



**HIGHLAND WELD RE-9 SCHOOL DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL
ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Location: District Administrative Office Boardroom

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

The February 25, 2025 meeting was called to order by School Board President Brian Fabrizius at 7:00 p.m.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

3. Welcome Visitors

4. Agenda Approval

Motion: Ryleigh Sittner moved to approve the agenda and Heather Simpson seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

5. Recognition of Visitors Desiring to Address the Board

None

6. Consent Agenda for this Meeting

Approval of meeting minutes; accounts payable in the amount of \$233,405.96, bank reconciliations for pooled cash in the amount of \$774,971.5, food service reconciliation of \$260,290.29, accounting for Activity Funds, and Personnel Recommendations.

Motion: John Batka moved to approve the meeting minutes, accounts payable, bank reconciliation for pooled cash, food service bank reconciliation, activity funds, and personnel recommendations. Ryleigh Sittner seconded the motion.



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Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizio aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

7. Information Items

a. Student Recognition

i. Highland High School State Wrestlers

The High School wrestling team took 13 wrestlers to regionals and won Region 4. Of the 11 wrestlers that qualified for state, 5 of them placed. Ira Sittner was the sole 1st place champion. Addelyne Sidwell qualified for girl's state with Platte Valley, since Highland High School does not have a girls team.

ii. Highland FFA

The Highland FFA Parliamentary team will be attending district competitions, so they attended the board meeting to practice and present their skills. Last year they finished 2nd at the district competitions.

b. Bond Update

Bob Long gave an update from Artaic Group. They're planning on having a 50% design document completed by the end of this week that will be shared with the community. Bus access is a huge discussion point right now, to include what drop off and pick up will look like. Traffic studies are being completed, and planning on utility needs is also being conducted with Maintenance Director, Davin Armstrong.

c. Superintendent Search

Brian Fabrizio provided an update on the search process for a new superintendent. 15 applications were received, which the Board narrowed that down to seven. The seven applications will be further narrowed to identify finalists. Committees will be formed consisting of six to eight people to assist in the interviewing process and identify strengths and weaknesses of the finalists. More information on applying for those groups will go out by the end of next week. These groups will provide feedback to the Board, but the



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Board will be the final decision makers on who is selected.

Jill Altohf, a parent, asked if there could be the opportunity for the finalists to be invited to tour and shadow the district. Brian Fabrizius said that a handful of the candidates have invited the Board down to their current schools to see how they do things. Each of the finalists will come on school tours and get a chance to meet the staff and interact with them. Dr. Randy Zila with McPherson & Jacobsen, LLC is also providing the district with a few different personality tests for the candidates to gather extra insight into them.

Elementary Teacher, Lisa Bielefeld, asked if the board has a “shopping list” of sorts for what we’re looking for in a superintendent. Brian Fabrizius stated said that the Board and Dr. Zila made a list while hiring the last Superintendent and that is what is posted and sent to the candidates before they apply. That original list has been adjusted to highlight items that may have been previously overlooked for the specific needs of the district.

d. Board Policy Changes

A revision to policy JIB- Interscholastic Sports has been recommended by Superintendent Trusler. The revision would add the designation that any student participating in sports would register and compete according to their gender assigned at birth.

8. Action Items

a. Board Approval - Out of Country Trip

High School Agriculture Teacher, Megan Capps, is leading a group of 13 Highland students on an agricultural tour in the Dominican Republic with EF Tours. Transportation to and from the airport is being provided by the school district, so this trip requires Board approval even though district funds are not being used on the trip.

John Batka asked if the district should expect to see any fiscal changes with political changes at the federal level. Business Manager, Alicia Hoops, said that the district does not rely heavily on federal grants and when the initial budget is made, it is always more conservative with the various budget accounts to limit any surprises or having to pull funds.

Motion: Heather Simpson moved to approve the out of country trip next month. John Batka seconded the motion.



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Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous

b. Bank Signatures

There have been some changes on bank procedures and an official notice from a Board Meeting is needing to be sent to the bank.

Motion: John Batka moved to approve the individuals authorized for transactions and authorized signers for the accounts at Farmer's Bank. Ryleigh Sittner seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

9. Superintendent Report

Interim Superintendent, Karen Trusler, provided an update on safety and security concerns that have been implemented or upgraded, and updated the Board on what Security Director, Ben Cummings' next projects are.

She highlighted a few December expenses including contracted therapy from North Range Behavioral Health, a case for the AED that was put in service in the District Office, and food expenses from Shamrock Foods Company.

10. EMA Team Member Report

Board Member, Ryleigh Sittner, gave a shout out to wrestling and all their hard work.

Board Member, Tara Steinke, stated that FFA is going well spoke on the first Green Hands ceremony.



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Elementary Principal, Jennifer Moylett said that the elementary-only Professional Development day for all staff was great and only one staff member was unable to attend. Teachers across all grade levels were able to collaborate and the day was a huge success in the building.

High School Assistant Principal, Riley Couch, said he was able to finalize the report needed for Career & Technical Education (CTE) that involves following up with current and former students in the CTE programs to assess the success of applicability of the program.

High School Principal, Kelsey Bailey, stated that attendance at the High School was slightly lower on the Elementary School's professional development day, most likely due to older siblings needing to watch younger siblings. They are starting to see senior's attendance drop and are working on how to get those students to class.

Middle School Principal, Clay Naughton, recognized teachers Megan Finch and Lorin Secrist for being great staff members making the Middle School a great place to be.

Elementary School Teacher, Lisa Bielefeld, shared that having the district's Security Director and local police officers around campus interacting with the kids has been great to help them recognize people in the community they can trust and don't need to be afraid of in emergency situations. Also, the Chromebooks continue to be great in the classrooms especially as the first graders start doing research on zoo animals.

Parent, Cole Dorwart, asked if there was an update on the elementary school potentially being sold to the Town of Pierce. Brian Fabrizius stated that a decision has not been made, but the Town is actively doing research on what it would cost them to maintain.

Parent, Spring Varra, mentioned that After-Prom is going to take place at the High School. She also stated that High School Wrestling is doing a cornhole fundraiser in April,



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and the Highland Recreation Association wrestling tournament will be held in March.

Maintenance Director, Davin Armstrong, said he walked the Town of Pierce Board through the Elementary School. He also met with a GeoThermal company that has awarded the Town a grant that could help them with utility costs of the school. The baseball field scoreboard is also scheduled to be installed, weather permitting.

Parent, Brittany Federer, inquired on how open coaching positions are shared. Karen Trusler said she would double check, but believes they are all posted on the district website.

Parent, Christina Jensen, said that middle school wrestling has their last school-sponsored tournament this weekend. They have a great mix of new and experienced wrestlers and are performing fairly well, even against bigger districts, at tournaments.

Board Member John Batka congratulated all the wrestlers and said it was very exciting attending state to support the Highland athletes.

Brian Fabrizius thanked Alicia Hoops for all of the time and work that has gone into the Bond. He also noted that the 7th grade girls basketball team is undefeated and heading into a tournament this weekend.

11. Executive Session

Brian Fabrizius made a motion that the Board of Education convene into executive session pursuant to the Colorado Revised Statute § 24-6-402(g) to discuss documents made confidential by the Colorado Open Records Act, and the particular matter for discussion is the content of applications and supporting records for superintendent candidates who are not yet finalists as defined by the Colorado Revised Statute § 24-72-204(3)(a)(XI).

Motion: Heather Simpson moved that the board of education convene into executive session pursuant to the Colorado Revised Statute § 24-6-402(g) to discuss documents made confidential by the Colorado Open Records Act, and the particular matter for



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discussion is the content of applications and supporting records for superintendent candidates who are not yet finalists as defined by the Colorado Revised Statute § 24-72-204(3)(a)(XI). John Batka seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

Motion: John Batka moved to invite Dr. Randy Zila and Interim Superintendent Karen Trusler to join the Board in Executive Session. Ryleigh Sittner seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

Motion: Brian Fabrizius recommending Jim Fraley, Any Lavier, Kyle Bules, and Scott Cooper are the finalists for the Superintendent position and will be interviewed by the Board. Ryleigh Sittner seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

Motion: Heather Simpson moved to exit Executive Session at 9:28pm. John Batka seconded the motion.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.

12. Adjournment

Motion: Brian Fabrizius moved and Heather Simpson seconded the motion to adjourn the February 25, 2025 Board of Education meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Sittner aye; Steinke aye; Fabrizius aye; Batka aye; Simpson aye
The vote was unanimous.



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Brian Fabrizius, President
BOE

John Batka, Secretary
BOE