

WEBER SCHOOL DISTRICT
5320 Adams Avenue Parkway
Ogden, UT

Study Session
November 4, 2020

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Study Session in the Superintendent's office at 5320 Adams Avenue Parkway, Washington Terrace, Utah. The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m. The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

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| Jon Ritchie | Board President |
| Jan Burrell | Board Member |
| Douglas Hurst | Board Member |
| Paul Widdison | Board Member |
| Jeff Stephens | Superintendent |
| Art Hansen | Assistant Superintendent |
| Lori Rasmussen | Assistant Superintendent |
| Robert Petersen | Business Administrator |

Board Vice President, Dean Oborn and Board Members, Bruce Jardine, and Janis Christensen joined via Google Meet. Also attending, Barbera Whitman, Uniserve Executive Director.

Superintendent Stephens began by congratulating President Jon Ritchie, Doug Hurst and Paul Widdison on their re-election. They were each unopposed, which is a tribute to the respect that constituents have for them.

Superintendent explained, three county commissioners will attend our Board meeting to present a check. Weber County received three installments of CARES funding originating from the federal government into the Governor's office. Commissioners have provided much needed resources for our district that enable us to make a few changes going into 2nd term. He prefaced with a tribute to our teachers and nurses who have provided daily in person instruction to two different groups of students; short term flexible learners (quarantined up to 2 weeks), and long term flexible learners (chose a quarter to learn online digitally). Managing all three groups have proven unsustainable. The resources we receive will enable us to make some adjustments. The district's organizational chart was then discussed noting the addition of Nick Harris as the Director of Digital Teaching and Learning. Nick was previously a supervisor. Currently there is no plan to replace his position. CARES funding will be used to pay for the difference in salary. Responsibilities will be separated from the Curriculum and Technology departments and move to Digital Teaching and Learning. Also, Jennifer Boyer-Thurgood was appointed as K-12 Weber Online Principal. It was noted that a high school principal and supervisor are on the same salary lane. Jennifer was previously Curriculum Specialist. Board President, Jon Ritchie asked where their offices will be located. It was explained they will be located at Weber Innovation Center.

This reorganization allowed us to open K-12 Weber Online School, November 2nd, 2020. This has been a huge effort from all directors to make this happen, along with continued communication with neighboring schools and families. A letter from both Superintendent Stephens and Principal Jennifer Boyer-Thurgood was sent out to parents. Superintendent shared how we want these students to have the best of both worlds. They will have a full time, online, certified teacher, but do not want them to lose the connection with their neighborhood school. They will be informed of class activities, school events and at any time they may come back to their neighborhood school. Board Member, Bruce Jardine asked if parent teacher conferences will be virtual with the K-12 Online School. It was replied, yes they would. They will have a principal and a teacher and we want them to know each, so if there is a need they will be available. Board Member, Jan Burrell asked if we anticipated if students come back, will there be need for another organizational restructure. Superintendent expects K-12 Weber Online School will grow. Possibly home school families, charter school patrons or families outside the district. We have increased capacity to deliver instruction digitally. Business Administrator, Robert Petersen stated we know we have families with kids attending online charter schools and we want to bring them back to Weber District. Board Member, Paul Widdison asked if students have to sign up for a certain amount of time in K-12 Weber Online School. It was noted how difficult it is to manage students when they are in and out, so we ask them to commit for at least a term. Jan Burrell asked if we have a way to approach students that are in our boundaries but not currently attending our schools. Superintendent noted we are working closely with our counselors and principals who daily are trying to make connections with students and families that may have dropped off. Students choosing to learn online will find even greater support than they are currently receiving.

Superintendent noted with the additional CARES funding from the County Commissioners, we will also be able to provide much needed relief for our nurses who are spending so much time contact tracing. We have currently hired seventeen contact tracers and will hire up to thirty to be assigned at different schools as well as a mobile team depending on the need. They have been trained and working with Lynn Raymond, Technology Director, to get the technology needed.

Superintendent explained we are not able to provide every course as we would in person, for example band, CTE courses, etc. One specific course we are experiencing difficulty with is Dual Language Immersion. Families that wish to continue in the program will need to do it in person school, but have an option for a hybrid model with the English portion. We are finding the program is unsustainable, and also highly compromised. It is not just learning the language, but learning a subject in the language such as health, math, science, etc. It is difficult to replicate it online in a Canvas course. There are currently about 40-50 families participating in the program. We are not eliminating programs but it will only be offered in person or a hybrid model.

Superintendent noted our high schools have some students using a hybrid schedule. Some of their classes are in person but also learning from home digitally. This would be a consistent schedule. For example, (A) day in person and (B) day online. Junior high is the same. Elementary level, most are in person all day, but some are in person for the morning and home in the afternoon for various reasons. We are trying to be flexible but be consistent for teachers.

Superintendent Stephens emailed the Board today indicating that Weber High will begin a soft closure tomorrow with over fifteen positive cases. We are following the health guidelines and this model with two week soft closures has shown to be effective. Weber High is our third school to close. Roy High was first and now has close to zero cases. Bonneville High has been closed for a week and will reopen next week. They have shown to have high participation and engagement from students. Teachers send a link and deliver instruction live as they continue (A & B) schedules. To further clarify, Bonneville was on soft closure last week but the football team played in the State playoff game. Questions have been raised why they were allowed to play. The two are independent of each other. The school can be shut down but with fewer than 3 positive cases, groups can continue to participate. Fremont had to forfeit a State playoff game with over 3 positive cases on the football team, but at the same time the school remained open.

Finally, Superintendent Stephens alerted the Board that possibly next month we will come to the Board with a parameters resolution from the 2011 bond. We are currently paying 4% interest but possibly can get it down to 2% or 1%. This will save money, allow us to restructure our existing debt, and create space to layer new debt if we go out to bond. We will have additional capacity to bring on debt to save tax payer dollars. This is another way to position ourselves for an upcoming bond and keep tax impact lower for constituents.

Meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.