OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
AND STUDY SESSION - INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
May 16, 2024

1.0 OPENING ITEMS

1.1 Meeting Date and Location:

May 16, 2024 – District Office, 1985 Barkley Blvd., Bellingham, WA.

1.2 Call to Order/Land Acknowledgment:

Mr. Benjamin (President) called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He acknowledged that this meeting is being held on ancestral homelands of the Lummi people and Nooksack tribe.

1.3 Roll Call:

Present: Directors Douglas Benjamin (President), Camille Diaz Hackler, Scott Ritchey, Jenn Mason, Katie Rose, Superintendent Greg Baker and Sheri O'Day (recorder).

1.4 Audience:

- Pearl Petaia, a music specialist at Kulshan Middle School spoke about the importance of the performing arts.
- Jane Moore is a senior at Bellingham High School and shared that the best part of her transition from homeschool to Whatcom Middle School was the choir club, and music is her safe space.
- Connie Campbell, music teacher at Bellingham High School and choir club instructor at Whatcom Middle School talked about the importance of music education and believes the current middle school schedule excludes students from participating.
- Angel Raphael is a sophomore at Bellingham High School who participates in choir and orchestra. She believes orchestra is as important as academic classes and that music can be a coping mechanism for humans.
- Sandy Rogers is a music teacher at Meridian Middle School District and talked about how Meridian has managed to offer music classes to students during the school day.
- Freyja Junell spoke about the importance of music to her.
- Nick Strobel has been a music teacher in the Bellingham Public Schools for 23 years. He noted that the district does so many things well, including the fifth grade strings program, but the current middle school schedule prevents students from continuing with music classes in middle school.
- Cambria Schmidt is the parent of students at Kulshan Middle School and Sehome High School. She believes the lack of music choices in middle school is impacting the high school music programs.
- Patty Bourne teaches future music educators at Western Washington University (WWU) and believes in the importance of arts education for all students. The

partnership between the school district and WWU allows her to be in the schools to witness the wonderful music educators.

- David Jones is a music teacher at Whatcom Middle School who has also taught at many of the elementary schools. He and others are forming an advocacy group for middle school music programs.
- Shovia Muchirawehondo spoke about the profound and lasting effect of racism on black students. She is asking for the implementation of a rigorous anti-racism program.

1.5 Superintendent's Announcements and Report: Summary of Dr. Baker's comments:

- With only a handful of weeks left in the school year and in anticipation of next school year, fifth grade students have visited their future middle schools and eighth grade students have visited the high schools. Seniors are excited to be finishing their AP tests and are looking forward to graduation.
- Many districts across the state are experiencing the challenges of the state not fully funding education. He's hopeful that news coverage of the financial struggles of large districts like Seattle will help to spread awareness about what districts are facing.
- Dr. Baker shared news and photos about events, including an Earth Day event at Geneva Elementary School; the Sehome High School environmental club's work party with Whatcom Million Trees; the Since Time Immemorial family night at Whatcom Community College; and Parkview Elementary School's walking school bus.
- Staff appreciation week was last week. Our schools' parent organizations did a wonderful job showing appreciation of school staff.
- Wade King Elementary's choir performed the National Anthem at the Seattle Mariners game last Friday.
- The district received a grant to fund a mobile audiology clinic van with state-of-the-art equipment, which will be up and running soon.
- Bike to Work and School Day is tomorrow.
- Dr. Baker reviewed some highlights of the EL-2 monitoring report that is on tonight's consent agenda.
- A capital projects update included the Bellingham High School tennis courts; Kulshan Middle School addition and fields; open house at the new District Office and an upcoming Community Transitions facility meeting.

2.0 CONSENT ITEMS:

Ms. Mason made a **motion,** seconded by Mr. Ritchey, to approve the following consent agenda items:

2.1 Approval of Minutes of April 16, 2024 School Visit; April 17, 2024 Regular Meeting; April 26, 2024 Special Meetings; May 7, 2024 School Visit
2.2 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – April 2024
2.3 Resolution 12-24, Transfer of Funds from Capital Projects Fund to General Fund
2.4 Resolution 13-24, Intent to Construct Carl Cozier Elementary School
2.5 EL-2 Monitoring Report – Organizational Continuity
2.6 Moreno Dental, LLC and Hodag Properties, LLC Permanent Parking License (#2223-189)

2.7 Washington State Department of Commerce Interagency Agreement (#2324-049A)
2.8 Coast to Coast Turf, Inc. Agreement – Kulshan Middle School (#2324-216)
2.9 City of Bellingham Interlocal Agreement – Recreational Services (#2324-222)
2.10 foundry10 Memorandum of Understanding – CTE Curriculum (#2324-223)
2.11 Quillayute Valley School District Interlocal Agreement (#2324-224)
2.12 Vamos Outdoors Project Agreement for Services and Data Privacy Agreement (#2324-226)
2.13 Whatcom County Health and Community Services Interlocal Agreement (#2425-237)
2.14 NWESD 189 Whatcom Discovery Program Interlocal Cooperative Agreement (#2425-005)
2.15 Personnel Recommendations
2.16 Personal Services Contracts

Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.0 POLICY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

3.1 Revision to B/SR 3.1.1, Monitoring Response Document

At the April 26, 2024 school board retreat, the board discussed modifying Board/Superintendent Relationship Policy 3.1.1, Monitoring Response Document. The board was presented with the suggested revised policy, and after discussion, Ms. Diaz Hackler made a **motion,** seconded by Mr. Ritchey, to approve the proposed revised policy. Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.2 Monitoring Report Ends 1, 2, 3 (combined report)

Dr. Mike Copland, Deputy Superintendent, and Brian Rick, Director of Research and Assessment, discussed some highlights from the report and answered questions from the board.

4.0 BOARD RESPONSE TO MONITORING

4.1 Board Response to Monitoring – Ends 2.1 (Part 2), Student Competence

The board discussed the feedback contained in the combined monitoring responses for Ends 2.1, Part 2 (Attachment A). Mr. Benjamin will provide a final summary version of this document which will be submitted for approval at the June 18, 2024 regular meeting.

4.2 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-6, Academic Standards and Provisions

The board discussed the feedback contained in the combined monitoring responses for EL-6 (Attachment B). Mr. Benjamin will provide a final summary version of this document which will be submitted for approval at the June 18, 2024 regular meeting.

4.3 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-8, District Calendar

The board discussed the feedback contained in the combined monitoring responses for EL-8 (Attachment C). Mr. Benjamin will provide a final summary version of this document which will be submitted for approval at the June 18, 2024 regular meeting.

5.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5.1 GP-7.2 – 2023-24 Annual Board Agenda, Revised – general review.

5.2 School Board Directors' Reports. Highlights of comments:

- Ms. Mason appreciated hearing from so many Alderwood students during the recent school visit. It's apparent that students are passionate about what they care about, and it's also evident that students feel a sense of community in their school. She's also so happy that the students, staff and families have the beautiful new school.
- Mr. Ritchey attended a wonderful Squalicum High School art show. There were sub-committees formed at the board's recent retreat, and work is progressing with those sub-committees. The WSSDA regional meeting was great, and it was marvelous to have state superintendent Chris Reykdal there to explain where the state is with education funding. The Alderwood visit was fantastic, and he was struck by how students can talk about important things at such a young age.
- Ms. Rose formerly lived across the street from Alderwood, and she's happy to see how passionate the neighborhood is about their new school. She enjoyed hearing from students this evening about the importance of the arts. The recent board retreat was great, and she values that time and the conversations among the board members.
- Ms. Diaz Hackler shared that her fifth-grade granddaughter got to visit the middle school she'll be attending next year. She loved the retreat, and the WSSDA regional meeting was amazing. The Alderwood visit was great, and the District Office open house was lovely.
- Mr. Benjamin was sorry to miss the Alderwood visit. He attended the state auditor's exit interview and noted they didn't have much to say because there were no findings. He attended the District Office open house and heard amazing comments from those who toured the new building. He agreed that the opportunity for board members to connect with each other at retreats is fundamental, and he was proud to have the entire board at the WSSDA regional meeting. He leaves for Spokane tomorrow to attend an all-day WSSDA retreat on Saturday.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 n/a

7.0 STUDY SESSION

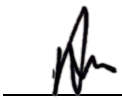
7.1 Study Session – International Baccalaureate (IB)

Executive Director Ari Feeney and Director of Teaching and Learning Tom Gresham gave a presentation to the board regarding the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. They also answered questions from the school board members.

8.1 Board Assessment of Meeting: Ms. Mason assessed the meeting, with an overall rating of 4 *(commendable).*

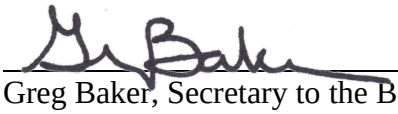
8.2 Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Approved:



Douglas Benjamin, Board President

Attest:



Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved: June 18, 2024

ATTACHMENT A
5/16/24 board meeting minutes

Monitoring Response Document – INITIAL COMPILATION

Policy Monitored: Ends 2.1, Part 2 – Student Competence
Date Report Submitted: 3/14/2024
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 4/17/2024 and 5/16/2024

Below are my responses in connection with the report:

Ends Reports:	**Executive Limitations Reports**
1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. has achieved the goals established in the policy or is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals. **DB CDH JM SR KR** b. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals, but a greater degree of progress is expected for **policy** items noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress in achieving the goals established. * d. cannot be determined*	1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. is in compliance, with the acknowledgement that there is always more work to be done. b. is making reasonable progress toward compliance except for item(s) noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress toward compliance.* d. cannot be determined*
**see comments below (No. 3)*	

2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

DB:

- There is evidence of modest gap closure with Hispanic/Latinx and low-income groups.
- There have been significant increases in dual credit and CTE participation, particularly among female students.
- The growth particularly in CTE participation and offerings is impressive.

CDH:

- Despite the difficulties students had during the pandemic, it seems hopeful that dropout rates seem similar to pre-pandemic.

SR:

- Our overall district graduation rates have improved over the past 10 years beyond state averages and made important progress towards the rates reflected from the high bar peer district. This progress is commendable.
- Bellingham's very strong graduation rates for students with disabilities at 7 years reflects the values of The Bellingham Promise and illustrates our district's impressive commitment to transitioning students effectively to life after public schools. The 90% graduation rate is especially commendable.
- Our progress in closing the gap for low income vs. non-low-income students 5 year graduation rates are evident from the data provided; the progress is commendable.
- The notable increase in CTE dual credit is an impressive reflection of the district's investment in and dedication to the CTE programs and is commendable outcome. The breadth of programs offered is impressive and will directly help support engaging student interest and belonging with applied knowledge and learning opportunities.

- The graduation gap between Hispanic/Latinx and non-Hispanic/Latinx Bellingham students decreased to 6 percent from 8 percent in year-over-year comparison.

KR:

- Glad to see pandemic doesn't appear to have had a big impact on dropout rates.
- Encouraging to see the gap narrowing between Hispanic/Latines students and low-income students – especially the latter given poverty's overall impact on students and families.
- Especially heartening to see lasting trends in improved graduation rates over time among groups.
- CTE growth is commendable given how impactful courses can be and how well offerings are set up to meet diverse student interests and talents.

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

DB:

- The graduation gap with multilingual learners increased, though it is recognized these numbers fluctuate significantly.
- The report indicates that income is perhaps the most significant contributor to graduation rate gaps.

CDH:

- None.

SR:

- My interpretation of the testing impacts to grade 10 students is that these anomalous scores may be the result of COVID era effects due to reduced student familiarity with the standardized tests and a lack of understanding for the use of these standardized test scores specific to this cycle of measurement. I was glad to learn that we will likely see improvement in this area in future cycles.
- Our district stands out for our strong focus on proficiency gaps and the district team's efforts to close these gaps. I would anticipate continued progress in this area as we see reduced COVID era effects and with the efforts already underway and would like to voice support for the importance of these continued efforts.

4. Comments on the report itself.

DB:

- Appreciate blending the data sets with the report narrative, makes for a much smoother read.

CDH:

- Great report, as always.

SR:

- This is an exceptionally rich and transparent report on key outcomes related to The Bellingham Promise. Thank you for such a well developed and documented report.

KR:

- Integrated data set makes it much easier to see. This report is always great – thorough and clear.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

DB:

- None.

CDH:

- None.

SR:

- None.

ATTACHMENT B
5/16/24 board meeting minutes

Monitoring Response Document – INITIAL COMPILATION

Policy Monitored: EL-6, Academic Standards and Practices
Date Report Submitted: 4/17/2024
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 5/16/2024

Below are combined responses in connection with the report:

Ends Reports:	**Executive Limitations Reports**
1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. has achieved the goals established in the policy or is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals. b. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals, but a greater degree of progress is expected for **policy** items noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress in achieving the goals established. * d. cannot be determined*	1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. is in compliance, with the acknowledgement that there is always more work to be done. **DB CDH JM SR KR** b. is making reasonable progress toward compliance except for item(s) noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress toward compliance.* d. cannot be determined*
**see comments below (No. 3)*	

2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

DB:

- The report shows active progress in developing academic practices and standards that meet policy expectations, as the Board has come to expect from this superintendent and his team. Some notable examples of commendable efforts include, but are not limited to: expanded inclusionary efforts, more focus on behaviorally dysregulated students and mental health supports, use of AI tools, new math curriculums, alignment with Board Ends, STI integration, expanding IB schools, and broad stakeholder involvement.

CDH:

- The board is impressed with the work done on coming up with a new inclusion definition. It seems like a lot of work went into it.
- The board is also impressed with the professional development on artificial intelligence. It's a new and growing field and staying on top of current trends is very smart.
- More impressive work has been done towards improving the Since Time Immemorial standards. Getting the outdoor learning grant to expand the salmon release, the storytelling pathway and Treaty Day are all very important things.

SR:

- The new definition of inclusion is an excellent framework for fully realizing the value of inclusion for all students and the community at large. This definition really underscores the positive network effects of inclusion and is commendable as an expression of equity and impact for all students.

- The thoughtful alignment of professional learning and district-wide goals as well as the significant variety of professional learning course offerings is a commendable demonstration of the district's commitment to ongoing improvement in instructional innovation.
- The district's ongoing commitment to the mental health of students and successful pursuit of grand funding to complement previous activities is commendable as both a pragmatic response to changes in our communities and effective recognition of the important role of mental health in the realization of The Bellingham Promise.
- Without a comprehensive background in instructional innovation, it can be challenging to provide observations on the quality of specific initiatives pursued this year, however, as a community member given the opportunity to meet with a variety of students and staff the innovation appears both effective and engaging for students and staff. In their energy and enthusiasm for initiatives like STI and IB commendation is easily justified.

KR:

- Appreciate both the new definition of inclusion and the thoughtfulness and intention behind it – especially the recognition that ALL children are capable. Glad to see the professional development on AI and Since Time Immemorial curriculum – valuing both where we're going and where we've come from.
- Report demonstrates clear alignment with board ends, in addition to meeting other criteria and needs.

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

DB:

- None.

CDH:

- None.

SR:

- None.

KR:

- None.

4. Comments on the report itself.

DB:

- Organized and very readable. Appreciate the clear indication of new efforts.

CDH:

- As always, a good report.

SR:

- The report was very informative and the links to specific additional resources and reference materials was much appreciated.

KR:

- That this report highlights new and updated processes is so helpful and demonstrates the commitment to progress and ongoing learning.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

DB:

- None.

CDH:

- None.

SR:

- None.

Monitoring Response Document – INITIAL COMPILATION

Policy Monitored: EL-8, District Calendar
Date Report Submitted: 4/17/2024
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 5/16/2024

Below are combined responses in connection with the report:

Ends Reports:	**Executive Limitations Reports**
1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. has achieved the goals established in the policy or is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals. b. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals, but a greater degree of progress is expected for **policy** items noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress in achieving the goals established. * d. cannot be determined*	1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. is in compliance, with the acknowledgement that there is always more work to be done. **DB CDH JM SR KR** b. is making reasonable progress toward compliance except for item(s) noted.* c. is ***not*** making reasonable progress toward compliance.* d. cannot be determined*
**see comments below (No. 3)*	

2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

DB:

- The report shows that the superintendent has developed a robust process over the years to build the district calendar consistent with policy. This year is no exception with broad involvement of stakeholders, attention to evolving holidays, bargaining changes, enhanced professional development, family engagement and broad communication strategies.

CDH:

- The district calendar is so important to so many people. The board feels that Dr. Baker always does such a thorough job in involving so many groups, as requested by the board. Good job, also, in keeping the calendar (and families) up to date when it changes, like after inclement weather.

SR:

- The district's important commitment to professional learning is reflected in the adjusted calendar dates for early dismissal. Developing these opportunities for collaboration and growth are valuable as schools continue to respond to changes in education, society and technology. Many families are understandably challenged by the need for these early releases, but the district's work to develop and communicate the calendars proactively and effectively is commendable.

KR:

- The district calendar is a key example of the many needs and priorities of the myriad stakeholders the district serves. Creating a calendar designed to thoughtfully meet such a range of almost contradictory needs is commendable, particularly as it also so clearly reflects the values of The Bellingham Promise.

- Appreciate the continued support of multiple channels of communication and opportunities for families to engage.
- Snow day approach is a perfect example of the thoughtful intention behind scheduling and communications and demonstrates the district/superintendent's understanding of the role the district plays in the community at large.

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

DB:
- None.

CDH:
- None.

SR:
- None.

KR:
- None.

4. Comments on the report itself.

DB:
- Concise with great examples and clearly marked updates.

CDH:
- Great job on the report. The examples are a great touch.

SR:
- The report was very well prepared and informative. The bolded differentiation of new items is a helpful construct for evaluating against prior year's efforts.

KR:
- Great report – informative and includes valuable context for a seemingly simple process.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

DB:
- None.

CDH:
- None.

SR:
- None.