

**Highland School District #203**  
**Board Work Study Session**  
**Highland District Office**  
**February 10, 2020, 7:00 a.m.**

The February 10, 2020 Board Work Study Session was convened at 7:06 am by Chair Nikki Keller. Present were Board Members David Barnes, Lupita Flores, Carlos López, and Cindy Reed; Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Business and Operations Francis Badu, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman.

HJH Teacher Paige Matson and HJH student/ASB Treasurer Alastor Smith joined the meeting at 7:08 a.m.

**1-Community Garden:** Introductions were made and Alastor read a statement from the Highland Community Garden group, which currently has 10 students and three teachers plus others that have committed to maintaining the garden over the summer. The garden will be located next to the CTE building near the greenhouse and they will work with the grounds crew to ensure placement within the existing sprinkler system. It will be ADA accessible and available for teachers to hold class there benefitting math and reading subjects as well as the FFA and agriculture classes. They have a \$5000 grant and are getting donations for materials and labor to keep costs down. They plan to be organic as possible and the fruit and produce can be purchased by the HSD kitchen through the Farm-to-School program plus fresh produce will be made available to students and their families. They can reapply for the grant annually. The board supported the location of the garden and gave the go-ahead.

Paige and Alastor left the meeting at 7:23 a.m.

Highland Community Prevention Coordinator Lizbet Maceda, Student Assistance Professional Stacey Beat, and three students, Annette, Michael and Natalie, joined the meeting at 7:27

**2-Prevention Policy Day Presentation:** Lizbet thanked the board for their time and explained that a group of them went to Olympia to give a presentation focused on mental health. Their desire is to have more mental health professionals in the school. Each student shared an experience, one having lost her mom and not having the skills to cope with that loss lead her to destructive habits. It would have been helpful if she'd had someone at the school to talk to. They said they were well received and Senator King was impressed and appreciated hearing from them. They have started a prevention club to give students a voice and to find out what is needed in the student body.

The group left the meeting at 7:33 a.m.

Band teacher John Straehle joined the meeting at 7:35 a.m.

**3-HS Band Disney Trip Proposal Presentation:** John used a PowerPoint to present the proposal for the high school (and some 8<sup>th</sup> graders) to travel to California to march in a parade at Disney and perform music to video. They had to audition to be accepted to go. There are 45 students and twelve adults going. The trip is funded solely through the booster club fundraising. Francis asked about insurance. The board asked John to bring a couple of students and give a presentation after the trip.

John left the meeting at 7:50 a.m.

**4-School Zone Flashers:** Francis said the district has six school zone flashers: two by the high school and four by TIS. We have an agreement with the county where they install the flashers and we buy and maintain them. The current system is several years old and can no longer be programmed remotely but must now be programmed by physically going to the flasher with a ladder and laptop, which is not very feasible on a snow day when school has a delayed start. Research has been done and a new system will cost between \$15-\$20k. Francis recommends paying for this from the capital projects fund.

HHS teacher, Stephani Kinney, joined the meeting at 7:56 a.m.

**5-Overnight/Out-of-State Travel Request-DECA Nationals:** Stephani reported that she found out at the end of last week that two students have qualified for DECA National competition in Nashville, TN. Three students will attend (one is in training) for a cost of \$4500. Gear Up is contributing \$2000 and the rest will come from DECA funds (currently \$11k). Stephani is asking for trip approval as soon as possible so they can secure their plane tickets at the lowest possible price.

Stephanie left the meeting at 7:58 a.m.

**7-Negotiations Update:** Mark said they are pretty much settled. He noted that although we have a three-year contract in place with HEA, there is a 'reopener' clause which allows the union to negotiate other-than-salary parts of the contract in each of the years of the contract, if they so choose. The discussion has centered around the new insurance program: SEBB, insurance pooling and the December state allotment. Mark shared examples of how other districts have handled the pooling and changes due to SEBB. Francis explained about the SEBB start date, premiums paid, state allotment and options for making payments to VEBA for HEA.

**6-Staffing Update:** The district hasn't changed how things are done over the years despite the changes we're seeing in students and student behavior. Mark described possible options for reconfiguration of staff to address the ever-rising social/emotional/behavioral needs of students. The state also hasn't kept up with funding for counselors so the district has to be creative in solving the problem of having a lack of counselors. Francis explained basic ed and program funding, reduced funding, which we are experiencing, and the effect of reduced enrollment.

Francis left the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

HHS Principal, Brandon Jensen and Athletic Director/Dean of Students, Josh Borland joined the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

**8-Discipline Procedure Update – 3412P:** Brandon and Josh said they've been working on an issue at the high school and junior high of an increase in gang related behaviors. There has been but one altercation and we don't have any students that are actually in a gang but there are those that idolize the culture and identify with one or the other: Sureños or Norteños. Admin had the police come in and teach the staff what [gang-related signs] to look for in order to maintain a safe environment. New state laws concerning school discipline restrict discipline options so Josh has talked with several other districts to see what they are doing and an option they would have adopted is an agreement. Once a student has been identified as identifying with a gang (by one big event or several small ones), he or she and the parent are brought in for a meeting and to sign the Academic and Behavior Safety Agreement. The agreement lays out expectations and provides discipline progression in addition to the discipline structure already in place. The agreement was shared with the student body so they are aware. It was noted that there isn't 'zero tolerance' for

any behavior except for guns/weapons and drugs on campus but that, as a public school district, we are required to work with students in getting an education. Possible expulsion is an option only if safety for staff and students is a concern.

Brandon and Josh left the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

Gear Up Site Director, Anastasia Alexandros, joined the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

**9-Gear Up Presentation:** Anastasia introduced herself and gave a description of the program, which is fully funded by a federal grant and is in partnership with CWU. The goal of Gear Up is to encourage students in their path of post-secondary education or training. The way they do this is with tutoring, test prep help, life skills training and help, academic planning, college tours, career exploration, professional development, technology supports, and parent resources to name a few. She advertises to all staff but only a handful, three or four, take advantage. The funding is ‘use-it-or-lose-it’ so she reaches out to staff frequently. This is the fourth year of the five year grant and they were not approved for another one in the last three years of applying so Gear Up may not be around after the 2020-2021 school year.

Anastasia left the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

**10-February Regular Board Meeting Date Discussion:** The regular board meeting night in February falls on a teacher optional day when there is no school. After discussion it was decided to move the meeting to Tuesday, February 25.

Mark and Julie left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

**11-Superintendent Evaluation Discussion.**

Mark rejoined the board at 10:30 for his evaluation.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10: 35 a.m.

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Chair

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Secretary