



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
May 22, 2019**

1.0 OPENING ITEMS

1.1 Meeting Date and Location:

May 22, 2019 - 1306 Dupont St., Bellingham, Washington

1.2 Call to Order/Roll Call:

Ms. Diaz Hackler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present: Directors Kelly Bashaw, Douglas Benjamin, Camille Diaz Hackler (President), Jenn Mason, Quenby Peterson, Superintendent Greg Baker and Sheri O'Day (recorder). She acknowledged that this meeting is being held on the ancestral homelands of Indigenous Peoples, in particular the Lummi Nation and the Nooksack tribe.

1.3 Audience:

- **Jennifer Wright** – Is a parent who has enrolled her son in another district in order to get his educational needs met. Highly Capable Learner (HCL) students can experience struggles. She believes it's difficult for parents to navigate the system. She is a teacher, her husband is a principal, and they believe the district is under identifying students for HCL services. Their family sought early entrance for their son, but it was an impossible task with roadblocks at every turn.
- **LaVera Langeman** – Is a paraprofessional in the Lowell Bridges program, which serves students in special education. She stated that Bellingham Association of School Employees (BASE) members felt disrespected when the school board meeting was moved to the date of the BASE social. She has chosen to work in the Bridges program as a second career and serves on the Understanding and Serving Students with Dyslexia Advisory Group. She loves her job, although it is exhausting and emotional. She believes the district should be paying a higher wage to BASE employees.
- **Alleen MacKay** – Is a paraprofessional who has worked in the Bridges program at Lowell for over 11 years. There has been an increase of students in the Bridges program, and the increased volatility has the potential to lead to more staff and student injuries. She would like to see an increase in the number of paraprofessionals in the Bridges program.
- **Emma Reardon** – Is a student who read a letter written by another student, which outlined the services that she had been provided with during her years as an HCL student. She stated that the HCL plan is a document that is not followed up on. She does not feel that she has the opportunity to collaborate with other students and is isolated from her peers.
- **Kristen Mason** – Is the parent of four students at Silver Beach, Whatcom and Squalicum. She is against option 2 that is being considered by the Attendance Areas

- PreK-12 Standing Committee because of the small group of Silver Beach students that would feed into Whatcom. It also will increase the commute time and make transportation, other than bus and car, unrealistic. Why would the district consider moving students across town into a high growth area?
- **Hilary Thomas** – Is the parent of two sons in HCL. Her older son entered HCL in elementary school and will be graduating from high school this year. She stated that her son received more services when he was in fifth grade than he has received in high school. The focus of the program has been differentiated instruction. There does not appear to be support from leadership at each school for the program. She asked that the district re-commit to provide services for students who are entitled to it, even if it requires outside-the-box thinking.
 - **Adam Resnick** – Is the parent of a sixth-grade student who qualifies for HCL. He stated that most students who qualify for HCL services do not receive the services, and he believes there is clear data that the district is failing to provide services to the students who are identified as HCL. He asked that board members read the comments from a survey. He suggested that the district hire a leader in the field to create a satisfactory program.
 - **Veronica Douglas** – Is the parent of two students who have been in the district for nine years. She loves to be a part of the team to make things better. She served on the HCL review committee and the HCL advisory committee and helped to reinvigorate the HCL parent association. She believes that when all kids benefit, the entire community benefits. She had to fight for services for her son from eighth grade on. He is finally doing well because he is attending boarding school, at an expense to their family. She encourages the board to enforce and implement the decent plan that we have.
 - **Pat Gillham** – Is the parent of a 12-year-old son who qualifies for HCL. The family moved from Idaho, where he was pulled out each week for HCL services. The student has never been exposed to any HCL services other than Future Problem Solvers. What do parents do when they do not have the opportunity to pay for their kids to be tutored or attend Future Problem Solvers? He believes the school board should evaluate why there is so much dissatisfaction with HCL and hire someone who has the expertise to fix the program.
 - **Carrie Eller** – Is the parent of a current kindergarten student at Silver Beach and also has a three-year-old. Of the two options being considered by the Attendance Areas PreK-12 Standing Committee, option 2 grossly affects students from her neighborhood. The bus ride is too long to Shuksan Middle School. She believes that students will lose school friendship ties when they are split between Kulshan and Shuksan. She believes that both options being considered are short-sighted in terms of balancing numbers across the four middle schools.
 - **Vicky Reardon** – Is a parent speaking regarding the HCL program. She said many people think that HCL students will be just fine because they are smart. She has had to home school her children at times and had to choose between staying in the district or leaving; their family chose to move to China for two years. She stated that Dr. Baker was presented with a clear plan based on research and best practices, but he chose not to adopt it. She asked Dr. Baker to resign.

- **Samantha Konikoff** – Is the parent of a fourth-grade student and a kindergarten student at Silver Beach. The fourth grader is identified as HCL. There has been a lack of consistency for her student, and the teacher is now charged with making sure services are provided. The ideas presented at the beginning of the year sounded great, but there is no follow through. She feels privileged that she is able to volunteer at school to make sure her son receives the services he is entitled to, but she worries about the students whose parents are not able to make sure their students receive services.
- **Connie Campbell** – Is the sister of a parent in the district who was not able to attend the meeting this evening. She read a letter on behalf of her sister, which asked that the school board visualize what an HCL student looks like. It would likely be an incredibly hard-working student who always goes the extra mile. Many HCL students don't fit this vision. Many have mental health issues. An HCL student who is struggling may look different than other students who are struggling.

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

- It is likely that a budget will not be brought to the school board for approval until July or August. In the meantime, we are working with principals to fine-tune staffing and continue to prepare for next year. Very few reduction-in-force letters were required to be delivered by the deadline of May 15.
- The [Attendance Areas PreK-12 Advisory Group](#), consisting of approximately 40 people, has been meeting over the past couple of years. The committee's focus is on middle school boundaries, and neighborhood meetings have been held at Silver Beach, Columbia, Whatcom and Kulshan. The advisory group has recently been processing two scenarios with the community. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Steve Clarke and Executive Director of Teaching and Learning Jay Jordan shared that approximately 160 people attended the four meetings. There has also been a substantial amount of feedback received via a survey. The advisory group will meet tomorrow to review the feedback received. Overall, it is clear that people like the schools they attend. Steve reviewed with the board the two options that have surfaced and that have been shared with the community. He and Jay then answered questions from the board. Dr. Baker thanked Steve, Jay and the committee for their work.
- Executive Director of Family Engagement Isabel Meaker talked about the Fifth Annual Latinx Education Summit held at Bellingham High School on May 19, 2019 and shared some photos from the event. She noted that 974 people attended and said it meant a lot to the families that administrators and board members attended. Dr. Baker shared that the title of Isabel's position has changed from Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Family Engagement to Executive Director. Ms. Diaz Hackler thanked Deputy Superintendent Mike Copland for the music at the Latino Summit.

2.0 **CONSENT ITEMS:**

Mr. Benjamin made a **motion** to approve the following consent agenda items:

2.1 **Approval of Minutes of the April 17, 2019 Regular Meeting and May 7, 2019 School Board Visit**

- 2.2 **Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – April 2019**
- 2.3 **Monitoring Report – EL-2, Organizational Continuity**
- 2.4 **Resolution 8-19, Acceptance of Central Kitchen Project**
- 2.5 **Award bid for Bus Maintenance Renovation Project**
- 2.6 **Washington State Health Care Authority (#1819-144)**
- 2.7 **Whatcom Community Foundation’s Project Neighborly Grant Agreement – Shuksan Cafeteria (#1819-159)**
- 2.8 **Whatcom County Detention Center Education Program Interlocal Cooperative Agreement (#1920-002)**
- 2.9 **Washington Reading Corps Contract (#1920-004)**
- 2.10 **Personnel Recommendations**
- 2.11 **Personal Services Contracts**

Unanimous affirmative vote.

3.0 POLICY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

3.1 Monitoring Report Ends 1, 2, 3 (combined report)

Dr. Mike Copland, Deputy Superintendent, and Brian Rick, Director of Research and Assessment, discussed the [report](#) and answered questions from the board.

4.0 BOARD RESPONSE TO MONITORING

There was discussion about the board president’s summary with regards to policy monitoring. The board would like to have a separate section in the meeting agenda for the summaries to be reviewed.

4.1 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-6, Academic Standards and Practices

There was discussion regarding some of the feedback contained in the monitoring response document for EL-6. Following discussion, Mr. Benjamin made a **motion** to approve the monitoring response document ([Attachment A](#)). Unanimous affirmative vote.

4.2 Board Response to Monitoring – EL-8, District Calendar

There was discussion regarding feedback contained in the monitoring response document for EL-8. Following discussion, Ms. Mason made a **motion** to approve the monitoring response document ([Attachment B](#)). Unanimous affirmative vote.

4.3 Board Response to Monitoring – Ends 2.1, Part 3, Student Competence

There was discussion regarding some of the feedback contained in the monitoring response document for Ends 2.1, Part 3. The board has asked that next year more information be included regarding why students are choosing to not continue with secondary education. Following discussion, Mr. Benjamin made a **motion** to approve the monitoring response document ([Attachment C](#)). Unanimous affirmative vote.

Based on a discussion regarding EL-9 (Asset Maintenance and Protection) at the April 22, 2019 meeting, the board will discuss at a future retreat Ms. Peterson’s concerns regarding solar energy.

5.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5.1 School Board Directors' Reports

- Ms. Mason enjoyed hearing from so many students at the Squalicum High School visit. The Latinx festival was awesome; it was great to see so much engagement with families that could easily feel disenfranchised from the district.
- Mr. Benjamin attended the WSSDA regional meeting in Ferndale recently and talked about “On Board,” which will develop training resources for board members. One installment consists of a budgeting/bargaining manual, which outlines the roles of all parties. A report from the Board of Education was included, and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) also provided a handout. The culinary program in Ferndale provided a great lunch.
- Ms. Diaz Hackler also enjoyed the Squalicum visit, the Latinx festival, the WSSDA regional meeting and the board’s special meeting on May 15. She noted that one of the chefs from the Latinx festival is opening a new restaurant soon in downtown Bellingham.
- Ms. Bashaw enjoyed the Squalicum visit and the Latinx festival as well. It was great to see so many families at the Latinx festival.
- Ms. Peterson was appreciative of the Squalicum visit and noted that it seems the new principal, Miguel Perez, is well integrated into the school. She attended an awards ceremony for girls participating in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math). She noted that the HCL conversations will likely continue until the issue is addressed adequately. She shared that there are many sad stories due to students not being given what they are entitled to.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 School Board Committee Reports

- The “Student Leaders” linkage meeting will be held 2:30-3:30 in portable A at Bellingham High School on May 15, 2019.
- There was discussion regarding when or how board operating policies are reviewed. This will be investigated.
- Dr. Baker reminded the board of a conversation at a previous board meeting regarding feedback that the word “citizens” be changed to either “community members” or “individuals”. After discussion, a **motion** was made by Ms. Mason to change the word “citizens” to “individuals”. Unanimous affirmative vote.
- Ms. Peterson asked that board members read through a WSSDA article regarding board policy 1400 prior to the June 5, 2019 meeting. She would like the board members to understand what changes are being recommended by WSSDA, as it will require some shifts in the current practice with regards to public comment at board meetings. Ms. Peterson noted that she and Ms. Mason will then meet and will notify Dr. Baker and Executive Director of Communications and Community Relations Jackie Brawley regarding their recommendations.

7.0 CLOSING ITEMS

- ### 7.1 Board Assessment of Meeting:
- Ms. Diaz Hackler assessed the meeting, with an overall rating of 4 (*commendable*).

7.2 **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Camille Diaz Hackler" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Camille Diaz Hackler, Board President

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Baker" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

Minutes approved: June 5, 2019