

**NYE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 12, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Wulfenstein called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Hafen Elementary School student Kensley Pace led the Pledge of Allegiance.

WELCOME

Mr. Wulfenstein welcomed everyone to the Board of Trustees meeting.

RECOGNITIONS

Mrs. Weir recognized Sue Ellis-Borchardt's significant contributions to the Gabbs school community. Ms. Ellis-Borchardt's generous donation enabled the school to provide professional photographs for all staff and students.

ROLL CALL

Present: Bryan Wulfenstein, President; Nathan Gent, Vice President; Larry Small, Clerk; Chelsy Fischer, Member; Leslie Campos, Member; Chelsea Silva, Member.

Mr. Gent arrived at 5:37 pm.

Absent: Robert White; Member.

Executive Cabinet/District Office staff in attendance: Joe Gent, Superintendent; Laura Weir, Assistant Superintendent; Genoveva Lopez-Angelo, Assistant Superintendent; Ray Ritchie, Chief Operating Officer; Brian Kunzi, Legal Council; Michelle Wright, Director of Human Resources; Shanda Roderick, Director of Special Education; Joe Schmidt, Director of Maintenance Safety and Operations; Nate Cardinal, Project Manager; and Iliana Garcia, Executive Assistant.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Wulfenstein adopted the agenda as written.

GENERAL PUBLIC INPUT

Four public comments were made. Michael Keyes, a student at Pahrump Valley High School, provided comment in person. Additionally, Nicole Walter, Chad Cobb, and Dave Harris submitted three comments via email.

CONSENT AGENDA

- September 19 and October 17, 2024, minutes and closed session minutes
- Second Reading NCSB Policy 8482 and 8483
- 1st Quarterly Report for 2024-2025
- Library Contracts for Amargosa, Gabbs, and Smoky Valley

Mr. Small made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Silva seconded, and the motion passed with a vote of all in favor 6-0.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mrs. Lopez-Angelo introduced Manse School's Principal and Vice Principal, Elizabeth Gilligan, and Edward Chandler-Guinto, who shared highlights about Manse. Jared Paruch, Principal of Hafen Elementary, also presented Hafen's highlights.

Mrs. Weir and Mrs. Angelo-Lopez gave the updated Board Goals.

Mrs. Weir provided an update on her ongoing efforts to create a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

During Mr. Cardinal's district-wide project update, Mr. Wulfenstein inquired about the condition of the new football field in Pahrump. He expressed concerns about the turf, specifically the possibility of it being lifted or grass blades being pulled out by students during physical education classes. Mr. Cardinal stated that he was unsure but would follow up.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Gent reviewed the District's protocol for recognizing retiring employees. In preparation for the December Board Meeting, Dr. Gent invited all Board Members to attend a financial review session with Mr. Dan McArthur. This session will be held on December 4th, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM in the Annex Building.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Small summarized the recent Superintendent's Student Advisory Board meeting. He thanked JG Johnson Elementary for their Veterans Day program and reminded the Board of the upcoming NASB conference and workshop. Mr. Small proposed prominently displaying the district's Mission Statement and the updated Board Goals near the Board member portraits outside the Boardroom.

Mrs. Fischer also commended JG Johnson Elementary for their Veterans Day program. She gave a shout-out to Hafen Elementary for their initiative in organizing a Christmas event this year.

TONOPAH SPORTS COMPLEX UPDATE FROM KNIT:

Brett Anderson, with KNIT, presented a detailed overview of the Tonopah field replacement project, which is currently in the design development phase. He provided an animation showcasing the proposed design and a 25,000-square-foot pre-manufactured metal building to house the concession stand, storage, team rooms, and restrooms. **Fall 2025:** Lights, scoreboard, bleachers, press box, and infrastructure. **Fall 2026:** Track and field replacement, some paving. **Fall 2027:** Concession and team room building. **Field Markings:** The field will accommodate both 11-man and 8-man football. **Trees:** Existing trees will be preserved; no new trees are planned within the complex. **Fencing:** A secure fence will enclose the perimeter, with an additional fence separating the track from the public area. **Concession Stand Design:** The booster club will be consulted on the layout and design of the concession stand. **Building Materials:** Pre-manufactured metal buildings were discussed as a potentially more cost-effective option compared to cinder block. **Project Timeline:** Clarification was provided on the timeline, with construction planned to start in the summer of 2025. **Paving:** The possibility of paving the road and parking lot will be explored. **Hard Rock Concerns:** A geotechnical report will be conducted to assess potential hard rock issues. **Project Schedule Request:** A detailed project schedule will be provided to the Board and or Superintendent.

DISCUSSION OF TRANSFER OF SILVER RIM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, TONOPAH, NEVADA, WITHOUT CHARGE, TO NYE COUNTY PURSUANT TO PROVISIONS REGARDING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES:

Mr. Kunzi provided background on the Silver Room Elementary School property, noting its transfer from Anaconda to the school district with a reversionary clause requiring educational use. The school district lacks the resources to refurbish the damaged building. The county secured grant funds to refurbish the property and intends to use it for a childcare center and/or auxiliary educational opportunities. Mr. Kunzi confirmed the legality of the transfer between government entities without charge, citing relevant statutes and interlocal cooperation agreements. A quick claim deed is recommended due to the complex and unclear title history dating back to 1901.

Mrs. Campos made a motion to approve the transfer of property. Mr. Small seconded, and the motion passed with a vote of all in favor 6-0.

SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATES FALL 2024:

Mrs. Roderick provided an update on the state of Special Education in the district. NCS D is currently serving 857 identified as eligible for Special Education Services. The Special Education program is progressing in meeting proficiency gap targets in reading and math. The district has a high success rate (83%) in terms of students with IEPs graduating or leaving school and going on to college, trade school, or full-time employment. Staffing: The district has increased the number of in-person speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and school psychologists. Virtual providers are still utilized, but with paraprofessional support to ensure student engagement. Professional Development, Work-Based Learning PVHS, a work-based learning program, has been launched at PVHS in partnership with Goodwill. Eighteen students are participating in the program, gaining valuable work experience. Inclusion Efforts: Several schools are implementing inclusion initiatives, such as mentor programs, Hope Squad activities, and morning announcements led by students with special needs. Unified Sports: The district is partnering with Unified Sports to promote inclusion in sports activities. Several schools have already started implementing Unified Sports programs. Parent/Guardian Empowerment Nights: The district has partnered with community organizations to host parent empowerment nights focused on the IEP process. Two sessions have been held so far, with plans for more in the future.

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION TO BAN STUDENT CELL PHONE USAGE IN SCHOOL:

Mr. Gent initiated the discussion, highlighting the potential benefits of a cell phone ban, including increased test scores and reduced anxiety and depression among students. Dr. Gent cited research and anecdotal evidence from other school districts supporting the positive impact of cell phone bans on student behavior and academic performance. Dr. Gent expressed his neutral support for the ban, citing similar research and the successful implementation of such policies in other districts. Concerns were raised about the potential negative impact on student communication and access to educational resources. Michael Keys, a student representative, provided feedback on the potential impact of a ban on student learning and extracurricular activities. Discussion ensued regarding the specific parameters of the ban, including the use of Faraday bags and the need for clear and consistent enforcement. Concerns were raised about the lack of prior feedback from parents, staff, and students. The board deliberated on the timeline for implementation and the need for a well-defined policy.

Mr. Gent made a motion to restrict cell phone usage for all Nye County schools from bell to bell, requiring phones to be powered off and in backpacks, starting January 6th. Mr. Wulfenstein seconded, and the motion failed 5-1.

Mr. Wulfenstein made a motion to direct staff to craft a cell phone usage policy restricting the use of cell phones in classroom settings from bell to bell in all Nye County schools, starting January 6th, to be brought before the board at the next meeting. **Amended:** To be brought before the Board in the next meeting with ample opportunity for parents, staff, and students to express their opinions before the board and have a policy on the floor that could be discussed and deliberated by the board and to have time before the meeting to review. Mr. Gent seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF THE NCS D WARRANTS:

NCS D Warrants: No. 1113 for \$34,997.45; No. 1135 for \$140,476.70; No. 1123 for \$201,453.04; No. 1122 for \$157,209.05; No. 1112 for \$5,219.24; No. 1106 for \$385,368.06; No. 1105 for \$90,093.07; No. 1132 for \$19,579.75; No. 1134 for \$302,291.62; No. 1127 for \$10,136.37; No. 1126 for \$42,106.95; No. 1121 for \$1,024,811.99; No. 1120 for \$33,018.11; No. 1119 for \$402,204.20; No. 1111 for \$324,356.72; No. 1110 for \$18,560.98; No. 1104 for \$204,510.15; No. 1103 for \$138,899.98; No. 1102 for \$15,456.64; No. 1101 for \$7,510.51.

Mr. Small made a motion to approve the warrants. Mrs. Silva seconded and the motion passed with a vote all in favor 6-0.

REMOTE RURAL BOARD MEETINGS; MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Dr. Gent spoke about the effectiveness of remote board meetings, particularly in ensuring meaningful participation from all Board Members and the community, especially in remote areas like Gabbs. The historical context of rotating board meetings to different locations was discussed, noting the unique geographical challenges faced by the district. Challenges with sound quality and technology in remote locations were highlighted, impacting Board Members and public participation. Concerns were raised about low community attendance at remote meetings, and the possibility of alternative approaches was discussed, including: Not making any changes; Focusing board meetings in Pahrump and Tonopah with improved technology; Conducting more frequent site visits to schools during the day to enhance board member interaction with staff and students; Offering alternative community engagement events separate from board meetings. The importance of consistent follow-through in visiting schools and engaging with communities was emphasized. Positive feedback was shared regarding the improved sound system in the current meeting location. Staff to conduct a survey to gather feedback from communities regarding preferences for board meeting locations and alternative engagement opportunities. Assistant Superintendents to assess community surveys and needs in their respective areas. Revisit the board meeting schedule and locations in the third quarter, with the June 12th meeting designated for finalizing the next year's schedule.

DISCUSSION REGARDING FUTURE BOARD MEETING TOPICS

Restriction of Cell Phones

Mrs. Silva asked about the new grading system and possibly having the athletic director present the benefits of sports in academics.

Mrs. Fischer asked about background checks on school volunteers and the progress of state superintendent meetings on BDRs.

Mr. Wulfenstein would like to have a plan for the maintenance of paved surfaces at schools/offices.

DISCUSSION TO APPROVE, DISAPPROVE, AMEND, OR MODIFY THE DATE OR ATTENDANCE AREA OF FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

Mr. Wulfenstein made a motion to change the location for the December 12th meeting from Amargosa to Pahrump and the January 16th from Pahrump to Amargosa. Mr. Small seconded, and the motion passed with a vote all in favor 6-0.

GENERAL PUBLIC INPUT

One public comment was made.

ADJOURNMENT

8:22 pm

By _____

Larry Small, Clerk