

Highland School District #203
Board Work Study Session
Highland School District Office
Tuesday May 5, 2015

Board Chair Chris Garent called the Board Work Study Session to order at 7:00 a.m. Others present were Board Members Nikki Keller David Barnes, Becky Laughery; Superintendent Mark Anderson; Director of Business and Operations Francis Badu, Principal Russ Hill and Substitute Recording Secretary Sharon Fisher. Board Member Matt Barker and Recording Secretary Melissa Benicio were unable to attend.

Russ reported on the status of the **Math Curriculum Review**. Phase 1 was discussion of various math curricula. The first day after Spring break staff used the IMET evaluation tool to select curricula for further review. The Math Curriculum Team is looking at three curricula for K-6 level, two for grades 7 & 8 and 1 or 2 for grades 9-12. Last Wednesday textbook publishers were brought in to discuss the curricula. Russ said we will get a hard copy of the curricula with regular digital updates. He added that all options have room to grow in curriculum. They will all be computer-adapted so students can be challenged at their own levels. Russ said the team is waiting for quotes on the K-6 choices. Nikki asked if there are charges for continuing updates. Russ replied that most are paid for a 6-year timeframe. After that we can purchase additional updates. All have something similar to "Dreambox". The companies will be getting constant feedback from staff. Computer-adaptive portions will be aligned with what the students are doing in class. The next Math Leadership meeting will be the 19th to formally develop a recommendation. Russ added the teachers are working very hard to look at content beyond the "bells and whistles" and are asking critical questions. Staff said they appreciate the opportunity to have input.

Russ gave his recommendations for staff persons of the year and left the meeting at 7:20. Mindy Schultz joined the meeting at 7:20. She gave the Board her nominations for certified and classified staff persons of the year. She left the meeting at 7:25

Mark gave the Superintendent's Report. He said Lupe Paniagua has resigned from her District Office position. Her last day is Wednesday. Since this is a non-union position her replacement can be appointed from in-district. Julie Notman will take the position of District Admin Asst and HR Asst. Her HHS secretarial position will need to be posted for 5 days in-house.

Mark discussed the Admin restructuring plan and said he will go around to all the schools tomorrow to discuss the plan with staff. He added that all staff he has talked to understand the decision; although many are sorry to lose their principals. Mark asked the Board members if they had any reservations or concerns. There were none expressed; all members were in support of the restructuring plan. He will work on the best way to announce the restructuring. Also Mark said he spent some time looking at maybe moving some teachers. There was discussion on this issue.

Barb joined the meeting at 7:35, made her employee of the year recommendations and left the meeting room at 7:40 am.

Mark continued with his Superintendent's Report. He said Kelly has finished his Superintendent internship.

Mark said with workdays added to the teachers' calendar, should administrators get paid for those also? That would be in conflict with the HAG agreement. He said there also needs to be some adjustment for change to the 7-12 principal position. And with the restructuring there will be a Dean of Students/AD position.

There was some discussion on "workdays" and Mark said we need to make sure whether or not we can "move and absorb within" before hiring outside. This will be a challenge at TIS because of the priority status.

Kelly joined the meeting at 7:55 to make his recommendation for employees of the year. He left the meeting at 8:00 am.

Mark updated the Board on legal and personnel issues. He reported he received notice of demand for arbitration in the employee grievance case which he forwarded to attorney Kirk Ehliis. There were some other legal issues he sent to Kirk also.

Brandon Jenson and Don Strothers joined the meeting and made their recommendations for staff of the year. Brandon requested to add instructional time at the high school. He is proposing an extra 30 minutes per day, 4 days a week. This time would be for intervention, remediation and fun stuff – it would be flexible. He said it's an adjustment but a good opportunity to engage kids. Brandon said he feels this change would be best for kids and would foster more success. The Board supported this proposal and encouraged Brandon to implement the plan for the next school year. He has also formed an advisory committee to look at SCOTS.

Chris asked if this change would affect the end time of the school day and the bus schedules. Mark and Brandon said that it what they are trying to work out. They also will be working on how to group the kids and make sure grades are kept up. There will still be advisory groups. There would be scanners to track where the students should be at a given time. There was discussion and the consensus of the Board was that this is an awesome program. Brandon said he will be "rolling it out" to staff tomorrow. He emphasized that this cannot be a study hall – teachers must work with the students and it will require weekly gradebook updates. There was further discussion on how this would work. Brandon added that by the end of high school all students should have been exposed to four teachers/advisors.

Don said there will be a meeting of potential football players on Friday. There is a sign-up sheet in the office. Brandon added they are hoping to have a good number of kids sign up and he will talk to them about making the commitment to play. They hope to have a varsity team with 20 to 25 sophomores, juniors and seniors. He said we need to have parents support the kids and make a commitment. Don has been working on having the league change boys and girls junior high soccer seasons. He has also discussed this with the mid-Columbia League. With this plan the 7th and 8th grade soccer players would have opportunities to play football and maybe continue with high school football. Don said travel distances may be an issue for junior high.

Nikki said she has a concern – Junior High girls volleyball and soccer are not the same season now. If there is a change girls may opt for soccer and what will happen to the high school volleyball program. She said she is reluctant to boost one program, like football, at the expense of Boys Basketball and Girls Volleyball. Don said we need students playing at least two sports.

Brandon asked if they should pursue the opportunity to change leagues. The consensus of the Board was that they should pursue the opportunity to move. There was further discussion on this topic. Chris said he feels we really need coaches to introduce baseball, track and football to kids at an early age. He added wrestling, basketball and soccer currently offer youth programs starting in early years. There may be no varsity football again this year.

There was discussion on the certified and classified Employee of the Year nominations. The Board agreed that all the nominees were excellent candidates. They selected Gretchen Vachon as Certified Employee of the Year and Julie Notman as Classified Employee of the Year for 2014-2015.

There was brief discussion on revising the workloads of the secretarial staff and that will be a future Board Work Study topic.

Francis gave an audit update and said we received a finding in January for the hiring of a non-highly qualified teacher for a position paid by Title funds. The District looked for a Highly Qualified teacher to fill the position but there was no one else available and this “was best for kids” rather than increase class sizes. Chris suggested we ask the auditors what we should have done.

Regarding the Bond Issue, Francis said we will have a timeline for the process. He also stated that a committee consisting of Chris, Dave, Francis, Mark and Cindy Reed will meet to review the RFQ qualification packets.

The Board Retreat date will be discussed at the June 2 work study session.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 am.

