



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
September 16, 2020**

**1.0 OPENING ITEMS**

**1.1 Meeting Date and Location:**

September 16, 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, 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, and all written comments received will be shared with the school board directors. Each board member has seen all messages received.

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

- Dr. Baker acknowledged that this is a challenging time for everyone. Families are facing child care challenges and teachers are teaching in a different way, some teaching while their own children are participating in remote learning. He shared some photos received from principals, showcasing what is happening across the district. Staff are working to get students what they need, such as desks, tables and music stands. Weekly meal boxes are available for any family needing them. Staff continue to plan for stage 2 of the Reconnect Plan, which will involve bringing a small number of students back into our schools while still receiving remote instruction. It is expected this would include some students who receive special education services, who are experiencing homelessness and/or those unable to access Wi-Fi. The district is collaborating with the Whatcom County Health Department as to when it would be safe to move to stage 2. There has been pressure across the state from high school athletes to be able to participate in sports. Dr. Baker answered questions from board members.
- Dr. Baker gave the board an update on student enrollment and status of the budget. The district has had an approximate 5% drop (575 students) in enrollment, which will result in a reduction in state funding. Across the region, districts have seen a 0-11% drop in enrollment, with 5% being a common percentage. Because of a loss of transportation funding, it will be necessary to furlough some transportation staff.

Placing them on furlough will enable those employees to retain health insurance. Other districts across the state are furloughing other employee groups. Although health care for substitutes is not funded, changes from the School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB) require that substitutes be offered health insurance coverage, which is an additional expense. Unemployment claim costs are another unanticipated expense. The district has a strong fund balance, and examples of additional funding include increased enrollment at the Bellingham Family Partnership Program; safety net funding for students receiving high-cost special education services and funds from the CARES Act. We have been conservative with spending and have opted not to fill vacant staff positions. Less money is being spent on field trips, athletics, travel and professional development. Dr. Baker answered questions from board members regarding enrollment and the budget.

- Dr. Baker provided a brief overview of the Sunnyland Elementary School rebuild project and introduced Sunnyland Principal Amy Berreth, who reviewed the site and design plans for the new building and answered questions from board members. Dr. Baker also introduced Buildings and Grounds Director Mike Anderson, who responded to questions regarding ventilation and HVAC systems. Dr. Baker and the board also congratulated Mike on his upcoming retirement.

## **2.0 CONSENT ITEMS:**

After the board discussed a minor change to the minutes of the August 19, 2020 special meeting, Ms. Bashaw made a **motion**, seconded by Ms. Diaz Hackler, to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 2.1 Approval of Minutes of the August 19, 2020 Special and Regular Meetings**
- 2.2 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – August 2020**
- 2.3 Approval of Expenditures and Payroll – March-July 2020**
- 2.4 Resolution 18-20, Intent to Construct Sunnyland Elementary School**
- 2.5 Resolution 19-20, Assurance of Racial Balance for Sunnyland Elementary Rebuild**
- 2.6 Resolution 20-20, Sunnyland Elementary School Educational Specifications**
- 2.7 Resolution 21-20, Request to Transfer Funds from the Capital Projects Fund to the General Fund**
- 2.8 Authorize Negotiations for General Contractor-Construction Manager Services Related to Sunnyland Rebuild**
- 2.9 Sewer Line Relocation Easement for Parkview Rebuild**
- 2.10 Hold Harmless Agreement for Franchise Utility Easement Relinquishment**
- 2.11 Approval of Squalicum Fields Phase 2 Change Order**
- 2.12 Learning Assistance Program Readiness to Learn**
- 2.13 Minimum Basic Education Requirement Compliance**
- 2.14 Front Stream Payments Agreement (#2021-032)**
- 2.15 SHI International Group Adobe Sales Order (#2021-034)**
- 2.16 Northwest ESD 189 – Safe Schools and Threat Assessment Services Contract (#2021-041)**
- 2.17 Cerium Networks, Inc. Support Contract (#2021-042)**
- 2.18 Bellingham Public Library Memorandum of Understanding (#2021-043)**
- 2.19 Accelerate Education Master Services and License Agreement (#2021-047)**

- 2.20 **Hub International Northwest, LLC Contract (#2021-049)**
- 2.21 **Northwest Career & Technical Academy Agreement (#2021-050)**
- 2.22 **Presence Learning Agreement (#2021-053)**
- 2.23 **DreamBox Learning, Inc. Agreement (#2021-054)**
- 2.24 **Vector Solutions K-12 Education Software Agreement (#2021-055)**
- 2.25 **Microsoft Premier Renewal (#2021-056)**
- 2.26 **Malcolm Oliver Agreement for Services**
- 2.27 **Personnel Recommendations**
- 2.28 **Personal Services Contracts**

Unanimous affirmative vote.

### **3.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

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

- Ms. Mason expressed appreciation for the work of Dr. Baker, the executive team and the entire staff to get the school year underway. Although there are many challenges for families, she shared that she has never felt more connected to her daughter's school staff and the other students. She also acknowledged that reaching out to families who may be experiencing difficult times by staff is very much appreciated.
- Ms. Rose expressed that this has been the best start to a school year for her family and thanked everyone for the work that has been put into making it a successful start. She also thanked Mr. Benjamin and Ms. Bashaw for drafting a letter to all district staff from the board.
- Ms. Bashaw works with many parents of children in the district and has heard nothing but praise and reports of this being the best start ever.
- Ms. Diaz Hackler appreciates Dr. Baker for keeping everyone on track during this hard time. She hopes that all staff are taking care of themselves and has also heard positive reports from district parents that things are going well.
- Mr. Benjamin acknowledged that Dr. Baker is sought out at a state level for his knowledge and expertise, and he thanked Dr. Baker for creating a district and a space where input from others is sought out. He noted that he misses the board gathering for linkages, study sessions, etc. and hopes there is a way for the board to connect during the virtual WSSDA (Washington State School Directors Association) conference in November.

#### **3.2 GP-7.2 – 2020-21 Annual Board Agenda, Revised**

### **4.0 NEW BUSINESS**

#### **4.1 New Business (as needed):** n/a.

### **5.0 CLOSING ITEMS**

#### **5.1 Board Assessment of Meeting:** Ms. Rose assessed the meeting, with an overall rating of 4 (*commendable*).

#### **5.2 Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

**Approved:**



Douglas Benjamin, Board President

**Attest:**



Greg Baker, Secretary to the Board

*Minutes approved:* October 14, 2020