

# CHURCHILL COUNTY BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Fallon, Nevada

## REGULAR MEETING

January 25, 2017

### CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Whitaker called to order the regular meeting of the Churchill County School District Board of Trustees at 6:01 p.m. at the Churchill County School District Administration Office, 690 South Maine Street, Fallon, Nevada.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and CHARACTER COUNTS WORD "RESPONSIBILITY"

Payton Smith and Amelia Bateman, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from Numa Elementary, led the pledge of allegiance and spoke a few words about the Character Counts Word "Responsibility."

### VERIFICATION OF POSTING OF AGENDA

Vice President Whitaker confirmed the posting of the agenda pursuant to NRS.

### ROLL CALL

#### Trustees Present

Trustee Kathryn Whitaker, Vice President  
Trustee Carmen Schank, Clerk  
Trustee Matt Hyde, Acting Clerk  
Trustee Rich Gent  
Trustee Tricia Strasdin  
Trustee Phil Pinder

#### Trustees Absent

Trustee Clay Hendrix, President

#### Others Present

Dr. Sandra Sheldon, Superintendent  
Sharla Hales, District Counsel  
Phyllis Dowd, Director of Business Services  
Kimi Melendy, Director of Educational Services  
Derild Parsons, Director of Special Services  
John Johnson, Principal, Northside

*(Interested Staff/Community Members per Attached List)*

### REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Trustee Gent made a motion, seconded by Trustee Schank, to adopt the agenda; the motion passed unanimously.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

### SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

- A. **John Johnson, Northside Early Learning Center (NELC Principal), will present information about the mission of NELC, how NELC has developed a foundation for students to become good learners, and how NELC works to develop the relationships between family, community, and school to create a partnership that will follow each child through their education.**

John Johnson reported that Northside Early Learning Center (NELC) provides the foundation for students in the Churchill County School District. Mr. Johnson reported on the variety of community organizations that have visited students at NELC such as a veterinarian, ambulance attendees, local police, state patrol and others. Mr. Johnson highlighted classroom activities and parent engagement opportunities, which included visitors from community organizations, family nights, field trips, reading programs, and other ways in which the school communicates with parents.

Trustee Gent asked about parent involvement. Mr. Johnson stated that parent involvement started out great but has waned since the beginning of the school year. Instead of having a parent involvement meeting in the evening, Mr. Johnson is trying an afternoon event on January 26 to see if it attracts more parents.

Trustee Strasdin asked what kinds of assessments are used at Northside. Mr. Johnson reported that NELC uses the Brigance Inventory, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, and a school created assessment, which assesses numbers, letter recognition, basic shapes, etc.

Trustee Strasdin asked Mr. Johnson what are NELC's needs. Mr. Johnson stated that at a recent faculty meeting they determined that shade structures for playground equipment would be nice, as it gets hot in August, September, and May. NELC would also benefit from concrete bollards in front of the playgrounds, as a safety measure, to protect students.

Mr. Johnson explained some of the academic and social skills expectations of NELC's pre-kindergarten students and confirmed that assessments measure their goals.

Dr. Sheldon reported that teachers sit with students for breakfast and lunch, which helps students learn table manners and social skills. This has proven very beneficial to students.

Vice President Whitaker commented that the Nevada Association of School Boards' recent newsletter article regarding childhood education is an excellent article to read.

Mr. Johnson welcomed Board members to visit NELC and read to students, as it is very rewarding.

**B. Report regarding the salary, benefits, and term of the Community and Parent Engagement Coordinator (written report provided).**

Dr. Sheldon directed the Board to a written document in BoardBook and asked if the Board had any questions. There were no questions.

**C. Update regarding District-related matters.**

There was no additional information to convey to the Board.

**BUSINESS SERVICES UPDATE**

- A. Budget to Actual Report (written report provided)**
- B. Quarterly Workers' Compensation (written report provided)**
- C. Quarterly Student Funds Report (written report provided)**
- D. Quarterly Board Budget Report (written report provided)**
- E. Quarterly Board Bond Report (written report provided)**
- F. Quarterly Board Travel Reports (written reports provided)**

- G. Annual Investment Report (written report provided)**
- H. Comparison of Food Service Revenue and Meal Counts (written report provided)**
- I. Update regarding business related items**

Phyllis Dowd provided an update regarding the recent administrative review of the Food Service program. The review team was from the State of Nevada Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Program and they were pleased with staff willingness, facilities, and meal quality. The review team reviewed Lahontan Elementary and Churchill County Middle School. The review team ate breakfast and lunch at the schools as part of their review. The Food Service program has shown progress since the last review three years prior. The program needs a few minor tweaks, but considering this is the first year for Chartwells, Ms. Dowd, and Carolyn Grady, staff is pleased with the results. Ms. Dowd stated that staff will clean up some documentation. Five meals will not be claimed, as they are not considered a reimbursable meal as juice was not on meal tray at Lahontan. The review team will issue a formal letter within 30 days and the District has 30 days to respond.

Trustee Schank asked Ms. Dowd about the workers' compensation fund, as the District is self-insured. Ms. Dowd explained the report in BoardBook and stated that the District is performing as expected with the self-insured program.

Ms. Dowd explained the report in BoardBook regarding food service comparisons.

#### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE**

- A. The latest Student Enrollment Data will be provided to the Board of Trustees (written report provided)**
- B. October, November, December, 2016, Violent Acts Report (written report provided)**

#### **UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS**

- A. Wednesday, February 1, 5:30pm, Board Retreat, Old Post Office Meeting Room**
- B. Wednesday, February 15, 4:00pm, Special Board Meeting, Churchill County Middle School Library**
- C. Saturday-Sunday-Monday, March 25-27, 2017, National School Board Association's 77<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Denver, Colorado**

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Recommended Personnel Action (Attachment A)**
- B. Approval of Vouchers**
- C. Approval of January 11, 2017, REGULAR Board Meeting Minutes**
- D. Approval of Student 17-01 to enter the General Education Development (GED) program**
- E. Approval of Class Size Reduction Report**
- F. Approval of Annual Request to Lease Water Rights to Truckee Carson Irrigation District (TCID)**
- G. Approval of School Performance Plans**

Trustee Whitaker pull Items F and G; Trustee Schank pulled Item A. Trustee Gent made a motion ***to approve Consent Agenda Action Items B, C, D, E, as provided, seconded by***

**Trustee Schank.** There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously; President Hendrix was absent.

Trustee Schank asked the reasons why two teachers were resigning. Dr. Sheldon explained that those teachers are not leaving until the end of the year. Trustee Schank made a motion, seconded by Trustee Strasdin, **to approve Item A as specified.** There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously; President Hendrix was absent.

Vice President Whitaker questioned whether Item F could be approved, as it is not known whether the Future Farmers of America (FFA) leadership wants to lease out the water rights. Sharla Hales, District legal counsel, suggested the motion contain the words: “to approve request subject to agreement by the FFA program leaders.” Trustee Strasdin made a motion, seconded by Trustee Pinder, **to approve the Annual Request to Lease Water Rights to TCID subject to an agreement from the FFA leaders.** There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously; President Hendrix was absent.

Vice President Whitaker stated that she reviewed the school performance plans and feels that the buck stops with the Board and that the Board has to hold stakeholders accountable. Vice President Whitaker stated that she read the plans and some of the action items state that they would be complete almost a year ago, but have not been completed. Vice President Whitaker stated that she expects better reports in the future. When principals’ report to the Board they should refer to their performance plans and what they are doing to improve their schools.

Trustee Strasdin suggested that District goals, mission, and objectives should be part of the performance plans as well as part of faculty meetings.

Trustee Schank stated that she noted that schools are using data to track student achievement and the high school is working on accreditation, grading, and communication.

Trustee Schank moved **to approve the School Performance Plans as shown in BoardBook, seconded by Trustee Hyde.** There were no public comments. Trustee Schank commented that the plans indicate teaching is aligned to standards. Trustee Pinder commented that sometimes processes flow slowly, but it is also important to remember to set the goals and objectives and make sure that follow-through occurs and adjustments to goals are made. Trustee Pinder thanked principals and teachers for their hard work. Vice President Whitaker commented that it is a huge concern when a goal is set and but not met. Trustee Strasdin stated that she appreciated Mr. Lords’ honesty in some of the comments as she felt they were extremely accurate. The motion passed unanimously; President Hendrix as absent.

## **REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Trustee Schank reported on her attendance at a recent Nevada Association of School Board’s legislative meeting and a one-day conference for professional development. Vice President Whitaker stated that the NASB professional development was informative. Trustee Gent reported on his attendance at a two-day training regarding violent extremists, which also involved bullying. Vice President Whitaker reported chairing the Discipline and Attendance Committee last week and commented that they reviewed survey results for uniforms and have a subcommittee to look into the issue further. The topic of uniforms might come before the

Board at the end of March. Vice President Whitaker also reported that the Juvenile Probation Officers commented that they miss having a Dean of Students at the high school, as that position made their job easier.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**A. For Presentation and Discussion Only: Mr. Greg Lobdell from The Center for Educational Effectiveness will present the results of the recent Community and Staff Perception Surveys.**

Dr. Greg Lobdell from The Center for Educational Effectiveness provided a detailed report of the results of the recent Community and Staff Perception surveys. The Board asked questions. Dr. Sheldon will provide hardcopies of the building-level and district-level survey reports to Board members. Mr. Lobdell committed to delivering an Executive Summary to the Board by the end of the weekend, prior to the Board Retreat on February 1. Dr. Sheldon commented that conversations need to occur with principals and staff to determine how to use this data to make progress on an ongoing basis, to improve student learning and schools as a whole.

**B. For Discussion Only: Mr. Nate Waite and Ms. Michelle Richardson will report on the technology rollout for District schools.**

Nate Waite and Michelle Richardson reported on the success and challenges of the District's technology in schools. This update included how Chromebooks are being used in classrooms, how student learning is positively affected, Google classroom, the importance of professional development, and the maintenance challenges of Chromebooks.

**C. For Discussion Only: Churchill County High School staff will provide information on how students are notified of scholarships and financial aid.**

Trustee Gent asked Kevin Lords about the procedure for notifying students of scholarships and financial aid. Mr. Lords stated that Renie Knittle, the high school's registrar, maintains scholarship information. In recent years, the high school has lost a counselor, a dean of students, and a career scholarship position. Last year the high school lost another counselor who transferred to the middle school. With the savings from that position, they paid a substitute secretary, Mr. Lords' wife, Amy Lords, to work with the scholarships. This year the Board approved a half time library specialist. The plan was for the library specialist to work with scholarships half time. Because the high school didn't have a librarian, the library specialist was not available to work with scholarships.

Mr. Lords stated that Ms. Knittle and Ms. Lords created a Google Document that contains scholarship information, and was shared with senior students. When the document is updated, students have changes available to them right away.

Trustee Gent asked if parents receive access to the Google Document through school email. Mr. Lords stated that they have not officially shared the document with parents unless they have requested it. Students can share the document with parents.

Trustee Whitaker asked if information is presented to juniors so they can prepare for scholarships. Mr. Lords stated that counselors have put together information for parent night regarding the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA application) as well as information regarding

local colleges: TMCC, WNC, and UNR. CCHS's JAG teacher talked about the NCAA Clearinghouse. There were 40 students present at parent night.

Trustee Whitaker asked how much money was offered in scholarships during the years when CCHS had a dedicated scholarship counselor. Mr. Lords stated that the class of 2011 was awarded \$850,000; \$250,000 of that award went to an academy appointment through the military. The class of 2012 was awarded \$400,000, class of 2013 \$528,000, class of 2014 \$670,000, and then the high school lost their dedicated scholarship coordinator. The class of 2015 was awarded \$1.1 Million; \$500,000 of that award went to two academy appointments through the military. The class of 2016 was awarded \$1.3 million; \$750,000 of that award went to one academy appointment.

Vice President Whitaker noted that discounting the academy appointments, the amount of scholarships were about the same, but there has been a loss of enrollment. Staff has been able to get scholarship information out to students and more students are getting scholarship money than before. Mr. Lords acknowledged that fact but stated that staff is letting other things go because scholarships take precedence; counselors and the registrar spend a lot of time with scholarships. Renie Knittle, CCHS registrar, puts in a lot of time, never complains, and she does an amazing job.

Trustee Schank stated that she was told that students needed to initiate their request for scholarship information. That is fine for students who are self-motivated, but there are students who are not as self-motivated. Mr. Lords stated that he has witnessed staff from the guidance office talk to students in the hallway letting them know about scholarship information. Mr. Lords noted that even though parents want their children to apply, if there is an essay involved with the scholarship it is tough to get students to write those essays.

Trustee Strasdin thanked Mr. Lords for his presentation. Applying for scholarships is a lot of work and follow up. Making the information available is most important.

Vice President Whitaker stated that her husband's family provides a scholarship that requires a 500-word essay and if students convert that into money per hour, it is \$500 for one hour if they receive the scholarship.

Mr. Lords stated that our community offers a lot of money in scholarship and supports our students in post-secondary education.

Mike Terry, Veterans of Foreign Wars, stated that the VFW has several scholarships where essays are involved. VFW offers a \$30,000 scholarship to high school students and \$5,000 to middle school students. Established in 1947 VFW's audio essay program provides high school students with a unique opportunity to express themselves in regards to a democratic and patriot theme recorded essay. Each year 40,000 students from across the country, grades 9 through 12, enter to earn their fair share of \$2 Million dollars in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through this program. The national first place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship paid directly to the recipient's university, college, or vocational technical school. These national scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$16,000. Mr. Terry stated that he wants CCSD students to apply. Go to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), youth educational programs, for information regarding scholarships.

Jay Turley, parent, reported that his son is a senior at the high school and that this issue came up when he was talking with Mr. Terry about scholarships. Mr. Turley realized that he did not hear about these scholarships and reported that the high school had only one entry for that scholarship and the middle school had two entries, which he felt was embarrassing. Mr. Turley questioned why he and his son were not informed about these scholarships. Mr. Turley also questioned the number of students receiving scholarships at the high school. Mr. Turley asked his son and his son said that he did not know about these scholarships. Mr. Turley felt there is a communication breakdown and that he takes responsibility as a parent, but feels that students are losing out.

Nate Waite stated that when he worked at the high school he noticed that students were given many opportunities to apply for scholarships. Information is on bulletin boards and in announcements, but students are choosing not to apply. Mr. Waite's son who graduated two years prior didn't apply for any scholarships. Mr. Waite commended Mr. Lords and Terri Pearson for their good efforts. This is a challenge for students and parents.

Terri Pearson, CCHS school secretary, stated that she has worked at the high school for 18 years and a CCHS 9<sup>th</sup> grade student won the VFW award receiving a certificate, medal, and \$100. Mr. Terry asked that information and applications be delivered to social studies teachers. It was open to all students, grades 9 through 12. We should be celebrating the fact that she won. Ms. Pearson commented that she feels responsible to those parents. Scholarship information is posted on walls, but students have to take initiative and participate in scholarships.

**D. For Discussion and Possible Action: Approval to continue and possibly increase the new teacher hiring incentive up to \$10,000 or more.**

Trustee Hyde disclosed that his wife is just about done with her schooling to become a teacher and she may apply with the District, so he will abstain from voting on this item.

Trustee Strasdin disclosed that agenda item 14D could potentially affect her in a private capability as currently she is studying to be a teacher and could ultimately benefit her economically. Because there is the potential for conflict of interest, Trustee Strasdin stated that she would abstain from voting on this matter.

Dr. Sheldon stated that last year the State provided new teacher incentive money, up to \$5,000 for new teachers coming to the District. Different districts did different things with incentive dollars. Elko chose to offer \$10,000 to new teachers for hard to fill schools in Owyhee and Jackpot. If those teachers stayed for the second year, they would get another \$4,000. Lyon County offered \$5,000 for new teachers. Churchill County offered \$3,000 for new teachers and expended the entire \$53,000 received by the State on those incentives. The State is aware that we have a teacher shortage and that we need to encourage teachers to come to the State of Nevada.

Dr. Sheldon stated that the recent survey pointed out that we have a more senior staff, so staff is leaving through retirements and we need to fill those positions, probably with young new teachers just graduating. Clark County has several hundred positions still open for this school year, so we are in a crisis level.

Dr. Sheldon proposed \$5,000 as an incentive for new teacher hires. The District is looking at the potential of 20 positions opening due to retirements and unfilled positions that the District currently has open. The State provided classroom reduction dollars but the District was not able to fill those positions this year, as the District was unwilling to open those positions up to long-term substitutes. Dr. Sheldon reported that the District has excellent long-term substitutes and staff is encouraging substitutes to take that extra step to get their teacher's license. As we use long-term substitutes, we reduce our substitute pool, which creates another problem. Dr. Sheldon reported that it is unknown at this point if the State will be offering incentive dollars for new hires next year.

Dr. Sheldon directed Lori Norcutt to identify job fairs. Ms. Norcutt has done an excellent job. Some job fairs start February 1, but the majority will be held in March and April. Michigan has four job fairs within four days and one university as 460 teachers graduating this year. Dr. Sheldon said staff is looking at the cost of participating in those job fairs. Chip Rutledge is working with the District's Family Engagement Coordinator to put together a video and staff is working on creating a pamphlet to take to those job fairs. The District is also designing a six-foot banner to highlight skiing in Tahoe, fishing, etc. If we could increase the incentive to \$5,000, we would be more competitive in recruitment. Dr. Sheldon said that it is a high priority for the Governor to provide incentives for new hires and expects they will at least provide as much as they provided this year. If the Governor does not provide this incentive then it would be a budgetary item in our budget. At \$5,000, twenty positions would be approximately \$100,000.

Dr. Sheldon also commented that currently new teachers with experience could bring with them five years' of experience on the salary schedule. Dr. Sheldon recommends an increase in years of experience. How do we make Churchill County more attractive to students coming out of college?

Trustee Schank commented that if the District brought teachers in with ten years of experience it would be much more expensive. Dr. Sheldon commented that she feels that the District should offer incentive and experience but also look at the teacher salary scale. Lyon County starts their salary at \$36,500 and we start teachers at \$34,500. It is getting competitive and if we want to recruit high quality teachers it is going to cost money, but it will benefit students in the end. Elko starts at \$41,000 and their top salary is \$85,000.

Becky Dodd commented that her understanding is that if you work in Nevada you can transfer to Churchill County with all of your experience. Dr. Sheldon confirmed that is correct, she was previously referring to bringing new teachers in from outside of Nevada.

Trustee Gent asked if \$5,000 would make the District competitive with surrounding districts. Dr. Sheldon reported that Humboldt County is at \$5,000, Lyon County is at \$3,000. Ms. Dowd reported that Humboldt County has one year, Douglas County has two years at \$1,200 each year, Mineral County offers \$10,000 over two years paid quarterly, and Churchill County offers one year at \$3,000. Carson City does not have an incentive.

Phyllis Dowd stated that she looked at salary schedule for Carson City, Mineral, Lyon, Elko, Douglas, Humboldt, in that order where Churchill is at the bottom and Humboldt is at the top. There is a \$3,000 spread in salaries. All counties have employer-paid PERS. Dr. Sheldon commented that Elko and Clark county start at \$41,000 with a top salary of \$85,000.

Trustee Schank made the motion to ***figure the amount for twenty positions and build that into next year's budget; an incentive of \$5,000 per new teacher.***

Trustee Pinder commented that he would like to hold off questioning the competitiveness and if \$5,000 is going to be enough.

Trustee Schank's motion died. Trustee Pinder made a motion ***to make the incentive amount a range between \$5,000 and \$10,000 at the Superintendent's discretion.*** Trustee Schank seconded the motion.

Ms. Dowd commented that \$100,000 is in the contingency fund and 88% of the budget has been expended to date. Ms. Dowd commented that the District could afford up to a \$10,000 hiring bonus. Ms. Dowd would like to see a trigger where the new hire gets \$5,000 up front and the rest later or at the start of the second year. Dr. Sheldon stated that she and Ms. Dowd could work on criteria and bring it back to the Board for approval.

Public Comments: Nate Waite stated that from his perspective and working with many teachers this should be a priority. If you don't have a full staff, any initiative that moves forward can only be partially implemented.

Elena Marsh, Churchill County High School, also supported competitiveness and requested the Board not just provide new teacher bonuses but also adjust the salary schedule so the starting rate is higher.

Becky Dodd stated that it concerns her that the District is giving this money to new employees, while she understand that we might have to do it, she questioned what is going to keep them here. Some teachers might stay in Churchill County for two years and then go to Lyon County to get new teacher incentive. Ms. Dodd commented that the salary schedule should be considered for the whole staff and not just new teachers so that the District can retain the best staff.

Mr. Waite commented that having a positive work atmosphere helps attract and retain teachers.

The motion passed unanimously; Trustee Strasdin and Trustee Hyde abstained and President Hendrix was absent.

- E. For Discussion and Possible Action: Discussion and possible action regarding the hiring process to revise Policy 2120 and Regulation 4116.3 to eliminate revised recommended personnel action items and confirm that the Superintendent's authority to hire and have employees start work contingent upon subsequent approval by the Board of Trustees.**

Sharla Hales commented that the open meeting law states that when materials are provided supplemental to an agenda item, the materials should be provided to the Board of Trustees and the public at the same time. Ms. Hales commented that if an updated Personnel Action list is provide to Board members at the board meeting that it concerns her as the public may have read the agenda already posted and would not be aware of additional names being added to the list. Ms. Hales suggested that revised Personnel Action forms should not be handed out at the Board meeting. Ms. Hales explained that the Board typically has two board meetings a month and that the Personnel Action form should not be updated in the future. Rather, it should be made clear in policy and regulation that the

Superintendent has the authority to hire after receiving the recommendation from the hiring committee. If it is in the District's best interest to have the employee start work, then that happens, but make it very clear to the new hire that they are starting upon subsequent Board approval at the Board's next regularly scheduled meetings. This should be in bold letters in writing and conveyed to the new hire verbally.

Trustee Schank made the motion, seconded by Trustee Strasdin, ***to amend policy 2120 as corrected and stated by Sharla Hales***. *Ms. Hales stated that upon committee recommendation, the Superintendent may approve the early commencement of employment, and employees may start work conditioned upon subsequent approval by the Board.* There were no public comments. The motion passed unanimously; President Hendrix was absent.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Beck Dodd, Teacher from E.C. Best, requested at the last Board meeting that water be removed from their playground. The health inspector was at the school and stated that it was unsafe and not healthy because the playground is flooded. Ms. Dodd understands that maintenance will pump the field tomorrow and commented that the Board should listen to staff comments.

Elena Marsh, CCEA President, commented that she has been intimidated to come to meetings in the past. Board members have made rude and hateful comments about teachers and the association. She has noticed that the past two weeks the Board has been kinder to each other, not as snarky, and kinder about the staff and she appreciates it as it makes it easier for her to attend meetings because the Board is showing gratitude and are nice to each other.

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

Trustee Schank requested information about what is happening with STEM labs and the costs associated with those labs, requested a report on high school internships – how many and is credit given to students who participate, and a report on the Rio Vista property.

Trustee Whitaker requested more discussion on plans of action for students who are failing or at risk of failing at the high school.

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

President Hendrix, Trustee Whitaker, and Trustee Pinder will meet for agenda setting immediately after the Budget Committee Meeting scheduled for the afternoon of January 31.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Hyde made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Pinder, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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Carmen, Schank, Clerk of the Board

*Prepared by Debra Shyne*