

HUMBOLDT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES - RETREAT (Tuesday, April 30, 2019)-APPROVED

Generated by Judy Kritikos on Friday, May 10, 2019

A. Call to Order: The retreat meeting was called to order at 9:16 am by acting President Nicole Bengochea on Tuesday, April 30, 2019, at the Humboldt County School District Office.

Board members present were: Vice President Nicole Bengochea, Clerk Boyd Betteridge, Chris Entwistle, Abe Swensen and Sabrina Uhlmann.

Board members absent were: President Glenda Deputy, Andy Heiser.

Others present were: Bruce Braginton (Facilitator), Amy Nelson, Noel Morton, DeAnna Owens (D. Ofc); Malinda Riemersma (HCEA/HCS D Webmaster); Michelle Cook (H-Sun); Supt. Dave Jensen, Asst. Supt. Dawn Hagness and Secretary Judy Kritikos.

Procedural: 1. Pledge of Allegiance: Acting President Bengochea opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Public Comment: None

Procedural: 1. Public Comment Guidelines

C. Discussion and Possible Action Items

Action, Discussion: 1. Board Retreat Facilitated by Bruce Braginton discussing issues revolving around the 1) the development and implementation of Personalized Learning to support student academic improvement; 2) The use of Social Media to expand and strengthen communication with staff and community members; and 3) A discussion of facility needs, to include a review of the Cunningham Group report and consideration of how to meet the district's facility challenges. Recommended Action: Board engage in the Retreat Facilitated by Bruce Braginton addressing topics of: 1) Personalized Learning; 2) Social Media; and 3) Facilities Needs

Dr. Jensen welcomed facilitator Bruce Braginton, who served as a HCS D Board member for five years, and served as Board President for several years. He retired from Newmont and moved to Reno, NV. We appreciate Bruce coming back to the District to facilitate today's retreat. A binder has been given to each Board member with documents for the three topics on today's agenda. Dr. Jensen provided background information on Cunningham group and how they came to review the District's schools.

Dr. Jensen invited Amy Nelson, Noel Morton and DeAnna Owens to engage on the Personalized Learning topics. Malinda Riemersma has been invited in the capacity of our webmaster to engage on social media.

Personalized Learning (PL):

Mr. Braginton opened the discussion all attendees: "What does personalized learning mean to you?". Each attendee offered their opinions: the level your child is on, learn/progress at their own speed, use variety of instructional models, meets individual needs, use of technology, competency based, more accountability, different modality, using variety of instructional models, 21st century learning, competency based - grades aren't as important, as students can be higher or lower in a variety of subjects, readily available resources, geared more toward individual interests, getting them ready for college, etc. The Board felt they had a good concept of what PL looks like.

Dr. Jensen showed pictures of a classroom from 100 years ago and today, and asked what similarities and differences did they see in the two pictures. While there were differences, computers, laptops, etc., they were learning in the same way. We are doing the same things, just using different tools to do it. Desks, chairs, seating in rows, facing the teacher standing in the front is basically the same as 100 years ago. The NASB in San Antonio showed how different set-ups and furniture can make significant changes to the learning environment for students.

Now that they've determined what PL means, Mr. Braginton asked "Where's the gap?" Responses: funding, breaking stigmas/habits, effective plan to make the changes, etc.

A video was shown discussing leadership and roles of leadership, and how the leadership plays a roll in PL, i.e. message from the top, providing proper tools, modeling, support, PD. Dr. Jensen said that if staff feel changes are imposed, it is not received as well as if it's a unified message. Baby steps to ensure the transition is done slowly and done right. It can't be pushed on all teachers in all rooms. Some students still need the traditional model of teaching.

Looking at trends in business and industry, in 2012 - there were clear indicators that desktops were phasing out and tablets/iPads/etc were increasing. Those who missed those signals were caught off guard and many companies are no longer in business (ie Blockbuster, Borders books, etc.). The trends on enrollment in traditional schools vs growth in charter and home schools show that traditional school enrollment is declining, on a national level. It's indicating parents are looking at other avenues for education outside the traditional public school.

Dr. Jensen asked the Board - what are our options? Responses ranged from doing nothing to complete 100% to PL. Somewhere in the middle would allow choices to those who need it, and no change to those who do not need/want it. Could take traditional learning and make changes to make it more personalized. Community engagement is also important. Forcing teachers won't get their buy in. Newer teachers are more likely to support this. 15-20 years from now, PL will be more of the norm as more changes come about. The traditional text books are also changing. On line access to books rather than each student having and carrying books to/from class is getting more traction - which is a financial savings, as well as resources (trees). If we don't address PL now, the next generation of students and the next Board will be caught well behind and catch up will be more difficult.

Mr. Braginton said there are three basic questions to ask ourselves for PL: What does it look like? When do we want to get there? How do we get there? The Board will need to drill down into each of these areas into more detail as we move forward.

Dr. Jensen had Noel Morton address the group as they viewed 3 slides. Looking at what we've achieved so far - up to 2015, not much was offered to students other than the traditional. In 2015-2016, Distance Ed/online learning was brought in. This year, at GVE and WGS, Summit Learning/blended learning model, was rolled out. It's important that we're careful when introducing new opportunities to not push it forcefully. We need to offer different pathways and explore new opportunities, yet keep the traditional for those who still want/need it. Other teachers and parents will see the changes and opportunities and get on board for the newer learning opportunities. District-level support and a VERY clear vision is crucial. It needs to be clear from the top down, have the buy in, the experience and a strategic introduction. Referring back to the District's Strategic Plan, Dr. Jensen confirmed the promise to the staff: if it doesn't align to the Strategic Plan, we won't do it-whether it's a grant, curriculum or program. A good plan will outlast leadership. It took 18 months to develop, vet, get feedback, involve the staff and Board before it was ready to be rolled out. PL needs to be handled the same way, to avoid confusion and frustration. Dr. Jensen told the Board that several of his Supt. Goals for this upcoming year will be tied to PL. Ms. Uhlmann related a concern about what happens if one grade/class has individualized learning and the next year enters a class where that isn't taking place, i.e. Summit Learning. Dr. Jensen stated that's one of the main reasons for rolling it out grade by grade. Dr. Jensen emphasized that the focus is on "strategic". We must be strategic and have systems in place to support the program. One such program is Modern Teacher (MT). Dr. Jensen learned about it thru his Superintendent's group, attended a training, along with Dustin Christean from LHS. During that process, MT provides support mechanisms that we will require, the way ANet partners with us on the Strategic Plan. The first meeting was held yesterday, and spent about 1.5 hrs with Jason Bletzinger on that video conf. He will be on site on May 16 and June 18 for full day meetings to start that work and move forward. Looking at support provided, this program provides the needed support. We won't have to create this program on our own. MT is in 20 states, 56 districts serving 1,014 schools.

Ms. Uhlmann would like a conversation with GBC regarding AA degrees for LHS students, as this could be implemented fairly easily.

Dr. Jensen stated this topic would be discussed at the next two Board meetings.

11:32 am: The group stopped for lunch.

12:05 pm: The group resumed the meeting.

Social Media

Mr. Braginton opened the topic with a slide showing one minute of social media usage in 2016 and one minute currently. Technology changes so quickly, and this slide showed the various apps that have drastically increased and those that have slowed down and leveled off. Nationally, over 3 years, Twitter usage has dropped and Instagram is up. Younger kids are using Snap Chat and Instagram rather than Facebook. The diagram showed Tinder had 1.4 million swipes per minute. A lot of time is spent on YouTube and Netflix. LinkedIn had dropped off the current chart. As we consider our District strategy, looking at trends, we are seeing new programs being implemented, and this needs to be considered in how the District responds to Social Media.

Mr. Braginton stated we have a few topics to deal with: How do we deal with misinformation? As a District, how do we want to deal with information that is outright false, or negative? No one is immune from this type of posting. The Supt. has addressed a few issues, yet we're unable to post background info due to various laws. Generally, on our District page, there isn't a lot of negative posts. At one time, there was an early childhood issue with one student and one incident and a parent used the platform to voice her negative posts. We won't ever be able to stop the negative, we just need to push the narrative with the positive things going on, and let the parents/community know all the good things we're doing. A lot of the persons with negative comments generally just want to be heard. Taking the conversation off-line allows them to be heard yet doesn't flood the page with negativity.

The Board discussed each school having its own page and all be the same, whereas some schools you have to join, rather than its own page. The Board discussed each member having their own page, and the limitations/oversight, especially given the terms end at some point. It was suggested that a link be put on the page with "Having a Problem with the School?" - the parent can use the link to submit their issue. Often times, a complaint is made, yet it's found that the person didn't speak to the teacher directly, or to the Principal, but call the District to speak to the Superintendent or message a Board member. On the Board's individual page, they would post information only regarding the schools in their area. Dr. Jensen asked the Board if they were comfortable with them having individual pages, and most of the Board indicated yes. The Board also indicated other districts have e-mails directly thru the District, so they would like to look into that.

The Board discussed recognizing a person weekly/monthly to let the community know who the person is, would make the employee feel special, and project a positive image.

The Board then discussed Apptegy. Having FB, Snap Chat, Instagram, the HCSD page, school pages, managing all of them and ensuring all have the same message becomes challenging. Apptegy can help with issues of navigating the school websites, it's very easy for parents to find what they want. Live Feeds are also possible for Administrators. Apptegy can share one story on FB, Twitter, Live Feed, District and school websites, push notifications and even send out text/voice messages with one click, especially in the case of an emergency. It's quick, easy and the same information is seen across all sources. It's handled once, not multiple times. We haven't used live feed, but this is something Dr. Jensen thinks we should look into. Malinda Riemersma has looked into it and everything she's seen is positive. Another similar program has the benefit of notifying the Administrator when their organization is mentioned anywhere. Malinda will see if Apptegy has this feature. An app is more likely to be used by parents rather than the District or school site. Peach Jar was discussed and it seems they're not used as often, so the Board felt this might be worth looking into. It is not a free app. \$14,700 annually, based on student numbers. Initial set up/app development is one time fee of \$12,500 and takes 60 days to prepare. If we determine in the future to discontinue the program and not lose our information. Nye County is also using this program.

Looking at trends, this seems to be the way to go. Chris Entwistle asked what the odds are that this company dissolves in the near future. Malinda has researched the company, and they seem solid and poised to continue moving forward. If it were to dissolve, we would still retain all the information. The Board was ok with moving forward on this.

Dr. Jensen then opened discussions on District policy of staff members engaging with students. The Board discussed why employees would connect with students, such as coaches letting the members know about training times and changes. Board members discussed the appropriateness of communicating directly with players/students, since it is not monitored. While FB is pretty transparent, instant messaging is not. It could be set up for outgoing messages only, so no responses are able to be sent back. Sabrina Uhlmann asked about Instagram, when employees have an account and a student follows them and can communicate with them that way. Inappropriate relationships often start out with communications that transition to private conversations. The Board agreed they have a concern about how to mitigate inappropriate relationship issues that could result from communications. Bruce Braginton confirmed that the Board has indicated they wish to dive deeper into policies in this area. Dr. Jensen confirmed the Board wishes the policies to be strengthened, to include language to address expectations of staff, coaches interacting with students, and include section that addresses use of student photographs.

The Board took a short break at 1:30 pm.

The Board resumed at 1:47 pm.

Cunningham Group

Bruce Braginton provided background of the Cunningham report: the forum that was held in March 2018, getting ideas/feedback from the community, and after review of the schools, provided a report with three possible concepts:

Concept 1. Replace furnishings/technology - \$10mm. 2. Limited reconfigurations, discussing redo of FFMS adding 5th grade using 2nd floor, etc - \$40mm. 3. Major reconstruction with grade realignment - \$100mm. It was unanimous that option #3 was not feasible. Looking at the first option, the breakdown shows the cost for technology, media center, meeting/student areas, etc. Dr. Jensen stated we've already made a lot of improvements already in the technology area. As the Board already discussed personalize learning, Boyd Betteridge was interested in knowing if teachers want their classes changed to move in that direction. Dr. Jensen stated he's received numerous requests from teachers, especially through the Newmont grant, to change the room design, bouncy balls, allowing fluid movement of students during instruction, so yes, teachers are already moving in that direction.

Concept 2 - includes the previous conversation about the changes to FFMS. Working with FFMS, changes include the space above the library, changing the grade configuration.

Concept 3 - major reconstruction. Making FFMS a K-5 school, and what it takes to make that happen, as well as the changes proposed to other schools. It was generally accepted that this option was not feasible, given the cost. Other Board members acknowledged how many other school districts are undertaking these huge changes with the high cost. They recognize the changes to education, as well as the changes to learning, and are willing to take on the cost to get to the changes to keep education as advanced and moving forward in their community.

At present, we have a roll over bond approved in 2008, passed with 63% voter support. The roll over was renewed from the bond taken for GVE improvements. As it neared the closed, the District had the opportunity to continue the bond. Having the debt actually enables us to get more funding. In Humboldt County, we get \$0.135 per \$100 assessed valuation. In 2008, we thought it would generate \$800,000 and actually brings in approximately \$1.2 - \$1.5 mm annually. The median age of our buildings is 58 years, so our needs are going to increase. We anticipated going to voters in 2016 for a continuation, but the Gov. extended all the roll over bonds by 10 years, so the 2008 bond roll over is extended to 2028. We refinanced it this year, providing a \$121,000 interest savings over the next ten years. As we consider where we are and where we go, we have 3 options: (1) Do nothing, continue our existing rate thru 2028; (2) Secure another bond and what we do with that is up for

debate - furniture, LHS HVAC in the old gym (approx \$1.6 mm); (3) Seek community approval to approve an increase to the rate. What does that look like, and would the community approve it?

Bruce stated that if they opted for option (1) Do nothing approach, the money that comes in from the bond covers basic needs only, which Dr. Jensen confirmed. So there is no room to do any of the other projects to support personalized learning, etc. Chris Entwistle asked if Option (2) bond funding would need to be voter approved, and Dr. Jensen confirmed it would not. We would have to go to the Debt Management commission and follow a set process, but we could take more loan on our existing rate without tax payer approval. It would mean we would reduce the amount available on an annual basis to meet other facility needs. We could take a one-time amount of \$2.9 mm +/-, which would finish the AC units. One of the struggles in 2007 was the community saying we had not followed through on our previous projects, so why give more funds? We have now completed the AC in all schools except WJHS and LHS certain areas. We are still dealing with an aging infrastructure and can only maintain them for so long.

Dr. Jensen walked thru various points on the economy, putting a bond on the ballot, timing, need, etc. The Board agreed there will be growth in the community. Do we ask for additional revenue? If so, how much? When? Knowing what we know about the aging infrastructure, and at some point some schools may become unusable, how does this factor into the decision? We have a 5-year improvement plan, which includes the electrical at LHS, HVAC at LHS, but if done all at once, we have identified \$15mm in projects. As we update the plan, some projects are deferred as we do not have the funds to cover the cost. We're doing smaller projects, but delaying other projects that need to be done while funds just aren't available. The Board discussed projects like turf at LHS and a concession stand, and why those projects are considered while the infrastructure at older schools is deteriorating. Sabrina Uhlmann said the rurals feel left out when they see LHS getting more money, especially for these types of items when they need so many things as well. Bruce asked if the Board wants to take a wait-n-see attitude - see what the economy does, if the community grows, if the community will be more willing to accept additional taxing to support the growing needs of the aging infrastructure in the schools, weighing the needs of infrastructure vs personal learning items, i.e. furniture, technology, etc. Abe Swensen stated that eventually, annual maintenance won't be enough. We need to be forward thinking and not think about just maintaining. Dr. Jensen said that new school construction, such as WGS, would be approximately \$30mm, and eventually it will happen. The issue with WGS is the historical nature, yet with aging, this problem will need to be addressed sooner rather than later.

Bruce Braginton summarized where he believes the Board stands: there isn't an immediate need to replace WGS, nor is there enough growth in the community to drive the building/changes to existing schools; continue with maintenance while seeking community input/approval for a not-too-distant decision on funding a new school or major improvements. To move forward on the funding, Dr. Jensen stated a committee needs to be developed, fund raise, which can't be done on District time, while realizing what the community's threshold will be for the bond amount. Boyd Betteridge said a picture needs to be drawn with why this is needed, and what it will be used for. He also stated we need to keep the City/County involved as well, since they were a part of the original forum last year. Dr. Jensen concurred, suggesting an assessment needs to be done (which has been done), and what are the needs for our facilities. The District can do this and report to the Board, and the Board can then direct action.

Nicole Bengochea left the meeting. Clerk Boyd Betteridge was then Acting President.

To complete the HVAC system at the LHS old gym will require approximately \$1.5mm. This summer, two wings of the WJHS will have the same HVAC system that was installed in the District Office, for \$85,000. If it works well, it's a model that can be rolled out , with a good cost savings. Sabrina Uhlmann stated the AC units do not work in the rural schools, especially in the kinder areas.

Dr. Jensen wrapped up the meeting by thanking Bruce Braginton for coming back to Winnemucca to facilitate the retreat. Bruce thanked everyone for their input, enjoyed the opportunity to help the Board in this meeting.

D. Public Comment: None

Procedural: 1. Public Comment Guidelines

E. Board Reports:

- Abe Swensen thanked Bruce for coming and facilitating.
- Chris Entwistle thanked Bruce and wished him safe travels back home.
- Sabrina Uhlmann also thanked Bruce, it was nice to meet him and it was a very interesting meeting for her first retreat.
- Dawn Hagness let the Board know Orovada has a Science Fair today; She let the Board know their district e-mails have been set up.
- Dave Jensen thanked Bruce for his input and it was nice seeing him again.
- Boyd Betteridge thanked Bruce for coming and facilitating the meeting.

E. Adjournment: Acting President Boyd Betteridge adjourned the meeting at 2:59 pm

Action: 1. Meeting Adjourned


F. Notice

Information: 1. Notice to Persons with Disabilities

G. Postings

Procedural: 1. Public Posting of Agenda

Submitted by Secretary, Judy Kritikos



Boyd Betteridge, Clerk