

Highland School District #203
District Office
Tuesday, October 7, 2024
Regular Board Meeting -7:00 a.m.

The **October 7, 2024, AM Regular Board Meeting** was convened by Vice Chair David Barnes at 7:05 a.m. Present included board members Lupita Flores and Cindy Reed, Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Business & Operations Francis Badu, Director of Student Success & Superintendent Designee Mindy Schultz, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman. Board members Carlos López and Nikki Keller were absent. David announced that the meeting is being recorded.

1-Communication Check-in: We would like to install an electronic reader board at TES as soon as possible. It is old and broken and dangerous for staff to climb a ladder to change the letters.

2-Capital Projects: Francis reported that the issues with the HMS HVAC system are finally being addressed after they had a joint meeting with the unit installers and the controls systems company. Next is phase 2 of the HVAC system update for the HS, starting with the permit process. Monson Architect has closed business but the engineering company that was part of the award team, L & S, will oversee the project so we can be ready to put out for bids as soon as possible, thus ensuring adequate time to order units for their arrival by the start of the project. In review of financing, we have about exhausted the first \$2.5m and will need to borrow the next amount separately rather than consolidate it with the current loan due to an increase in interest rates. The levy money that repays these loans will come into the district until 2028.

3-Enrollment/Budget Discussion & Fund Balance Review: Francis shared the October 1 enrollment report chart. We are up two students but still down overall and below 1000. A drop was anticipated due to a large graduating/outgoing class and a smaller than usual incoming kindergarten class but not this low. The enrollment is being shared with the unions and staff so they are aware. It is an ongoing discussion as we will track it all year to see if the cuts we've already made will be enough. All districts seem to be experiencing the same [trend] except Naches. In the future we need to have discussions about facilities and the cost-inefficiency of having to maintain three buildings and properties.

GF-CP Balances: The enrollment piece was bad news. Shared GF-CP chart. We are closing the books and they'll be done at the end of this month. On the surface the fund balance looks about the same as last year but it can be misleading because some of the money is the state's, and if you back that out the Fund balance is \$2.4m. The fund balance was healthy where we ended but we must look ahead. We have critical needs, part of it is curriculum, compensation to be competitive, and technology. We will need about \$400K of the ending fund balance assigned for these critical needs. We usually move money into CP but need to keep it in GF. The board understands the situation and agrees. We usually budget conservatively but the enrollment dropped a lot. Francis explained the different categories of funds and how they can be used for different projects.

Francis left the meeting at 7:26 a.m.

4-Transition Discussion: Mark plans to submit his retirement notice in December. The Board would like Mindy to give a report at the monthly PM board meetings as part of her transition this year as the superintendent designee. She will spend time with Francis and Roberta to learn about their roles and will attend advisory and personnel meetings to expose her to district-wide conversations. This is a bargaining year with all three unions so she will be able to sit in on those too. It needs to be determined what responsibilities will be moved from Mindy to other admin and we must look ahead and plan for other retirements that are anticipated in the district and building levels.

5-2025-2026 Early Start Discussion: Late start was moved to Thursdays a couple of years ago to accommodate the high school three-day block schedule. They are no longer doing that schedule so we

would like to move the late start day back to Wednesdays as Thursday is the weekday that most often has trainings and ESD meetings that staff would like to or need to attend.

6-Admin Presentation Planning: Discussed what the board would like from the admin such as attending meetings to give an in-person presentation. Decided to have two admin, a principal and a director, give a report each month at the AM meeting and the meeting will be held on a rotating basis at the building in which they work, starting in November. The meetings for HMS and HHS admin/directors will continue at the DO. We will continue the PM meetings at TES in November and MWC in April. The admin that presents at the AM meeting will not need to submit an Admin Board Report for that month's PM meeting.

7-Open School Board Position: Nikki has publicly shared that she was resigning and there are people asking about the open position. She has not yet submitted an official/written resignation statement to the board [so we can't move forward with posting it]. Reviewed the policy regarding board member absences and reviewed board attendance for the past 14 months. We'd like to post for the open position.

8-Ample and Equitable Funding Convening: No one expressed interest in attending this event hosted by YSD and OSPI.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 a.m.

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Chair

Secretary