

**Advisory Committee of MUHSD & COCS  
150 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Cottonwood, AZ 86326**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Cottonwood Rec Center  
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 4:00 PM

**Members of the Committee**

Dan Mabery – Committee Chairman  
Claudia Abey           JoAnn Cook  
Jason Finger           Anita Glazar  
David Gray           James Ledbetter  
Stephen Renard       Kelli Rhoda  
Micah Swenson       Philip Terbell  
Mike Westcott       Sonny Zale

**I. OPENING**

Mr. Mabery opened the meeting at 4:02 PM.

**II. Public Comments**

Oouida Dorr addressed the audience to honor the work of Mrs. Bateman during the Advisory Committee Meetings.

Dr. John Tavasci addressed the committee discuss the history of consolidation. The two Boards made a resolution and the consolidation was formalized. The issue that is being faced is that the MUEA is very powerful and they are very organized to get out the “no” vote. We have been consolidated. It can work depending on who you are. He thought it would be of interest to know that we were consolidated and it was dissolved.

**III. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**III. 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes Not Previously Approved**

1/25/2018 Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Approval of the meeting minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

**III. 2. Auditor General Review**

The Committee discussed a spreadsheet generated to review the Auditor Generals reports for the past 5 years. Mr. Terbell and Mr. Zale will reported on this information.

Mr. Zale shared a spreadsheet that he had generated that regarding the administrative cost for each school site. He had also included districts that have only one site to the spreadsheet as a comparison. Mr. Westcott created a rebuttal to the information present by Mr. Zale stating that admin cost per teacher could not be compared to COCS because they are not a high school or peer school. Mr. Westcott stated that the best measure of the Auditor General’s numbers is that Mingus is one of the few districts that gets the low cost and high efficiency.

**III. 3. Consolidation and AZ Teacher Shortage**

Mr. Gray presented information with respect to teacher shortages in Arizona.

- 1/3 of teachers have less than 4 years of teaching experience
- 44% of teacher leave the profession after 3 years of teaching

- 24 % of teachers leave the profession after the first year
- 2,000 AZ teachers have remained open since August 2017
- 3,400 positions have been filled by people who are without any basic teaching training; nor have these positions been filled by individuals who passed the state's subject or professions proficiency exam
- 800+ teachers have resigned, never showed up or walked away from their positions
- AZ elementary teachers are the lowest paid teachers in the United States or another way of looking at it – they are earning 14% less than 2001 adjusting for inflation
- AZ high school teachers are earning 11% less 2001 adjusting for inflation
- 85% administration of rural district stated that recruiting is “difficult to extremely difficult”
- AZ teachers are leaving the profession at three times the National average

Dr. Hargrove shared with the committee that the Mingus Union District has teachers that fall into each of these categories. Recruitment is a problem with the lower salary schedules. Mr. Gray continued to state that he felt that a consolidated district would have a hard time finding funds to hire new teachers.

Mr. Gray also stated that if the class size is large now those numbers are only likely to go up. Mrs. Cook asked if the state legislature would fund more if we were not consolidate. He stated no and continued to ask if this would benefit our kids. He just doesn't see it improving. He is all for a unified district if it is better for both districts and students. Mrs. Cook stated that there is a statute that says that teacher salaries cannot be cut or decreased due to consolidation. It is noted that is only for the first year and after that it could be decreased or frozen. Mr. Westcott stated that the statute would not address the 301 monies. Mr. Renard made several statements regarding the impact consolidation would have on Mingus teachers. Mr. Mabery asked if there have been any projections regarding a drop in teacher salaries and benefits. We are looking at the possibilities that would eventually equate the salaries without effecting the Mingus teachers. Mr. Zale stated that it appears that it is the teacher's salaries where the money needs to flow, not administration. We consistently see 10 -12 applications for administrator positions due to the salaries structure.

Mrs. Cook wanted to take a deeper look at how the 301 monies will be allocated. 301 money is not a guaranteed source of funds from the proposition.

Mr. Finger wanted to know how Mingus alone would be able to increase teacher salaries with the money coming from new student enrollments. He also stated that removing some administrative costs would free up for teachers.

Mrs. Dewitt agreed with Mr. Gray's information regarding the recruitment of qualified teachers. There districts in our area that are dealing with those very difficult choices to make. If you make salaries a priority then that has to be the focus.

Mr. Zale returned to the information that was presented by Dr. Keegan with respect to cost savings. Mr. Renard stated those numbers have not been agreed upon.

Mr. Gray stated that what's best for students is having qualified teachers in the classroom. He also stated that this is creating animosity between the teachers within the proposed unified district.

Mr. Ledbetter stated that the total savings as reported by Dr. Keegan is \$250,000 is not as it was intended. He said it is not appropriate to advance those opinions if they are not accurate.

Mrs. Glazar shared that she had recently communicated with Dr. Keegan and he was now of the estimation that those numbers were no longer accurate.

Mr. Westcott stated that we don't have the final number and we cannot have all the information need to be worked out before we start putting numbers out there.

Mr. Zale stated that at the December meeting the business managers provided information that said that the savings would be between 1.1 and 1.4 million.

Ms. Abey addressed the committee regarding her experience with the biggest problem in high school being retention and graduation by having fantastic programs and opportunities. If you start losing students it will only cost more.

Mrs. Cook stated that the COCSD Board is simply saying that they believe that they are prepared to let Mr. Carter's Office determine the numbers.

#### **III. 4. The Absence of Clarkdale in the Newly Formed District**

The Committee discussed what is lost and what is gained. Mr. Renard reported that he did not see any pros to Clarkdale students to be removed from the Mingus Union High School District. Mr. Mabery clarified that he was talking about Clarkdale kids and Mr. Renard stated that he was referring to all of his students. He mentioned that it would now be easier for Clarkdale to start their own charter school now that they are no longer part of a union district. He provided data as to the number of student coming in from COCSD and CJESD. Mr. Finger stated that those students [CJES] would not see any difference. They would have the same teachers, the same programs and the same opportunities. The talk of a charter school coming in is kind of a chicken little argument. It is farfetched to think that those kids would want to go to a charter school with all the things that Mingus has to offer. There was considerable discussion regarding the money that the new unified district would owe the CJESD and how those numbers would be determined. There is nothing conclusive at this time.

Mr. Phil Terbell believed that we are likely to see the property taxation increase due the amount of growth in the valley.

Mr. Ledbetter is predicting a huge loss for the new district. Mr. Finger asked that Mr. Ledbetter explain the comments regarding the cost to the tuition for CJ students. There is no more money that will be assessed to the CJESD taxpayers.

Mrs. Cook said that it is not the boards that will make the decision it will be the voters.

Mr. Zale noted that students that attend Mingus from Beaver Creek do not have Governing Board representation in the Mingus District.

Mr. Renard continue to state that he felt that there was no identified benefit.

#### **III. 5. Staff Compensation Model**

The Committee discussed ideas to address the disparities in staff compensation if consolidation should move forward.

Mrs. Glazar provided a quick overview of information of staff compensation. With the savings at \$250,000 and the need to look at the 301 as well as teacher salaries there would be less for Mingus and more for COCSD. Those are disparities that would need to be looked at. The biggest portion of this is the disparity and the compensation package \$630,000 to \$740,000 and classified is \$220,000 to \$240,000 the problem with that is you have find that every single year. Mr. Mabery had previously asked Dr. Keegan if consolidation happened could salaries be equalized without negatively effecting the Mingus teachers. It was the judgement of Dr. Keegan that it would be possible. Mrs. Cook began to share some of the averages of teacher salaries within their District as it related to the information Mrs. Glazar had provided. Mr. Mabery asked if this information could be included in the business manager's report. Mr. Mabery also asked that the power point be provided to the Committee as early as possible. The business manager's did not want to release the information prior to the meeting.

Mrs. Leonard stated that business managers are not prepared to address how to fix the disparity but only provide consensus data.

The agenda items below will be added to the next agenda due to time constraints.

**III. 6. Funding and Taxation**

The Committee will discuss how funding and taxation would change with consolidation and realignment of boundaries.

**III. 7. Report From Superintendent/Business Manager Meeting**

The Committee will hear a report regarding a meeting between the Superintendents and Business Managers of both Districts.

**III. 8. Future Agenda and Minutes Generation**

This item was moved to the top of the agenda as a result of Ms. Dorr public comment. The Committee was prepared to discuss the replacement of Mrs. Bateman as the record keeper for the Committee. Mrs. Bateman will continue in her role to the Committee. If Committee Members want an item to be on the agenda it has to be to Mrs. Bateman by Thursday, prior to the meeting at 5:00 PM. Mr. Mabery also requested that members not come to the meeting with information that has not been shared with the group via publication of the agenda.

Mrs. Glazar asked that the meeting be moved to the 27th because she would be unable to attend. There was considerable discussion regarding an acceptable date to move the next meeting.

Mr. Mabery called for a vote to have the next meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> at the Cottonwood Public Safety Building. The vote was (13-1) Mrs. Glazar was the nay vote.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Mabery adjourned the meeting at 5:45 PM.

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Dan Mabery  
Committee Chair