

# CHURCHILL COUNTY BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Fallon, Nevada

## REGULAR MEETING

September 8, 2016

### CALL TO ORDER

President Hendrix called to order the regular meeting of the Churchill County School District Board of Trustees at 7:00 p.m. at the Churchill County School District Administration Office, 690 South Maine Street, Fallon, Nevada.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Aaron Holt, high school teacher, led the pledge of allegiance.

### VERIFICATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

President Hendrix confirmed the posting of the agenda pursuant to NRS.

### ROLL CALL

#### Trustees Present

Trustee Clay Hendrix, President  
Trustee Greg Koenig, Vice President  
Trustee Carmen Schank, Clerk  
Trustee Matt Hyde, Acting Clerk  
Trustee Rich Gent  
Trustee Tricia Strasdin  
Trustee Kathryn Whitaker

#### Others Present

Dr. Sandra Sheldon, Superintendent  
Sharla Hales, District Legal Counsel  
Phyllys Dowd, Director of Business Services  
Kimi Melendy, Director of Educational Services  
Debra Shyne, Secretary  
*(Interested Staff/Community Members per Attached List)*

### REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. Sheldon requested item "A" removed from new business. Trustee Gent made a motion to adopt the agenda as indicated, seconded by Trustee Hyde. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

### SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

#### **A. Churchill County High School Teacher Mr. Holt and his students will present to the Board a cross curricular project they worked on called "Animal Ark."**

Dr. Sheldon reported that the Board requested principals provide a report twice each year regarding programs occurring at their schools. From the high school, Mr. Holt and several students were present to report on a cross-curricular project and Mr. Marsh and several students were present to report on their recent trip to Japan.

Mr. Marsh reported that his Japanese class had a layover in China for thirteen hours on their way to Japan. Mr. Marsh passed out a Hiroshima Times newspaper article about their visit to Japan with some quotes from his students, written in Japanese. Ally Steele, Kristen Marsh, Tyler Marsh, and Jay Horning reported on their experiences from their trip to Japan.

Mr. Aaron Holt and his students provided a PowerPoint presentation including a video from their cross curricular project where they visited the Animal Ark in Reno in November of 2015. Mr. Holt explained the purpose for the trip and students Jacob Bake, Kris Trott, and Jade Bauman reported on their experiences.

**B. Ms. Kimi Melendy, Director of Educational Services, will provide an update regarding the Churchill Virtual Program.**

Kimi Melendy stated that the District is now calling their distance education program the Churchill Virtual Program, and she was in the process of putting together a brochure. Ms. Melendy reported that 249 students, grades 1 through 12, are using the Churchill Virtual program in some capacity (part time credit retrieval or full-time). Twelve elementary students are home school students and one is from LOGOS. Ms. Melendy reported that 12 elementary students, 15 students grades 6 to 8, and 221 students grades 9-12, use the A+ program.

Ms. Melendy is working with the A+ company regarding training for teachers. Dr. Sheldon stated that the District is looking at other more interactive programs as well.

Ms. Melendy reported that the high school transcript would have an "OL" associated with these courses designating online and students must meet with counselors to enroll in these classes. Students are counseled to check with the university they might attend to see if online courses meet their criteria. It was noted that some NIAA schools and other schools do not accept online credits.

Trustee Schank asked if the A+ software was collecting data on Churchill County students. Ms. Melendy stated that they do not. The data collect, such as attendance and grades, are entered into Infinite Campus. The teacher of record inputs attendance and grades.

Trustee Hendrix suggested utilizing Mr. Rutledge's class to create a U-Tube video for the Churchill Virtual Program.

Dr. Sheldon also reported that over 2,000 letters were sent to parents providing them with information to access the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Secretaries from schools will be trained how to assist parents with the portal. If a parent has three children in our District, they can see all three accounts and can place money on each of their food accounts. Dr. Sheldon also reported that the District has a Facebook account. Dr. Sheldon asked board members to view the District's Facebook page and to "like" the District.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- A. Sunday-Tuesday, September 25-27, National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) Fall Conference, Hyatt Regency, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.**
- B. Friday-Saturday, November 18-19, Nevada Association of School Boards Annual Conference, Atlantis Casino Resort Spa, Reno**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Recommended Personnel Action (Attachment A)**
- B. Approval of Vouchers**
- C. Approval of August, 2016, Payroll**
- D. Approval of August 25, 2016, Regular Board Meeting Minutes**
- E. Approval of the Churchill County School District Test Security Plan 2016-2017**
- F. Approval of Students 16-15 to enter the General Education Development (GED) program**
- G. Approval of 2016 Churchill County High School Track and Field Team Fundraiser – Christmas Tree/Wreath Sales**

Trustee Gent made a motion, seconded by Trustee Hyde, **to approve Consent Agenda Action Items A-G as provided.** Ms. Dowd reported an error on the Personnel Action form which indicated that the kindergarten teacher was hired under class size reduction funds, which is not the case. Class size reduction funds can only hire students in grades one through five. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

## **REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Trustee Schank reported on her attendance at the Churchill County Education Association's negotiation session. Trustee Schank also reported that Stacy Wilke from Carson City will fill the vacant position on the NIAA board.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. For Discussion and Possible Action: Approval for Dr. Sheldon to proceed with a Community Perception Survey.**

Dr. Sheldon stated she provided information about the Center for Educational Effectiveness for Board members to review at the last board meeting. Half of the cost (\$2,500) will be out of Title I dollars and the other half (\$2,500) will be out of the general fund. It was noted that this would be paid for out of the superintendent's budget, professional services line item.

Dr. Sheldon reported that the surveys take a look at the school from the perception of secondary students, staff, and parents regarding how well the schools and district are doing their jobs. The survey could be given one year later to see if there is any growth in the areas focused on by schools/district. Surveys could be administered during parent conferences, could be emailed, or information sent via automated calls to notify parents of the survey. Additional efforts will be used to include high school parents in the survey.

The Board and staff discussed the purpose behind the survey and how the surveys would be implemented.

### Public Comment:

Amanda Lister, high school counselor, stated that the District has one of the most educated staff communities and would rather look inside our community as many employees have master's degrees. It would be more valuable for staff to see their own strengths and weaknesses and build key relationships at the same time instead of spending \$5,000 on a survey.

Elena Marsh, math teacher at the high school, commented that high school students do project-based learning the high school has an AP stats class, and seniors in English are required to complete six hours of community service and write research papers. This would be a perfect opportunity for students to create a survey and the AP stats class could analyze the data. Ms. Marsh reported that the high school has tried to survey high school students but those have been extremely biased surveys.

Dr. Sheldon stated Elena Marsh was right; students are capable of putting together a survey and analyze the results. The benefit of this survey is the fact that these questions have been highly vetted over many years with many different school districts across the Pacific Northwest as well as the data has been used for improvement in school performance. Dr. Sheldon stated that she used the survey for seven years in her former district and it does change the culture of the district. Trustee Schank wanted to survey parents about uniforms, which could be added. The purpose for this survey is to inform the District as to where they are in the perceptions of the our parents, students, and staff.

Trustee Koenig stated that for the minimal sum of \$2,500 we would have a company who has run this survey thousands of times on numerous school districts who have vetted out the inaccurate questions. We should not expect that high school students could come up with a survey that is on par with a professional company. The teachers could come up with something, but there will be a bias there. If teachers spent their time creating a survey would they do it on their own time for free or want a stipend? This alternative could cost more than \$2,500. We are not likely to get a better survey than paying this company. Trustee Koenig made a motion to **approve spending \$2,500 for the survey out of the general fund**. Trustee Whitaker commented that students can analyze the data afterwards and write reports. Trustee Whitaker agreed with Trustee Koenig's reasoning to go with a vetted company. President Hendrix commented that students can present to the board reasons why the data is not valid. Trustee Schank stated that one of the District's goals is community engagement, so this needs to be advertised to parents, community, and staff to let them know that we want to hear their feedback. There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. For Discussion Only: Update regarding Infinite Campus Parent Portal.**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

### **B. For Discussion Only: Patty Fleming will show the Board how she uses Google Classroom to work with Teachers on the Nevada Educator Performance Framework.**

Patty Fleming stated that she started to learn about Google Classroom when learning about blended learning format. Ms. Fleming and her coworker from regional professional development decided to offer a graduate level class for teachers to earn their ESL endorsement. The State of Nevada provided \$74,000 to offer four classes and they are using a blended format, where half of the instruction is face-to-face and the other half is online. Nate Waite has assisted Ms. Fleming with Google Classroom. Ms. Fleming reported that Mr. Waite has worked tirelessly to help the middle school with Chromebooks.

Ms. Fleming demonstrated Google Classroom for the Board and audience.

**C. For Discussion and Possible Action: Approval to send two board members to the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS).**

Trustee Whitaker made a motion, seconded by Trustee Gent, *to approve sending Greg Koenig and Matt Hyde to the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, NAFIS Conference, September 25-27.* There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

**D. For Discussion and Possible Action: Action to ratify the 2016-2017 School Year Tentative Agreement between the Churchill County School District and the Churchill County Education Association, including fiscal impact data.**

Phyllis Dowd reported on the major changes to the contract, also highlighted in her memo in BoardBook.

Trustee Koenig made a motion, seconded by Trustee Hyde, *to ratify the 2016-2017 School Year Tentative Agreement between the Churchill County School District and the Churchill County Education Association, including fiscal impact data.* There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

**E. For Discussion and Possible Action: Approval to hire a Parent Community Engagement Coordinator to assist with public relations, social media, and community outreach.**

Dr. Sheldon stated that this position would replace Heidi Woolsey in Educational Services, who recently took a position at the middle school. Dr. Sheldon would like to table this agenda item for now until the duties of this position are more defined. This position would be paid for out of Title I with a little bit out of the general fund. Debra Shyne has been maintaining the District Facebook page and the District website and would like to continue. The goal is to get more parent and community outreach and promote the District's schools in a positive manner. This agenda item will return at the next board meeting.

**F. For Discussion and Possible Action: The Board shall consider all efforts made by the school district to fill the position through other means and designate our vacant teaching positions as critical positions pursuant to NRS 286.523.**

Dr. Sheldon provided the Board with NRS 286.523, which deals with employment of retired employees where employment does not affect the retired employees' retirement income. Dr. Sheldon read from the NRS: "Positions for which there are critical labor shortages must be determined in an open public meeting held by the designating authority as follows." The District qualifies under 4(d): "The board of trustees of each school district shall designate positions within the school district for which there are critical labor shortages."

Dr. Sheldon stated that Phyllis Dowd provided a memo in BoardBook regarding sixteen open positions in the District, which are definitely critical shortages, not only in this District but across the state.

Ms. Dowd reported that the District has an extreme need for teaching positions. The District currently has eight long-term substitutes in vacant positions and has funding for an additional seven classrooms with class size reduction funds, but cannot open those positions because the District cannot fill the current open positions. The intent is to approach retired teachers and encourage them to come back to work for the District at no

penalty to their retirement. Retired teachers would have options that our current staff do not have for their retirement plan. The retiree could make the decision when returning to the District in a critical labor shortage position to participate in PERS where the District would contribute 28% for their position into PERS, which would add to the employee's retirement, unless the employee is already at the maximum retirement 75%/90%. If the District hired someone who is already at the maximum retirement, they could elect two other options. The retiree could participate in social security, at a lower contribution rate for the District at 6.2% instead of 28%, or they could elect to participate in a tax-deferred investment plan for retirement (403B) where they would be eligible for the same contribution rate that the District would have contributed to PERS, which can be placed in their investment plan. Retirees would have their PERS retirement, their normal pay on the salary schedule, and they could have 28% going into an investment plan, which they could immediately pull money out if they are at least 59 ½ years old. That is the enticement to get retired teachers to come back to work for the District. For the District, we get a well-trained classroom teacher back in the classroom and we do not have the inconsistency with long-term substitutes. Ms. Dowd knew of one substitute in the classroom who cannot substitute all year, which affects consistency in the classroom. Dr. Sheldon could elaborate on the reasons why we strive for consistent teaching staff in the classrooms.

Ms. Dowd reported the PERS does have some requirements that need to be discussed, also summarized in her memo. Ms. Dowd addressed each of the requirements at the meeting. The Board has the authority to designate these positions as critical labor shortages. The reason why they are critical to the District is that we have a history of turnover. There were eighteen retirements and resignations last school year. Last school year, the District had four long-term elementary teaching positions filled by substitutes as the District could not find licensed staff to fill those positions. The District has competition from surrounding districts. The District has a \$3,000 hiring bonus, paid on their first month's paycheck. The District's sister districts have a higher hiring bonus and are offering a higher level on the salary tables. The District is hoping that at some point in the near future the District can better compete, but the District is not there yet. The Nevada Department of Education has contacted the U. S. Department of Education and the statewide academic disciplines or subject matter that the federal government considers a shortage is the same. In Nevada it is our elementary teachers plus special education positions plus quite a few other teaching positions. The District sent principals on recruiting trips out of state and has scheduled several more recruiting trips in October. The District has advertised through several national teacher hiring websites, has recruited with other school districts within the state to let them know of our openings, and human resources has worked really hard to try and fill these positions. Ms. Dowd recommended that the Board of Trustees designate 14 elementary teaching positions Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> grade and one elementary special education teaching position as critical labor shortage positions.

President Hendrix asked Ms. Hales if the memo in BoardBook satisfied the requirements of subsection 6, which states, "A designating authority that designates a position as a critical need position shall submit to the System its written findings which support that designation." Ms. Hales suggests that the motion include the following language: "based on the memo included in BoardBook and Ms. Dowd's presentation at this meeting, I move that we designate (the motion). Incorporate in the motion Ms. Dowd's memo and presentation.

The Board does not have an obligation to verify the facts presented.

President Hendrix stated that he did not analyze the memo to the statute to see that the memo satisfies all of the requirements of the statute. Ms. Hales stated that the motion would do that same thing, that to the extent her memo and her presentation answers those questions, the Board can approve the motion.

President Hendrix stated that his next concern is that the District has to submit written findings to the "System". All of the finding have to be in written form as opposed to on the record and in the memo. Ms. Hales stated that Debra Shyne will transcribe what has been said, and based on the motion and the transcription and the memo from BoardBook, those all become the Board's findings.

Ms. Dowd stated that she has had quite a few conversations with PERS over the past week and they stressed that the minutes need to be recorded succinctly on the conversation, PERS talked about how they want to counsel the retiree if they come back to work with the District so the retiree understands all of the ramifications on the retirement side of the equation as well as the District's reporting of contributions to PERS.

Trustee Schank asked if Churchill is the only district doing this. Ms. Dowd stated that she did not know if other districts have pursued this but she would imagine so based on the list from the U.S. Department of Education, as we are not the only district who are short teachers.

Ms. Dowd stated that Trustee Whitaker previously called her and asked if this has been done in the past. Ms. Dowd reported that a principal at the high school, Robbin Pedrett, took one of these positions and she elected to receive the 403B plan.

Trustee Schank asked if there is interest by teachers in the community and anyone has talked with them. Ms. Dowd reported that Keith Boone has been talking with two retired teachers and one has contacted human resources to ask questions. The District can't move forward until the Board makes a decision. The decision becomes effective upon the Board's vote tonight and the District could hire someone tomorrow.

Trustee Whitaker asked if notification would be word of mouth, if the District has a plan, or if the District would send letters out to all retirees. Dr. Sheldon stated that the District can contact retirees and let them know this is an option. Even in this situation, the District has the option to hire or decline to hire. Just because a retiree would like the position, it does not mean they will automatically get the position.

Trustee Gent asked how long the position would last. Ms. Dowd stated that this would be a maximum of a two-year period from the day of designation. Dr. Sheldon stated that due to the fact that there is a nation-wide shortage of teachers it would not surprise her if in two years the District would be designating more positions as critical need.

Trustee Schank asked if because it is public monies if the District would have to notify all retirees to treat them equally or send out a memo. Trustee Schank stated that she did not think the District could call certain teachers and invite them.

Dr. Sheldon stated that the District would send out notification that the District has declared these critical areas and invite retirees if they have interest. But also, in this

situation, the District does need to call and recruit people because the District is desperate. Dr. Sheldon stated that she spoke for a half hour with a mom at a bus stop who just moved into the area and taught first grade for five years. Dr. Sheldon stated that the District really needs her to come in and if she doesn't want to work full time, she could work as a substitute. The District will actively recruit individuals as well as send out a global all call.

Trustee Whitaker asked if several retirees were interested what would be the practice. Do they have to reapply and interview?

Dr. Sheldon stated that the retired employee would have to fill out a shortened version of an application, as most have worked for the District in the past and the District has that information, so a shortened application would indicate the position the retiree is interested in. The principals would then talk with the individuals who were interested in the positions. This would not be the same as a competitive interview process, but more of an interactive conversation. PERS will talk with them to be sure they understand what they are stepping into filling a critical vacancy position.

Trustee Schank made a motion, seconded by Trustee Whitaker, ***that we consider the efforts to fill the position through other means and designate our vacant teaching positions as critical positions pursuant to NRS 286.523, based upon the memo included in BoardBook and Ms. Dowd's presentation in this meeting.*** There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

#### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AS REQUESTED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND CLARIFICATION OF REQUESTED AGENDA ITEM**

Trustee Hyde requested a report to compare where Chartwells is at now as compared to last year with lunch sales and how Chartwells is doing in general.

Trustee Schank requested an agenda item regarding sending a Trustee to the October 11 International School Safety Institute Conference as they are presenting information regarding digital data mining.

#### **SET DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT BOARD "AGENDA SETTING" MEETING**

Agenda setting was set for Monday, 09/12, at 5:00 p.m. with Trustees Hendrix, Koenig, and Schank attending.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Gent made a motion, seconded by Trustee Whitaker, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:06 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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Carmen, Schank, Clerk of the Board

Prepared by Debra Shyne