

Highland School District #203
Board Work Study Session
Highland District Office
January 7, 2019, 7 a.m.

The January 7, 2019 Board Work Study Session was convened by Board Chair Nikki Keller at 7:05 a.m. Also present were Board Members Matt Barker, David Barnes, and Lupita Flores; Superintendent Mark Anderson; Director of Business & Operations Francis Badu; community member Carlos Lopez, HHS Leadership student Ema-Clementina Bordeniuc, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman.

1-Comprehensive Program Review: Mark reported that the CPR is scheduled for April and lasts for a week or so. It is done on a three-year cycle. Our review was scheduled for last year but was deferred a year due to the passing of program director Barb Gilbert. The State will come in for an intensive review of several focus areas including building education plans, civil rights, meeting IEP/Special Education standards, ELL, and others. One area that we will show difficulty in is exiting students from the ELL program. The exit test (WELPA) is so difficult at the high school level that they are unable to pass all sections, even for students that pass the state Smarter Balanced Assessments. This is not just an issue at Highland but is happening in districts throughout the state. We currently have three teachers teaching extra classes to help students prepare for the test and will look into other program staffing options. A downside is that even if a parent requests their student be exited from the program, the district is still held accountable for that student. Mark noted that the state Food Service audit starts tomorrow, will last the rest of the week, and will be helpful for assessing what students are being served (per the rules) versus what they want to have served.

2-Junior High Language Arts Curriculum: Mark: The current curriculum is lacking so an advisory team was assembled to choose a new one. Using guidelines for finding an appropriate provider and program, they will present samples for the board's consideration once they complete their research. This year's budget has room for the anticipated \$50k cost and a choice will be made by late spring.

3-Realignment Update: Mark: The district is still looking at staffing options and the feasibility for making a 3rd grade to TIS/6th grade to HJH switch but is not anywhere close to a final decision. The switch would have to be done without hiring any new staff so staffing is the area that will be reviewed first. If that looks possible then building accommodations will have to be resolved and a public forum held to inform our patrons and seek input. There is much to consider and implementation would not be possible before the 2020-2021 school year.

4-Budget/Staffing Preliminary Discussion: Mark and Francis took budget information to share with staff at each of the buildings. Mark complimented Francis for presenting the budget in a manner that is understandable. It was stressed that if staff resign or retire, the district will try to cover the position from within and will not hire more staff unless absolutely necessary. We will try to keep current staff employed but positions may change. Francis is optimistic that we can have a budget planned out this month. There have been extensive discussions with Kirsten and Michelle about classified staffing: how to assimilate Gen. Ed. paras into funded programs, which will have a domino effect on the para-ed pool of employees necessitating seniority consideration for keeping staff in place. Discussion ensued about state funding allocation and over-staffing at HSD. We are overstaffed per state rules, which do not take into consideration how a district is structured. It will be a challenge to get through this.

5-2019-2020 Instructional Calendar: Mark had a meeting with the HEA to discuss next year's instructional calendar. He noted that it is in the HEA CBA that the certificated staff create the calendar which is different from other districts where he has worked where it was the district's responsibility to do so. The recent 18-day winter break over Christmas and New Year's was too long and some teachers complained that it is hard for the students to start up again plus it is very close to the end of the semester. A rear-round instructional schedule could utilize a longer break like that to offer intervention classes, with teachers applying for teaching positions but the HEA would have to agree to a year-round calendar. It was noted that our calendar closely matches that of area school districts, particularly Yakima's, which is where most of our teachers live and where their own children attend school. The district office has received complaints from parents about the calendar and this information has been shared with the calendar committee. Input from the board will also be shared: school in December 2019 should go through 12/19/19, and the snow make-up days need to be in March and April and not concentrated in May to create a lengthy Memorial Day weekend.

HHS Leadership student Ema-Clementina Bordeniuc left the meeting at 7:40 a.m.

6-Vacant Board Position: Nikki reminded the board that the resignation from Chris Garent was presented at the December board meeting and that they have 90 days to appoint a new member. Policy and procedure 1114 concerning member resignation and vacancy were reviewed. We will publish the vacancy with qualifications noted and an application deadline of January 31, 2019.

Francis Badu left the meeting at 7:45 a.m.

7-Superintendent Evaluation/Contract Discussion: Mark reminded the board the reason for the early eval/contract discussion is related to an automatic extension of the superintendent contract by one year if the board doesn't vote against it prior to February 1 of the current year. The board is comfortable with moving the eval/contract discussion to the February work study session on February 4.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Chair

Secretary