

Board of Trustees' Meeting
District Office
270 East Bridge Street
Blackfoot, Idaho

April 15, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Chairwoman Bonnie Hepworth called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. She welcomed the audience and led them in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members in attendance were Chairwoman Bonnie Hepworth, Vice-Chairwoman Mary Jo Marlow, Treasurer Sonya. Harris, Trustee Karen Driscoll and Trustee Dewane Wren. Also in attendance were Superintendent Brian Kress, Assistant Superintendent Ryan Wilson, Board Clerk JaNae Smith, Joy Mickelsen, Lynette Carter, Teresa Rowe, Madi Simpson, Christa Stufflebeam, Paige Hyde, Lori Kay, Brenda Thibeault, Katie Thibeault, Vicki Chase, Liam Martin, Liam Pope, Chelsey Arave, Amy Wren, Steve Martin, Eulalie Christensen, Venessa Shutes, Ryan Shutes, Emilee Murdoch, Don Hong, Leif Watson, Teresa Watson, Samantha Pharis, Sidnee Menefee, Olivia Hyde, Ayla Nichols, DeeLane Worley, Amelia Robinson, Lacy Hong, Heather Grimmett, Abbie Robinson, Linda Beauvais, Ronna Park, Kelsey Callister, Kambri Johns, and Mia Johansen.

Mr. Kress stated that there was a need to amend the agenda to add Item C,2b. Superintendent/Board Correspondence. Mrs. Mary Jo Marlow moved that the board of trustees amend the agenda and add item C,2b. Superintendent/Board Correspondence. The good faith reason is the correspondence took place after the agenda was posted. Mr. Wren seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

Mrs. Hepworth recognized the MVMS Gifted Talented History Students. Mrs. Vicki Chase explained the History Projects, benefits of the program and student successes. In 2020, there were 17 students who qualified for the State Contest and 6 students who qualified for the National Contest. This year all Blackfoot entries received awards at the regional contest. The state contest is May 1, 2021. Christa Stufflebeam and BHS cheerleaders were also recognized. They placed in every routine with a third place overall in the State Championship. They are the only all-girl team to place in the all-around. Mr. Kress told them they have elevated Bronco Pride and expressed appreciation to them.

Public Forum – Mrs. Emilie Murdoch, Ms. Eulalie Christensen, and Mrs. Amy Wren came forward during public forum. Mrs. Murdoch would like the board to have an opt-in policy instead of the current opt-out one for human sexuality education. Ms. Christensen is concerned with what is being taught to our children. She has been on curriculum boards and would like to help. She would also like to see an opt-in policy. Mrs. Amy Wren gave a message of hope. She would like to see her teaching profession be valued.

Superintendent Update (Information) – Mr. Kress said that springtime is trying to get here. Baseball played out in the rain yesterday. The third trimester is in full swing. He told about the BHS SAT testing that took place in the new gymnasium. He gave a shout out to the Senior/Freshman Service Day. There were 2400 hours of service given by the BHS students. The end of school is almost here.

March Financial Report (Information) – Ms. Rowe gave the March financial report. At the end of her report, it was noted that the amount for FY21 Revenue to Date and FY20 Actual Revenue thru 3/31/2020 was the same amount. Ms. Rowe said it looked like a clerical error. (See attachment.) *Note: Prior to the end of the board meeting Ms. Rowe gave board members a revised Cash Flow Statement.*

Superintendent/Board Correspondence (Information) – Mr. Kress stated that he had correspondence with the board this week, and he read the emails to them as follows:

“4/13/2021 Board Members,

It came to my action over the weekend via social media, and also information was shared with me yesterday, that there is concern that we are currently teaching literature that contains pornographic material to our secondary students. This is an accusation I took VERY seriously.

Today I met with the English Language Arts Department from Mountain View Middle School, I plan to meet with the same department from Blackfoot High School tomorrow. I asked them if they had taught, in the past two years, any material that could be perceived as pornographic in nature. Each of the teachers answered with a resounding NO. One teacher even made the comment that she was well aware of the values and conservative nature of our community and that there is no way she would open that can of worms. I followed up that I had been informed that some of the supplemental materials and libraries contained pornographic content. According to what I was told, complete novels of a supplemental nature cannot be completely accessed by a student unless it has been assigned by a teacher. There are small excerpts of novels, but from what I was told nothing pornographic in nature. Having learned that, I will be seeking clarity from the curriculum companies regarding what students can and cannot access. Regarding the use of supplemental material and novels, the teachers stated they barely have enough time to cover the main source material and there is no time for the use of supplemental materials. I believe what was told to me by our teachers.

As I stated, I will be speaking with the BHS ELA department tomorrow to cover the same ground. I also reached out to a colleague, he has served as a mentor of mine, to seek if they had experienced the same sort of thing. He gave me some great advice that I will share when it comes time to hear a recommendation from our curriculum committee. Regarding that committee, there was a flaw in the membership of that committee. When I became aware of the flaw, I asked it to be rectified. I am pleased to say that it has been corrected. We will now have 4 parents to help review the curriculum. The parents would be ethnically classified as: 2 Caucasians, 1 Native American, and 1 mixed race. The socio-economic and religious background of these 4 parents is also diverse. I would say that it is a cross section of our community. This group has a HUGE challenge ahead of them, and I do not envy them at all. I am not sure when a recommendation will come, but I will ask that it be placed on the board agenda as soon as it has been made.

I will report back to you tomorrow regarding the discussion I have at BHS. I will not condone pornographic material being used in our classrooms. I will do my very best to better understand this situation. As always, please feel free to contact me with any concerns or questions.

4/14/21 Board Members,

I spent some time today with the English Language Arts Department at Blackfoot High School. The discussion followed much the same as the conversation with the ELA department at Mountain View Middle School. Those who were using the pilot program assured me that to the best of their recollection there had not been any material assigned for reading that contained pornographic content. I was questioned about my feelings regarding Romeo and Juliet. I told them I felt that was okay. I asked them if they had any knowledge that their students might have full access to online supplemental materials that did contain pornographic content. They responded that they did not believe that was the case. I let them know that was the same response I had gathered from MVMS and that I believed that to be the case, but I am waiting to hear from the publishing companies to make sure.

I have been asked today whether or not we continue to teach poetry in our classes. My response was that I truly did not know. I asked our teachers to share with me the material used in their classes. This list includes poetry, short stories, etc. that are used in BHS classes. In fairness, I did not make that request to MVMS, so their list only includes novels used in their classes. I attached the lists created by our teachers.

It has been requested that my previous email, and I am assuming this one, be shared during open forum in our upcoming board meeting. I have no problem fulfilling that request. I also need to make the board aware of a concern of mine. It appears our staff has been sent emails and texts that question them as professionals and implies that they have a lack of morals and values. As the superintendent, I know our staff and I have no doubt regarding their professionalism, morals, and values. I have met with each of those involved in this matter, and I have found them to be amazing individuals who want what's best for the children of our community. I am truly concerned that this has taken place.

I have been thoroughly amazed by our staff while we have had discussions regarding this matter. In one such discussion, I came to believe that something more needed to happen in order to better address this matter. I proposed having an open house to help share with our parents the current curriculum materials being used in our secondary English Language Arts department. I am pleased to share that our teachers agreed. We will be hosting an open house for our parents on April 21st between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM. The event will take place in the new gymnasium at Blackfoot High School. We will have copies of all the current and pilot materials being used in our classrooms. Our amazing teachers will be on hand to answer any questions our parents may have regarding the materials. I foresee this event being much like the parent teacher conferences we held pre-COVID-19. It is my hope that with an opportunity to see the content, and speak with the teachers who use the materials, we will address a majority of the concerns. I will notify our parents of this opportunity either later this afternoon or early tomorrow morning. We will not answer every question or concern, but we will do our best to be open with our parents.

As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.”

Mr. Kress made a clarification that there will be a total of 6 patrons on the ELA committee. He reiterated that the curriculum open house will be at the BHS gym between 6 – 8 p.m. Mrs. Harris surprised that Mr. Kress added this to the agenda since it wasn't on the agenda as a topic. She would like to see curriculum content as an agenda item. She questioned how long the piloted programs have been available for review by members of the public. She doesn't feel the opportunity has been available. She wants to be sure that the public is given an opportunity to review the piloted curriculum. Mr. Kress said that staff involved with the Open House will be reimbursed for their time. Mrs. Marlow thanked him for the opportunity to have the open house on April 21st so parents can look at the curriculum. The open house will be a great place for parents to ask questions of the teachers. On behalf of some patrons, she asked Mr. Kress for a reading list. Mr. Wren asked about a curriculum timeline. Mr. Kress said he didn't know when the recommendation would come before the board. There are currently two curriculums that are being piloted which are available for the public to come to the District Office any time to review.

Board Policy 606: Selection of Curriculum Materials (Information) – Mrs. Hepworth asked if there were any questions regarding this policy or Idaho Code. Mrs. Harris said that there are some things that are not clear in the board policy. She isn't sure what is meant in the policy by “for materials that are not covered”. She would like to see more clarification. There is concern right now that school boards need to pay attention to what is being taught. Who seeks new curriculum? The superintendent initiates the process. Mr. Wren said that over the years the district has tried to be on a 5 year rotation over the years to keep updated. Sometimes we can't do that due to funding. The school board gives direction to the curriculum adoption. Mrs. Harris asked when should parents get involved? Mrs. Hepworth answered that the policy and law doesn't say. It's open to what the board wants to do. They discussed options. Mrs. Harris asked who decides what programs are piloted? Mr. Kress said programs are piloted based on recommendations from the state. Mrs. Harris shared a list of curriculum that the state has approved and an example of how someone used their own curriculum. Mrs. Hepworth stated that the superintendent has been given the direction to do that with the curriculum director. She said that the board needs to be careful that they don't micromanage. Mrs. Driscoll stated that there may be patrons that come to board members so they need to pass on any information that they receive from patrons. Mr. Wren said that there has to be a certain amount of trust to those that adopt the curriculum. Mrs. Harris asked if a committee needs to be formed before a program is piloted. Board members asked clarifying questions regarding forming this committee. In doing this the process would need to start earlier. Mrs. Harris thanked them for their hard thinking. She asked who chooses the committee members? Mrs. Hepworth said that in the past board members have given suggestions. They discussed how the meetings are advertised, posted and the number of meetings and referenced the committee policy. Mr. Kress said that the curriculum director serves as the committee chairman for this committee. Mrs. Harris asked should we as a board look at the curriculum; should we ask for public comment? Mrs. Hepworth said that's why there is a member of the board on the committee.

Mrs. Hepworth asked for input on this board policy. Mr. Wilson stated that we trust the lawyers who make these policies and value the teachers who are teaching the curriculum as well as the curriculum director and superintendent. If the board wants to delve into this with more details, such as how the current committee is operating or changing this policy, then it can be put on a future agenda as an action item. Mrs. Harris asked more questions for them to consider. Mrs. Hepworth stated that they need to be careful about being too specific in the board policies. There

needs to be transparency and a balance. They discussed the option to have a work session in May. Mrs. Harris will meet with Mr. Wilson and go over her concerns in order to help draft changes to policy 606.

Usage of CARES Funds (Information) – Mr. Kress presented a PowerPoint. ESSER I funds are the only funds that have been received. He wishes he knew more about the ESSER II and ESSER III funds. The state has not released those funds. Mrs. Marlow asked if there was a surplus in Boise. Mr. Kress indicated that he agreed with Mrs. Marlow regarding a surplus of funds in Boise.

Bond Projects Update (Information) – Mr. Kress stated that district personnel have been busy with steering committee meetings at least weekly. Everything is going very well. He told them about the tour he did at an elementary school in Driggs and Black Canyon Middle School Student Center. Mr. Kress is excited about the meetings tomorrow to discuss the BHS Student Center. Mrs. Hepworth would like to see 8th grade students included in the student meetings.

Bond Funding Information (Information) – Mr. Kress turned the time over to Christian Anderson from Zions. He gave a PowerPoint presentation. The bond was approved for \$23,900,000 for new projects with a final maturity not to exceed 20 years from issuance. There is a levy target of \$3.76 per \$1,000 or lower. Currently interest rates are at a historic low. Ballot estimates for interest were at a proposed higher rate than what they will actually be. The patrons will pay back less than \$23,900,000. He explained the bond issuance timeline. He recommended a special board meeting on June 10th to adopt the bond resolution. Blackfoot School District is currently rated “Baa2” by Moody’s. Mr. Anderson also explained the bond rating and scores. Nick Miller, the district’s bond counsel, from Harley Troxell presented the Role of Municipal Advisor and Services of Bond Counsel as well as key timeline events. He gave a preview of the proposed special board meeting on June 10th.

Superintendent Evaluation (Information) – Mr. Kress said the evaluation will be completed during the May board meeting and will be the same format as last year. The areas of strengths were the goals. Mrs. Smith will give them hard copies of the evaluation and goals from last year as well as an electronic copy. Mr. Wren said that board members need to remember this year has not been a normal year.

Board Policy 677.8 Indian Policies and Procedures (Information) – Mr. Kress said that normally this board meeting is held in Fort Hall. The board needs to review the board policy for IPPs annually. He does not have any changes to present. The reason that the board meeting was not held at Fort Hall Elementary School is because the tribe is asking for 75% vaccination rate in order to have large meetings.

Board Policy Quarterly Updates (Information) – Mr. Wilson asked if the summary page was helpful to them. They indicated that it was. He will continue to have a summary page with quarterly policy updates. He then presented the following policy updates: 205: Continuous Improvement Plan, 296F1: Title IX Grievance Procedure: Reporting Form, 296F2: Title IX Grievance Procedure: Notice Template Complainant, 296F3: Title IX Grievance Procedure: Notice Template Respondent, 296F4: Title IX Grievance Procedure: Notice Template Witnesses, 296F5: Title IX Grievance Procedure: Notice of Delay, 356: Vacations and Holidays, Year Round Employees,

356.5: School Holidays, 604: Personnel Standards, 616: Early Graduation, 658: Social Studies, 677: Title I: Parent and Family Engagement, 677.10: Title I: Parental Involvement, 681.50: Student Data Privacy and Security, 816: Disclosure Requirements for Bond and Levy Elections, and 870: Board of Trustees Records. This is the first reading and if anyone has questions or concerns contact Mr. Wilson prior to the next board meeting. Mr. Kress told them that these policy updates are on the district's website.

Special Board Meeting (Action) – Mr. Kress suggested that the special board meeting be held on June 10th for the purpose of adopting the bond resolution. Mr. Wren moved that the board of trustees have the special board meeting on Thursday, June 10th at 6:00 p.m. at the District Office. Mrs. Karen Driscoll seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

Emergency Closure - 3/29/2021 (Action) – Mr. Kress stated there was a need to have districtwide school closures on March 29th due to widespread power outages in the community. Mrs. Mary Jo Marlow moved that the board of trustees approve the districtwide emergency closure due to community power outages. Mrs. Sonya Harris seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

Request Permission for Paper Bids (Action) – Ms. Rowe said at this time the administration is requesting approval to seek bids for paper for the 2021-22 school year. As in the past, the district will invite Bingham County Consortium, American Falls School District and Fremont County Joint School District to participate in the paper bid process. Paper purchases are declining as less paper is being used. Mrs. Sonya Harris moved that the board of trustees approve the request to seek paper bids for the 2021-22 school year as presented by Ms. Rowe. Mr. Dewane Wren seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

Intent to Operate 2021-22 Food Service (Action) – Mrs. Worley requested authorization to renew the district's agreement with the Idaho Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs for the 2021-22 school year. The district will be operating the National Breakfast and Lunch Programs, After School Snacks, and the Commodity Food Program. This year the State Department of Education and the USDA have provided free meals for all students and because of this not very many families have applied for free or reduced lunches. It is anticipated that meals will go back to full-priced, reduced and free next school year. The Free and Reduced Application can be filled out anytime during the school year. Mrs. Mary Jo Marlow moved that the board of trustees approve the intent to operate food service for the 2021-22 school year as presented by Mrs. Worley. Mrs. Karen Driscoll seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

Motion to Executive Session (Action) – Mr. Dewane Wren moved that the board of trustees recess into executive session in the manner and for the purposes authorized by Section 74-206, Idaho Code (1) (a) to consider hiring a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent; (b) to consider the evaluation, dismissal or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent, or public school student and (d) to consider records that are exempt from disclosure as provided in chapter 1, title 74, Idaho Code. Chairwoman Hepworth noted that this is proper business for consideration in executive session as per Idaho Code 74-206. Mrs. Sonya Harris seconded the motion. All board members in attendance voted in the affirmative in a roll call vote. Mrs. Hepworth – aye. Mrs. Marlow – aye. Mrs. Harris – aye. Mrs. Driscoll – aye. Mr. Wren – aye. The motion passed.

Officer Myler discussed the district’s school safety plans with the board of trustees.

After Officer Myler was excused from the meeting, Mr. Kress and board members shared complaints and concerns against some district employees. Mr. Kress presented the personnel recommendations.

The board reconvened into open session at 10:03 p.m.

Consent Agenda (Action) – Mrs. Hepworth asked if there were any questions regarding items on the consent agenda. There were no questions. Mrs. Harris said the bills were in order. Mrs. Karen Driscoll moved that the board of trustees approve the prior board minutes, personnel recommendations as they appear below in these minutes, and payment of March bills. Mr. Dewane Wren seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion carried.

<u>New Hires</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Stephen Benson (Category 1)	Business Teacher	BHS
Angelic Campbell (Category 1)	Family and Consumer Science Teacher	MVMS
Keaton Folsom	EL Migrant Outreach Para/EL Credit Tracker	– MVMS
Arizona Harrington	Special Ed Para	BHS
Casey Hostert (Category 1)	Special Ed Teacher	BOSS
Chance Loynd	6 Grade Teacher	BHSG
Stacy Moffit	1 st Grade Teacher	RC
Amy Smith (Category 1)	1 st Grade Teacher	FH
Lisa Thompson	Special Ed Para	BHS
Dallen Worthington (Category 1)	Automotive Teacher	BHS

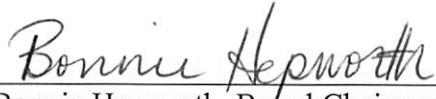
<u>In-District Hires</u>	<u>Previous Position</u>	<u>New Position</u>
Mandi Beasley	STO – Jump Start Kindergarten Para	BHS – Media Para
Kristen Earley Teacher	STA – Intervention Teacher	STA – Kindergarten
Sandra Eldredge	BHS – Special Ed Teacher	BHS – Dean of Students
Amber Serr	MVMS – Social Studies Teacher	MVMS – Counselor
Josh Torngren	IHS – Teacher	IHS – Principal

<u>Transfers</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Rishay Ackley	MVMS – Counselor	WAP – Counselor
Ashley Armstrong	STA – Counselor	GRO – Counselor
Holli Ludwig	BHGS/WAP – Counselor	BHSG – Counselor
Ronie Perkes	MVMV – Alternate Classroom Teacher	MVMS – Social Studies Teacher
Dara Stuart	RC – 3 rd Teacher	GRO – Teacher

<u>Resignations/Retirements</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Ivonne Chavez	Migrant Outreach Center/EL Para	BHS
James Clegg	Assistant Football Coach	BHS
Emilie Hansen	1 st Grade Teacher	GRO
Mia Haskett	P/T Paraprofessional	FH
Ryan Rosenfeld	5 th Grade Teacher	FH
Race Shelley	Assistant Football Coach	BHS

Future Agenda Items (information) – The following items were presented: Board Policy 606, Fidelity to the Curriculum, Sources of Strength and Gear-Up.

Adjournment (action) – Mrs. Mary Jo Marlow moved that the April meeting of the board of trustees be adjourned. Mr. Dewane Wren seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.



Bonnie Hepworth, Board Chairwoman



JaNae Smith, Clerk