

Highland School District #203
District Office
Monday, February 5, 2024

Regular Board Meeting-7:00 a.m.

The **February 5, 2024, AM Regular Board Meeting** was called to order by Vice Chair David Barnes at 7:04 a.m. Others present included Board members Lupita Flores, Carlos López, and Cindy Reed, Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Business & Operations Francis Badu, Director of Student Success Mindy Schultz, and Recording Secretary Julie Notman. Board member Nikki Keller was absent.

1. Swearing-In of Re-elected Board Member: Superintendent Mark Anderson administered the Oath of Office to returning board member Carlos López. His term runs until December 2027. No need for board action (as noted on agenda).

2. Communication Check-In: The new district website is being loaded with info from the current website, the go-live date may be pushed back to mid-March. The building secretaries will have the responsibility to maintain their building's page. In the process of looking at areas in which to make cuts, ParentSquare will be kept as it has shown to be a successful method of communication between staff and families. The app can be used for field trip permission forms, intersession applications, progress and report cards, thus saving the need to print on paper. FinalForms is also under scrutiny and Skyward is being considered as a possible replacement. The school zone warning lights by the high school are not working properly. The county is responsible for them, is aware of the issue and is awaiting the appropriate parts to repair them.

3. Migrant STEM Camp: This is the second year that students in the Migrant program have an opportunity to attend a STEM camp. The purpose is to give these students access to STEM activities that they might not get otherwise. The camp takes place during Spring Break and students in the program are invited to attend. Cindy moved and Carlos 2nd to approve the Migrant STEM Camp request as presented; motion carried.

4. 2024-2025 Instructional Calendar Discussion: Conversations have begun with admin and the HEA calendar committee about intersessions and dates, and school start and end dates. Discussed intersession value: HS likes winter and spring dates as HS students can make up credits. Grade school teachers like the fall and spring: fall for bringing students up to par that assessed as being a bit behind after summer break, and spring is helpful for orientation to the next grade level and/or building. The Board would like to keep intersession for many reasons: we advocated for it, we were/are a model district for the state, we have parental support, and now other districts are following a similar model/schedule (despite the lack of [earmarked] funding). Basic Ed funds transportation and secretarial staff only. Discussed parental awareness of high school credits needed for graduation and will ask to have more communication to parents about this.

5. 2024-2025 Budget Discussion: Francis: We've talked for years about how the [budget] cliff was coming and now it is here. Shared a budget status report showing revenue and expense amounts over the past five school years (including 2023-24) and the amended projected budget status for the 2024-2025 school year. This next year's enrollment is projected to be significantly lower as kindergarten enrollment is down and class sizes moving up a grade are lower, the graduating class is larger. The resulting reduced [basic ed] state funding and reduced federal funding [ESSER related] plus increased costs add up to a significant shortfall and making up the difference from the fund balance could potentially reduce it to 5.5%. Another chart shared showed the projected student enrollment numbers for the next school year and teacher and para staffing options at each grade level and department were discussed. We have 14 teachers that are provisional or in non-continuing positions. Adjusting staffing positions and reducing staff will help close the budget shortfall but not eliminate it completely. A couple of other specific cost-cutting areas are a freeze on new curriculum purchases and reducing extra trips. The Board understands the situation and directed Mark and Francis to work on the budget cuts in the

areas that were discussed. A Special Meeting for further discussion, decision-making, and board approval was set for Monday, Feb. 12.

6. Capital Projects Update: We will start the completion of the HHS/HMS HVAC system upgrade in May-June which will mean no heat or cooling during that time but also means the system will be ready for the 2024-2025 school year. Still looking at when to start an upgrade to the track and field.

7. Healthy Kids Grant: Francis received the good news on Friday that HSD was awarded a Healthy Kids Grant for \$190K. It will be divided between Food Service, \$85K and the MWC playground \$105K.

8. Intersession Update: All is ready and on track for next week's session. Have very engaged teachers ready to go.

Francis and Mindy left the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

9. Superintendent Evaluation & Contract Review: The Board discussed each evaluation line item and reviewed them with Mark. Final copy to be typed and signed at next meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further items to discuss, Vice Chair David Barnes adjourned the February 5, 2024 AM Board Meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Chair

Secretary