



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
June 17, 2020**

**1.0 OPENING ITEMS**

**1.1 Meeting Date and Location:**

June 17, 2020 – via remote Zoom meeting.

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

Mr. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:13 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, Katie Rose, Superintendent Greg Baker and Sheri O'Day (recorder).

**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:

- Tomorrow is the last official day of the school year. This week has been filled with school celebrations (mostly virtual), pickup of supplies, etc.
- Individual graduations for our four high schools were broadcast on June 12, 2020. Many people worked to make the graduation season a special event for seniors, and feedback has been overwhelmingly appreciative and positive. Families commented that they enjoyed being able to watch the ceremony with no tickets needed and can now watch it at any time.
- The Lighthouse Mission will be vacating Bellingham High School and moving into another facility in mid-July. At the Bellingham City Council meeting last night, the district was acknowledged for helping our community by providing a safe place for some of the city's most vulnerable population. Dr. Baker noted that clients of the Lighthouse Mission helped to clean up the area in front of the school prior to a diploma pick up event.
- There is a lot going on around the country relating to the fight against racism. One tension felt within the district is the creation of an ethnic studies course, which will be an elective high school social studies class. We will continue to look at all courses at all grade levels to identify where the history of racism is discussed.
- Another tension in the district and around the country is the presence of law enforcement in schools. Staff are currently seeking to understand the concerns and any benefits prior to moving forward with a decision. There has been a strong theme across the nation for years that schools should be a safe place. We have held meetings

with staff who want to do what is right for students of color. Today Dr. Baker met with a group of middle and high school students of color to hear their perspectives on this issue. Our district has one resource officer who supports our 23 schools, as well as staff who serve as campus monitors at our secondary schools. The sight of a police officer can cause anxiety and fear for some students, and we do not want students to feel that way unnecessarily. If the goal of the position is to build relationships, having one officer does not suffice. Students are more likely to form relationships with the campus monitors. In addition, our first responder lunches were well-intentioned, but we have heard from some staff that they would prefer to not have that occur within the school day. First responders are valued members of our community and some have connections with our schools as parents or are former students. We want to be careful about how we communicate with them regarding their value in our community. Board members agreed that this is a complex issue and that taking time to listen to different perspectives is important. Dr. Baker noted that, as with any significant change, when we arrive at a decision there will be some who will be upset, but staff will have authentically listened to everyone.

- Staff is working on professional development on the topic of racism and will also offer some opportunities to parents.
- The draft budget has been created, and Dr. Baker acknowledged Assistant Superintendent of Finance Simone Sangster and her team for their work on the proposed budget. The budget is a year-round process, and there are no new announcements in this budget. Part of the budget process is to formally share the entire budget with the board and then bring it forward for a vote at our next regular meeting. Dr. Baker shared some of the highlights and noted that a conservative approach was taken going into next year, in the event that the legislature makes changes to this year's state budget.
- Last week the state superintendent released his guidance for reopening schools for 2020-21. Dr. Baker participated in a Zoom meeting with the state superintendent today where that guidance was further discussed. The assumption at this point is that we will be opening for the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. Key factors to consider include how to screen students and staff each day; hygiene and being sure everyone is washing their hands; physical distancing of six feet as much as possible; face coverings; cohorts and how we group students and adults to lessen interaction throughout the day; and the continuous cleaning of facilities. Even though the plan is to re-open at the beginning of the school year, we must also have a remote learning plan that we can turn to at any point in time. Any remote learning will be more engaging than it has been over these past three months. An advisory group has been formed and will begin meeting next week, and there will be multiple workgroups formed to help inform and advise that group. It will be a herculean task to say the least.

## **2.0 CONSENT ITEMS:**

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

### **2.1 Approval of Minutes of the May 13, 2020 Regular Meeting**

### **2.2 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – May 2020**

- 2.3 **Resolution 7-20, Delegation of Authority to WIAA**
- 2.4 **Resolution 9-20, Request to Transfer Funds from the Capital Projects Fund to the General Fund**
- 2.5 **Resolution 10-20, Intent to Construct Alderwood Elementary School**
- 2.6 **Resolution 11-20, Intent to Construct Parkview Elementary School**
- 2.7 **Wetland Conservation Easement to City of Bellingham**
- 2.8 **Award of Bid for Alderwood Elementary School Rebuild**
- 2.9 **Approval to Enter into Contract with Coast to Coast Turf**
- 2.10 **Constructability Review Report, Alderwood Elementary School**
- 2.11 **Constructability Review Report, Parkview Elementary School**
- 2.12 **Annual Report on Asset Preservation Program**
- 2.13 **WWU Subrecipient Agreement/Professional Educator Standards Board (#1920-162)**
- 2.14 **Whatcom Family YMCA Summer Childcare Partnership Agreement (#1920-164)**
- 2.15 **Vamos Outdoors Project Agreement for Services (#1920-165)**
- 2.16 **Gym Star Sports Center (#2021-003)**
- 2.17 **Whatcom County Behavioral Health Services Contract (#2021-005)**
- 2.18 **Bureau of Internet Accessibility Services Agreement (#2021-006)**
- 2.19 **Piper Sandler & Co. Agreement (#2021-007)**
- 2.20 **Alternatives to Hunger dba Bellingham Food Bank Facility Use Agreement (#2021-011)**
- 2.21 **Personnel Recommendations**
- 2.22 **Personal Services Contract**

Unanimous affirmative vote.

### **3.0 POLICY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

#### **3.1 Review Governance Process Policies GP-1 through GP-6**

Governance Process Policies GP-1 through GP-6 are reviewed annually. There were no recommended changes suggested to the policies at this time.

### **4.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

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

- Ms. Rose has been impressed with the engagement and deep and thoughtful conversations at the elementary level regarding Black Lives Matter. If there is a need to increase counseling, she wonders where that funding will come from. From a parent perspective, she is excited for the end of the school year.
- Ms. Diaz Hackler shared that she would like to see more people of color running for the school board, serving on committees, involved with PTAs and PTOs and volunteering in the schools. She thanked staff for the work involved to put together the graduation ceremonies.
- Ms. Mason noted that she continues to be impressed with the teachers and paraprofessionals who have been engaged with students and have helped to keep families engaged. She is hearing more from community members regarding social justice. She shared that, while policy governance is great for student outcomes and long-term vision, it can give the impression that the board does not appear to be making decisions.

- Ms. Bashaw noted that she continues to appreciate the thoughtfulness of Dr. Baker when there are areas of tension.
- Mr. Benjamin asked a trivia question regarding when the district's first school levy election was held.

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

**5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

**5.1 New Business:**

- Mr. Benjamin previously emailed an annual summative evaluation of the superintendent to board members. He pointed out that this has been an atypical year and the board had suspended some of this year's monitoring reports. The policy governance model does not have a mechanism for the board to weigh in on the unprecedented events that have taken place over the past few months. The summative evaluation contains comments from the board members with respect to those events, and there was discussion regarding the document. All agreed that the comments should be included in the summative evaluation. Ms. Diaz Hackler made a **motion** that the added comments should not include board members' initials. Unanimous affirmative vote.

**6.0 CLOSING ITEMS**

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

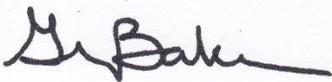
**6.2 Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

**Approved:**



Douglas Benjamin, Board President

**Attest:**



Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

*Minutes approved: July 15, 2020*