

Preliminary Business

Call To Order

Board Chair Pam Glenn called the Regular August Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed guests. There were sign in sheets available and guests were requested to sign in and indicate if they were interested in addressing the Board.

Agenda Items

Superintendent Hislop reported that there was no action needed on the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Plan. Therefore it was moved to Old Business.

Consent Agenda

Following a brief discussion regarding bills paid, Kaiger Braseth moved to approve the minutes and bills paid as presented. Ken Patterson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Reports

Transportation/Maintenance Report

Drew Williams reported that the well is up and running again. There are still some issues with the underground sprinkler system which he hopes to get resolved this week. The buses are ready to go and the painters have started on the resealing and painting of the south side of the elementary. The high school is complete and looks great. It was reported that the storage container will be delivered soon and placed on the south side of the bus barn.

Principal/Activity Report

Mr. Mills reported that registration started today and was mostly completed on-line. Inservice will be held August 26th. Cross Country, volleyball and football has started with 61 total athletes participating.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Hislop reported that there have been many conversations regarding the mask mandate. He reiterated the fact that the mandate requires students and staff to wear masks while indoors. Masks are not required for outdoor instruction, recess or athletic activities. He noted that if last years' metrics were in place, we would not be holding school in-person. Union and Umatilla counties have the highest positive COVID cases per capita in the state. He assured those present that he would continue to work with Union County Commissioners to regain local control. He read a statement from TSPC regarding the enforcement of the mandate and potential consequences to all licensed staff.

Superintendent Hislop stated that he has spent a considerable amount of time searching for possible solutions which would satisfy all of the patrons. He offered three options for instruction: 1) In-school instruction with face covering (mask or face shield); 2) CDL with virtual learning in partnership with IMESD; or 3) Option to transfer to a different online education program. He noted that the state has scheduled monthly updates to the mandates with the first review on September 2nd.

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Superintendent Hislop introduced Mark Mulvahill, Superintendent of IMESD, and reported that he has been working with Mr. Mulvahill regarding the state guidelines. He also read a letter he had drafted to Governor Brown requesting local control that he plans to have other area superintendents sign as well.

New Business

IMESD Occupational Therapy Update

Superintendent Hislop reported that Mountain Valley Therapy had previously provided OT services but were unable to provide them any longer due to staffing issues. IMESD will hire an Occupational Therapist and will provide services.

Old Business

Ready Schools, Safe Learners Plan

Board Chair Glenn opened the floor for public input. Student, Nate Bingaman, reflected on his experience through the pandemic. He stated that the last school year without traditional school activities was difficult for himself and his peers causing much stress and anxiety. He said that through conversations with his peers he feels, the challenges faced were due to the lack of normalcy not the fact the students had to wear masks. He reminded those present that the motivation for many students to be in school is extracurricular activities, college readiness and human connections. He urged the board to be firm in following state guidelines in order for in-person school and activities to occur.

Patty Bingaman addressed government over-reach and urged those present to look at science and do their own research. She encouraged the board to work with the Union County Sheriff in standing up to the over-reach of the Governor.

Superintendent Hislop reviewed the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Plan. He noted this document provides the District guidelines for in-person instruction. It contains four requirements; submitting the plan for peer review, recovery services including mental health services and credit recovery, plans for quarantine of contact traced individuals and face coverings. This document is also required in order for district to qualify for ESSER funds. No board action was needed on this plan.

Action Items

Approve Extra Duty Contract Language

Superintendent Hislop reviewed extra duty language that was agreed upon by the IEA and the district bargaining team. The language addressed the cancellation of sports seasons and coaches pay. Kaiger Braseth moved to approve the language as presented. Joe Fisher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Approve Staff Hiring

Superintendent Hislop recommended the hiring of Mark Emerson for the K-12 Music Instructor position. Ken Patterson moved to approve the hiring. Joe Fisher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mike Mills recommended the hiring of Heidi Bowers as the Cross Country Coach. Kaiger Braseth moved to approve the hiring. Ken Patterson seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

He also recommended the hiring of Shauna Kretschmer and Sydney Treat as Jr. High Volleyball Coaches. Kaiger Braseth moved to approve the hiring. Joe Fisher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Approve Leave of Absence

Superintendent Hislop reported that Amy Herron has requested a one year leave of absence from her paraprofessional position. She requested the leave in order to home school her children due to the mask mandate. She stated she was willing to continue to drive bus. Kaiger Braseth moved to approve the leave of absence as requested. Jason Beck seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed.

Good of the Order

Superintendent Hislop read a letter from a parent asking about the consequences for students that do not wear masks. Mark Mulvahill reviewed the ODE recommendations and noted that if a student continues to not comply, distance learning is an option. He noted that Umatilla schools are not having as much push back regarding the masks because they were on distance learning the majority of the school year last year and are excited to have the opportunity to be back in person. Kaiger Braseth asked what the ESD can do to help local schools regain local control. He indicated he has talked to ODE and the Governor but has a hard time advocating for local control at this time due to the high case numbers in Union and Umatilla counties. Once the numbers go down, there will be more of a chance to have that conversation.

In closing, Superintendent Hislop noted that he doesn't have all the answers and he agrees that there are questions and that this is a no win situation. He is grateful that we can open back up and the students can have activities. He expressed appreciation for the parents and community members that came and assured them that he wants the best for their children too.

Pam Glenn read a statement she had prepared and noted that the last year and half has been the most challenging time she has experienced during her tenure on the board. She sympathized with the parents not wanting their children to wear masks but noted that the board and administration are doing everything they can to insure the students can attend school in person. She hopes to gain local control so that these issues can be addressed at the district level in the future.

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Jason Beck encouraged those present to continue to fight for their freedoms.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Members Present

Jason Beck, Kaiger Braseth, Joe Fisher, Pam Glenn and Ken Patterson.

Others Present

Doug Hislop, Superintendent; Mike Mills, Principal; and Teresa Dewey, Deputy Clerk.

Chairman

Deputy Clerk