

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES: REGULAR MEETING

2013-2014

February 27, 2014

Administrative Center
Governing Board Room
4650 West Sweetwater Avenue
Glendale, AZ 85304-1505

I. REGULAR MEETING – GENERAL FUNCTION

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mrs. Lambert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Governing Board members constituting a quorum were present: Mrs. Tee Lambert, Mr. Bill Adams, Mr. Aaron Jahneke, and Mr. Chris Maza. Ms. Clorinda Graziano was not in attendance.

B. Moment of Silence and Meditation

Mrs. Lambert called for a moment of silence and meditation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Lambert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Maza that the Governing Board adopt the Regular Meeting Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jahneke. The motion carried.

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E. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Adams that the Governing Board approve the Minutes of the February 13, 2014 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jahneke. The motion carried.

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F. Current Events and Acknowledgments: Governing Board and Superintendent

Mr. Maza stated that he missed the last Governing Board meeting due to the passing of his maternal grandmother in Chicago. Mr. Maza expressed his appreciation for the condolences offered to him by his fellow Governing Board members and District staff.

Mr. Adams shared that he enjoyed visiting Lookout Mountain Elementary School. He stated that the new school was very impressive and was pleased that they took the community and staff input into consideration when planning the facility. Mr. Adams thanked Principal Tricia Johnson and her staff for making him feel very welcome.

Mr. Jahneke shared that he was looking forward to attending the Read Across America Breakfast on March 3, 2014. He stated that it was always fun reading to the children.

Mrs. Lambert shared the following:

- Welcomed Ryan Riguerra from Boy Scout Troop #124 who attended the Governing Board meeting and was working on his communication badge.
- Enjoyed having the opportunity to participate on a Student Advisory Group panel for Mr. John Huppenthal, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The topic was communication and 6th to 12th grade students were able to ask the panel for advice on how to handle issues at their schools.

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- Looking forward to attending the Read Across America event and reading to the kids.

Dr. Cook acknowledged and thanked Joslyn Brown, President of the Washington District Education Association (WDEA), and the WDEA members for their contributions and efforts with Invest in Education.

Dr. Cook advised the Board that it had the opportunity to celebrate the successes of Mountain Sky Junior High School and introduced Perry Mason, Principal; Tony Murphy, Assistant Principal; and Kelli Knox, Office Manager. Mr. Mason shared information regarding the school's student achievement gains. Mrs. Lambert stated that the successes were not only due to the staff, but also to Mr. Mason and Mr. Murphy's leadership and thanked them for everything that they do. Dr. Cook thanked Mr. Mason and Mr. Murphy for their efforts. Dr. Cook stated that during the presentation, they gave credit to others which is one of the qualities of effective leadership, but the credit belonged to them as well.

G. Special Recognition

Dr. Cook advised the Board that the District is fortunate to have a Community Outreach Specialist, Ms. Jill Hicks, who works on many projects. One of her current projects is the Desert Mission food drive during the month of February. Dr. Cook introduced Ms. Hicks to provide highlights of the food drive.

Ms. Hicks reported that a poster contest was held in order to get students involved in the food drive project and over 1,100 posters were submitted. Ms. Hicks stated that 208 posters were displayed at the Business Advisory Team meeting and that many businesses and organizations volunteered to also participate in the food drive. Metrocenter donated an iPad mini to the poster contest winner and will display 25 posters in the mall.

Ms. Hicks advised that students and parents in the schools have fully supported the food drive and were very competitive. She stated that that is why WESD is the best district!

Mrs. Lambert asked Ms. Hicks to return and report to the Board the final results of the food drive. Ms. Hicks advised she would provide an update.

H. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

I. Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Jahneke that the Governing Board approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maza. The motion carried.

UNANIMOUS

II. CONSENT AGENDA

***A. Approval/Ratification of Vouchers**

Approved and ratified the vouchers as presented.

UNANIMOUS

***B. Personnel Items**

Approved the personnel items as presented.

UNANIMOUS

***C. Out-of-State Travel**

Approved the out-of-state travel as presented.

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1. Debbie Gasiorek, Nutrition Services Supervisor, to attend the 2014 Legislative Action Conference – School Nutrition Association, March 1-5, 2014, in Washington, D.C., at no cost to the District.
2. Mary Ann Sanchez, K-8 Art Teacher (Northwest Christian School), to attend the National Art Education Association – Fusing Innovation Teaching & Emerging Technologies, March 28-31, 2014, in San Diego, CA, at a cost of \$1,287.00 (Title II funding that is available to private schools).
3. John Shikany, Director of Safety & Security, to attend Emergency Response Train-the-Trainer, March 10-14, 2014, in Emmitsburg, MA, at no cost to the District.

***D. Award of Contract – Bid No. 13.006, Apparel and Accessories, Silk-Screened and Embroidered - Supplemental** **UNANIMOUS**

***E. Second Reading and Adoption of Proposed Amended Board Policy IKE – Promotion and Retention of Students** **UNANIMOUS**

III. ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Discussion, Consideration and Possible Approval of Direction to the Employee Benefit Trust (EBT) Regarding the Employee Benefits Plan for 2014-2015 **UNANIMOUS**
 Dr. Cook introduced Mr. Rex Shumway to provide information from the Trust Board regarding EBT.

Mr. Shumway advised the Board that at the February 18, 2014 meeting of the EBT, John Coyle from The Segal Company reviewed the status of the EBT and presented Preliminary Budget Projections for 2014-2015. The Segal Company projected plan costs for 2014-2015 that represented a 10.1% increase over current contributions. Mr. Shumway reviewed the projections and historical paid claims data.

Mr. Shumway stated that based on the current revenue projections and possible budget limitations, as well as a trend analysis of the history of insurance usage, and because of the strong financial position of the EBT, the Administration made the following recommendations in order to absorb the project cost increase: (i) maintain the District contribution level as is currently provided in the amount of \$5,046.48 per employee (same funding level as the previous six years); and, (ii) consider an increase to the PPO Buy-Up Plan, and/or, utilize a portion of the excess contingency reserves of the EBT to cover costs that exceed District-provided funding.

Mr. Adams thanked Mr. Shumway, Mr. Maza, and everyone on the Trust Boards for their efforts. Mr. Adams asked for confirmation that the District and employees had not been impacted for seven consecutive years because the additional costs had been absorbed by contingency reserves. Mr. Shumway responded that the District had not been impacted, however, there were plan design changes that impacted employees, e.g., eliminated the EPO Plan and deductibles were changed.

Mr. Jahneke asked if the plan designs were performing as expected, e.g., PPO Buy-Up Plan performing at a deficit and the PPO Base in the positive. Mr. Shumway replied that the plans were performing as expected. Mr. Shumway advised that the PPO Base and PPO Buy-Up Surplus/(Deficit) figures in the table on page 23 of the agenda were reversed.

Mr. Maza stated that the Buy-Up Plan was in a deficit situation and will affect the overall functioning of the accounts in the Trust, e.g., the reserves and projections. Mr. Maza commented that the District had been fortunate to have contingency reserves to cover costs that exceed District-provided funding, but after years of drawing on the contingency reserves, there will come a time when it will have to be addressed.

Mr. Maza thanked Mr. Shumway for his excellent leadership and participation on the Trust Boards. Mr. Maza stated that Mr. Shumway made things understandable in a very effective manner.

A motion was made by Mr. Maza that, based on the current revenue projections and budget limitations, the Governing Board direct the Employee Benefit Trust (EBT) to formulate an employee benefits plan recommendation for 2014-2015 that maintains the same level of District contributions as provided in the 2013-2014 plan in the amount of \$5,046.48 per employee, with any additional funding to come from increased PPO Buy-Up revenue and/or excess contingency reserves of the EBT. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jahneke. The motion carried.

B. Appointment of Community Member to the Trust Boards

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Dr. Cook advised the Board that the Trust Boards was comprised of five members: Mr. Maza representing the Governing Board, Mountain View Assistant Principal J.J. Spellman representing District employees, and three community members. A community member representative had resigned in December 2013 leaving a vacancy. Dr. Cook reported that Dr. Mark Speicher was a previous Trust Boards member for a number of years and had expressed an interest to fill the vacancy.

Mr. Shumway stated that Dr. Speicher had valuable experience as he had previously served on the Trust Boards for six years. Mr. Shumway advised that Dr. Speicher had a wealth of knowledge about Trust matters and would be a welcome asset to the Trust Boards.

A motion was made by Mr. Adams that the Governing Board appoint Dr. Mark Speicher as a community representative on the Washington Elementary School District Trust Boards for the term that concludes on December 31, 2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Maza. The motion carried.

IV. INFORMATION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Review of 2012-2013 Single Audit

Dr. Cook introduced Ms. Cathy Thompson, Director of Business Services, who, in turn, introduced Mr. Dennis Osuch from the auditing firm of CliftonLarsonAllen who reviewed the annual single audit for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Mr. Osuch reviewed the communication to Governance, Single Audit, Uniform System of Financial Records (USFR) Questionnaire, and the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Mr. Osuch stated that his firm issued an unmodified opinion for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. He advised that this was different verbiage from in the past and stated that the firm had issued a clean opinion. Mr. Osuch acknowledged that the District had received awards from the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) and the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its excellence in financial reporting for the fiscal

year ending June 30, 2012. Mr. Osuch reported that the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2013 had been submitted to ASBO and GFOA and that he expected the District to receive the awards again.

Mr. Osuch stated that his firm enjoyed working with the District because it has the best people which was indicated by how well prepared they were for the auditors and their responsiveness to the audit. He advised that his firm would not have been able to complete the audit reports by December 2013 without their assistance. Mr. Osuch thanked Cathy Thompson, LeeAnn Gallagher, and the staff for their help and support.

Mr. Adams made the following comments:

- Thanked Mr. Osuch for the reports and the clean audit.
- Thanked Ms. Thompson and her team for managing the District's budget.
- If he was out in the public and someone said the District did not live within its budget; based on the audit reports, could he say that the District absolutely does live within its budget? Mr. Osuch replied in the affirmative because if you look at the financial statements, the District is clearly within its budget.
- Would you say that the District was extremely transparent? Mr. Osuch stated that from his firm's perspective in performing the audit, yes, the District is very transparent. Mr. Osuch advised that any questions that his firm asked, management was always very upfront and willing to answer.

Mr. Jahneke made the following comments:

- Thanked Mr. Osuch for the reports.
- In the past, there had been issues with schools depositing cash in a timely manner and asked if there was an improvement this year. Mr. Osuch stated that in the past, the finding had been reported as a significant deficiency, but it was not reported as a significant deficiency in this year's audit. Mr. Osuch reported that the matter had been addressed and was a testament to the efforts of Ms. LeeAnn Gallagher to improve the situation.

Mrs. Lambert made the following comments:

- Thanked Mr. Osuch for his presentation.
- There is a lot of value to the audit reports to identify weaknesses in the District that need to be addressed to make it stronger and was very pleased with the improvements made by the District.
- Asked Ms. Thompson how the student attendance reporting was going to be handled. Ms. Thompson replied that there was only one large issue. She advised that due to a calendar that was entered incorrectly, it caused one day's figures to be inaccurate at one school. Ms. Thompson reported that the information had been reported to ADE to have the attendance corrected. Ms. Thompson stated that it did not affect revenue in any way.
- Asked if teachers input their own attendance information in the classroom or was it sent to the office to be entered. Ms. Thompson responded that the teachers input their own information.

B. Update Regarding the University of Virginia – School Turnaround Specialist Project

Dr. Cook advised the Board that the District was involved with the University of Virginia (UVA) in a national school turnaround project. She stated that there was no cost to the District and ADE and WesdEd were the funding sources. Dr. Cook reviewed historical data regarding the project. She reported that on November 21-

22, 2013, the UVA project team came to the District to interview several administrators to determine if the District had the ability to grow and the capacity to turn around its achievement at specific sites.

In December, WESD was notified that it was eligible to proceed to the next steps, which involved Behavior Event Interviews (BEI) with the principals from the WESD focus and pre-intervention schools (Mountain View, Shaw Butte, Richard E. Miller, Moon Mountain, and Maryland). The BEI interviews occurred February 24-27, 2014.

Dr. Cook introduced the District's UVA project "shepherd", Dr. Janet Altersitz who is the Administrator for Professional Development, to present information regarding the next steps for the project. Dr. Altersitz reported that District administrators will be attending the UVA "boot camp". UVA has advised that it will be an intense training from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., March 19-22, 2014.

Dr. Altersitz reviewed the following next steps for the UVA Project:

- Training will be provided to District and school leaders at the University of Virginia in March and June.
- The focus is on assessment-driven instruction.
- Using data to make instructional decisions is an expectation and a requirement for teachers.
- Weekly data dialogues are an expectation and a requirement.
- Removing barriers to success is an expectation and a requirement for the District.

Mr. Adams thanked the involved personnel for their time and efforts and believed that the project will be beneficial to the District.

Mr. Jahneke stated it was difficult changing thought processes and getting people out of their comfort zones. He commended the District and the involved personnel for taking this brave step. Dr. Altersitz advised that she had met with three of the five schools and the teachers were excited and supportive of the project because they want what is best for the students. Mr. Adams thanked Dr. Altersitz for the information which confirmed that WESD is the best district.

Mrs. Lambert thanked the District for its willingness to participate in this project. She asked the involved personnel as they go through the process to enrich the District's culture, to see if there are any policies or regulations that might need to be addressed in order to reinforce or sustain the program.

C. Discussion of Professional Development for the Governing Board

Mr. Adams had requested a future agenda item for the purpose of discussing professional development for the Governing Board. He thanked his fellow Board members for the opportunity to have an open discussion regarding attending conferences for professional development. Mr. Adams provided an article to Board members regarding the importance of professional development. He stated that he knew that his fellow Board members believed in professional development, witnessed by the conferences they have attended, e.g., Arizona School Boards Association (ASBA) and Arizona Business & Education Coalition (ABEC) conferences and workshops. Mr. Adams reported that after attending a conference, Board members had shared conference materials and suggested that, in the future, a formal presentation could be presented at a Governing Board meeting for the public to receive pertinent information.

Mrs. Lambert made the following comments:

- Agreed that professional development was important for continued growth in order for Board members to be aware of educational issues and political decisions.
- Pleased that the conferences, workshops, and information provided by ASBA are very pertinent to the Board members.
- Felt that the Board participates in many professional development opportunities.
- Attending an event should be a learning experience and not a social activity.
- Liked Mr. Adams' suggestion to develop a way to share conference materials and the participant's perception of the event.
- Asked the Board how they wished to handle sharing the information, e.g., at a Board meeting or communication through the Superintendent.
- Stated that when professional development was discussed, travel seemed to enter the conversation. Mrs. Lambert said it was not about travel, but was about professional development of the Governing Board.
- Felt that the information shared at the conferences and workshops can help the Board members grow and be effective leaders.
- Asked Board members to send Dr. Cook professional development suggestions for topics of interest to help Board members be effective leaders. She asked Dr. Cook to compile them for review by the Board to have enriching experiences and make sure it is budgeted appropriately.

Mr. Jahneke made the following comments:

- Agreed with Mr. Adams' suggestion to have a more formalized approach to offer conference information.
- Would like to see more opportunities online, e.g., webinars at a nominal fee.
- Appreciated the daily legislative update emails from ASBA.
- Important for a Board member attending a conference or workshop to be fully engaged in the activities and workshops.
- Concerned about how beneficial it would be to send a Board member to the NSBA conference.

Mr. Adams appreciated Mr. Jahneke's suggestion regarding webinar opportunities. Mr. Adams stated he would ask ASBA if it would be possible for NSBA to offer conference topic webinars, at a nominal fee, for Districts who will not be able to attend the conference.

Mr. Adams suggested that the Board review the agendas of upcoming conferences to determine if it would be beneficial to send a representative.

Mr. Maza felt that the Governing Board members availed themselves of many professional development opportunities in the State, either as Governing Board members or in their professional capacity. Mr. Maza made the following comments:

- We are the Governing Board and not the educators within the school district. Many of the sessions at conferences pertain to programs or standards for educational practices. Mr. Maza stated that if the Board started offering input into the educational process, it would be a disservice to Dr. Cook and her leadership team.
- Would want to know who is sponsoring the professional development and the cost involved. Mr. Maza advised he had attended many professional development venues and many of the sponsoring agencies did not present

material that was of interest to him personally. He felt that the Board would need to determine if the cost was warranted.

- When you attend professional development, it is usually logic based and then the law occurs. Mr. Maza stated that the law versus logic piece is extremely frustrating. You learn good professional practices and learn how to adhere to the law, only to have a new law which does not delve into logic suddenly implemented, e.g., the new teacher evaluation system across the State.
- Supportive of professional development, but wants to be able to choose the professional development that is important to him as a Governing Board member and not as a potential micro-manager.
- Did not want to be involved with any professional development opportunities with ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council).

Mrs. Lambert cautioned Board members because many conference organizers have vendors displaying products in an exhibit hall and as public officials, Board members have a dollar limit of what they can accept as a gift. She also warned that Board members could have procurement issues if they were excited about a product and tried to promote it to the District.

Mrs. Lambert thanked Mr. Adams for requesting the professional development agenda item and appreciated the good dialogue.

Mr. Adams thanked the Board members for their comments and consideration.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Maza to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Adams. The motion carried.

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SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

Documents were signed as tendered by the Governing Board Secretary

Joyce Shista
BOARD SECRETARY

3/13/14
DATE

Jee Lambert
BOARD OFFICIAL

3/13/14
DATE