

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Administration Conference Room

Present: James RunningFisher, James Evans (Virtual), Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt (Phone), Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner.

Mr. RunningFisher called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Important Dates to Remember: Facilities Meeting July 10, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. Special Board Meeting Monday, July 14, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Mr. Gervais to approve the Regular Board Minutes 5/28/25, Special Board Minutes 6/2/25, Regular Board Minutes 6/10/25, Special Board Minutes 6/17/25 and Regular Board Minutes 6/25/25. Second by Mr. Bremner. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Approval of Agenda: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve the agenda with no changes. Second by Thomas Gervais. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Public Comment: None

Items of Information

Building Reports: None

Superintendent Report

Update: Superintendent Rappold reported that there have been a few transfers, some requested by employee and a couple transfers she requested. We have completed our fiscal year close out and working to re-establish budgets for 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Emergency License Teachers: Superintendent Rappold provided information on emergency license teacher. She provided attachments of the law regarding emergency authorization of employment and substitute teachers. Superintendent Rappold also shared some teacher shortage data, as well as worldwide special teacher shortage for the 2025-2026 school year. Which was about 33% shortfall, anticipated teacher openings statewide are about 9%. In Montana it is roughly 9% and Browning Public Schools is about 11% anticipated shortfall. What the district has done in the past to compensate the shortfall is looked for our highest qualified candidates who may not quite be done with a teacher prep program for hiring. Pieces of information that we utilize to prioritize emergency license candidates, we prioritize filling general education and special education teaching positions first as compared to specialist positions. Instructional coaching positions are only filled if the others are filled with a candidate. We have to balance that because the instructional coaching positions are a huge component of our mentorship and coaching of new teachers, whether they are fully licensed or emergency licensed we need experienced instructional coaches to guide and support them throughout the year.

We have filled many of our special education positions with Full mind or iTutor teachers if needed. It is not ideal but we have had some very good special education teachers come to us that are remote. It works better in special education classrooms since those classrooms have paraprofessionals assigned to them. There is an onsite paraprofessional linked to a virtual teacher and they build a highly productive working

relationship. We have improved the quality of our special services by filling some of our unfilled onsite sped positions. We really look at hiring fully licensed teachers, applications are monitored daily.

We have had five teacher internship applicants who had applied to the district for a yearlong internship. We were able to recruit all of them into teaching positions. They were in their last year of their teacher prep program and we were able to recruit them into teaching positions. Along the course of the last few years, we have had a lot of success hiring emergency applicants who then ultimately became fully certified. At one point about 70-75% of Bullshoe's entire staff was either emergency or provisionally licensed. They are now fully licensed educators with the district. Browning Elementary is in a very similar situation right now. They have a high concentration of emergency licensed staff, but they are all in a teacher prep program, looking towards licensure. Napi, Browning Middle School and Browning High School have a few emergency license candidates that are not yet certified. We have had five emergency licensed candidates who have passed their Praxis as well as another five that have taken their Praxis on June 30, 2025. We have heard a couple have passed and still waiting to hear on the others. So, to cover the shortfall we will most likely have to continue to hire emergency licensed candidates. As long as we continue our mentorship program with Colleen Wilson and continue to have our instructional coaches supporting the new and inexperienced teachers than we are going to have more successful teacher candidates down the road and continue what we have already been doing. We could resolve our own teacher shortage issues within our community members who are wanting to pursue teaching in the community.

Mr. RunningFisher asked if the instructional coaches were in a class and an instructional coach. Superintendent Rappold stated that they are not doing both, and assured him that the instructional coach position was a fulltime job. She also stated that they are in the classrooms to model for teacher's lessons on how to teach curriculum, on how to manage classrooms, student classrooms of students. Browning Public Schools has had an instructional coaching program for 15 plus years, every school in the state is wanting to hire instructional coaches and they have not had the longevity in their coaching programs like BPS. Each building has two instructional coaches. Right now, we have two openings at the middle school. The previous coaches have moved, one was hired as an assistant principal and the other was hired as the childcare coordinator. The High School has two part time instructional coaches, so together they combine to be a little over fulltime. Superintendent Rappold assured that our instructional coaches are an asset to our schools and teachers. When you look at the early years of comprehensive school improvement, our proficiency rates were 1% to 2% proficiency rate at each grade level. You look at our proficiency rates now we are looking at 15% to 20% proficient across each grade level and are showing growth even on the statewide assessments.

There was more discussion on emergency hired teachers. Superintendent Rappold stated they have done a couple things the last couple of years. Last year we followed through with the non-renewal process. If they don't have a license, they are not eligible to be rehired until they do. This year we added another step, they were non-renewed and have to reapply. All of the principals went through a hiring rubric and scored them based on the Danielson Framework and what we want high quality teachers to have. Some of the things they scored on are, are they successful in their teacher prep program, do they meet their professional responsibilities, do they have good instruction and classroom management, do they communicate well with families. They scored them off a rubric and the principal said yes rehire or no do not rehire. Superintendent Rappold and Assistant Superintendent LaFromboise Wagner also followed up with the teacher prep programs to make sure they were making adequate progress.

Superintendent Rappold stated that she included some draft schedules for principal/director's week, new teacher orientation and the draft of the strategic plan. Superintendent Rappold asked if there were any questions on the strategic plan, there was no questions. She stated that it would be brought back to the next board agenda for approval.

2025-2026 Preliminary Budget Update: Ms. Anderson gave a brief overview of the 2025-2026 preliminary budget; in August we will have a final budget meeting. This year's budget is a \$31 million budget. She went through the spreadsheet she provided and gave quick overview of each fund. Ms. Anderson stated that she imported the budget and there is plenty of money to operate and our goal is to stay within the budget. Superintendent Rappold asked if there was enough money to purchase three new buses out of the bus depreciation. Ms. Anderson stated that yes there is enough to buy 3 buses, she also stated that they don't want to deplete this fund because is it like depreciation process you buy the bus and recoup the cost through taxes over the next seven years. Mr. RunningFisher asked overall if the district is in good financial shape. Ms. Anderson replied yes, everything salary wise is covered and every department has plenty of operating money. We are right at where we need to be.

HR Status Report: Elementary level we are in need of 2 kindergarten openings, 1 pre-K, 1 BNAS 1st grade teacher, speech therapy assistant, 1 1st grade teacher opening, 2nd grade we will have 1 opening after we recommend some emergency hires. We will also be recommending 2 3rd grade emergency hires. We have 3 sped teacher openings, 1 youth mental health specialist, 1 PCA, 1 TA. We are going to be recommending a 5th grade teacher and a music teacher which will both be emergency hires. We are in need of a custodian at Napi. At BMS we are in need of a 8th grade BNAS teacher, 8th grade BJA teacher, shop teacher, family consumer science teacher and may have a possibility there. Also, at BMS we are in need of 2 instructional coaches, home school coordinator, a dean of students. At the secondary level we need an assistant principal, our last recommendation has resigned. We will be recommending an emergency hire for the technology position, PE/heath teacher opening, ELA reading interventionist opening, science teacher opening have a few possibilities there. We also need to hire an emergency teacher for the science opening, drivers ed teacher, 2 sped teachers, 2 sped TA's, 1 regular TA, 1 custodian, we have a math teacher opening for the Buffalo Hide Academy, 1 child care opening for childcare A1, 1 technology technician, 2 cooks at the Food Service. We need a skilled plumber at Maintenance, 2 flex custodians. Special Services we need an adaptive physical ed individual, nurse, sped TA, school phycologist, speech pathologist. Transportation we need one 12-month bus driver which will be up to Mr. Bullcalf to decide and presently need two 9-month bus drivers. *No public participation. No board discussion.*

Coaching Update: Superintendent Rappold stated that Mr. Hall is making some final recommendations for some fall positions which will most likely be on the special board meeting. The assistant volley ball coaches specifically. He is making good head way filling all of the coaching positions for next year. *No public participation. No board discussion.*

Resignations: Superintendent Rappold accepted the following resignations: Justine Steward, Ee-Gah-Kii-Maht Classified Assistant- Elementary Summer Program, Effective 6-30-2025; Cameron Gudgell, Assistant Principal-BHS, Effective 6-30-25. Superintendent Rappold stated that they have re-opened the Assistant Principal position, Mr. Gudgell had a health concern in his family and was not able to leave his state to come to Montana to fill that position. The position is being advertised on OPI. She also stated that they do have a couple of interested applicants so they will re-interview and get a recommendation for hire. *No public participation. No board discussion.*

Items of Action

Hiring: Motion by Mr. Bremner to approve the following hires pending successful background checks/drug tests: Ryana Augare, Napi Elementary Teacher 2025-2026 (\$47,062.00); Raelynn CalfBossRibs, Napi Elementary Teacher 2025-2026 (\$52,455.00); Tayler CalfBossRibs, Napi Elementary Teacher 2025-2026 (\$48,859.00); Francine DeRoche, BMS Elementary Teacher 2025-2026 (\$54,254.00). Second by Thomas Gervais. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Motion by Mr. Gallup to approve the following hires pending successful background checks/drug tests: Elizabeth Coleman, Certified Math Teacher-BHS 2025-2026 (\$79,062.00); BHS Head Coaches 2025-2026 (\$10,712.00); BHS Spring Assistant Coaches 2025-2026 (\$14,075.00). Second by Mr. Bremner. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Motion by Mr. Gallup to table the following agenda items until the special board meeting: Whitney Lucke, BHS Math Teacher 2025-2026 (\$52,455.00); Cody Lucke, BHS Vo-Tech, Auto-Welding Teacher 2025-2026 (\$47,062.00). Second by Mr. Evans. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup voting for and Mr. Bremner abstaining from the vote.

Contract Service Agreements: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve contract service agreements pending successful background checks: Barbara Dee Ann Kipp, Emergency Preparedness School Safety Plan 2025-2026 (\$5,600.00). Second by Mr. Bremner. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Out of State Travel: None

In State Travel: None

Approvals: Motion by Mr. Evans to approve the following items Mary Suzanne Augare, Lane Change Request-Certified Teacher Babb 2025-2026 (\$3,244.00); Brandy Bremner, Lane Change Request-Certified Teacher Bullshoe Elementary 2025-2026 (\$4,087.00); Louise Giebel, Lane Change Request-Certified Sped Teacher 2025-2026 (\$3,361.00); Myron HeavyRunner, Lane Change Request-Certified Teacher BMS 2025-2026 (\$4,577.00). Second by Mr. Hoyt. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup voting for and Mr. Bremner abstaining from Brandy Bremner, Lane Change Request-Certified Teacher Bullshoe Elementary 2025-2026 (\$4,087.00).

Motion by Mr. Gallup to approve the following items BHS position to VoTech-Auto .5 FTE and EoTech-Welding.5 FTE; MHSA Dues 2025-2026 (\$6,527.00). Second by Mr. Evans. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Motion by Mr. Bremner to approve the following Montana Interquest canine Detection Contract 2025-2026 school year (\$6,600.00); Substitute Eligibility Roster 2025-2026; Purchases over \$10,000.000; District Claims Check #69222-#69529 (\$1,528,344.39); Student Activities Claims Check #705972-#706384 (\$25,243.96); Additional Pays/Payrolls. Second by Thomas Gervais. *No public participation. No board discussion.* Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Personnel: None

Legal Issues: None

Motion by Mr. Evans to adjourn at 6:33 p.m. Second by Mr. Hoyt. Motion passed with James RunningFisher, James Evans, Thomas Gervais, Mike Hoyt, Brian Gallup, Lockley Bremner voting for.

Respectfully submitted:

Melanie Heavy Runner, Board Secretary

James RunningFisher, Board Chairperson

Sandra Rivas, District Clerk

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