



Board of Directors, Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, September 9, 2025
RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400
BENTON COUNTY, RICHLAND, WASHINGTON

The Board of Directors of Richland School District No. 400 met for a regular meeting Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 5:30 P.M. via Zoom and in person, 6972 Keene Road, West Richland, Washington. School Board Vice President Jill Oldson presided. Board members participating: Bonnie Mitchell, Katrina Waters, and Rick Jansons. Administrators present: Superintendent Dr. Shelley Redinger, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Dr. Bryan Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital and Operations Ken Gosney, Executive Director of Instructional Services Tory Christensen, Chief Financial Officer Travis Belisle, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Jennifer Klauss, Executive Director of State and Federal Programs Derek O'Konek, Director of Communications Robert Sorensen, Executive Director of Special Education Pre-K-12 Zac Carpenter, and Director of Information Technology Glenn Whitcomb.

The Board meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Personnel, Legal, Real Estate)

The Board adjourned to executive session at 5:30 P.M. to discuss qualifications of an applicant for employment or review of performance of an employee (final actions must be taken in public and discussions affecting employees generally must be held in public) 42.30.110 (1) (g); discussion with legal counsel, of enforcement actions, litigation or potential litigation, if public discussion might result in an adverse legal or financial consequence. (Does not permit an executive session solely because attorney is present.) 42.30.110 (1) (i); and acquisition of real estate, if public knowledge might increase the price 42.30.110 (1) (b). The executive session was projected to last sixty minutes, with no action expected. Executive session ended at 6:28 P.M.

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 6:30 P.M.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

1.2 Roll Call-Katrina Waters and Tiffany Qian participated via Zoom.

2.0 COMMUNICATIONS

RECOGNITIONS-Recognizing Innovation, Service, and Excellence (RISE Awards)

Robert Sorensen, Director of Communications, shared a new staff recognition this year. Staff from each school or department will be honored for their amazing work. This recognition will take place weekly at locations throughout the District.

2.2 Requests and Comments by Visitors (2 minutes per individual)

Ron Higgins, Richland, shared concern regarding COVID vaccine information.

2.3 Board/Student Representatives/Superintendent Reports

Both Shelley Redinger and Bonnie Mitchell shared information regarding the *Take Strides* event to recognize Suicide Awareness Month. The event will take place on September 24, 2025, beginning at Fran Rish Stadium. Students, parents and the community are encouraged to participate.

Student Representatives:

Sinan Farawila and Tiffany Qian reported meeting with principals, the first pep assembly, a general council meeting, training regarding fundraising, and shared there are several athletic events this week.

Jill Oldson encouraged parents to complete the Parent/Guardian committee survey. Topics will be decided for meetings this year. The survey will be communicated via ParentSquare and available on the District website.

3.0 BUSINESS

3.1 Performance Audit Update

Superintendent Redinger shared information on many annual required facility inspections completed throughout the District including water backflow systems, elevators, fire sprinklers, bleachers, basketball backboards, and school kitchens. Inspections were completed with only minor issues to be addressed. She recognized air conditioning units are in need of some improvement as they are aging. Board discussion followed.

3.2 Digital Responsibility-Qustodio

Glenn Whitcomb, Director of Information Technology, shared information on Qustodio, a parental control and digital wellbeing application for chrome books. Key features include: screen time limits, web filtering and safe browsing, activity reporting and alerts, as well as usage insights. Mr. Whitcomb advised one additional personal device can be added free of charge. Parents may also extend protection to additional devices by enrolling in family-focused plans for a fee.

3.3 Board Vacancy Timeline

Ms. Oldson stated that Board of Directors' Position #3 was vacated by Chelsie Beck who moved out of the area. She shared the timeline for the vacancy:

- **August 26** – Acceptance of Chelsie Beck's resignation letter
- **September 9** – Review proposed timeline for filling Position #3 at the board meeting
- **September 10 (Noon)** – Post application online for Position #3
- **October 8 (Noon)** – Applications due (4 weeks from posting date)
 - forward applications to board for review
- **October 14 (5:00 p.m.)** – Executive Session prior to board meeting
 - review applications and select candidates to be interviewed
 - vote in the public portion of the meeting to confirm the interview list
- **October 21 (5:00 p.m.)** – Special Board Meeting for public interviews and selection
 - conduct candidate interviews
 - enter executive session for review and discussion
 - return to open session to deliberate, make a motion, and vote
- **October 28** – Oath of Office for Position #3 (term ending November 2027)

3.4 Levy Planning Discussion

Travis Belisle, Chief Financial Officer, reported school districts are limited to an amount of Educational Programs and Operations (EP & O) Levy funds that can be collected. The limit is the LOWER of three values:

- \$2.50 times the total Assessed Value (AV) per \$1,000
- Per pupil limit time the enrollment of the previous year
- The voter approved amount

Mr. Belisle explained the average assessed value of a home in the District is \$418,142. The maximum amount to collect for an average home would be approximately \$1,050 (\$87/month or \$2.86/day). He reviewed past levy history and stated the District underestimated the assessed value growth, projecting only 5% growth during the last levy period. Thus, the requested levy amount the voters approved at the estimated \$2.50 ended up providing lower levy rates for tax collection. The levy rate actually decreased over the four-year period. Mr. Belisle recommended asking for the \$2.50 rate, while estimating the AV growth to be 10% for the next four year (26/27=\$43,818,000; 27/28=48,200,000; 28/29=53,020,000; 29/20=58,322,000).

Mr. Belisle stated Underfunded Program/Mandates include Special Education, Materials, Supplies, and Other Costs (MSOC), payroll benefits, substitutes, athletics, clubs field trips, staffing over state funding allocations, and supplemental and other salaries.

Mr. Belisle also recommended maintaining the Capital Projects Levy at \$.50/\$1,000. This amount is used for Technology Infrastructure and Site Modernization, Instructional Technology Licensing, Subscription Services, Implementation and Training (26/27=\$8,676,000; 27/28=\$9,543,000; 28/29=\$10,497,000; 29/20=\$11,547,000).

Mr. Belisle advised levy dollars will have direct impacts on students and will not be used to build back the fund balance. The District also only receives Local Effort Assistance (LEA) funds if a levy passes. Board members requested additional details on what is funded by levy dollars and what is at stake if the levy fails. Mr. Belisle will bring detailed Resolutions to the September 23, 2025 meeting for review.

3.5 Draft District Goals:

***Improve Fiscal Responsibility**

Mr. Belisle shared plans to develop a multi-year financial framework by the end of February, 2026 that will guide budget planning, expenditure control, and revenue optimization strategies to rebuild the District's unassigned fund balance. Details include:

- identify cost-saving strategies and prioritize sustainable, recurring savings
- engaging departments in building budget capacity and ownership
- annual monitoring of fund balance progress via monthly financial reports
- reinforcing long-term trust with staff, families, and community
- Final goal: reach 8% unassigned fund balance by August 2030

Mr. Belisle shared specific activities and timelines for each. Board discussion followed with members requesting quarterly updates.

***Longterm Facility Planning**

Ken Gosney, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Operations, presented details to develop and implement a comprehensive 10-year facility plan that addresses property acquisition or sale, school construction, building maintenance/replacement, and the upkeep or replacement of athletics facilities. He explained the plan will align with growth projections, programmatic needs, safety requirements, and fiscal responsibility. Details include:

- defined timelines, estimated costs, and funding sources for each identified project
- establish tracking system for annual progress updates
- completion and board approval of the 10-year plan by the end of June 2025

Mr. Gosney also shared an action plan by phase. Board discussion followed with a recommendation to bring a draft plan to the Board in May, with approval in August.

***Job Description Audit**

Mr. Gosney advised the Human Resources Department will conduct a phased audit of all job descriptions across departments during the 2025–2026 school year. The audit will assess the accuracy of roles, responsibilities, and qualifications, and identify outdated, missing, or misaligned duties to ensure clarity, equity, and efficiency across all positions. Details include:

- completion of five audit phases as outlined in the project plan
- delivery of a final summary report of findings to the board by November 2026
- identify gaps and inconsistencies that may impact workload parity, job expectations, and support structures

***Human Capital Audit**

Mr. Gosney stated the Human Resources Department will conduct a district-wide human capital audit to evaluate appropriate staffing levels for all employee groups during the 2025–2026 school year. The audit will identify indicators and triggers such as student enrollment, demographics, special programs, and service requirements that determine when staffing levels are too high or too low. The process will establish a weighted framework for evaluating staffing needs, ensuring equitable allocation of personnel and alignment with student and programmatic needs. Details include:

- develop a staffing level framework with defined triggers and weighting criteria
- comparative analysis against enrollment trends, demographics, and program requirements.
- delivery of a final Human Capital Audit Report with recommendations by November 2026.
- all employee groups - certificated, classified, and administrative staff may be included in the analysis

3.6 Legislative Priority Discussion (Washington State School Directors' Association)

Ms. Oldson asked members to weigh in on the priorities described in the WSSDA General Assembly Handbook. All stated generally concurring with the priorities chosen and trusted the representatives to change their vote if needed. There was consensus from the members that Ms. Oldson and Mr. Jansons will share at the upcoming General Assembly Meeting.

3.7 Policy No. 4330-Community Use of School Facilities

Brad Anderson, Director of Operations, reported the District last updated this policy in December 2010. The legal references have been updated, the text that has the strike-through is captured in the procedures and can therefore be removed from the policy. The District is also suggesting changing the policy number to match WSSDA's policy number - 4260. Mr. Anderson stated during last fiscal

year 14,000 events were booked including school activities, sports, and clubs with both inside and outside groups. After much discussion, this policy will be added to the September 23, 2025 agenda for further review.

3.8 Policy No. 5011-Sexual Harassment of Staff Prohibited

Matt Ellis, Director of Human Resources, stated this policy was recently updated with WSSDA in April 2025. The updates from April define sexual harassment by the regulations implementing the federal law Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, a sentence regarding discrimination is referred to the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator, and an update to the legal references. Student violations will be spelled out in the student handbook. Tory Christensen is the student Compliance Coordinator.

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Bonnie Mitchell –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE POLICY NO. 5011-SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STAFF PROHIBITED FOR FIRST READING.

Advisory Vote-Student Representatives: Farawila, yes; Qian, yes
Vote: Waters, yes; Mitchell, yes; Oldson, yes; Jansons, yes
Motion was approved.

3.9 Policy No. 6801-Capital Assets/Theft of Sensitive Assets

Mr. Belisle reported this policy was overdue for revision and went through a total overhaul. The District is also proposing to change the policy name and number to match the WSSDA model policy - 6801, previously 6221. Board discussion followed and Mr. Belisle will make changes if necessary for second reading.

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Bonnie Mitchell –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE POLICY NO. 6801-CAPITAL ASSETS/THEFT OF SENSITIVE ASSETS FOR FIRST READING.

Advisory Vote-Student Representatives: Farawila, yes; Qian, yes
Vote: Waters, yes; Mitchell, yes; Oldson, yes; Jansons, yes
Motion was approved.

3.10 November Board Meeting-Change of Date-Move to Wednesday, November 12, 2025

***Add Special Board Meeting-October 21, 2025-Board Vacancy Interviews**

It was moved by Rick Jansons and seconded by Katrina Waters –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE MOVING THE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2025 BOARD MEETING TO WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025, DUE TO THE VETERANS' DAY HOLIDAY.

Advisory Vote-Student Representatives: Sinan, yes; Qian, yes
Vote: Waters, yes; Mitchell, yes; Oldson, yes; Jansons, yes

Motion was approved.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA (approval by a single vote of the Board)

It was moved by Bonnie Mitchell and seconded by Rick Jansons –

THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (4.1)
THROUGH (4.11) INCLUDING AN UPDATED PERSONNEL ACTION.

Advisory Vote-Student Representatives: Farawila, yes; Qian, yes

Vote: Waters, yes; Mitchell, yes; Oldson, yes; Jansons, yes

Motion was approved.

4.1 Personnel Actions

CERTIFICATED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Bartlett, Holly, 1.0 FTE, Nurse, Special Programs, effective 9/10/25 (Back from Reduc. in Force)

Gaul, Cassidi, 0.4 FTE, Speech Language Pathologist, Special Programs, effective 9/10/25

House, Amiee, 1.0 FTE, WSLP, Three Rivers Homelink, effective 9/2/25

Manning, Anna, 1.0 FTE, Preschool, Early Learning Center, effective 9/10/25 (non-continuing)

McCourtie, Jennifer, 1.0 FTE, Health, Richland School District, effective 8/29/2025

Wren, Aaric, 1.0 FTE, Extended Resource Room, Carmichael Middle School, effective 8/29/25

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

NEW HIRES FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Arizmendi, Katie, Paraeducator, 1:1 RBT Supplemental Support, Sacajawea, effective 9/9/2025

Clark, Crystal, Bus Driver, Transportation, effective 8/26/25 (from sub)

Edwards, Misty, Nutrition Services Team Member, Richland HS, effective 8/27/25 (from sub)

Hoff, Jennifer, Paraeducator, Structured, Richland HS, effective 9/8/2025 (rehire from sub)

Knowles-Gentle, Kathey, Bus Attended, Transportation, effective 8/26/25 (from sub)

Littleton, Rebecca, Paraeducator, Basic Education, Orchard Elementary, effective 9/5/2025 (from sub) date correction

Paniagua, Adilene, Bus Driver, Transportation, effective 8/26/25 (from sub)

Tarbox, Reid, Paraeducator, BESST, Lewis & Clark Elementary School, effective 9/9/2025

Wilson, Christopher, Bus Attendant, Transportation, effective 8/26/26 (from sub)

CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Brown, Tiffany, Paraeducator, Occupational Therapy to Office Professional, Transportation, effective 9/8/2025

RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

Cornell, Brandon, Paraeducator, 1:1 Life Skills, Richland HS, effective 9/3/2025 (will sub)

Jansky, Kewonquah, Bus Attended, Transportation, effective 9/2/2025

4.2 Approval of Minutes (August 26, 2025)

4.3 Richland Education Association (REA) Contract Approval

4.4 Richland Education Association Coaches Contract Approval

4.5 School Improvement Plans (SIPs)

**4.6 Resolution No. 993-Approval of Granting Permanent Easement to Bonneville Power
Administration and Authorization of Board President to Sign**

4.7 Policy No. 2108-Learning Assistance Program-New

4.8 Policy No. 2163-Response to Intervention

4.9 Policy No. 3143-Notification and Dissemination of Information About Student

Offenses and Notification of Threats of Violence or Harm

4.10 Policy No. 3210-Nondiscrimination

4.11 Payroll and Warrant Information

ASB Fund Warrant Nos. 40008370 through 40008370 for \$15,328.00
No. 54000849 for \$50.00
Nos. 40008371 through 40008387 for \$23,682.22
Nos. 54000850 through 54000854 for \$16,270.18
Capital Projects Fund Warrant Nos. 20002404 through 20002406 for \$256,743.46
No. 52000480 for \$91,855.65
Nos. 20002407 through 20002416 for \$405,803.37
Nos. 52000481 through 52000482 for \$6,935.63
General Fund Warrant Nos. 10093041 through 10093052 for \$49,104.04
Nos. 51005213 through 51005235 for \$29,999.92
Nos. 10093055 through 10093122 for \$837,785.59
Nos. 51005236 through 51005268 for \$275,186.15
Payroll Warrant Nos. 10092908 through 10092909 for \$1,325.00
Nos. 10092934 through 10092935 for \$508.48
Nos. 10092972 through 10092997 for \$54,419.20
Nos. 10092997 through 10093038 for \$5,158,274.92
No. 10093039 for \$279,111.68
No. 10093040 for \$9,313.84
Electronic Fund Transfer for \$10,371,090.80
Total August Payroll approved in the amount of \$15,874,043.92

5.0 AGENDAS

5.1 Future Agenda Items

September 23, 2025:

- 3.2 - change from Levy Planning to Levy Resolution
- return Policy No. 4330

Ms. Oldson asked to divide Business topics between Old and New Business in future agendas. This will be discussed at Board Leadership.

October 14, 2025:

- Levy Resolution-Second Reading

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 P.M.

RICHLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 400

SECRETARY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS