

Highland School District #203

District Office

Monday, April 14, 2025

Special Board Meeting -7:30 a.m.

The **April 14, 2025, AM Regular Board Meeting** was convened by Chair David Barnes at 7:32 a.m. Those present also included board members Lupita Flores, Kerry Jones, Carlos López, and Cindy Reed, Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Student Success/Superintendent Designee Mindy Schultz, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman. David announced that the meeting is being recorded.

II. Discussion Items:

A. Communication Check-In: David mentioned that he had checked out the district website recently and found it was easy to navigate and feels it is moving in the right direction. Mark responded that it can be hard to find people and time to keep it updated. Parents are happy with ParentSquare. Next there was discussion about the after-school program [sponsored by the non-profit Altera/Northwest Learning & Achievement Group which is grant funded]. They will not have funding for next school year so there will not be an after-school program in 2025-2026. The district cannot fund it either so this needs to be communicated to our families so they are aware and can plan. We will look at offering a morning drop-off option.

B. Budget & Staffing Update: Mark shared the *Actual Budget Financials* report from Francis. Unfortunately, we started the 2024-2025 school year with 30 students fewer than anticipated, equaling an over \$400K shortage in state funding. The fund balance is supposed to be 9.00% per district policy, the projected 2025-2026 balance is \$725,222, or 3.69%, 5.31% below the policy limit. The board will have to make a decision about what percentage of a fund balance they are comfortable with. We've had a 100 FTE drop from 9/1/23 to 9/1/25. Headcount is always higher than FTE as some headcount students are part-time-YVC or Running Start students and we get only partial funding for them. We're going to have to look at moving staff around/transfers and letting go of provisional teachers. Need to look at retirement incentive options and not replace them when someone retires or leaves the district. The other thing the board needs to be thinking about is consolidating buildings, K-5 at TES. The current configuration with two elementary schools is not [financially] sustainable. Need to figure out what year we will do this. The count of students per building for next year as they move up grade levels: MWC will be down 18 students, TES up 7, HMS down 21, and HHS up three students. MWC is projected to have 172 students, down from 400 when Mindy was the principal there. The higher grades have the largest number of students. Incoming student counts don't match the outgoing student counts, so enrollment is dropping each year. The number of students withdrawing or living in-district but attending elsewhere hasn't changed significantly, and the reasons for doing so vary. There is a lot to be considered and will include many uncomfortable conversations. Need to inform the community in the end-of-year newsletter so they are aware of the change in enrollment and the district's work and plans for addressing the loss in funding.

C. Capital Projects Update: Mark: One of the very positive things we've had recently is that the bids for the HHS HVAC upgrade came in lower than expected. We'll be able to take care of the HMS office but not the HMS gym. The gym doesn't have the electrical capacity needed for the upgrade. The final completion date is in October, but the internal work will be completed before school starts. The priority of the moment is to move MWC to TES which will delay the upgrade of the track. We can sell the MWC property once it is empty, and that money can go back into Capital Projects. The reader board is up at TES but the electrical work isn't completed so it isn't in operation yet.

III. Closing Items

The April PM meeting is tomorrow night at MWC, 7 p.m. in the library.

The April 14, 2025, Special AM meeting was adjourned at 8:12 a.m.

Chair

Secretary