

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, EAST HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9

Call to Order: Trustees of School District No. 9 held a meeting on January 8, 2024. Chairman, Scott Walter called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm

Attendance and Introduction of Board Members

Trustees Present: Chairman Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt (until 7:45), Stacy Baird, Martin Balukas, Tristan Ulmer, Marcia Ellermeyer. and Mark Diehl.

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Clerk Jill Hoogerheide, District Secretary Jen Cordell, Director of Information Systems, Brandon Hansen, and Activities Director Shaun Murgel.

Principals and Vice Principals: Michael Kemper, Duane Schlabach, Gus Somerfeld, Lynsi Morris, and Brian Kessler

Visitors: Shelby Shively-Johnson, Ryan McNulty, Tamika Shoppe, Zachary Steward, Karlee Erickson, Teri Valvoda, K.D. Jones, Daniel Shults, Aiden Hurley, Copen Earley, Catherine Hansen, Kate Johnson

Via Zoom: Sonny Tapia, Cole Bass, Kari Speicher, Nancy Bailey, Krystal Butler, Jana Nygaard, Jon Cantrell, Mary Smith

Review the Agenda

No comments

Hear the Public

No comments

Reports

Student Report

Students from the EHHS music department reported about their All State competition experience. They participated with all the other qualifying kids throughout Montana. The students felt that it was a great experience to perform with such a huge choir. The All Star choir will be traveling to Missoula in the coming weeks.

EHHS BPA students reported about their BPA competitions and that all of the attendees from EHHS qualified to move on to the State competition. There were students who finished in first place.

Administrator Report

EVMS Principal Lynsi Morris reported that girls' basketball has started with a huge number of 7th grade enrollees. 8th grade ski trip was a huge success but there were only 66 attendees this year. They are hoping to have an increased involvement with increased snow fall.

Radley Principal Gus Somerfeld reported that school enrollment has been a little bit of a concern but Radley has shown continuous growth. They anticipate it to grow even more in the next couple months. He also spoke about the discipline referrals and some of their ideas to alleviate the number of referrals. He thought that games could help. Library students learned about the functions of the School Board today.

Vice Principal Michael Kemper reported that the current focus is re-teaching some of the expectations. Many students reported that the school breaks are a tough time for them and this came out in the behavior reports. The 6th grade peer interactions were a little tough as the kids came back from break. Kemper and Morris are speaking to students to reinforce the expectations. He has also noticed that other students are sticking up for the students being targeted by a specific group of kids. Bullying is still a huge problem.

EHHS Principal Brian Kessler reported that they are looking at registration. They had a meeting with Helena College regarding some new opportunities and courses for next year and the team is very excited. The Cosmetology program at EHHS will benefit from some of the courses we are offering as dual credit options. RBHI screener data may have some false positive trends. The school has been cautioned that it may not be exactly accurate and there is still a concern. The questions remain the same and the thought is that some of the kids have figured out how to answer the questions.

Vice Principal Duane Schlabach wanted to highlight some of the behaviors and traumas going in to the break. They felt like the break helped most of the students with a refresh. There has been a down tick in truancy issues and uptick in tobacco issues but that may be because the monitoring has been more accurate. They are talking to the kids and giving resources and interviews with SRO to try and help the students stop using tobacco. The team is focusing on positive culture building. They also intend to focus on staff expectations collected from a survey given out during the fall such as the staff meeting every student at the door when they come into the room.

Director of Information Systems Brandon Hansen spoke about the productive break. All of the battery backups in the district have been replaced which was a huge project. This will help with power outages. He announced that Oliver will be starting as a regular employee and his transition so far has been good. The IT team hopes to be able to meet the needs of all 5 schools with Oliver on board. Kindergarten registration is going well.

Activities Director, Shaun Murgel reported about all the sports teams out on the roads and that there has been an effort to talk about the cold weather coming up. Most sports are finishing soon

with Basketball being the only one left and he wanted to give a huge shout out to the hard-working bus drivers. He also spoke a little about the scheduling challenges for facilities use.

Trustee and Committee Reports of the K-12 Board

Board Chair Walter solicited reports from the Trustees and Committees.

No reports from the Committees and Trustees.

Strategic Planning – Scan for Future Needs

Chairman Walter solicited comments and observations regarding the current strategic plan and planning needs.

Superintendent Rispens wanted to encourage the Board to take note of the enrollments still dropping and how the lower numbers will impact us.

Notifications of Retirements and Resignations

No retirements or resignations to report

Consent Action Items

Minutes of the December 11, 2023 Regular Board Meeting

Approval of the former and new warrants (Claims #49544 - 49588) and (Payroll #64941 - 65082)

Personnel Actions

Recommendation of Employment:

- Oliver Atkinson IT Help Desk Technician
- Sabrina Page Paraprofessional
- Sophia Lance Basketball
- Alicia Ayers Basketball

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the consent agenda as presented except for the Personnel Actions. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Balukas to approve the Personnel Actions with the additional three recommendations. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Unfinished Business

Selection of Service Provider for School Pictures

Superintendent Rispens reported that the district received two responses for the RFP posted for school pictures. He stated that the Board will need to select a provider for the next three years.

Representatives from Lifetouch and Legacy Photography addressed the Board to speak a little bit about their services.

Krystal Butler commented online about Lifetouch and Legacy Photography.

Mary Smith commented online about Lifetouch and Legacy Photography

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Diehl to select Lifetouch as our school photographer for the 2024-2027 school years. Trustee Diehl, Trustee Ellermeyer, Trustee Balukas, and Trustee Baird voted aye. Trustee Ulmer, Vice Chair Murfitt and Chairman Walter voted no for the motion. Four in favor and three against. Motion passed.

Budget Update – Grant Funding – Longevity and Positions Funded

Superintendent Rispens and Business Manager Hoogerheide presented information to the Board regarding grants we receive and how the funds are being used.

Policy Review – Second Reading

- 1400 Board Meetings
- 1511 Code of Ethics for School Board Members
- 1610 Goals and Objectives
- 2320 Field Trips, Excursions, and Outdoor Education
- 3305 Use of Restraint, Seclusion, and Aversive Techniques for Students
- 3410 Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations
- 3431 Emergency Treatment
- 5121 Applicability of Personnel Policies and Professional Development
- 5223 Personal Conduct
- 5330 Maternity and Paternity Leave
- 7320 Purchasing
- 8125 School Bus Emergencies
- 8132 Activity Trips
- 8210 Procurement Policy for School Food Purchases and Use of Federal Funds
- 1240 Duties of Individual Trustees
- 1520 Board Staff Communications
- 5231 Personnel Records

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt , seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the Board policies under second reading. Unanimous vote for the motion.

New Business

Calendar Committee Presentation

The School District Calendar Committee (Teri Valvoda and CJ Hansen) presented information to the Board about their efforts and spoke a bit about the process and some of the results from the survey that was conducted last fall. The Calendar Committee asked the Board's opinion about doing research into the 4-day school week and would like their approval the study this more.

Kate Johnson requested clarification on who gets to make the final choice on the calendar options.

Motion by Trustee Baird, Seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve researching a 4-day school week. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Policy Review was moved to the next agenda item in order to accommodate Vice Chair Murfitt needing to leave the meeting early.

Policy Review – First Reading

- 3141 Nonresident Student Enrollment

Mary Smith commented online regarding the Out of District policy.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve policy 3141 under first reading with the suggested amendments. Unanimous vote for the motion.

- 8110 Bus Routes and Schedules

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve policy 8110 under first reading with the suggested changes. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Vice Chair Murfitt excused himself from the meeting at 7:45.

- 8132 Activity Trips

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve policy 8132 under first reading as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Consideration of a New Student Activity Account – EHHS Travel Club, “Visiting Vigilantes”

Superintendent Rispens reported that the EHHS Travel Club is doing fundraising and need a student activity account.

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the new student activity account for EHHS Travel Club Visiting Vigilantes. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Consideration of Additional Lion Electric Buses under EPA Rebate Program

Superintendent Rispens reported about the latest EPA Rebate Program for electric buses and how the district may benefit. There is a deadline that is rapidly approaching.

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Diehl to authorize the Superintendent and the Board Chair to apply for a grant for electric buses for whatever number they feel appropriate. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Request for Permission – JROTC Air Rifle Storage on EHHS Campus

Superintendent Rispens presented the request to store JROTC Air Rifles on the EHHS campus. This issue is required to be addressed annually by the Board.

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer, seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve the storage of the air rifles on the EHHS campus. Unanimous vote for the motion.

MHSA 2023 Executive Board Proposals – Review and Discussion

Activities Director Shaun Murgel reviewed information and the ten proposals to be discussed at the MHSA annual meeting.

Montana Advanced Opportunity Annual Report Review and Approval

Superintendent Rispens reported that the annual report is required to continue our Montana Advanced Opportunity funding. OPI is requesting the Board review and approve the report.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the MTAO report. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Transformational Learning Annual Report Review and Approval

Superintendent Rispens reported that the annual report is required to continue Transformation Learning funding. OPI is requesting the Board review and approve the report.

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the Transformational Learning report. Unanimous vote for the motion.

EPA Lead Standard Revision for East Helena Record of Decision

Superintendent Rispens reported about the EPA's proposal to adjust the Record of Decision regarding acceptable lead levels for residential yards in the EPA cleanup area.

Email Contact Structure for Board Members

There was a discussion regarding how School Board members' contact information should be listed on the district website and how the Board members want to be contacted.

The Board would like a group email address for the Board and individual accounts set up by the District.

Evaluation for the Superintendent

The Board entered a Closed Session in order to protect the privacy rights of the Superintendent.

Chairman Walter adjourned the regular meeting at 8:44 p.m.

The Board exited Closed Session and Resumed the open session at 9:23 p.m.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve to extend the Superintendent's contract and additional year to the full 3 years allowed by law. Unanimous vote for the motion.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be held on February 12th, 2023 @ 5:30 Eastgate Elementary.

Submitted by: _____
Board Clerk, Jill Hoogerheide

Date

Approved by: _____
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Date