

WEBER SCHOOL DISTRICT
5320 Adams Avenue Parkway
Ogden, UT

Study Session
January 8, 2025

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Study Session in the Board Room at 5320 Adams Avenue, Ogden, Utah. The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m. The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

Paul Widdison	Board President
Doug Hurst	Board Member
Janis Christensen	Board Member
Jan Burrell	Board Member
Kelly Larson	Board Member
Gina Butters	Superintendent
Clyde Moore	Assistant Superintendent
Dave Hales	Assistant Superintendent

President Paul Widdison welcomed everyone and excused Board Member Bruce Jardine, who will join us virtually during Board Meeting. New Board Member Wyle Williams was in attendance and noted he will be sworn in, along with new Business Administrator Brock Mitchell in Board Meeting.

Board Member Janis Christensen noted she is excited to see how USBA (Utah School Board Association) is supporting public education. It was noted every month a board brief will be shared from USBA Associate Executive Director Lexi Cunningham. This month the topics will focus on “push pause” and the JLC (Joint Legislative Committee) with their initiative to promote legislators to recognize the challenge it puts on districts with all of the bills on education. One way to become involved is at the upcoming conference and sign up for the *Remind* app to stay informed on the legislative session. Board Member Christensen also encouraged everyone to be aware of the Day on the Hill, January 27th. The Advocacy Tool Kit is also available as a resource to stay informed and involved. Superintendent Butters also emphasized how important it is to track the bills as they progress through the session.

Superintendent Butters updated the Board on things happening around the district:

The Utah Fits All Scholarship lawsuit is currently in the 3rd District Court from the UEA (Utah Education Association). The suit is basically stating that taxpayer money should not be used to pay for private tuition. We anticipate it will go all the way to the Supreme Court.

The Intermountain HealthCare Grant recently awarded \$5 million to Weber School District to be used to help fund medically based career pathways. We are working with Ogden-Weber Technical College, Weber State and legislators in the area about the possibility to apply for another grant for innovative product models for students.

Matt Patterson, principal at Mt. View Jr. High was awarded *Utah Middle School Principal of the Year* before Christmas and will be formally recognized next month in Board meeting.

SB173 *Market Informed Compensation for Teachers* passed last year. Superintendent Butters explained there will be a five-year pilot program for districts to participate in recognizing and incentivizing educators. Weber School District has applied and opted in for now, but we have the option to opt back out of the program by April 1, 2025. Human Resource Directors Nicole Meibos and Quinn Karlinsey presented to the Board some of the possible benefits and challenges, and criteria; Student Achievement, Professional Evaluation, Parent Survey and Other Optional Criteria to the Teacher Merit Award. Quinn explained we are in year one of the pilot which is to build a program, year two collect data, and years three, four and five would be the payout to award teachers. Identifying the teacher criteria has to be set.

Student Achievement Growth Data

Benefits:

- Districts allowed to pick the weight of each category within set range
- A 0-20% for “other” as we see fit as the LEA
- Panorama has been an approved method for collecting survey data

Challenges:

- Complex determining student growth
- SB173 requires a 5-point scale for observations
- Administrators will need to be trained on the system and the 5-point scale
- Mindset of observations have changed from labeling/ranking teachers being highly effective
- They strongly recommend 3 observations per teacher by at least 2 different administrators
- Will teachers be willing to mentor student teachers if so much weight is placed on test scores

Roster Verification

Benefits:

- Once top 25% identified, teachers are guaranteed a payout

Challenges:

- Roster verification for SPED, DLI & Co-taught classes will be difficult
- Once numbers are computed, some teachers could switch categories
- “Other category” not consistent amongst LEA’s

Payout Merit Awards

Benefit:

- 25% of eligible teachers will qualify for additional money
- Increases retention, motivates and rewards teachers and encourages PD

Challenges:

- Not all teachers are eligible
- Cannot earn way in after the first year

- Identifying which schools qualify for high poverty status is complex. May not have any schools that fit into the 70% category
- Could create environment where some kids are not wanted in classes (sped, behavior and attendance)
- Works against the PLC model by decreasing collaborative efforts, decrease in morale, lack of evidence that merit pay works
- Can PT teacher make the same as FT
- Inequity of measurement in honors, traditional and special education courses

Merit Award

Top 5% would receive \$10,000 a year for 3 years

6-10% would receive \$5,000 a year

11-25% would receive \$2,000 a year

High Poverty Merit Award

Top 5% would receive \$20,000 a year for 3 years

6-10% would receive \$10,000 a year

11-25% would receive \$4,000 a year

In conclusion, it was noted the biggest concern is teacher retention and hiring the best teachers. Weber School District has a great benefit package to help with retention; retirement, salaries and employees are eligible to receive insurance until age 65.

Superintendent Butters added it will be really challenging to put together a model by April 1st. She also pointed out only 16 of 41 districts have opted in from the state. Another concern is our teachers have an influence that cannot be measured and worry about the morale of teachers and how we can't always measure good teaching. It could also impact collaboration we are trying to solidify as a district. A survey will be sent out from the district next week.

Assessment & School Improvement Director Bryan Becherini updated the Board on the Dual Language Immersion program and noted a study will take place over the next year. There is currently no plan to alter the program for the 2025-2026 school year. We are trying to determine what we can do to improve the program and will continue to gather data. Bryan noted the survey will also allow us to do a follow up with parents and other groups. An overview of the survey questions was briefly discussed.

Legal Counsel Heidi Alder updated the Board with policies on a second reading:

Policy 7100 *Employee Harassment and Discrimination* was updated to align with our student policy to include definitions and references to all state and federal laws required.

Policy 7900 *Employee Corrective Action and Termination* was also updated to include definitions for career and provisional employees that are defined in other policies. We combined policies and added more detail for corrective action, referring to other policies and how violations could result in termination. There has been no feedback since last meeting.

First readings:

Policy 6500 *Volunteer* is a new policy regarding volunteers. Realizing we have many volunteers in our schools, a survey was sent out to administrators for a list of individuals in their schools that are not employees. We needed to create a system and a process to continue and make sure everyone has the training and background checks necessary. There are different processes for long-time and one-time volunteers.

Policy 7140 *Internship and Field Placement* was updated because it was outdated and applies to clinical, internships, student teachers, and counselors. It outlines processes and explains paperwork needed to have in place.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.