

WEBER SCHOOL DISTRICT
5320 Adams Avenue Parkway
Ogden, UT

Special Board Study Session
July 21, 2022

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Study Session in the Board Rooms at 5320 Adams Avenue Parkway, Washington Terrace, Utah. The meeting convened at 8:30 a.m. The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

Jon Ritchie	Board President
Dean Oborn	Board Vice President
Doug Hurst	Board Member
Jan Burrell	Board Member
Bruce Jardine	Board Member
Paul Widdison	Board Member
Janis Christensen	Board Member
Gina Butters	Superintendent
Clyde Moore	Assistant Superintendent
Dave Hales	Assistant Superintendent
Robert Petersen	Business Administrator

President Ritchie welcomed everyone.

Superintendent Butters turned the time over to Business Administrator Robert Petersen.

Dr. Robert Petersen noted this is a review for our upcoming Truth and Taxation Hearing on August 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m., and Board meeting at 6:00 p.m. By law, we are required to post two ads in the newspaper. The first advertisement was on Tuesday, July 19, 2022. There are ten entities holding a truth and taxation. The second ad will be a stand-alone ad to appear on July 26, 2022 to include the exact figures from the state tax commission. Robert went over the ad and breakdown of numbers. President Jon Ritchie requested at the tax hearing to present the figures of what the monthly increase will be. It was noted 9.1% is the total increase. Robert explained his handout to all Board members noting there are needs for teacher salaries, maintenance, and upgraded safety in our schools. Superintendent Butters noted we need to emphasize in order for the district to be held harmless, we have to increase our tax rate to continue to receive state revenue. Tax increases are challenging but ours is simple. It was also noted how low our district administrator costs are.

The following talking points we discussed: Teacher and staff salaries, capital improvement, voted leeway, board levy, and rate changes. Weber School District has a low tax rate compared to other districts. The recent legislative audit concluded our rates are too low and state funding may be jeopardized because of low local effort. Funding for operational costs for our new schools was discussed with Board Member Jan Burrell noting we need to explain how basic our new buildings will be. Board Member Bruce Jardine suggested the importance of school safety and including needed upgrades.

Superintendent Butters commented we need to express it is hard to put a monetary value on great teachers. We are trying to stay competitive to attract and retain great teachers in our district.

Digital Teaching and Learning Director Nick Harris & District Legal Counsel Heidi Alder presented on HB374 - *Library Reconsideration Policy*. Nick noted as we try to attract world class educators this also includes our librarians. Many districts our size have a media director only supervising librarians.

Nick referenced Weber School District Article 8 Miscellaneous, Policy 8200 *Library/Media Selection and Reconsideration*, Policy 8210 *Library/Media Selection Criteria*, and Policy 8220 *Library/Media Reconsideration Procedure*.

It is our duty to provide a wide range of library media materials in a variety of formats, with a diversity of appeal. We need to allow a fair review of allegedly inappropriate material. An example review of the book "*Monday's Not Coming*" was discussed and what librarians are asked to look at. It was noted once a book is put on a shelf we have to be careful about what we do to remove the book. President Ritchie noted the State School Board also vets' books. Reconsideration of the policy was explained and how it works.

Heidi Alder noted Utah State Representative Ivory worked with districts to pass this bill. They were concerned about pornography in libraries. This bill prohibits sensitive materials, defined as pornographic or indecent materials, which is already defined in state code in the criminal section code. It is prohibited in schools. It also required the State Board of Education to provide training, provide a model policy, and interpretation and guidance from the attorney general. School committees must also include parents and this will need to be added to our current policy.

It was noted our policy is good but needs to be amended. Changes would include the definition of sensitive material and that term be included in the criteria of the reconsideration. Other changes not required but recommended include determining what to do with books under review, decide who can request reconsideration, whether a patron can submit unlimited requests for reconsideration, and considering if the committee will have to go through each book one by one. Our options are to amend our policy with the State policy.

President Ritchie noted we should make the additions/changes to the policy at an upcoming Board meeting.

Facilities Director Larry Hadley updated the Board on upcoming capital projects. It was noted they meet every Thursday at the new high school site. The biggest concern right now is the concrete shortage, but it has been slowly improving. Another concern is the storm drain systems at the new high school. An update on construction was presented for each floor of the new high school. Fencing on the outside has been posted but chain link is not up. There has been an update to the tennis courts, increasing them to eight. Materials such as pipe insulation were purchased before price increases and is stored in our warehouse.

The new junior high rendering was then discussed. It was noted the road has been paved. About 15% is completed on the new junior high. The seminary building plans have not been drawn in yet, but Ivory Homes have given us two lots. The first boundary naming committee for the junior high met last night.

The new elementary school was discussed noting there are steps to the process: schematic, design development, construction document design. We are currently in construction document. Westland is the contractor for the new elementary. We are hoping to have documents by October and break ground the first of the year, which puts us on schedule. President Ritchie asked about boundaries for the new elementary. It was noted it will follow the process of Policy 4170 *Attendance* and a timeline preliminarily to discuss in the fall. This will create a new cone in our district. Assistant Superintendent Dave Hales noted the mapping system from Trent Bills, District Computer Support Technician helped so much with the last boundary changes.

Larry concluded noting it is a challenging process to scale everything down with construction to stay within budget.

Community Relations Specialist Lane Findlay began his presentation on school safety. He began noting badge access into the district offices will be required beginning August 5th. It is important to only have one main entrance into buildings.

Lane went over the presentation administrators will receive at Nuts and Bolts meetings in August.

WSD Safety plan:

- Coordinated - With law enforcement and other stakeholders. The role of the first responders is primarily focused on...response.
- Comprehensive - prevention, intervention, response & recovery.
- Balanced - Must be realistic while striking a balance between connectedness and be able to effectively operate. We don't want our schools to feel like prisons.
- Focused - Must have a vigilance mindset (vs paranoid/fearful) while fostering a positive school environment.
- Collaborative - Must involve all departments and leaders working together with one goal in mind. **KEEPING OUR SCHOOLS SAFE!**

State law requires we have a safety committee for the district. They include Board members, assistant superintendents, administrators and others to meet quarterly. There is also sub-committees and teams at each school to identify safety concerns and needs. It was noted we currently have a District Emergency Operations Plan, and School Emergency Response Plans (SERP).

The proposed tax increase will provide more funding for capital improvements to include safety upgrades such as locks on classroom doors, and video security systems. We have over 1,100 cameras in the district and are in the process of converting all buses over to Genetec.

Standard Response Protocol updates for 2021 include "lockout" is now "secure" and "hold" has been added. We need to make sure we are back to conducting all emergency drills and reunification. We have a five-year contract with our law enforcement partners, Weber County Sheriff's Office, Roy, South Ogden, Harrisville, Pleasant View, North Ogden and Riverdale Police Departments.

Building hardening consists of vestibules, electronic access, glass, audio enhancement, visitor check-in system, doors and locks.

Expansion of mental health therapists has been a priority with 25 full-time staff, and five more being added for the 2022-2023 school year. This helps us focus on identifying and addressing issues in younger ages and when students are in crisis.

Lane concluded his presentation noting the greatest preventative piece when it comes to school safety is a positive school culture or environment and relationships with teachers and administrators.

Superintendent Butters noted during the impact of COVID, we had a pause on all attendance credit for students. SB219 has expired. We are reinstating our attendance Policy 4170 *Attendance Policy*. Examples of attendance and graduation rates were shared due to low attendance by students. Over 12% of our students have been chronically absent.

Assistant Superintendent Clyde Moore noted we have one adjustment needed to the 2022-23 school calendar. The committee overlooked New Year's Day falling on Sunday and the national holiday being observed on Monday January 2, 2023. We currently have a comp day on January 2, 2023. It is recommended we move the comp day to January 3, 2023. It will be added to the consent calendar at the next Board meeting.

Weber School District organizational chart was briefly reviewed with the Board. Assistant Superintendent Dave Hales will be oversee Elementary Education and Assistant Superintendent Clyde Moore will be over Secondary Education.

Assistant Superintendent Dave Hales began discussing HB193 *Optional Enhanced Kindergarten*. The bill names 23 districts that qualify for full day kindergarten. Weber School District is not in this year's funding stream. A survey was sent to principals to see how many principals would be able to turn their schools into full day kindergarten. It was noted optional enhanced kindergarten (OEK), is growing and currently funds Valley View, Riverdale, Orchard Springs, Midland, and West Haven Elementary. Title I Kindergarten remain the same. Currently we have 34 classrooms with full day kindergarten.

Meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.