II Funds (CRSSA Act). The third allocation is ESSER III Funds (ARP Act). Funds from all three avenues may be used for pre-award costs dating back to March 13, 2020 when
the national emergency was declared. ESSER III funds will require districts to spend at least 20% on learning loss activities.

The district received an allocation of $688,731 in ESSER I Funds and was used for two (2) professional learning days for teachers, PPE, and internet and technology support.

The district received an allocation of $2,662,509 in ESSER II Funds which has been used for additional nurse and health aid time, additional 4th and 5th grade teachers, and PPE. It will also be used for planning for the upcoming summer and fall.

The ESSER III Fund allocation is estimated to be $5,980,000 and will be used for the planning of the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

Ms. Weingart shared the amendments that were adopted by the full senate on SB 5128 – Pupil Transportation.

Lastly, she shared the budget considerations. The last day of the legislative session is April 25th in which transportation funding, the release of ESSER III funds, and other legislative action will have been decided. The April enrollment count will be used to project the enrollment numbers for fall, and program offerings for 2021-2022 will be considered.

B. Legislative Update

Director Dolle shared that Friday, March 26 is the last day that bills can be read in order to be considered unless they are necessary to the budget. She shared status information on HB 1162, SSB 5265, and SB 5030.

C. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Rob Roettger started his report with the district mission statement.

Director Carol Lewis shared information on the waiver for the minimum 180-day school year. This would be a continuation of the district’s practice for the last several years. The four (4) days are used for conference days with parents, two (2) days in the fall and two (2) in the spring in lieu of four (4) half days in the fall and four (4) half days in the spring.

Mrs. Lewis then shared information on the Emergency Waiver Program, HB 1121. There are three (3) major components to graduation requirements: the high school and beyond plan; pathways; and, credits. The State Board adopted rules for the graduating classes of 2020 and 2021. The State Board anticipates adopting permanent rules that would apply to classes through the year 2023 at their July meeting.
Waivers can be used for up to two (2) credits (four (4) credits when combined with the student circumstances waiver), the graduation pathway requirement, or the Washington State History requirement. The High School and Beyond Plan may not be waived.

When waiving credits, the district should try to apply the student circumstances waiver first (this is only for elective credits). The emergency credit waiver can apply to any two (2) credits whether they be up to two (2) elective/personalized pathway credits or up to two (2) credits in content areas (two credits cannot be used in the same content area).

Mrs. Lewis shared that districts must apply for authority from OSPI to use the waiver. Students using a waiver must already be reasonably on track to graduate by the end of this summer. Students must be given choices related to the waiver. Students using a waiver must demonstrate post-secondary preparation without the credit being waived. Districts must make a "good faith effort" to help students meet all requirements without using the waiver. The district will continue to assist students in meeting their requirements without a waiver.

Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt shared recent data in regards to COVID testing and data. The total number of students and staff on-site in-person is near 4400. To date, there have been 1236 potential COVID cases tracked which is an additional 322 since last month. To date, there have been 667 students and 166 staff sent home symptomatic. Close contacts that have been quarantined total 317. The great news being that there has still not been a single epidemiological link within our school system.

Mr. Arlt gave an acknowledgement to how hard the nurses and health aides have been working to stay on top of COVID and its potential impacts in school buildings. Testing has begun for staff and students that are symptomatic or close contacts. It will take time to get the testing program to full capacity. Testing adds a very important layer to the work of mitigating COVID exposure and keeping students and staff healthy. Soon, the district will be able to include Rapid Antigen testing as well.

Mr. Arlt mentioned that new information was available from SRHD that says parents may have the option not to select the automatic quarantine if they choose to have their close contact student tested in order to return to the classroom sooner. Additional guidance from SRHD could be coming for transporting students as well.

Superintendent Roettger shared that the goal for graduation ceremonies is to be in person for graduates and their families. Plans for graduation ceremonies remain at the discretion of the school district as long as it does not conflict with the governor's guidance. It would take about 75 positive COVID cases per day for two weeks for the county to go back to Phase II. We will plan for a Phase III graduation yet have a Phase II plan as a backup.
Re-opening planning considerations was shared by Superintendent Roettger. After the Governor’s proclamation stating that by April 19th, all school district must offer at least 30% of average weekly instructional hours as on-campus, in-person instruction for all K-12 students who wish to attend in person. The district is waiting for CDC guidance and guidance from the DOH, State, and Governor with direction on 3' versus 6' distancing, cohort models, case rate metrics and such. The district intends to provide additional in-person learning opportunities at the secondary level that will cause the least amount of disruption to the elementary level and families of all grade levels. Considerations for a staggered start and end time for the remainder of this year as well as next year is being sought as there are not enough bus drivers to transport all students at the same time.

Teaching and Learning Director Annie Wolfley shared a follow up from the last school board meeting. The district is planning to bring 4th and 5th grade students back to full time in-person learning on April 12th. Two (2) of our distance learning teachers would need to return to an in-person classroom. Four (4) additional teachers have been hired in order to comply with guidelines and meet the needs of in-person learning. Families are being notified if their student will be assigned to a different teacher. Moving 4th and 5th grade to full time in-person learning will require yet another adjustment for the transportation department. March 31st will be used as a teacher preparation day. This adjustment allows for forty-nine (49) days of full-time, in-person learning before the school year ends.

The Governor’s Proclamation states that there must be at least 30% of instruction done in an in-person setting. This will require an adjustment to the secondary level schedules. The district is diligently looking at how to increase the in-person learning time without causing too much disruption. At this time, we are required to maintain the 6’ distance rule although it may change to 3’. One challenge being faced is lunch time when having more students in the building at a time and needing to keep the 6’ distance. There are multiple ideas so far on how to move forward and we want to make sure that whatever plan gets implemented can be built upon easily. Any proposed re-opening adjustments will be presented to the School Board for consideration prior to implementation.

Superintendent Roettger reiterated that the goal for next fall is to have all students back full time in person. Only circumstances completely out of our control will change that goal.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Second reading to consider new Policy No. 5117, Civility

Assistant Superintendent Tom Arlt shared that there are a couple of small changes to the first reading. The word “urge” was changed to “recommend” and the last sentence in the policy was struck as there is no corresponding procedure.
Director Nicol made a motion to adopt new Policy No. 5117 as presented. Director Estrellado seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. ICOS Report for March 2021

Finance Director Jamie Weingart shared that the ICOS Report is an annual report completed by the maintenance and operations team and Director Jeff McClure. Details on each building are available in the board book in their entirety.

No action was taken.

B. Consideration to change 4th/5th grade from a hybrid to a full in-person learning model

Information on this agenda item was presented by Director Annie Wolfley during the Superintendent’s report.

Director Nicol made a motion to move the 4th and 5th grade students from a hybrid learning model to a full in-person learning model as presented. Director Dolle seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

C. Consideration of Resolution No. 17-20-21, Requesting a Waiver of the Minimum 180-Day School Year for Grades K-12

Information on this agenda item was presented by Director Carol Lewis during the Superintendent’s report.

Director Estrellado made a motion to approve Resolution No. 17-20-21 as presented. Director Nicol seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Consideration of Resolution No. 18-20-21, Emergency Waiver of High School Graduation Credits

Information on this agenda item was presented by Director Carol Lewis during the Superintendent’s report.

Director Dolle made a motion to approve Resolution No. 18-20-21 as presented. Director Estrellado seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

Director Dolle shared that she took the Youth Mental Health training course and is now a certified trainer. During the last Talk 2 Healthy Choices meeting on March 16, the conversation was around state funding for tobacco, vape, and marijuana use prevention.
Board Minutes
March 24, 2021
Page Seven

Upcoming events include a Take Back Event on April 24th partnering with Cheney Clean Sweep at the Cheney and Airway Heights Library locations. EWU now has a permanent drop box located at the Big Red Barn. The next Talk 2 Healthy Choices meeting is scheduled for April 20th.

Director Swenson was pleased to announce that high school sports is going well.

ITEMS FROM THE STUDENT ADVISORS

Student Advisor Steven Johnson shared that this was his first in-person meeting since being a Student Advisor to the Board of Directors. He shared that sports are going well. The first season will be ending soon and will transition quickly into the next season. The annual blood drive was a success. He felt it was a cool experience and a great opportunity for our community to support others. Senior Prom is being planned and the Junior class is trying to plan something as well. Senior advisory classes had a good focus on school links. Other grade levels were working on their class schedules for future years. In April there will be a cap and gown distribution for the upcoming graduates. Last week there was an Honor Roll Ice Cream Social. Several meetings ago Mr. Johnson mentioned he had the opportunity to set up legislative meetings as part of his service in another club. Since then he has met with Rep. Jenny Graham and Rep. Mike Volz. Both meetings went well as he was advocating for funding for CTCOs.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Director Dolle and seconded by Director Estrellado to adjourn the School Board meeting at 7:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Mitch Swenson, Board President

Robert W. Roettger, Board Secretary/Supt.