

Highland School District #203
District Office
Monday, March 3, 2025
Regular Board Meeting -7:30 a.m.

The **March 3, 2025, AM Regular Board Meeting** was convened by Chair David Barnes at 7:30 a.m. Those present also included board members Lupita Flores, Carlos López, 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. David announced that the meeting is being recorded.

II. Business:

A. Communication Check-In: Nothing to share/report

B. Budget Extension Update: Francis: We will be voting on Capital Projects Fund and Debt Service Fund budget extensions as we may spend more money than was in the approved budget [for 2024-2025]. The money wasn't available for that budget because the \$2.2m that we borrowed may not be enough to cover the [initial costs of the] next project. The bids for the Phase II/HHS HVAC Upgrade, which starts in mid-June and goes through July and August, will come in this Wednesday, estimated to be at \$2.2-2.5m plus there are the engineering cost and taxes, which will take it about \$2.9m. Payments for the project might not start until the next budget year but if earlier we'll need to have the budget extension in place. The extension should be ready for a vote at the next meeting.

C. Budget Status and Staffing Update: Francis & Mark: Starting to look at the 2025-2026 budget. It will be equally challenging to put together as it was for this school year and will be very, very tight, due to the loss in enrollment. The State updated the budget numbers, fixing them in February: we will see a drop in our allotment. We are currently overstaffed per state staffing ratios so there will be a [necessary] reduction in teaching and classified staff. There will be cuts: one Basic Ed administrator (Mark), we will shift Mindy's budget area to Basic, we will not hire to replace the retiring teacher (5th grade), the paras on a one-year only posting will not return. With our lower enrollment having two elementary schools is a cost problem and becoming more so. It will be a challenging spring. With our enrollment going from 1,200 to 900 with the same facilities and staff, it doesn't add up. Everyone (staff) knows there is a problem, but they don't think it will affect them/their department although we keep communicating it. We are having meetings about contracts, and a zoom with the PSE rep, hoping to roll-over the CBAs. We're trying to get things narrowed down so we have it [2025-2026 budget] ready next month.

D. New School Board Member Discussion & Vote: There were no questions nor comments and after a short discussion, Lupita moved and Cindy 2nd to approve Kerry Jones as the new Highland School Board member, motion carried. He will be seated at the March 18, 2025, PM meeting.

Francis left the meeting at 7:43 a.m.

E. Curriculum Update: Mindy: The National Geographic curriculum was selected as the Science option. Now working on verifying that the hands-on parts are in place. Found some things [in the science rooms] that need repaired. The Transitional Kinder class is being renamed to TTK: Transition to Transition to Kinder. Looking at a different program that is very commonly used in our area, Creative Minds. It is a program that is more social emotional focused.

F. 2025-2026 Instructional Calendar and Intersession Survey: Mindy shared printed results of the community Intersession surveys. We received over 160 responses, pretty equally from each of the schools. Overall, the response was very positive and we are very satisfied with the survey participation. It was nice to see that the community supports and feels the district is making an effort to support students. Over 50% marked that our calendar supports student learning. One thing that was

noted was that parents want a better invitation process. So, we are looking at having two areas of focus and doing a better job of communicating/inviting students, such as siblings in a family. Discussed where to have intersessions on the calendar to honor the results in the survey which indicated a preference for having them in October and February. Discussed options for HS credit retrieval such as after school support. At the intersession in February, some HS students got caught up in just one day so another option might be one day in May that could be designated as a snow make-up or if not needed then used as a credit retrieval day. Still looking at options. So far the PSE Intersession survey results match this one of the community. Will share results with HEA.

III. Closing Items

Briefly reviewed the upcoming meeting dates, April 7 is in Spring Break and April 14 is one day before the PM meeting on the 15th. New board member Kerry Jones will be sworn in at the March 18 PM meeting so will finalize April dates when he can weigh in.

The March 3, 2025, AM meeting was adjourned at 7:57 a.m.

Chair

Secretary