

Highland School District #203
Board Work Study Session
Naches Heights Fire Station
September 13, 2021, 7:00 a.m.

The September 13, 2021 Board Work Study Session convened at 7:09 am. Present were Board Chair Nikki Keller, Members David Barnes, Lupita Flores, and Cindy Reed; Superintendent Mark Anderson, Director of Business and Operations Francis Badu, community member Tom Berndt and Recording Secretary Julie Notman. Board Member Carlos López was absent.

1. Fund Balance Review: Francis reported that he did some research about what minimum percent of Fund Balance other area districts maintain. Highland falls about in the middle at our current minimum of 7.5%. If the fund balance drops too low and the state apportionment is delayed for any reason, we wouldn't be able to cover our expenses. Francis looked at monthly expenses and reported that HSD has \$1.3 to \$1.9m expenses per month, averaging \$1.5 to \$1.6m of which 82-85% is payroll and benefits. Francis proposed we maintain the equivalent of one-month expenditures, about 9% of apportionment, as the minimum Fund Balance. The Board agreed and will vote on this at regular board meeting. Francis also shared a chart with enrollment, which has declined over the past 7-8 years. We have lost 156 FTS since 2013, equaling about \$675,935 in state funding.

2. 2022 Levy Committee: Francis reported that ESD 112 came to HSD to tour the facilities and visit with staff about needs. The board reviewed the list. We need three-four community members to be on the levy committee. The last bond began eight years ago and will be paid off next year. A Capital Projects levy or bond proposal to the voters in 2022 will begin collection in 2023 for 6 years at which time we'll be eligible for major [state] funding to replace a building. We also need to run an Operations levy in a couple of years. These two levies could be run together in 2022, one to begin collection in 2023 and the other in 2024. We will keep the overall percentage at the current rate. We must submit the levy proposal to the county by December 10 for a February 2022 vote.

3. Operations Update: Francis: There are four areas of funding that operate independently of each other: Levy and apportionment, Programs, Transportation, and Food Service, the latter of which tends to lose money. This is the first year we've gone to CEP where all students eat for free and families do not have to submit the traditional application. Yet, we need the financial information from the survey [which replaced the traditional application] for funding and to sustain other programs. CEP reimbursement is based on the number of students that eat and a lot of HS students go to the store. Need to brainstorm ideas as to how to encourage them to eat at school. We have been approved to buy a bus with ESSER funds and also plan to buy one with Transportation funds. We are still looking for a company or painter to update the sign on the side of the HHS gym and the state champion signs.

HJH Principal Don Strother joined the meeting at 7:45 a.m.

6. HJH Update: Don shared that the main goal for this year is student achievement, focusing on instruction and learning. In 2019-20, standards that students need to master were identified: what they need to know and be able to do to move to the next grade. Another goal is to have standards-based grading in place at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. The standards need to be written in student-friendly language and will represent what the student knows and if they know how to do it. We must provide feedback so the student knows what to do to reach the next level. They are focusing on how to build relationships, a positive culture in the district, buildings, and classrooms.

The classroom must have time for self-assessment and reflection, and time for the student to talk with the teacher. The block days allow room for SEL, intervention and relationship building.

Francis left the meeting at 8:14 a.m.

HHS Principal Brandon Jensen joined the meeting at 8:14 a.m.

7. HHS Update, CTE and Four-Year Plan: Brandon first shared that after talking with leadership they've designed an update to conferences that will allow parents time to visit with their student's teachers rather than just their advisor, who may or may not have that student in a subject class. They will have a conference day in late September and another in December, then during conference week in October they'll have full school days on Monday and Tuesday and half on Wednesday through Friday with scheduled conferences on two nights and an open format on a third night. The board is in support of this new plan.

Don left the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

Mr. Berndt left the meeting at 8:51 a.m.

Brandon reported that they are excited to have students back in the building as both students and teachers have struggled with the upheaval of the past 18 months. The students are not standing around but going straight to class and are wearing masks appropriately. There is more of a problem with dress code than pandemic restrictions. Goals for the year include improving academics to meet standards and SEL, MTSS and RTI, and effective instruction strategies. These are being addressed through Scottie Time, Intersessions, the Character Strong program, and the new block schedule.

The state has created nine pathways to graduation, all of which must align with 'School & Beyond'. CTE is important because it is one of those pathways. We offer three CTE options: Business & Marketing, Agriculture, and Art/Skilled & Technical. Brandon must submit a program evaluation and a four-year plan and explained the evaluation process and plan. He'd like to add a fourth CTE option: Computer Science. Both Sarah Crowston and John Straehle could be CTE endorsed. Brandon answered questions from the Board who are in agreement with the CTE program and Four-Year Plan.

MWC Principal Andrea Wickenhagen joined the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Brandon Jensen left the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

Andrea shared her goals as the new principal at MWC: Relationships, good communication, supporting all students with the UDL (Universal Design for Learning) strategies and Inclusionary Practices, implementing new MyView curriculum. She shared about the new Transitional Kindergarten, starting in January 2022, to move students from the preschool to a class that is more kindergarten-like to prepare them for kinder. This will increase pre-kinder spots for students and we hope to serve more families/students to prepare them for school. Open House will be on two nights, Sept 14 and 16, to limit the number of people in the building. The Annual Jog-a-thon fundraiser will also be modified to reduce the number of people gathered together. The October Intersession theme will be Life Around You. Conference week: MWC and TIS will stay with half-days all week during which intersession will be explained and students encouraged to attend.

Andrea left the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

TIS Principal Kelly Thorson joined the meeting at 10:36 a.m.

Kelly shared that they had a 98% turnout for the TIS orientation and it was a positive event. Holding it after school had begun meant the students were familiar with the new curriculum that was then shared with parents. The TIS Relay Race Fundraiser will be later this month and the

funds are used for PBIS rewards, playground equipment/upgrade and field trips. They've been gaining 2-3 new students each week. The new schedule is going very well. Concerns include helping students maintain distancing all day long and the lack of parent involvement in the Parent Association.

Kelly left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

5. PSE Bargaining Update: Mark shared that we hired Warren Hopkins from ERNN to assist with negotiations. They met last week and have another meeting scheduled in a couple of weeks.

4. COVID Related: Mark: With the recent governor school employee vaccination mandate, we are collecting vaccination records from staff and have about 50 employees that have not either submitted their vaccination record or requested an exemption request. Mark has to meet with each individual who submits a disability-related or religious belief accommodation request.

Director of SEL & Inclusionary Practices Courtney Sund, Director of Student Success Mindy Schultz, and Associate Director of Student Success Manuel Rangel joined the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

10. Student Services, SEL/IP, Student Success: Mindy reported that the main focus this school year will be on the new curriculum with ongoing training and support for the teachers. Success Maker is a Tier 2, Tier 3 intervention program but all students have access to it for enrichment or remedial help. Another goal is to have three successful Intersessions and with 69 teachers replying to a survey that they are willing to work, she anticipates having enough staff for all sessions. HJH teacher are excited about what options they can offer.

Courtney reported that it has been fun partnering with Mindy and Manuel. MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Supports) is a system to help student become a whole, successful person. Tier I reaches all students, utilizing PBIS, Tiers II and III target those with greater needs. Inclusionary Practices works on finding what gets in the way of a student being successful. This year's focus is on UDL: Universal Design for Learning.

Manuel reported that his goals include how to share info with parents so they understand how the school [district] works and the planning involved in creating a successful educational system. He would like to have a CORE/PAC meeting every month. He has been going on home visits and feels those are going well in building trust.

Courtney and Manuel left the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Josh joined the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

11. AD Update and Proposal: Josh shared an agenda of topics and reported that after nearly a year of no sports, the fall season has kicked off with higher numbers turning out for Cross Country and Volleyball and higher numbers for junior high football. Soccer numbers are down a bit. Josh gave a facilities update: the gym floors need redone, the tennis courts need resurfaced and he presented an interest in purchasing an automatic/robotic field painter. He likes the new calendar in regard to sports and feels that students wearing masks has cut down on some discipline issues. How do we resolve the ASB deficit? Some sports don't have a parent booster group or sponsor tournaments to build funds. Brainstorming ideas: Local warehouses sponsor a game night-free tickets for entrants (with sponsor info on ticket or business card handed out), proceeds to sport, booster banners, programs with adverts, game day sandwich boards with plexiglass so sponsor advert can be changed, decals for cars, stickers.

12. Social Medica/Communications Update: Josh/Mindy: We need parent permission for students ages 13 and under to have their picture posted on Facebook. Check with legal and insurance about this. One goal for the district website is to have a 'celebration' posted each week.

Get info from buildings. Note that we are the Scotties. Update website to replace Scots with Scotties. Rebrand TIS to TES and change color back to crimson from the Tieton Tartan blue. The board reviewed the website and made a list of areas to update/complete.

Mindy, Josh and Julie left the meeting at 12:23 p.m.

13. Personnel Issue

Meeting over at 1:48 p.m.

Chair

Secretary