

Highland School District #203
District Office
Monday, March 11, 2024

Special Board Meeting-7:00 a.m.

The **March 11, 2024 Special Board Meeting** was convened by Chair Nikki Keller at 7:02 a.m. Others present included Board members: David Barnes, Lupita Flores, Carlos López and Cindy Reed, Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Student Success Mindy Schultz, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman.

1- Communication Check-In: Discussed misinformation about upcoming staffing changes.

2-1st Reading of New/Revised Policies: Nikki checked with the board if they had a chance to review them. Yes, move to 2nd reading.

3-Education Support Professionals Week-March 11-15: The district will find a way to recognize the Classified staff, whom are very much appreciated.

4-21st Century Program: The program, [which is independent of the school district], is being discontinued due to loss of funding. We could lose students if we don't have an after-school program due to parents needing that support to match their work schedule. They may need to transfer their student to a school that has a before- and/or after-school program, or to their work before- or after-school program which aligns with a different school district. One option for the district would be to rearrange staffing schedules at the grade schools to address this issue. Discussed reducing intersession dates options to partially fund an after-school program. Another area to consider is outside vendors that run an after-school program in one of the buildings but we know those include a cost/fee to the family. Other area school districts do offer this. The board directed the district to research programs.

Tieton Elementary School Principal & CTE Director Brandon Jensen and High School Principal Jeremy Gillespie joined the meeting at 8:11 a.m. and left the meeting at 8:31 a.m.

Director of Business & Operations Francis Badu joined the meeting at 8:11 a.m.

7-2024-2025 Budget Discussion: Due to an anticipated budget shortfall some provisional staff are not being renewed and the HS CTE business position is being RIF'ed (reduction in force). Jeremy explained where the classes currently taught by that position could be taught by other staff. Brandon explained the CTE requirement for articulation between some CTE classes and YVC and/or CWU. Certification can be done conditionally if needed. The high school scheduling staff (HHS principal and HHS counselor) are gathering student scheduling requests for next year to draft the 2024-2025 course schedule. Then it can be determined where the RIF'ed teacher's classes may be scheduled. DECA is an extra-curricular activity, and the advisor can be any teacher, no special certification is required. One DECA requirement is a student-run business, currently the student store and print screening. Next discussed were calendar options as presented by the teachers' calendar committee, which they drafted per a teacher survey. Of the teachers that completed the survey (about 2/3), 69% said the #1 request was to have a day and a half extra off at Thanksgiving and a longer summer break. Discussed intersession dates and value at length. Intersessions were introduced in response to a state request to combat the learning loss that resulted from the pandemic-related online instruction and learning loss over summer break. It also serves to offer credit retrieval for students who are not on track to graduate, and enhanced learning options for students. We are still getting requests for information about intersession from other districts that want to start their own. The board drafted a 2024-2025 Instructional Calendar in compromise to the teachers' version. Francis reviewed the budget status report which shows not much of a revenue increase due to the drop in enrollment. ESSER funding helped sustain the district for a couple of years, but it has been anticipated [and advertised with staff] that budget cuts would have to be made to keep the fund balance as close to the policy-set amount as possible. The loss is about \$850K. We have gone through this before, in 1997 and 2008.

5-Capital Projects Update: The HHS/HMS HVAC system will be worked on in May and June, with completion in the summer so there isn't a disruption to heating or cooling at the start of next school year. This summer we will start the process of looking at the cost of renovations and a timeline to schedule a fix to the track & field.

6-Enrollment Discussion: Shared the current enrollment numbers, our headcount number is down another three. Shared how new students are enrolled through FinalForms, which can be done in any building office if a family does not have internet access. We have large outgoing classes in grades 9-12 and the incoming classes are smaller, with a drop in enrollment close to 20 students each year. We need to consider having one school building for Pre-K-5 at TES. Population is down overall across the state.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Chair

Secretary