



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
March 25, 2020**

**1.0 OPENING ITEMS**

**1.1 Meeting Date and Location:**

March 25, 2020 – via remote Zoom meeting.

**1.2 Call to Order/Roll Call:**

Mr. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He acknowledged that this meeting, while attended from various locations, is being held on the ancestral homelands of the Coastal Salish people. Present: Directors Kelly Bashaw, Douglas Benjamin (President), Camille Diaz Hackler, Jenn Mason, Superintendent Greg Baker and Sheri O’Day (recorder). Director Katie Rose was unable to attend. Mr. Benjamin acknowledged the heroic work that Dr. Baker and his team have done to successfully manage this unprecedented COVID-19 event, and the board is appreciative of the additional work that allowed this evening’s meeting to occur. He noted that members of the district’s executive team, as well as others, are viewing this meeting but are not visible on our screens.

**1.3 Audience:**

Mr. Benjamin noted that, because of our current emergency status due to COVID-19, public participation is limited to written submissions only. Any written comments received will be shared with the school board directors.

**1.4 Superintendent’s Announcements and Report:** Summary of Dr. Baker’s comments:

- Dr. Baker shared that we are learning as we go. He acknowledged the members of the executive team, who have been outstanding while working under crisis mode for several days. The team has been meeting via Zoom every morning at 7:30 to identify the highest priorities, challenges and solutions, and they meet again at the end of the day for a team review and check-in. The four top priorities are:
  - Safety/Health: Regular operations at our school sites have closed, with district essential staff working on site and from home. Staff is working within the protocols of the health department. The Lighthouse Mission has relocated their operations to Bellingham High School, and most of the community has been overwhelmingly supportive.
  - Food: Breakfast and lunch is being provided to students at 16 school and apartment complex sites. Our food services staff, principals and others are working hard to make that happen, and over 1,600 meals were provided to kids today. In addition, the Central Kitchen is supporting the Lighthouse Mission by preparing food to serve breakfast, lunch and dinner for 200 community members who are utilizing the services of that organization.

- Child Care: Many families have come up with their own child care solutions. Child care is being provided at The Firs and Parkview Elementary for children of emergency responders, and child care services will begin at Cordata Elementary next week. We will continue to monitor the need, with the possibility that additional school sites will be used for child care.
- Learning: The team has been working non-stop on a remote learning plan, with the landscape changing every day. The expectation is not that students will be online all day. We have 300-500 students experiencing homelessness; some students do not have computers or internet access; and there are many parents who have lost their jobs. The direction from the state is that districts be planning for implementation of a learning plan for next week. Staff is determining how to best communicate with families that do not have the necessary supports. A focus within our student population is high school seniors and how the school closure will impact graduation. We are waiting for additional direction from the state relating to the complex graduation requirements. It is not an easy task for an institution that has relied on face-to-face contact to drastically change its service delivery, but we will continue to learn some great lessons that will help us to improve instruction. We are also continuing to think about staff learning. Another area of focus is staff learning, and we will continue to think about how our staff receives professional development and learns to use new tools themselves. The Human Resources Department is working hard in conjunction with labor leaders to answer questions from our 1,500-1,600 employees.
- Dr. Baker asked Capital Projects Director Curtis Lawyer to give an update on the Sunnyland Elementary capital project. Curtis shared that the district has been working with Dykeman Architects and the educational specifications committee, and there is one committee meeting remaining. Also, Curtis and others have been working with the Parks Department and the City of Bellingham to exchange a portion of vacated King Street behind the school (owned by the City of Bellingham) for the Shuksan Meadows Park property (owned by the district). This would prevent both the district and the city from going through the process to surplus the properties.
- Dr. Baker again acknowledged and thanked the members of the executive team for the work that each of them has been leading in connection with the COVID-19 crisis. Their work has been nothing short of phenomenal.

**2.0 CONSENT ITEMS:**

Ms. Bashaw made a **motion** to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 2.1 Approval of Minutes of the Feb. 19, 2020 Regular Meeting and Study Session; Feb. 28-29, 2020 Special Meeting; and March 4, 2020 Student Roundtable**
- 2.2 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – February 2020**
- 2.3 Resolution 2-20, Request to Transfer Funds from the Capital Projects Fund to the General Fund**
- 2.4 Hire Appraiser for Property Appraisal**
- 2.5 Bellingham Public Schools Foundation 2019-20 Agreement (#1920-108)**

- 2.6 **Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families Interlocal Agreement (#1920-137)**
- 2.7 **Center for Educational Leadership Agreement (#1920-138)**
- 2.8 **Malachied, Inc. Agreement for Consultant Services (#1920-147)**
- 2.9 **Lighthouse Mission Ministries Facility Agreement (#1920-154)**
- 2.10 **Personnel Recommendations**
- 2.11 **Personal Services Contracts**

Unanimous affirmative vote.

### **3.0 BOARD RESPONSE TO MONITORING**

#### **3.1 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-3, Treatment and Communication with Public, Parents and Students**

There was discussion regarding the summary of the board responses to the EL-3 report that was prepared by Mr. Benjamin. Following discussion, Ms. Bashaw made a **motion**, seconded by Ms. Mason, to approve the monitoring response document ([Attachment A](#)). Unanimous affirmative vote.

#### **3.2 Board Response to Monitoring – Ends 2.1, Part 1, Student Competence**

There was discussion regarding the summary of the board responses to the Ends 2.1, Part 1 report that was prepared by Mr. Benjamin. Following discussion, Ms. Bashaw made a **motion**, seconded by Ms. Mason, to approve the monitoring response document ([Attachment B](#)). Unanimous affirmative vote.

#### **3.3 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-4, Staff Treatment, Compensation and Evaluation**

The board discussed the feedback contained in the combined monitoring responses for EL-4 ([Attachment C](#)). Mr. Benjamin will provide a final summary version of this document which will be submitted for approval at the April 22, 2020 regular meeting.

#### **3.4 Board Response to Monitoring – Ends 2.1, Part 2, Student Competence**

The board discussed the feedback contained in the combined monitoring responses for Ends 2.1, Part 2 ([Attachment D](#)). Ms. Bashaw asked that her response to item 1 be changed from “c” to “b”. Mr. Benjamin will provide a final summary version of this document which will be submitted for approval at the April 22, 2020 regular meeting.

### **4.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

#### **4.1 School Board Directors’ Reports. Highlights of comments:**

- Ms. Bashaw has been able to view families picking up food from Options High School and appreciates that Bellingham High School is being used by the Lighthouse Mission.
- Mr. Benjamin commented that a lot has happened in our world since the board’s last regular meeting. The elementary roundtable at Carl Cozier Elementary occurred as the seriousness of COVID-19 was beginning to become apparent. He noted that teachers are heroes for working with all our students. He enjoyed the roundtable and looks forward to the next time the board can meet with students.
- Ms. Mason noted that the elementary roundtable was helpful and good feedback was received from students. She shared her appreciation for Dr. Baker and his team as they navigate the current health crisis and acknowledged that building a massive

system so quickly entails quite a lot of work. The number of decisions that need to be made to accomplish tasks is likely immense. She also appreciates the use of Bellingham High School for the community. From a parent perspective, the communication from principals, teachers and paras has been incredible. Everyone is going above and beyond to love all students.

- Ms. Diaz Hackler noted that it has been a very difficult time, and Dr. Baker has done an excellent job rising to the occasion. She hopes that he is taking care of himself during this stressful time. She would like to see mental health support for families during this stressful time, as many community members losing jobs and scared.

**4.2 GP-7.2 – 2019-20 Annual Board Agenda, Revised** – General review.

**5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

**5.1 New Business:**

- Dr. Baker shared a photo and email from an administrator who helped to serve meals earlier today and noted that the district focus on equity is very apparent.
- Mr. Benjamin noted that the school board’s primary responsibility relates to overseeing the superintendent. We have a great superintendent, and the work that has been done by the superintendent and his team has not gone unnoticed by the board.

**6.0 CLOSING ITEMS**

**6.1 Board Assessment of Meeting:** Mr. Benjamin assessed the meeting, with an overall rating of 4 (*commendable*).

**8.2 Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

**Approved:**



Douglas Benjamin, Board President

**Attest:**



Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

*Minutes approved: April 22, 2020*