



Poudre School District Board of Education

2407 Laporte Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80521 • 970-490-3607

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from Board of Education Business/Work Session Meeting
August 27, 2019

DINNER SESSION - 5:30 PM

PRESENT: President Christophe Febvre, Vice President Rob Petterson; Directors DJ Anderson, Kristen Draper, Naomi Johnson and Carolyn Reed; Superintendent Sandra Smyser; Assistant Superintendents Todd Lambert and Scott Nielsen; Executive Directors Matt Bryant, Dave Montoya, Madeline Noblett, Dustin Reintsma and Victoria Thompson

ABSENT: None

LATE: Director Donovan arrived at 5:54 p.m.

The dinner session began at 5:30 p.m.

1.0 District Information and Board Discussion Topics

1.1 Wellington Boundary Issue

Planning Manager Brenden Willits provided information on a boundary issue in Wellington:

- Current resident is encroaching on PSD property.
- Encroachment was unknown to either party.
- Staff recommended PSD quick claim the property to the residential owner.
- Any legal fees accrued will be payed by the current resident.

Board discussion included:

- Recommendation was made to survey the west side of property.
- Current property owner waiting to rebuild and needs an answer soon.
- Board members gave approval for staff to move forward with a quick claim deed.

1.2 Legal Counsel

Executive Director of Human Resources Vicki Thompson provided an update on the hiring of in-house legal counsel:

- Job description was composed by Human Resources.
- Waiting for attorney Darryl Farrington to provide input on the job description.

1.3 Wellington Middle/High School Build

Planning Manager Brenden Willits provided an update on the Wellington Middle and High School Build:

- Town of Wellington expressed concerns regarding road improvements on adjacent properties, sidewalks, governmental immunity and other items.

- PSD legal counsel created a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on seven major topics:
 - groundwater
 - development plan and platting portion
 - off-site transportation
 - 24-inch sewer line
 - off-site water and sewer
 - storm water
 - adjacent roadway improvements.
- Memorandum of Understanding Agreement will be presented at the Wellington Town Council meeting tonight and will come before the Board of Education at the next meeting.
- Agreement is necessary to move forward and avoid delays.
- School districts have a review process rather than an approval process.

Board discussion included:

- County Road 9 will include a bike lane and sidewalk for student use.
- Important to be good neighbors as well as good stewards of taxpayer funds.
- Current lift station can handle flow north and west; PSD would contribute to any upsizing required due to increased flow.
- PSD staff oppose a contribution to a realignment of Highway 1.

2.0 Agenda Planning

2.1 Retreat Information

- Possibility of a book study for a spring retreat was discussed.
- Superintendent Smyser introduced the book "Influencer", stated the book coincides with work being done by PSD leadership and offered the book for loan.
- Board will not have a retreat on October 10.

2.2 Facebook Live Community Outreach

- First time trying this form of outreach.
- Staff proposed Saturday October 5 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. at the JSSC building.
- Funds will be provided from the Board budget.
- Attempts being made to minimize costs.

3.0 Committee Reports

3.1 URA Update

- Board members were encouraged to consider how information will be disseminated from the URA to the PSD Board after Director Febvre steps down from the committee.

3.2 Audit Committee Update

- Intake meeting occurred last week with a new partner from the external auditor.
- Process is just beginning.
- Auditor indicated they were impressed with the finance department.

3.3 Foundation Committee

- Retreat occurred with Superintendent Smyser and Madeline Noblett in attendance.
- Commitment to raising funds and helping children remains.
- Foundation needs more members.
- Defining position of Executive Director is important.

Dinner session ended at 6:20 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING/WORK SESSION - (BOARDROOM) – 6:30 PM

PRESENT: President Christophe Febvre, Vice President Rob Petterson; Directors DJ Anderson, Nate Donovan, Kristen Draper, Naomi Johnson and Carolyn Reed; Superintendent Sandra Smyser; Assistant Superintendents Todd Lambert and Scott Nielsen; Executive Directors Matt Bryant, Dave Montoya, Madeline Noblett, Dustin Reintsma and Victoria Thompson

ABSENT: None

LATE: None

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Febvre called the work session meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda

3.0 COMMUNITY COMMENT

Parent Todd Macey expressed concern about the review process for the health and wellness curriculum.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Personnel Action

4.2 2020-2021 SY Calendar

4.3 School-Based Student Fee Schedules

4.4 Contract for Natural Gas for FY2019-2020

4.5 Employee Self Insurance Expenditures (in excess of \$250,000)

4.6 Phone/Voice System Upgrade

Director Donovan moved to approve and adopt the recommended actions on the Consent Agenda.

Director Petterson seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Anderson, Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Johnson, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.1 2019 Mill Levy Election

Community Comment:

School Psychologist and parent Melanie Potyondy stated the mill levy is necessary to attract and retain talent, especially school psychologists, and shared a current position in the district is going unfilled due to low pay.

Teacher Mark Barlett shared that a teacher with ten years of experience and a master's degree brings home too little money to pay rent or mortgage in Fort Collins. PSD has the status of a top performing district but needs to offer a livable wage comparable to surrounding districts.

Susie McCollum expressed support for the mill levy override and yielded her time.

Teacher Kimberly Noel stated she loves her job and hopes young, passionate teachers will join the district due to increased pay through the mill levy.

Teacher and parent Skye Marsh thanked the Board for the opportunity to work in the District, stated she gives her all as a teacher because it is a calling and not just a job, and shared many teachers are having to work second and third jobs to make ends meet.

Teacher Montserrat Granados said new teachers in PSD often must decide between living with roommates or living outside of Fort Collins due to high prices and low wages. A mill levy override would help teachers feel valued and afford them an opportunity to make better financial decisions.

Parent and former speech therapist Kim Dickson recounted multiple conversations with PSD alumni who credited PSD teachers with inspiration for a strong life path and stated teachers should be able to make the money necessary to live in our community.

Parent Vanessa Hayward stated her family chose to move to Fort Collins knowing taxes were higher because quality education will give her children better opportunities. As a homeowner she is more than happy and honored to pay the proposed mill levy tax.

Teacher and PSD alumni Amy Heeley spoke about the need to move in with her parents to be a teacher due to high prices in Fort Collins combined with student loans. New teachers are choosing other districts due to increased pay.

Teacher Chris Glatfelter shared he became a teacher by incurring considerable debt and must work a second job to survive, adding that young teachers live month to month and do not find it sustainable to teach in Fort Collins right now.

Teacher and parent John Robinson stated students deserve to be in fully funded and functioning classrooms with teachers who aren't working multiple jobs and can focus on teaching children instead of all the other concerns surrounding low pay.

Community member Mike Gallagher said teachers deserve to get paid a living wage, students deserve a good mental health environment, and the community deserves a safe environment in our schools. As a property owner he wants to give the District more money but needs the mill levy to pass in order to contribute.

Teacher Brendan Gallagher reminded Board members of their request for teacher participation in the Boardroom and expressed appreciation for the attempt to mitigate a problem that is a State issue.

PEA President Tom List presented a petition with 776 signatures asking the Board to put the mill levy override on the ballot.

Director Donovan moved that the resolution be read in its entirety.

Director Draper seconded the motion.

Director Donovan read the resolution aloud.

Board discussion included:

- Teachers are professionals and deserve to be paid as such.
- Mill levy override is a step in the right direction but the State needs to allocate more funds for education in general.
- Thank you to teachers and staff for taking time to share life stories.
- Board hopes to alleviate some of the burdens for staff through the mill levy.
- Educators do profound work growing the future citizens of our community and country.
- Tax would equal \$137 on a \$400,000 residential property.
- Local taxpayers have a history of financial support to schools.
- Success of mill levy will require full support of teachers, board members and community.
- Gratitude was expressed for the many staff involved in the mill levy work over the past year including all summer.
- Board approval of mill levy override addition to the ballot will give voters the option to support the education of children.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Anderson, Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Johnson, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0

Board recessed at 7:40 p.m.

Board reconvened at 7:46 p.m.

5.2 Legislative Agenda for 2019-2020 SY

Community Comment

Parent and community member Eric Sutherland stated the system for public education in the State of Colorado is flawed and the PSD Board of Education should be working toward a legislative policy agenda that clarifies tax increases as well as immunizes from diversion.

Director Petterson moved that the Board adopt the legislative agenda as shown in the packet and authorize the legislative subcommittee and our delegate Nate Donovan and our alternate delegate DJ Anderson to submit these legislative items to the CASB delegate assembly upcoming for inclusion in their legislative agenda.

Director Draper seconded the motion.

Board discussion included:

- Desire for specificity is understood.
- intent is to work with legislators in Denver to come up with appropriate solutions.
- Some taxes fund URAs, but the school district will get the full 18 million dollars of this mill levy if passed.
- Committee members are vested in working with legislators to see items enacted.
- Board members cannot write legislation.
- Discussion surrounding future legislation including tiffs and mill levy equalization occurred.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Anderson, Draper, Febvre, Johnson, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: Director Donovan

Motion passed 6-0

6.0 INFORMATIONAL REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 Wellington Learning System

Assistant Superintendents Todd Lambert and Scott Nielsen provided an update on the Wellington Learning System.

Board discussion included:

- Staff are doing great work.
- Cost will depend on family need and use of resources.
- Home visit curriculum requires staffing and costs will be incurred.
- Cheaper to invest in students early.
- Anticipated that multiple classrooms will open in two elementary schools and may be used as community resource areas for parents and students.
- Plan is to support parents as well as students.
- Wellington community will have opportunity to share ideas on need.
- Great opportunity for growth and success.
- Gratitude was expressed for creative vision.
- Creating a model curriculum will stimulate growth.
- Effort at ages 0-3 are with the parent.
- Parents who understand child development can utilize knowledge with other children.
- Establishing a relationship with parents is important.

6.2 Early Childhood Long Range Planning

Assistant Superintendent Todd Lambert and Director of Early Childhood Education Carolyn Martin provided the long range plan.

Board discussion included:

- Appreciation was expressed for out-of-the-box thinking to reach children as early as 6 months old.

- Home visit program encourages strong bonding between parents and children.
- Parents are the first and most enduring educators in a child's life.
- Home visit program takes about 10 staff members for 100 children.
- Check on family well-being is included in the visit.
- Once a week visit allows for tracking of measures assessments.
- Currently 100 students receive home visits.
- Community networks will likely be individualized based on needs.
- Closing the achievement gap is a likely byproduct of reaching students from ages 0-3.
- Visionary work is exciting and appreciated.
- Gratitude was expressed for the hard work involved with the program.

Board recessed at 9:22 p.m.

Board reconvened at 9:27 p.m.

7.0 WORK SESSION TOPICS

7.1 District Ends: Initial CMAS, PSAT, SAT Discussion

Assistant Superintendents Scott Nielsen and Todd Lambert provided an update on PSD performance measures.

Board discussion included:

- Scores are up across the district.
- Low participation marks are based on federal guideline.
- Math achievement for 5th grade is up, and administration is not concerned about lower growth percentages at this point.
- Social persuasion is occurring principal to principal, teacher to teacher.
- Gratitude was expressed to administration and principals for the hard work involved with improved test results.
- Statistical evidence shows PSD is closing the achievement gap.
- Empowerment of teachers comes from methodology among colleagues which results in improved students.

8.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports discussed.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

Board meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Brunner
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education