

**MADISON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, March 9, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kendra Horn. Rhonda Boyd, William Fabel, John Russ Hamilton, Kendra Horn, Therese Sutton (Zoom), Klint Todd, and William T. C. Wood were present. Principal Rodney Stout and Superintendent Micheal Wetherbee were present.

Visitors: Lauren Bleck-Tutsch, Annaliese Smail, Michelle Gasper, Kaylie Theis, Kord Anderson, Rachel Minert, Desaray Tipton, Laurie Bartoletti, Joe Gilman, Elizabeth Hamilton, Carolyn Hamilton, Ridgely Elser, Shawn Regnerus, Mackenzie Fabel, Sidney Mailey, Tiffany Hemphill, and April Gerth. Anthony Johnson, Destiny Howser, Estee Aiken, Judy Brady, Maria Bartoletti, Emilie Sayler, and Jenn Martens were present on Zoom.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: William T. C. Wood led the Board and the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Pledge

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Visitors from the Floor: None at this time. Public Comment

Parent Concern Regarding Threats of Violence in Rural Schools: Lauren Tutsch addressed the Board regarding bullying in school, discipline, and the negative impact on students in rural areas as opposed to urban areas, and provided handouts on the statistics. Annaliese Smail addressed the Board regarding her disappointment in the District's handling of some student discipline issues.

REPORTS:

STUDENT COUNCIL: Student Council President Mackenzie Fabel reported that Honor Roll students would be attending a ski trip at Maverick Mountain on Thursday, March 11; varsity track practice will start on Monday, March 15; FFA members will compete in District CDE's in Missoula on March 26, and State FFA will be held in Billings April 7-10; FCCLA has qualified for Nationals this summer. Student Council

JUMPSTART KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM: Laurie Bartoletti provided the Trustees with early kindergarten data from neighboring schools; April Gerth spoke to her positive experience with taking her son to Twin Bridges' full day early kindergarten program, and encouraged the Board to consider having an option for a full day program; Estee Aiken also addressed the board regarding the positive impact on students and communities from implementing structured, early childhood programs, and presented information on all-day programs. Jumpstart Kinder Program

CSCT FUNDING FOR ALTACARE PROGRAM: Carolyn Hamilton, AltaCare therapist, provided a handout (enclosed) and asked the Trustees to reach out to legislative representatives regarding their support of funding for the CSCT program, through which AltaCare operates; currently, AltaCare serves between 10%-20% of CSCT Funding-AltaCare

the student body; students are supposed to be enrolled in the program, but therapists can also intervene in crises; intervention and care reduces suicide, chemical dependency, and other risky behaviors; the State of Montana does not have enough care providers to meet the need for mental health care, especially in rural areas.

BOARD RETREAT: Kendra Horn summarized the board retreat, noting that it is a work session where the Trustees discuss school finances, budgeting, facilities and building needs, and long range planning.

Board Retreat

CONSIDERATION OF OUT OF STATE STUDENT TRIPS: (Moved by consensus)

Student Trips

- Senior Trip: Mackenzie Fabel presented the Board with the itinerary and financial information for a senior trip to Salt Lake City, UT March 25-28 (enclosed); Superintendent Wetherbee advised the Board that the District would help offset some of the increased travel costs that are due to COVID; William T. C. Wood moved to approve the senior trip to Salt Lake City, UT March 25-28 and John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- Band/Film Class Trip: Joe Gilman and Beth Hamilton presented the itinerary for the film class and band class trip to Idaho Falls, ID May 6-8 (enclosed); Therese Sutton moved to approve the Band/Film Class trip to Idaho Falls, ID May 6-8, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. Mr. Johnson mentioned that the eight students and two chaperones would be attending. The motion carried.
- FCCLA: Rachel Minert provided an itinerary for FCCLA Nationals in Nashville, TN June 26-July 3 (enclosed); three students will be attending to either volunteer or compete at the FCCLA National Convention; she also asked that the Board approve fundraising for additional per diem due to the higher cost of the destination; the current per diem rate allowed by District policy is \$30 and the rate for Nashville is \$61; additionally, she asked that the Board relax the current procedure of 2 students per room due to COVID, as only 3 students are attending. Rhonda Boyd moved to approve the FCCLA trip to Nashville, TN June 26-July 3, \$61 per diem, and 3 students per hotel room. William Fabel seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- Spanish Club: Kord Anderson updated the Board on the current trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands that was scheduled for June 2021; due to the current situation in Ecuador and feelings from the members who were traveling, they have moved their trip to summer 2022 to allow things to settle down and give them a better opportunity to fully experience the trip; he also presented an itinerary for a Spanish Club trip to Belize during the summer of 2023 (enclosed); the trip would be through EF Tours, and approval of the trip will enable the Spanish Club to begin fund raising this summer; the trips are valuable experience for the language aspect but also because students have the opportunity of interacting with different cultures. John Russ Hamilton moved to approve the Spanish Club trip to Belize in 2023 with EF Tours, and William Fabel seconded the motion. Discussion included, but was not limited to: band trips and Spanish Club trips normally occur in

alternate years, but the schedule will be different due to COVID; students have not signed up for Belize yet, as they are waiting for Board approval; some students who were planning to go the Galapagos will go to Belize instead. The motion carried.

BOARD GOALS AND TRAINING:

Sheridan School Board will provide the staffing structure to promote a diverse and well-rounded education for all students through the employment of highly qualified individuals.

Board Goals

Superintendent Wetherbee stated that the District does a good job, and pointed to the fact that we have low staff turnover; there are a lot of job opening around the state, and we are fortunate that we are able to attract good applicants.

OLD BUSINESS:

CONSIDERATION OF UPDATES TO EMERGENCY POLICIES 1900-1912 IN RESPONSE TO AND COMPLIANCE WITH CHANGES TO STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH AND EMERGENCY DIRECTIVES: The Board reviewed Policy 1905; the state attorney general has advised that a school board can do what is best for the district; if a health board directive is not approved by its county commissioners, it is not binding; the Board addressed Policy 1905 at the Feb. 17 Special Meeting, and stated that the policy is in place unless it is superseded by an order from the county level; since the current health board directive hasn't been approved by the county commissioners, it can be considered a recommendation, and there is no need to revise Policy 1905. There was no motion.

1900 Series
Policies

NEW BUSINESS:

OUT OF DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS: The Board reviewed one attendance agreement for an out of district student; John Russ Hamilton moved to approve the agreement as presented, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the attendance agreement for the Clark family was approved.

Out of District
Attendance

CONSIDERATION OF ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS UNDER EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Principal Stout advised the Board that there are two students in the Jumpstart Kindergarten program; parents are happy with it, and the students are doing well; William T. C. Wood moved to approve enrollment of the students under exceptional circumstances, and John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Enrollment
under
Exception
Circumstances

HIRING AND/OR RESIGNATION: The Board reviewed Carolyn Hamilton's resignation letter from her bus driving position after the current school year. William Fabel moved to accept the resignation, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Hiring/Resigna
tion

Superintendent Wetherbee recommended hiring Becky Larsen as assistant varsity track coach. William T. C. Wood moved to approve hiring Becky Larsen as

assistant varsity track coach, and Rhonda Boyd seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Superintendent Wetherbee recommended hiring Mike Grover as assistant middle school track coach. John Russ Hamilton moved to approve hiring Mike Grover as assistant middle school track coach, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF RENEWAL/NONRENEWAL OF TENURED TEACHERS: The Board reviewed the enclosed list of tenured teachers, and Superintendent Wetherbee recommended renewing their contracts as presented. John Russ Hamilton moved to approve renewal of the tenured teachers as listed, and William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the following tenured teachers were renewed: Kord Anderson, Laurie Bartoletti, Rodney Braaten, Ed Burke, Sara Decker, Paula Elser, Michelle Gasper, Destiny Howser, Lyra Hyndman, Anthony Johnson, Heather Kenworthy, Jennifer Konopacki, Rachel Minert, Shawn Regnerus, Janelle Schmit, and April Wuelfing.

Renewal/Nonr
enewal
Tenured
Teachers

PRINCIPAL CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS: Principal Stout distributed a proposal for his 2021-22 contract asking for a 1.5% increase on the "base" portion of his salary which corresponds to the increase in the matrix for certified staff, and an increase to the insurance portion of his contract which corresponds with premium rate increases when they are released by the insurance provider (enclosed). John Russ Hamilton moved to approve the proposed contract amount for Principal Stout's 2021-22 contract. Klint Todd seconded the motion. Further discussion included: insurance rates are expected at the end of the month and may be anywhere between 2% and 9%. The motion carried.

Principal
Contract

RATIFY SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT: William T. C. Wood moved to approve the superintendent contract for 2021-22 with corrections to the dates and term. John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Ratify Supt.
Contract

CONSIDERATION OF OUT OF STATE STUDENT TRIPS: Previously addressed.

CONSIDERATION OF JUMPSTART KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM FY22: The Board received letters from Sheila Trischman and Laurie Bartoletti supporting a full-day Jumpstart Kindergarten program; the Board discussed the program options in depth at the Board Retreat; there is enough funding through additional ANB and Title I for a half-day program; the general fund can comfortably support a full-day program; this decision would affect 2021-22, and the staff is flexible to the type of program; a full-time program would likely require an additional paraprofessional depending on enrollment; other cost considerations will include construction to modify the classroom to accommodate higher enrollment; the Board is using caution in comparing this program to those with tuition or private funding; the Board sees the need to be flexible; some parents will not bring students for full a day, so there will need to be an option for half day program; even if students attend a full day

FY22
Jumpstart
Kindergarten

program, the District is eligible to receive half the ANB funding from the State; the community has need for child care and early-kindergarten programs; since there is no longer a local preschool, and Trustees see that filling the gap may feed into the increased ANB in the future; William Fabel moved to offer a full day early kindergarten program following our K-12 school calendar in the 2021-22 school year, with the option of half-days. John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion. Discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: the difference in salary for the certified position from .714 FTE to 1.0 FTE is approximately \$10,000 per year. The motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF RESTRUCTURING DISTRICT IT POSITION: Superintendent Wetherbee and Destiny Howser offered an overview of the current IT structure, and included Destiny Howser's letter from a few years ago; the information is still current, and ISM is still being utilized to provide additional tech support and infrastructure background and maintenance; Mrs. Howser has one prep per day for teaching, and an additional prep for technology; she is also paid an hourly rate for technology hours outside of her teaching contract; as the hands-on tech person, she can trouble shoot most problems and rarely needs to outsource to ISM; the District has added so much to infrastructure in the past few years; Mrs. Howser has a great working relationship with ISM; ISM provides a lot of resources and have done a great job supporting all of our new devices; software updates, security monitoring, firewall and many other subscription are provided through a monthly service contract; the possibility of hiring an in house IT position and sharing that employee with the Twin Bridges School would enable the District to spend that money locally on a salary instead of spending the money in Helena, where it doesn't contribute to the community; currently, with the support of ISM and the ability to work remotely on District computers, the one-hour tech prep during the school day is usually sufficient to meet the needs; Mrs. Howser rarely needs time outside of the school day, except during the summer when she is able to focus on larger projects; she is more comfortable with her position now, and feels that the District is in a good place technology-wise; an individual hired for IT may be busy at any one time, but probably wouldn't have enough work to fill their schedule; if the District is good where we are, there is no need to change what we are doing; the prospective salary for a full time IT coordinator could be approximately \$54k per year plus benefits; William Fabel moved to table the issue until the next meeting to allow Superintendent Wetherbee time to do some more research. William T. C. Wood seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IT Position

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT FY22 NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE/DECREASE NON-VOTED LEVIES: The Board reviewed the enclosed tables for the FY22 Notice of Intent to Increase/Decrease Non-Voted Levies. William T. C. Wood moved to adopt the elementary notice using prior year taxable values, and William Fabel seconded the motion. The motion carried. John Russ Hamilton moved to adopt the high school notice using prior year taxable values, and Rhonda Boyd seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Intent to
Inc/Dec FY22
Levies

RESOLUTION TO SET ELEMENTARY GENERAL FUND MILL LEVY AMOUNTS: The Board reviewed the enclosed FY22 general fund budget worksheets; the elementary District has the opportunity to ask the voters to approve an elementary general fund levy for \$30,935; Superintendent Wetherbee recommended asking voters for the full amount as it will enable the District to have a budget limit that is about \$2,000 more than the current year's budget. William T. C. Wood moved to set the elementary general fund mill levy at the maximum allowable amount of \$30,935. William Fabel seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Mill Levy

READING AND/OR APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) MINUTES:

William Fabel moved to approve the minutes the Feb. 9 safety committee and regular meeting and the Feb. 17 special meeting as presented. John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Minutes

REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLS AND EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS:

William T. C. Wood moved to approve the March warrant list as presented, including warrants #109351 through #109393 totaling \$71,534.39, and John Russ Hamilton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Expenditures

EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS: The Board previously discussed the high school entrance and the elementary playground drainage at the Board Retreat; we are waiting for a second bid on the elementary heat exchanger.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

Principal Stout reported on the following:

- Attendance – K-6=95% 7-8=97%, 9-12-91% K-12=94%;
- He listed February students of the month;
- Teacher evaluations have been completed for all tenured teachers, and non-tenured teachers will be completed this month;
- The 5th and 6th grades are working on CO2 powered dragsters, and the 1st grade will begin working on their air powered cars; races will follow when the student complete their cars;
- The 3rd quarter ends March 18;
- The 4th Quarter unit theme for grades K-6 is space and rockets;
- The math curriculum review is complete and new math curriculum is on the way.
- See enclosed report.

Principal's Report

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Wetherbee began by welcoming Mr. Pierson's new baby, and then reported on the following:

- Summer maintenance projects are upcoming, and lawn maintenance supplies have been purchased;
- Current enrollment is 65 HS students, 24 MS students, and 94 elementary students, for a total of 183;

Supt. Report

- He has had 5 disciplinary interactions with 7th-8th grade students this month and 18 for the year; he has had 2 disciplinary interactions with high school students this month, and 4 for the year;
- Testing went really smoothly, and we are currently working on connectivity in the south mezzanine for AltaCare or anyone else who needs to utilize that space;
- Basketball is over, and track will be starting; there will be approximately 12 middle school students participating in track, which is the lowest number we have seen;
- Twin Bridges School will be discussing the prom at their board meeting tonight, and he will follow up with Mr. Kaiser;
- Close Up is working on finding a way for seniors to go on a modified trip this spring;
- Mr. Braaten's Ag and shop classes are building a bull skeleton; they have cleaned the bones and are rearticulating it;


ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:38 p.m., William Fabel moved to adjourn the meeting.

Adjourn

The minutes of this meeting were recorded and transcribed by Rebecca E. Larsen, District Clerk.


CLERK


CHAIRMAN