

**HUMBOLDT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**310 East Fourth Street**  
**WINNEMUCCA, NEVADA 89445**

A board retreat of the Humboldt County Board of School Trustees was held April 16, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. in the District Office Boardroom.

Board members present were: President Bruce Braginton, V. President Glenda Deputy, Nicole Bengochea, Boyd Betteridge, John Hill and Louis Mendiola. Absent: Clerk Ann Miller

Others in attendance were: Superintendent Dr. Dave Jensen, Asst. Superintendent Dawn Hagness, Brenda Olsen, Carrie Stringham, Jim Huge, and Secretary Paula Wright. Absent: Director Kelly Novi, Attorney John Doyle

President Braginton opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Braginton thanked Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Stringham for joining the retreat. Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Stringham have filed to run for school board.

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Comment – Discussion Only**

None

Prior to beginning the retreat, the Board was treated to breakfast prepared by Ian Tolotti with Chartwells.

8:10 a.m. Breakfast

8:32 a.m. Resume meeting

Mr. Braginton began by asking the Board to keep the retreat informal and to keep in mind that they are here for the students of Humboldt County.

Dr. Jensen thanked Jim Huge for his willingness to facilitate the retreat. The Board appreciates Mr. Huge's expertise.

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees - A Comprehensive Review**

Dr. Jensen provided Board members with a copy of the book "Improving School Board Effectiveness, A Balanced Governance Approach". The book provides a look at the evolving role of school boards and how they contribute to improved student learning.

Dr. Jensen thanked the Board for their dedication to the students in Humboldt County and their desire to move the District forward. He introduced Jim Huge.

Mr. Huge congratulated the Board on receiving the Governance Team of the Year for the State of Nevada award.

Mr. Huge said he appreciates working with the Board; "You exemplify exactly what a board is supposed to be doing." Mr. Huge noted that research shows that, if a board functions well and knows its role, works well with a superintendent that knows his/her role and they have continuous dialogue, the District is more effective in terms of what it does for students.

### Key Elements of the school board's role in student achievement.

Local school boards can play a role in increasing achievement as they:

- ✓ Express the desire to improve.
- ✓ Mention specific initiatives being implemented in the district and ways you can contribute to them.
- ✓ Use data in decision making.

### Characteristics of well-governed districts associated with higher student achievement:

- ✓ Stability (board members serve at least 6-8 years) and desire to serve students rather than to seek higher office.
- ✓ Short, regular meetings coupled with annual or bi-annual goal-setting retreats.
- ✓ Effective management: referring complaints to administration, lack of separate subcommittees, joint discussion of problems with superintendent as a governance team.
- ✓ Communicative board chair serving as a go-between for the superintendent and his/her colleagues. Mr. Braginton noted that if there is anything he is able to do more effectively in his role as board president to let him know. He is open to feedback to perform more effectively.
- ✓ Understand that the Board's responsibility is to see that the school district is well managed, not to manage the school district. This statement is included in the Board's Code of Ethics that they review and sign on an annual basis.
- ✓ Understand that any derogatory or criticizing statements made about a fellow board member, administration or staff undermines the entire effectiveness of the Board.

9:35 a.m. Break

9:49 a.m. Resume meeting

### **Applying the Priorities Defined During the January 5, 2016 Board Retreat - Planning and Preparation**

1. How do we recognize the positives, tell the positive stories in our district?

Dr. Jensen said that the District has scheduled Dr. John Draper to speak to staff at the kickoff to the 2016-17 school year on Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. He asked that board members try to attend. Also, he and Mrs. Hagness are working to put together a video to kick off the school year at the assembly.

Mrs. Hagness noted that she has attended several workshops featuring Dr. Draper. He speaks about the "Successory" program. The "Successory" program is a way for students and staff to thank someone who has helped them on their way to success.

A form will be made available at all school sites and on the District website.

1. Possible avenues to celebrate and highlight success.
  - ✓ Bring a "Successory" story to the Board at each board meeting.
  - ✓ Place all the "Successory" forms (staff, student) into a drawing and recognize the award winner at a board meeting by presenting them with a gift card or college savings bond for students. Consider donations from the community to celebrate the award winners.
  - ✓ Award recipients would then be placed on a "celebration wall" within the school, at the District office and on the District's Facebook page.
  - ✓ Celebrate winner/s on the Chamber of Commerce marquee.
  - ✓ Celebrate winner/s on a short video clip prior to showing a movie at Park Cinemas.

- ✓ Use the video of the positives within the District and community as a recruiting tool. Examples: a student success story from Winnemucca Jr. High's Warrior Hall, Marcel's Johnson's remediation class at Lowry High School.
- ✓ Consider thank you/appreciation cards for board members to handout to students or staff.
- 2. Identify what is not going well and make efforts to correct.
  - ✓ Identify and make the necessary changes.
  - ✓ As site administrators make their annual presentations, ask them to report anything that is not going well at their individual school and how the Board can assist them to correct it.
- 3. Support opportunities for staff creativity.
  - ✓ An initial proposal has been made to the Board in regards to the Pay-for-Performance plan to allocate funds to support professional development opportunities for certified teaching staff at eligible schools. Individuals or departments will have the opportunity to seek funds to support professional development activities that will support instructional strategies in the classroom through a competitive sub grant award process.
    - ✓ Provide support for those schools that do not qualify for the funding, making it equitable for all schools.
  - ✓ Conversations have been held with elementary school principals regarding the hiring of Vice Principals and Dean of Students' and the formatting for late start Thursdays. How to we make it more appropriate to allow staff time for creativity?
  - ✓ Provide mentoring opportunities.
- 4. Fund a part-time grant writer, in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club.  
 The Boys and Girls Club has hired a grant writer for the upcoming school year, however, she is so incredibly busy that she does not have time to provide grant writing services to the District.
  - ✓ The District has not budgeted for a grant writer in the FY17 budget. It was noted that funding a grant writer would benefit the District many times over.
  - ✓ Consider proposing a grant writer on a pilot basis for a one/two year trial.
  - ✓ Consider cost sharing a grant writer with Lander and/or Pershing County.
  - ✓ Consider using Impact Aide funding to cover the salary for a grant writer.

11:02 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Resume meeting

- 5. Consider calendar changes to support remediation and academic acceleration of students.
  - ✓ Look at alternative models for school years 2017-18 and 2018-19.
  - ✓ Provide the staff and community clear, upfront reasons for exploring a modified calendar.
  - ✓ Build a plan upon why staff/community like the current calendar.
    - ✓ Summer jobs; fire fighters, etc.
    - ✓ Youth camps
  - ✓ What would be the effect on schools/parents/community? (school start/end times, bus schedules, summer school projects, child care, the Boys and Girls Club, summer jobs, youth camps, family vacations, outdoor swimming pool).
  - ✓ Consider the additional cost of having maintenance crews do preventative maintenance on weekends.
  - ✓ Consider separate calendars for elementary and secondary sites. Must have considerable community input for this consideration.
  - ✓ Provide stakeholders the opportunity to express their likes/dislikes with the calendar.
  - ✓ Consider the modified calendar on a one, two, or three year basis. This will provide an opportunity to gather information to evaluate any benefits to student achievement and retention of knowledge.

Mr. Braginton noted that the first step will be to agendaize time at an upcoming meeting to determine if the majority of the Board is in favor of considering a modified calendar, why the Board would want to make a change or investigate a change to the current calendar, and what criteria would be put into play.

Future discussions the board will consider include:

- ✓ The safety of students and staff (traffic flow, pick up and drop off).
- ✓ Gender equity
- ✓ Invite Senator Ira Hansen to a board meeting to provide his perspective on some of the issues legislators have passed (gender equity, the protocol for reporting of bullying/cyberbullying). This will allow the Board to be more proactive on issues.

Mr. Braginton felt it was a great discussion and felt another retreat should be held to see how they have progressed on the items discussed at this retreat and to focus on the next items for discussion, safety being a key topic.

Mr. Huge thanked the Board for the opportunity to facilitate the retreat.

Mrs. Brenda Olsen and Mrs. Carrie Stringham thanked the Board for the opportunity to participate in the retreat.

Board members thanked Mr. Huge for facilitating the retreat.

#### **Public Comment – Discussion Only**

None

#### **Board Reports/Requests – Information Only/No Action**

1. Mrs. Bengochea thanked Mr. Huge for facilitating the retreat.
  - ✓ She thanked Dr. Jensen for his promptness in returning phone calls and always being available.
2. Mrs. Deputy said she felt the Board was sending out a mixed message; in that, they encourage teachers to take advantage of professional opportunities, yet, want them to remain in the classroom. Mr. Braginton agreed saying “We are trying to meet two conflicting needs.” “We just need to meet both needs the best we can.”
3. Dr. Jensen reported that the Winnemucca Grammar School principal interviews will be held Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:30 p.m. Committee members are asked to arrive at 3:15 p.m. Mrs. Bengochea and Mr. Hill volunteered to serve as the board representatives. We have two interested candidates, Michelle Garrison (Dean of Students at French Ford) and Jonathan Reynolds (VP at Winnemucca Jr. High School).
4. Dr. Jensen thanked the Board for their time and thanked Mr. Huge for his leadership and guidance.
5. Mr. Braginton thanked everyone for attending and thanked Mr. Huge for facilitating the retreat.
  - ✓ He thanked Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Stringham for attending the retreat.

Adjourned at noon.

Submitted by Secretary, Paula Wright

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Ann Miller, Clerk