

SOUTH WASCO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
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Special Board Meeting
See webpage for zoom Link

Monday, Nov. 15, 2021
6:00 p.m.

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL BOARD: Josh Thompson, Tamarra Ferguson, Joan Stark, Melissa Huntley, Paul Koerschgen

SCHOOL BOARD ABSENT: Rob Miles, Kevin Duling

ADMINISTRATION: Ryan Wraught, Mark Endsley, Aimee Hovis

STAFF: Danielle Foreacker, Lesa Bennett, Tess Wills, Yancy Wells, Amy Rethwill, Jon Boggs, Jamie Sowell, Marni Maleyft, Josh Kurtz, Mikael Kurtz, Megan Henson, Jorma Henson, Necia Jackson, Marcy Brown, Tonya Duling, Lisa Nananni, Marla Rethwill

GUEST: Miriam McDonell, Mary Beechler, Elizabeth Unti, Mike Foreacker, Kim Mead, Kathy White, Ellen Skeeters-Stevens, Candy Barnett, Danette Cole, Teddy Franke, Jordan Belozor, Jesse Rose, Tobi Delco, Janine Belozor, Jesse Rose

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:03 PM

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA BY BOARD MEMBERS:**

Board member Huntley requested an addition to board discussion to respond to Mr. Josh Kurtz.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: Joan Stark

Second: Melissa Huntley

Motion approved unanimously.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

A. Regular Board on Oct. 11, 2021 approval

B. Special Session on Oct. 25, 2021 approval

C. Acknowledge Payment of Bills

D. Personnel Report

Motion: Joan Stark

Second: Melissa Huntley

Motion approved unanimously.

5. **RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS**

A. Straightline Architecture – Scott Marshall was not able to attend the meeting and presentation moved to December meeting.

B. SWEA Presentation – Josh Kurtz addressed the board and community representing approximately 70% of the SWC staff. Mr. Kurtz presented a slideshow explaining how the represented staff would like to see the district continue. Concerns were presented and a letter that was read expressed recommended future actions for the school board.

6. **INFORMATIONAL**

A. Athletic Director's Report—Basketball season underway and Jim Hull was unable to attend meeting due to an away game.

B. Principal's Report--Mark Endsley

- Discipline plan is continuing to be fine-tuned, and by December it should be complete and ready to implement in the spring with a firm plan in hand.

- Assessments--75% have already been given the FAST assessment. Teachers are finding that students are much further behind that we hoped. The district has an intervention program to help address some of the deficits to help kids get caught up to grade level.

- Parent-teacher conferences will be happening. Parents will be able to do phone, zoom or in person for conferences.

C. Superintendent's Report -- Ryan Wraught

- Test to Stay - We are hearing that there is a new program where students can test to stay in school after exposure. Student can be tested after (COVID) exposure, if the test is negative they can stay at school. Two or three days later if they test negative, they can stay in school. OHA is coming out with reduced quarantine times, reduced to 7 days or by case by case basis. The state is working with the federal government for available tests.
- Supt. Wraught also thanked staff for filling in for each other and keeping the school running. Teachers are using their prep time to cover for quarantined staff members.
- We are working with Holmes Construction and are prepared to submit the seismic grant with a potential for \$2.5 million additional funds to help with district upgrades and construction projects specifically for the Old District building.

7. **BOARD DISCUSSION**

A. DRAC Update—Rob Miles

- Major work has been completed. Currently we are waiting for weather to put on the polyurethane top. Fundraising continues for the polyurethane track layer at a cost of \$305,000 and field lighting at \$304,000.

B. North Central Public Health – Dr. Mimi McDonald

- Dr. McDonald gave an update on where Wasco county is at with COVID numbers in cases per month and reviewed the new Test to Stay in more detail.

C. Board Survey Protocol – Notes were provided to school board on past practices of surveys sent out by the district. If there is a survey coming from the district-Superintendent Ryan Wraught will send out. Any future survey that pertains to policy, the board will send and create.

D. Temporary Housing for New Staff – Superintendent Wraught wanted to start the conversation of looking into temporary housing. The district has lost out on multiple potential employees due to the lack of housing in the area. Some ideas are to purchase an RV or remodel the downstairs of the old district building, build a tiny house, build on the Wamic property that district already owns, or purchase a home in the area. Board chair Thompson expressed that housing is not only a local problem, but also a state and national problem. He felt there is potential on the Wamic lot. It might be an option to put a manufactured home on the district lot. Board member Ferguson would like to see more formal networking to look at housing options for potential new employees.

E. 1st Reading: Policies: CM, IL, JFC, JFCJ, KGBB

- CM – Division 22 Compliance rules. Updates to the policy are the due dates for Division 22. The Div. 22 standards must be presented to the Board by Nov. 1 and submitted to the state by Nov. 15. Board member Stark suggested an update on the date of the publication on the school website.
- IL- State testing opt out for parents. It is a legislative rule to allow parents to opt out of state testing. This is something that the district is already doing so there is not a change in practice for the district but an update to policy.
- JFC- Prohibiting making false information in an investigation. Board member Koerschgen asked if nicotine could be added to the list on #9.
- JFCJ – Student policy with firearms. Reinforces the gun free zone act and exceptions to having guns on the school property. Exceptions can only be pre-approved by the principal or superintendent. Some examples for exceptions would be a shop class or hunter safety class. Another change is the 120 days of good faith reporting of any guns on the property and addition of an annual report regarding any gun related instances to the state.

GBJ-Employee policy for firearms. The district currently has this policy which prohibits concealed handgun carry for employees. If the Board would like to prohibit concealed handgun carry for community members the Board would have to adopt policy KGBB. After some discussion the Board will not entertain policy KGBB - therefore allowing concealed handgun carry by community members who are licensed to do so.

Board member Koerschgen asked a question regarding the policy of students having mace. Superintendent Wraught will consult with OSBA.

Board member Koerschgen asked a question regarding a student with a multi-tool and what would happen if a student was found with a multi-tool. Superintendent Wraught said those concerns are handled on a case-by-case basis.

- F. Board member Huntley responded to Mr. Kurtz' earlier letter to the Board regarding concerns and actions that have happened in past board meetings.

Board member Ferguson stated she heard from several SWC staff members regarding bullying by the union in the signing of a letter that Mr. Kurtz read in the board meeting earlier. Board member Ferguson encouraged discussion even if there are different views.

8. **BOARD ACTION ITEMS** none for November.

9. **BOARD GOALS** are posted on the school website at www.swasco.net.

10. **COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE ABOUT AGENDA/NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

- Board Chair, Josh Thompson read three letters that were submitted prior to the school board meeting outlining concerns and feedback for the school district.
Highlights from the letters:
 - Parent addressed they pulled their child from the district due to the atmosphere and how staff are treating students.
 - Concerns on inconsistency on mask mandate on extra-curricular activities vs class room mask mandates
 - Concerns regarding division regarding unvaccinated and vaccinated
 - Appreciation for the school board and the time they volunteer
 - Concerns on how students are being treated based on vaccination status or students' parents stance on COVID issues.
 - Encouraged board to speak and stand up for all views of the community.

Additional Comments were made via ZOOM about:

- Audience Comment - Disappointment at the rhetoric being had in school board meetings. Recommended district to consult attorney regarding the constitutional violation concerns.
- Audience Comment - that a mandate is not a law. The mask mandate is not a law. It is a temporary administrative order.
- Audience Comment - Question on SWCSD's stance on students having a vaccine to attend the school.
- Audience Comment - Disappointment that the Board would allow talking about a teacher during a Board meeting.
- Audience Comment - Encouraged the board to have philosophy consistency and stick to decisions made on policy. If you are calling for masks, then do it consistently and model that for the students.
- Staff Comment, Josh Kurtz - Encouraged parents that if there has been feedback on his classroom performance to follow the complaint policy.
- Board Member, Joan Stark - that if anyone has taken a walk with Josh Kurtz. His highest mission is to take care of kids in during this horrible situation.
- Clarification from Principal - Wanted to address mask inconsistency comment, I walk the campus frequently. Staff are wearing masks unless they are outside with physical distancing. District is not allowing this and it is not a frequent practice.
- Audience Comment - I am against the mask due to what I have seen in oxygen levels and impact to students' teeth. I am mainly concerned with mental health by students not being able to see facial expressions and wearing masks all day. I would pull my kids out of the district due to the mask mandate but I don't have a place for them to go as a single mom. My son is doing well but my 8th grade daughter is not doing well. I would like to see us talk more about mental health.
- Audience Comment – If this is the type of environment the district has when my kids are of school age. My kids will not be attending. Maybe the board should fight the mandate.
- Board Chair, Josh Thompson – I feel the fight is better fought in Salem. We are seeing other districts get fined. One of my responsibilities is fiscal, I want our money to go to the kids. The fight is in Salem and Washington DC.

- Audience Comment – Appreciate what Dr. McDonnell presented. The swiss cheese model was originally made for aviation training to save lives. In implementing the swiss cheese model to education, all the layers are to protect our children. In all the discussion and times debating masks, the time would be better used in talking about solutions and options. We have to listen to parents because they are the ones that care for the kids the most. Mrs. Belozar had a question for Dr. McDonnell regarding the number of deaths caused by COVID for the age group of 0-18 years old and the number of cases of mitochondrial disease. Dr. McDonnell responded saying she would get back with numbers and appreciated the history on the Swiss cheese model.
- Board Member, Tammarra Ferguson – It is interesting to hear from people in the community that do not have children or grandchildren. I am excited to have more parents share their opinion. I support discussions to continue. I also value and respect the time and energy Josh Kurtz puts in by being the SWEA President and outside things that he volunteers for. We made a decision together as a community and the board is listening. Our kid's education matters. We are investing in the outcome of our kids. That is why Josh, the board, and I are here.

11. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS** no items in November.

12. **RECESS TO EXEC. SESSION** under consultation with counsel concerning current or possible litigation. (ORS 192.660(2)(h))
No Exec. Session

13. **RECONVENE TO REGULAR BOARD MEETING FOR ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION**

14. **ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING** at 8:00 PM

South Wasco County School District is an equal opportunity employer.
Current personnel policies are available for review in the District office.