

Highland School District #203
Board Work Study Meeting
Highland District Office
January 8, 2018, 7 a.m.

The Board Work Study Meeting convened at 7:07 a.m. Present were Board Members Matt Barker, David Barnes, Lupita Flores, Chris Garent, and Nikki Keller; Superintendent Mark Anderson; Director of Business and Operations Francis Badu, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman.

Tour CTE Building: Immediately upon the arrival of all members the Board went to tour the CTE building. Art teacher Teresa Brooks answered questions and gave an account of how the art room will be used and further minor upgrades she has planned to maintain order and a new feel to the area plus plans for utilizing the shared wood/metal shop area. She is very pleased with the new room and stated that the students like it as well. Ag/Shop teacher Pat Hazen welcomed the Board and gave a short presentation about his classroom and plans for finishing up getting moved in and establishing order to his new space.

The Board reconvened in the District Office at 7:32 a.m. Mark noted that the ductwork in the CTE building needs another ½” of insulation to bring it to code. This large task may be done over the upcoming long holiday weekends or over Spring Break. We hired Picatti Brothers to certify the plasma cutter as it came without a UL listing. Two other sanders also don’t have the UL listing but cannot be certified and so will have to be replaced. There are still some blinds, cupboard doors and miscellaneous small organizational items on order. The tabbing and commissioning will be done this week. The landscaping has a three-year warranty. Total, final, inspection clearance is not expected for another 7-8 months but temporary occupancy has been granted so classes are being held there and the students are excited about the new building. There was discussion about when to hold a public open house. March or when the weather is nicer and most of the final punch list items are completed seems the best time.

Summer School Discussion: Mark shared that he and Barb had conversations in the past couple of years about Summer School and if it is a wise use of district funds. The data from students does not show that it provides a significant difference in student success. Kindercamp would still be held and possible augmented.

HHS Counselor Lynsey Westfall joined the meeting at 7:43 a.m.

HHS Scheduling Discussion: Lynsey shared that they are continuing to use Skyward technology to sort students by area (language, skill level, grad requirements, etc.) in the process of scheduling them into classes.

HHS Principal Brandon Jensen joined the meeting at 7:44 a.m.

Lynsey continued sharing that they plan to hold a day where each department will be able to present on their subject (English, Math, Science, etc.) and students will be able to learn what is offered to help them decide what they’d like to take. This will be in addition to the Electives Fair where students see presentations about the electives classes that are offered.

Lynsey noted that they have slowed down the sequence of math classes to classes plus labs to help students better learn the material. They are also switching from semester length classes to year-long classes in some subject areas to aid in scheduling and continuity. The English department is being analyzed to streamline the offerings, eliminate the 'singletons', and rename the classes to what universities recognize i.e.: English 10, 11, or 12. Subject matter within the class will still have some flexibility. Pat Hazen is working on aligning some ag and horticulture classes to the state science requirements so students that are not planning to attend a 4 year college will have (the required) 3rd year science class options that are more applicable or relevant to their post high school plans. Lynsey will be leaving on maternity leave soon so much of the scheduling options are being finalized earlier than usual but they are finding this to be a plus as there will more time to tweak things when needed. Brandon and Lynsey have had meetings with the departments to inform them of the upcoming changes.

Brandon spoke on ELL and noted that the numbers continue to grow which will affect class offerings. Some elective offerings may have to be cut to accommodate the needs of the ELL students and alternately may be offered via Red Comet. He explained that ELL has three levels of classes and that Melissa Larsen is teaching some of the 3rd level which are those closest to passing the exit test. It was noted that the ELPA is quite difficult and gets harder the older the student. It may be more difficult than the Smarter Balance. Due to the impending need to reduce staff we will have to reduce the number of elective classes offered. They will look at the numbers and raw data that shows how many students register for and take a class. We are over state funding of certified staff by five and are looking at the best way to reduce, whether all at once, over a 2 year or a 5 year span. The music department, art and PE, moving the 6th grade to HJH, Drama and Annual as co-curricular activities rather than classes, were all discussed in relation to reducing staff.

Brandon and Lynsey left the meeting at 7:59 a.m.

More discussion about staffing continued until Director of Student Services Intern Kirsten Lenz and Director of Student Services Michelle Curry joined the meeting at 8:19 a.m.

ELL Program Discussion: A handout was given containing a page with the ELL monthly student count, the Home Language Survey and a Home Language Survey Flow Chart. Kirsten and Michelle introduced themselves, their titles, and described their responsibilities. Kirsten explained the three pages of the handout and how responses on the survey, which is a state required part of the new student registration packet, automatically trigger language testing in speaking, listening, reading and writing. She explained emerging and progressing levels of language, how the system and process have evolved, and that second language difficulties must be ruled out before checking for Special Ed needs. Kirsten explained how each building works with ELL students: paras at MWC and TIS with some pull-outs at TIS using the same curriculum as the class. At HJH/HHS students spend one period/day in an ELL class. Normally a student exits the program in 1st or 2nd grade, 3.5 years is the minimum to exit out although the state claims it takes 7 years to successfully learn a second language. The difficulty of the federal and state language tests, ELPA & WELPA, was reiterated. A parent may request to have their student withdrawn from the program but the school is required to monitor their progress for two years just as they are for students that exit through successful testing. It was questioned if the scores are low just with ELL students or for English language students as well. The tests are administered on a computer, even to kindergartners, so keyboard training is

provided plus a practice test so the students will feel comfortable taking the test. Michelle noted that they will train the secretaries to carefully explain the Home Language Survey and the ramifications depending on how the questions are answered.

Kirsten and Michelle left the meeting at 9 a.m.

Further discussion ensued about the ELL program, scheduling and class offerings at HHS, and the need for positive attitudes by staff in their interactions with students. Summer School was also revisited. The summer school session is not long enough nor rigorous enough to make a significant difference in student success. The preschool program, however, has had a measureable positive impact in kindergarten student readiness and success so increasing the number of preschool class offerings is being considered. Offering a summer lunch program was brought up (in lieu of the meal summer school students are offered) and the merits and disadvantages were discussed. That led into a discussion about the district becoming a wholly Free/Reduced district. Important to consider are the cost to the district if the number of students eating lunch does not meet the required number for funding, and how to gather income information from families which is needed for the basis of funding of certain programs. This is most critical as the number of Free and Reduced qualifying families generates much of the district's state and federal funding for programs such as Title I, ERate, etc. MWC, TIS & HJH meet the criteria but we need to know how many HHS students currently eat school lunch vs going to the store or buying food at the student store. Would we need to have a closed campus? Angie Sanders, the new School Nutrition Director, will be invited to share information at a subsequent meeting. The Board agreed that it is time to discontinue summer school and to put the money to better use in early learning. It was noted that high school students have credit retrieval options through YV Tech and Red Comet to get back on track for graduating on time rather than attend summer school.

Capital Project Cost Update: Francis shared the *Actual and Estimated Capital Projects Cost Summary 12/31/17* with the Board noting that the Bond was \$6m and as of 12/31/17 we have spent \$5.4m with an estimated \$270k still to be spent. We have been able to do what was planned with the bond money and anticipate having a balance left over. Francis noted that he and Athletic Director Josh Borland have decided it will be best for the district to contract out the purchase and installation of the dividing curtain in the HHS gym. There are two or three other projects that can be paid by Capital Projects funds such as fixing the drainage by the new bus garage, extending the sidewalk by the HHS portables, painting a sidewalk to the CTE building, and installing an awning or other solution for the new portable at MWC to address icy walkway conditions. Mark and Francis will put together a list for the Board to review and approve. With the new State funding strategies, the levy system will be different. Francis proposed issuing a levy for tech upgrades. Regarding capital projects, requests were made to consider the following: repaint the stadium, fix leaks in the stadium bathrooms, increase and/or repair electrical outlets in the concession stand, fix the low spots on the football field left by removing the pits, purchase new soccer goals, lengthen the sidewalk to the stadium, add stairs from the baseball field to the concession stand, and find some way to increase storage in the high school as the athletic storage area has been taken over by chairs,. It was noted that the stadium with the concession stand and bathrooms are used by baseball, football, soccer, and track & field and should represent Scottie pride.

Superintendent Contract/Evaluation: Nikki noted that it is time for the Board to do the annual evaluation of the superintendent and to approve any amendments to his contract. They will discuss his evaluation at the February Work Study Session and vote on his contract amendments at the regular Board meeting that month.

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Chair

Secretary