OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
February 22, 2024

1.0 OPENING ITEMS

1.1 Meeting Date and Location:

February 22, 2024 – Options High School, 2015 Franklin St., 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, Jennifer Mason, Scott Ritchey and Katie Rose, Greg Baker and Sheri O'Day (recorder).

1.4 Audience:

- Elise Krause talked about CTE month and her experience as a CTE student.
- Britt Schell shared concerns about student access to technology and educational outcomes.

1.5 Superintendent's Announcements and Report:

Summary of Dr. Baker's comments:

- Voters approved our two levies on the special election ballot on Feb. 13. Our levies make up 25% of the district's budget and are a vital source of funding because the state doesn't adequately fund education. We are very grateful for our community's support.
- Dr. Baker shared events happening around the district, including hosting authors, events related to Career Technical Education (CTE) and Unified Basketball, which is an inclusive sport played at our comprehensive high schools. He also shared an update regarding construction and capital projects, which included recent photos at Kulshan Middle School, the new District Office (DO) and temporarily located DO staff throughout our district.
- High school registration for the 2024-25 school year is underway, and many new course options are being offered.
- Dr. Baker shared aerial photos of Carl Cozier and the Civic Complex. Today, we announced, along with the City of Bellingham, that we are working on a plan to relocate Carl Cozier to property owned by the City within the Civic Complex.
- This evening's consent agenda contains reports on EL-3 and EL-4, and Dr. Baker shared some brief highlights of what will be seen in those reports.
- Our district's first communitywide winter event is Friday, Feb. 23, 2024 at SportsPlex. The Winter Blast is for all families and students, and all are invited to

attend. Performances of the Sound of Music at Bellingham High and Guys and Dolls at Squalicum High kick off soon.

2.0 CONSENT ITEMS:

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

2.1 Approval of Minutes of Jan. 18, 2024 Regular Meeting; Feb. 6, 2024 Special Meeting; Feb. 6, 2024 School Visit
2.2 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – January 2024
2.3 Resolution 05-24, Transfer of Funds from Capital Projects Fund to General Fund
2.4 Resolution 06-24, Declaration of an Emergency and Waiver of Bidding Requirements Relating to Water Damage Repairs at Sehome High School
2.5 Approve Donation
2.6 Hire Appraiser for Property Appraisal
2.7 EL-3 Monitoring Report – Treatment and Communication with Public, Parents and Students
2.8 EL-4 Monitoring Report – Staff Treatment, Compensation and Evaluation
2.9 Policy 6220 Update, Bid Requirements
2.10 Policy 2190 Update, Highly Capable Programs
2.11 Amendment #4 to 2023-24 Whatcom Discovery Program Interlocal Agreement (#2324-002D)
2.12 Camp Fire Samish Agreements – Fifth Grade Outdoor Education (#2324-150)
2.13 RAM Construction General Contractors, LLC Agreement – District Office (Dupont Street) Repairs (#2324-151)
2.14 Interlocal Agreement with Ferndale, Meridian, Mount Baker, Lynden and Nooksack Valley Districts (#2324-155)
2.15 foundry10 Memorandum of Understanding – Reading Curriculum Funding (#2324-156)
2.16 City of Bellingham – Easements Related to New District Office Project (#2324-158)
2.17 Washington State Auditor's Office (#2324-165)
2.18 1835 Barkley, LLC – Agreements Related to New District Office Project (#2324-166, #2324-167, #2324-168)
2.19 foundry10 Memorandum of Understanding – Visualizing and Verbalizing Funding (#2324-169)
2.20 Personnel Recommendations
2.21 Personal Services Contracts

Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.0 BOARD RESPONSE TO MONITORING

3.1 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-7, Budget Planning and Execution

There was discussion regarding the summary of the board responses to the EL-7 report that was prepared by Mr. Benjamin. Following discussion, Mr. Ritchey made a **motion,** seconded by Ms. Mason, to approve the monitoring response document (Attachment A). Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.2 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-9, Asset Maintenance and Protection

There was discussion regarding the summary of the board responses to the EL-9 report that was prepared by Mr. Benjamin. Following discussion, Mr. Ritchey made a **motion,** seconded by Ms. Rose, to approve the monitoring response document (Attachment B). Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.3 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal

There was discussion regarding the summary of the board responses to the EL-9.1 report that was prepared by Mr. Benjamin. Following discussion, Mr. Ritchey made a **motion,** seconded by Ms. Mason, to approve the monitoring response document (Attachment C). Unanimous affirmative vote.

4.0 POLICY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

4.1 Revision to EL-9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal

The EL-9.1 monitoring report that was submitted to the board on December 14, 2023 contained a suggested change to paragraph 1 of the policy. Ms. Mason made a **motion** to make the change to Policy EL-9.1 (Attachment D), which was seconded by Ms. Rose. Unanimous affirmative vote.

4.2 Monitoring Report Ends 2.1 (part 1) – Student Competence

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

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 has deep gratitude and appreciation for this community after the levy measures passed, and she is disappointed that some districts did not receive the support from their communities. She continues to be frustrated by the way this state determines education funding. The Kulshan Middle School visit was great. The new addition is lovely, and it demonstrated to her how the physical aspect of a school matters. She shared her appreciation for the district's inclusion work, which has enabled her child to participate in school events such as Mountain School and fifth grade strings.
- Mr. Ritchey shared his excitement about the passage of the two levies. He is the parent of three children who attended Carl Cozier Elementary School, and the news about the new building and location is encouraging. The visit to Kulshan gave him an appreciation for the complexity involved when a capital project is underway while school is in session and students are on the campus. The Kulshan music teacher gave a fantastic overview which reinforced the importance of the district's music programs.
- Ms. Rose also expressed gratitude for the recent passage of the levies. It was very evident while she attended the WSSDA Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill that there is a need to continue to advocate for sufficient funding, especially in light of how students have changed since the state model was last updated. She agrees that

teaching students in a way they understand and teaching them how to be a part of a community is important when talking about inclusion. She shared a reflection from her time as a student, and she's grateful to be in a school district and community that tells all children that they belong.

- Ms. Diaz Hackler agreed that the levy passage was great news. While at the legislative conference in Olympia, she and Ms. Rose met with two sets of state representatives, because our school district is located within two different legislative districts. She would be interested in inviting legislators to visit our schools. She believes the capital improvements at Kulshan will be enjoyed by the surrounding neighborhood.
- Mr. Benjamin appreciates that Ms. Rose and Ms. Diaz Hackler attended the legislative conference. He enjoyed the Kulshan visit but missed seeing students since the visit occurred prior to the middle school start time. He has heard that Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal will be attending the April 27 WSSDA DA-1 regional meeting on San Juan Island, and our board is registered to attend. The board's retreat that was previously scheduled for March 1 is being rescheduled to April 26, to coincide with the DA-1 regional meeting. He asked if the board would be interested in completing the WSSDA self-assessment prior to the board retreat. All board members indicated they would be interested, and Mr. Benjamin will forward the self-assessment information to each board member. He appreciated Ms. Mason's remarks and agrees that the passage of the levies is a clear reflection of how our community supports public education.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 n/a

7.0 CLOSING ITEMS

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

7.2 Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Approved:

Douglas Benjamin, Board President

Attest:

Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved: March 14, 2024

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-7, Budget Planning and Execution
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 2/22/2024

The Board has received and reviewed the Superintendent's Monitoring Report referenced above. Following the Board's review and discussions with the Superintendent and his representatives, the Board makes the following conclusions:

Ends Reports:	**Executive Limitations Reports**
1. The Board finds that the Superintendent: a. has achieved the goals established in the policy. b. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals. c. is making reasonable progress towards achieving the goals, but a greater degree of progress is expected in some areas.* d. is ***not*** making reasonable progress in achieving the goals established. * e. 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 towards 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.

   Impressive steady year-after-year growth in grants applied for and received, the total grant dollars received, and the number of successful applications indicate success in our endeavors.
   Grants secured for specific areas of need and interest, mental health and sustainability.
   Strong evidence of continued and new community partnerships.
   The district continues to use a robust and transparent budget development process, excellent work with local partners to result in new space(s) for Community Transitions.
   The annual Budget Book continues to be a remarkable document that both educates and outlines the moral nature of the district budget. This effort should reinforce community trust in the district's efforts, especially important as we bring two essential renewal levies to the voters in 2024.

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

   None, we appreciate Dr. Baker's commitment to ongoing learning and improvement for the budget planning and management process. These efforts are important and ongoing.

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-7, Budget Planning and Execution
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 2/22/2024

4. Comments on the report itself.

   Very well organized and clear. Thank you for italicizing new sections and for talking about the budget planning process itself in ways that are easy to understand and interesting.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

   None identified.

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-9, Asset Maintenance and Protection
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 2/22/2024

The Board has received and reviewed the Superintendent's Monitoring Report referenced above. Following the Board's review and discussions with the Superintendent and his representatives, the Board makes the following conclusions:

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2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

   There is evidence that district facility/transportation management was well maintained despite an almost 15% reduction in associated staff due to budget cuts, and the addition of new facility technologies (e.g., building entrance protocols). Even with these cuts, APP scores remain roughly the same as last year (2022), and in many cases exceed those in 2021. Numerous outside agency observers have confirmed this. It is commendable that the district has identified a pathway to managing the complex mix of properties and some very old facilities with fewer staff due to the budget challenges of the district.
   The pace of facility replacements/upgrades continues to be impressive.
   There has been a commendable amount of safety training and process improvement during this reporting period. Transportation safety is of key concern for all parents with children who are supported by district transportation and the accomplishment of our district's achievement for 'outstanding bus inspections' is an important part of that safety puzzle. It is great to see the district investing in cyber risk management as they could seriously impact our ability to fulfill the mission of the district otherwise.
   The continued use of a Sustainability Advisory Committee and a Climate Action Plan show clear focus and efforts working toward high standards of energy use and conservation. All recently constructed facilities well exceed WSSP sustainability standards. This report really demonstrates the various benefits of newer buildings, including for energy efficiency.

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-9, Asset Maintenance and Protection
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 2/22/2024

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

   Thank you for providing additional information to the EL-9 report regarding the specific data on reported staff injuries, including staff injured by students. Due to the anomalous nature of the numbers for this past reporting period, we would appreciate watching them over the next year and hopefully getting a clearer understanding in the next EL-9 report.
   Ongoing dedication to improved sustainability is an important challenge, well-reflected in the work of the Climate Action Plan and effort by the advisory committee, management efforts and staff work.

4. Comments on the report itself.

   Comprehensive, plenty of data to support compliance. The Board appreciate the presentation of multiple years of data and the factual presentation of relevant data.

5. Possible changes to the policy.

   None identified.

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
Date of Board's Monitoring Response: 2/22/2024

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**see comments below (No. 3)*	

2. Please note commendable progress over the last year.

   There is clear evidence that the superintendent has engaged in robust long-term facilities planning involving a broad cross section of district staff and important community partners and stakeholders, ensuring that requests align with The Bellingham Promise, especially the district's commitment to equity. The Board has been well informed during this process, and results are reflected in bond requests.

3. Please note areas for additional improvement.

   None.

4. Comments on the report itself.

   Clear and concise. This report does an excellent job highlighting pertinent history and providing an update where appropriate.

Monitoring Response Document

Policy Monitored: EL-9.1, Facility Improvement or Development Involving Bond Measure Proposal
Date Report Submitted: 12/14/2023
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5. Possible changes to the policy.

   Delete the first line of section 1 of the EL-9.1 policy which reads: ***through the consent agenda***, as recommended in the monitoring report.

EL-9.1
Executive Limitations
1/1

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT OR DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING BOND MEASURE PROPOSAL

Recognizing the long-term community commitment when the district issues new bonds for property improvement, development or acquisition, the superintendent shall not fail to:

1. ~~through the consent agenda~~, inform the board that the district is constituting a facilities and bond planning task force for the purposes of reviewing the adequacy of current facilities and the possibility of a future bond issuance;
2. seek balanced staff, parent and community stakeholder input in the planning process;
3. use best practices in evaluating the adequacy of existing facilities and in the design of new facilities;
4. assure that final recommendations regarding facilities and bonds are aligned with district's strategic plan, The Bellingham Promise; and
5. provide ample opportunity for board and community discussion prior to final board action.

Adopted: 2/27/2019

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