

**DOLORES SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-4A  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MONTHLY STRATEGIC MEETING MINUTES  
DISTRICT BOARD ROOM**

**Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – The Dolores School Board meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on December 10, 2020.

**ROLL CALL** – Meeting held via Zoom. Members present were: Maegan Crowley; Kay Phelps; Lenetta Shull; Clay Tallmadge. **QUORUM** was present. Also in attendance: Lis Richard, Superintendent; Justin Schmitt, Secondary Principal; Lurleen McCormick, Elementary Principal; ValienaRosenkrance, Preschool Director; Doreen Jones, Finance Director; Alesa Reed, Curriculum Director; Staci Cost, DAC Chair; staff and community members via Zoom.

**PLEDGE**

The Board Secretary read the vision and mission statements.

- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (DSD Policy BEDB)**

A motion was made by Lenetta Shull and seconded by Kay Phelps to approve the agenda.

**Votes:** Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.

**Motion Passed.**

- III. REVIEW OR CORRECTION OF November 12 and 17, 2020 MINUTES (BEDG)**

A motion was made by Clay Tallmadge and seconded by Lenetta Shull to approve the November 12 and November 17 meeting minutes.

**Votes:** Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.

**Motion Passed.**

- IV. DISTRICT RECOGNITIONS/CELEBRATIONS** –ValienaRosenkrance, Teddy Bear Preschool

ValienaRosenkrance recognized and celebrated the efforts of the staff of the preschool, which has been recognized as the top preschool in the county. She shared that all staff will be taken out to lunch at Montezuma's.

## V. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (BEDH)

No comments received.

## VI. CONSENT AGENDA (DSD Policy BEDB)

1. Approve Disbursement of Checks for Payment of all Bills/Debts for November 2020
2. Directors Reports

## VII. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Board Member Reports (DSD Policy BIB)

**Maegan Crowley** - Board members did not attend the annual CASB convention, which was held virtually this year. Board members are still able to pay for access to all events, so if members want to use any of the sessions for professional development, every session was recorded. More information on how to access will be provided by CASB. The board discussed reviewing the roster of events and selecting sessions of interest for possible inclusion in the January work session.

**Kay Phelps** - BOCES Report: BOCES met to discuss their audit; they've had to adjust a lot, as have all schools. They are serving students through small groups and one on one assistance, depending on the school. Highlights: sending weekly newsletters with resources and updated info; supporting with assistive technology; completed special ed compliance requirements for the year and received 100% compliance on audits; autism leadership team is improving practices, and TBI team will be receiving training through the state to be able to better serve students with TBIs; early childhood team is working on increasing family engagement with preschool kids; there are \$45k in stimulus funds left to close gaps in services. BOCES also discussed changing their student plan platform from ALPINE to Frontline, and explained the reasons around that decision.

**Lenetta Shull** - Discussed concerns over state budget and loss of tax revenue due to the pandemic. Montezuma County will remain in Level Orange on the state COVID Dial.

**Clay Tallmadge** - nothing to report.

2. Finance Report – Doreen Jones (DSD Policies BBA, DAB)

Finance Director Doreen Jones provided this month's district finance report.

- November Revenue: \$814,623.46
- November Expenditures: \$647,664.88
- Dolores State Bank Balance: \$162,526.44
- Colotrust Balance: \$5,444,561.47

Dir. Jones explained that the funds for the extra meals being provided for students are being paid for by the state meal reimbursement program, so even though those funds are being drawn from the Lunch Fund they are being reimbursed.

### 3. Superintendent Report – Lis Richard (DAB)

Superintendent Richard provided a report on survey data and the COVID response plan. She shared that leadership has been reviewing DAC survey data, exit surveys, and parent surveys; these surveys have shown that concern about school leadership was the #1 reason for people leaving the district, and that the second highest reason was a lack of programming (and/or moved away). There's a plan in the works for increasing CTE programming and securing grant money for it- this plan will be completed by the end of month so that it can be reviewed and discussed at the meeting in January.

Update on COVID response plan:

- schools are doing good job of implementing the plan overall
- district is grateful for the extra week of break- 3 staff members tested positive for COVID at the secondary, so that time was needed for quarantine
- implementation of hybrid learning is going ok, staff and students are adjusting to challenges
- free meal program is going well- students are starting to realize that meals are free
- enrollment is up - elementary and secondary are seeing growth and retaining students
- supporting students and staff - 2 teenagers died by suicide in our county in the last week. Staff is extra stressed.

Board members asked whether administration has a plan in place in the event that our county goes to red or purple and we have to shift to online learning; Superintendent Richard stated that the district will easily be able to transition if that happens. The board also discussed the fact that Montezuma County Commissioners have said that they plan to stay at level orange, while Public Health officials have submitted a recommendation to move to red based on current metrics. Governor Polis will not make the decision to close down schools at this time.

## **VIII. ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION**

### **A. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## 1. Revisit Strategic Plan (Section A)

During the November 12th meeting, the board requested that a page be added with a rubric to see how we are making progress toward the goals in the strategic plan. Superintendent Richard will include a draft rubric for the work session in January, which could then be added to materials for each meeting.

## 2. Facility Repairs (FBC, FBC-R)

Monthly progress report on facility repairs:

- MS roof project \$36,530. This project has been delayed until the middle of December due to the contractor delay on an existing job.
- New exterior doors will be installed- district has decided to proceed with Integrity Glass- \$73,645.95
- All new blinds have been installed
- New water bottle fillers have been installed
- New gutters have been installed and cleaned
- All exterior wall packs have been examined and are awaiting a bid.

## 3. District Accountability Committee (DAC) (AE, AE-R, AE-R-3)

Board President Crowley shared that she had met with DAC Chair Staci Cost, and that the chair has done a great job identifying discrepancies between policies. She reviewed them, and checked references linked to each policy; the major difference was that bylaw policy does not reflect main policy AE-R, which had been revised in 2016. The chair will address these issues with the DAC and will report back with suggested revisions to bylaws at the January board meeting.

The board discussed that it's good for the district to have the DAC running because it is a very important committee. They will be seeking DAC input on the UIP (Unified Improvement Plan). Staci Cost reported that 2 members of DAC will be working with Alesa Reed as a subcommittee to dig more into UIP, and that a draft of updated bylaws has been completed, is being reviewed, and will be provided at the January meeting for review, modification, and adoption. The DAC will also have a special meeting for budget revisions on Monday December 14th- Doreen Jones will take the committee through the budget, in order to identify how the committee might be able to help the board think through where money should be dedicated and make budgetary decisions that will be beneficial to the district.

## B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Data Report on Student Achievement (IK, IKA, IKE)

Alesa Reed provided a report on student achievement data for Fall 2020. She walked the board through the RIT scale, and gave an overview of averages for each subject at each grade level, identifying areas of growth, decline, and comparisons to national averages. She pointed out that the national norm was established in 2015, but was changed this year, possibly but not explicitly in response to COVID. She explained that we are climbing back from a seven year decline, and that while there are pockets of concern, overall we are meeting averages; we aim for higher than average, but we are looking stronger than anticipated. This year is obviously tough and hard to assess.

The board also discussed concerns about being able to meet student reading needs particularly in regards to the READ Act (K-4th) during this time of hybrid learning.

2. Resolution to Certify the Mill Levy

The Board must approve the resolution to certify the mill levy every year in order for it to be presented to the county. Finance Director Doreen Jones works through this; she explained that formula changed this year, and new numbers have been approved by the district's auditor. These new numbers will account for tax income that the district will receive from the county next year.

**A motion was made by Lenetta Shull and seconded by Kay Phelps to accept the annual Resolution to Certify the Mill Levy effective January 2021.**

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

3. Future Building Advisory Committee (FB, FB-R, FBC)

Board President Crowley discussed that the board had previously agreed to have a committee in place by December, but that a lot has happened since the board committed to this December deadline. While we are dealing with rapidly changing short term plans, we also need to keep long-term goals and strategies in place. A lot of momentum was built up to address building needs, and having this committee come together is going to be key in making the building happen.

The board discussed the need to establish criteria for who is appointed to the committee, the number of people, and who is involved; and to look at how to engage the community and involve community members with specific skill sets who could provide valuable insight. The board wants to improve community engagement throughout the process. Given the situation that the community is in and

what everyone has been going through this year, timing for this task is difficult. The board agreed that time is needed to give this further thought and discussion.

**A motion was made by Lenetta Shull and seconded by Kay Phelps to table New Business items 3 and 4 until the January 2021 regular meeting.**

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

~~4. Bond Marketing/Initiative Committee (FDA)~~

*Item tabled until January meeting.*

5. "Talk to the Board" Tab

The board discussed the fact that the "Talk to the Board" tab was established to provide another vehicle for community communication and outreach, but that its effectiveness needs to be assessed. Adjustments need to be made, to both that vehicle and the "citizens comments," based on what COVID has brought up, in order to assure that voices are heard. The original idea for the "talk to the board" tab was to allow public comment to be seen by ALL board members, and rather than emails that are only sent to specific members. Board members recognized a growing issue with comments submitted via the tab becoming personal and negative, and discussed the need for a statement asking that the comments be constructive in nature and not personal criticisms.

The tab was also originally intended to allow for anonymity; for staff and for community members concerned with retaliation, this has been important, and needs to be continued. The citizen comments at the last meeting were a special situation, because it was a very contentious issue, and citizens used that tab as well as direct communication with the board and citizen's comments; this resulted in it being unclear what was intended to be read aloud as citizen's comments.

The "Talk to the Board" tab comments are and should be available to board members and the superintendent. In September, the board decided that comments from these would not be directly responded to, but would be addressed in the board meeting, and that they would make a decision based on board consensus whether the superintendent responds and/or a response is sent from the Board Secretary. The Board Secretary has been sending acknowledgement of receipt to all comments submitted. The board discussed methods of acknowledgement of receipt of comments, and agreed that an auto-response would be a disservice to the community, but that standard draft(s) would be useful.

**A motion was made by Clay Tallmadge and seconded by Lenetta Shull to task the Board Secretary with drafting several template responses for the “Talk to the Board” Tab, to be presented at the January meeting.**

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge -aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

**A motion was made by Kay Phelps and seconded by Lenetta Shull to draft a statement that states the purpose of the “Talk to the Board” Tab.**

Discussion: the anonymity has allowed for some hateful comments; a civility statement is needed, clarifying guidelines. Tallmadge will draft it, and the board will collaborate to revise at the next meeting.

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Phelps - aye; Lenetta Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

## 6. Bonus (BBA, DAB)

Superintendent Richard asked the board to recognize the hard work of district employees through a bonus. She shared that the district had a larger carryover of funds than anticipated, and suggested using about half of that amount to provide bonuses to the district’s 120 employees. She proposed 3 levels of recognition, based on the amount of responsibility and extra work that has been done throughout the year: highest tier - directors; middle tier - certified staff; lowest tier - classified staff.

Finance Director Doreen Jones answered board questions about the carryover funds. She explained that she budgets very conservatively, and that due to how funds were classified and spent, including some of the Coronavirus relief funds, we have a higher carryover (around \$243K more) than was budgeted in June. The board discussed using a smaller amount for bonuses than originally proposed, in order to be fiscally conservative in the event that finances change before the end of the fiscal year.

The board agreed that a bonus was a good gesture and very much in order. They discussed that giving an equal bonus to all employees would be better than tiered bonuses, because all employees have carried extra responsibility and risk throughout this unprecedented year, and because tiers could be misunderstood and not received well by district employees.

**A motion was made by Lenetta Shull to authorize \$73,000 for bonuses to be divided evenly among all district staff.**

**No second, motion died.**

**A motion was made by Clay Tallmadge and seconded by Kay Phelps to authorize \$90,000 for staff bonuses, to be divided equally among all employees.**

Discussion: the board agreed on the need to show appreciation, and to help with retention, as this has been and will continue to be a hard year.

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Kay Phelps - aye; Lenetta Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

7. Recommendations to Hire (DSD Policy GDE/GDF)
  - a) Cameron Elder - Substitute
  - b) Deb Nielson - GT Coordinator

**A motion was made by Lenetta Shull and seconded by Kay Phelps to approve all recommendations to hire.**

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Kay Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

8. Upcoming Board Events
  - a) Date for Policy Review Meeting

December: coffee with board - Tallmadge and Phelps  
January: three meetings scheduled (see below) - no coffee with the board  
February: coffee with the board - Shull and Crowley

Finance workshop - January 7th 5-8pm  
Policy review meeting - Wednesday January 20th  
Regular meeting - Jan 14th

The board discussed having a short special meeting at the end of the month to approve the budget once state numbers come in.



## **IX. AGENDA PLANNING**

### **1. Next Agenda**

Items for January meeting:

- discussion of suburban / transportation vehicle issue
- committees from new business (tabled)
- draft of template response for talk to board tab
- draft of statement of purpose of talk to board tab
- budget
- discussion and approval of any changes in student fees for next year
- recognition of bus driver who is retiring at 80

### **2. Meeting Recap**

Board members clarified their earlier discussion about the CASB annual sessions that have been offered, and agreed that they would review the offerings and would share recommendations if there are some that the whole board should see. This will be discussed further at the January meeting.

## **X. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f) for the purpose of discussing personnel matters in regard to secondary principal contract.**

**A motion was made by Clay Tallmadge and seconded by Kay Phelps to go into executive session. Those present at the outset of the executive session were members of the board of education, the superintendent, and the secondary principal.**

**Votes: Crowley - aye; Kay Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

*Board went into executive session. Returned at 9:25pm.*

**A motion was made by Kay Phelps and seconded by Lenetta Shull to approve the secondary principal's extended contract, conditional upon legal counsel and redraft of the contract.**

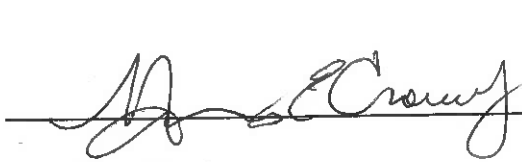
Discussion: the board agreed that the same legal counsel that drafted it should review it, and clarified that the contract would extend to June 30, 2021.

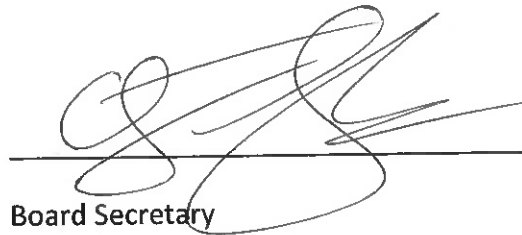
**Votes: Crowley - aye; Kay Phelps - aye; Shull - aye; Tallmadge - aye.**

**Motion Passed.**

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned by Maegan Crowley at 9:30 pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2/11/21  
Board President Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2-17-21  
Board Secretary Date