

MINUTES  
CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
EDWARD A. GREER EDUCATION CENTER, BOARD ROOM  
2832 E. FLAMINGO ROAD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89121

WORK SESSION

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

9:01 a.m.

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Roll Call: Members Present

Terri Janison, President  
Carolyn Edwards, Vice President  
Sheila R. Moulton, Clerk  
Larry P. Mason, Member  
Deanna L. Wright, Member  
Dr. Linda E. Young, Member

Member Absent

Chris Garvey, Member

Dr. Walt Rulffes, Superintendent of Schools

Also present were: Mark Wood, Board Counsel, District Attorney's Office; Bill Hoffman, General Counsel, Legal Department; Dr. Lauren Kohut-Rost, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction Unit; Jeffrey Weiler, Chief Financial Officer, Operations Support Unit; Dr. Philip J. Brody, Assistant Superintendent/CTO, Technology and Information Systems Services; Dr. Edward Goldman, Associate Superintendent, Education Services Division; Richard A. Carranza, Northwest Region Superintendent; Bramby Tollen, Director, Purchasing and Warehousing, Operations Support Unit; Dr. Robert Askey, Educational Computing Strategist (ECS), Ernest Becker Sr. Middle School; Paula Naegle, Principal, Del Webb Middle School; Larry Russell, Principal, Mario C. and JoAnne Monaco Middle School; Trent Day, Principal, Centennial High School; Elizabeth Carrero, Secretary to the Superintendent, Office of the Superintendent; Cindy Krohn, Executive Assistant, Board Office; Lisa Chrapcynski, Administrative Secretary II, Board Office; and Francesca Haak, Transcriber/Recording Secretary, Board Office.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

*Adopt agenda.*

*Motion: Moulton Second: Young Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustees Mason and Wright were not present for the vote.*

**BOARD MEMBER ARRIVES**

Trustee Mason arrived at the Board meeting at 9:02 a.m.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AGENDA ITEMS/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT**

ParentLink – Skip Rapoport

Mr. Rapoport expressed concern with the poor functionality of ParentLink and cited several problems with the system. He distributed a packet of documents that contained opinions from community members. He questioned whether the district had received a platinum level of service and maintenance for the two years it has been utilized, and if not, was the district due a refund from ParentLink.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AGENDA ITEMS/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)**

Review – CCSD Regulations 5141.1 and 5114.2 – James Parker, Deann Burnett

Mr. Parker expressed concern with his son's expulsion from Cimarron-Memorial High School just because of past verbal arguments, and he requested a review of his son's expulsion, citing ethnic stereotyping as the reason for his son's expulsion. He also alleged that his son was not being properly educated because Cimarron-Memorial had not placed him in classes for his special needs.

Ms. Burnett expressed concern with safety of campuses because of the placement of students after they have completed behavior schools. She alleged that students or parents are being allowed to choose which school they would like to attend, allowing students to reunite with their classmates which promotes their bad behavior. She also expressed concern with the "revolving door" process of the district in relation to repeat offenders. She suggested the possibility of increasing communication and cooperation with Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) to help them solve some crimes involving students.

ParentLink – Erin Cranor

Ms. Cranor expressed support of ParentLink, which has had a concrete impact on her children's achievement.

### **APPROVE PARENTLINK**

Approval regarding the electronic parent communication system, ParentLink.

Dr. Brody gave an overview of the ParentLink system through a PowerPoint® presentation. He explained that this system is really a two-part system -- a phone message delivery system and a system for parents to glean information regarding their children. He provided an overview of the implementation of the system from a technical perspective, noting that most issues have been resolved, including the company's slow response, the system's slow response, and problems with year-round elementary schools. He stated that a service level agreement was being worked on to be added to the ParentLink contract. He concluded with highlights of characteristics of the program's success.

Trustee Janison commented that it was a necessity to have the ParentLink system work successfully for everyone, and that was made clear to ParentLink, who was present in the audience, when the Board discussed and approved the system.

Dr. Askey stated feedback from parents had been that grades were not reported, but he noted that most of the time the cause was that teachers were not importing the grades properly, but sometimes the cause was that the system defaulted grades to a different area, necessitating the need to bring it to the attention of the teacher when parents call. He suggested the need for a way teachers could check the information they export, such as a validation key.

Trustee Moulton asked what percentage of his time is used for ParentLink.

Dr. Askey responded it varies, but a typical problem takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

Ms. Naegle stated she had been very involved with ParentLink and worked to make the system perform. She praised the phone message system, but stated that obtaining accurate grade information by parents had been difficult. She also noted it had been very time consuming for the ECS to manage this system.

## **APPROVE PARENTLINK** (continued)

Ms. Naegle also stated that she just wanted ParentLink or a similar product to work. She concluded that principals are skeptical whether the system would work for preregistration purposes, and her school was not going to use the ParentLink system for preregistration purposes at this time because of the inconsistencies with it.

Trustee Janison questioned Ms. Naegle on whether she felt this was a ParentLink problem or a problem with the system as a whole.

Ms. Naegle stated she could not completely trust the system because of all the past problems with it.

Mr. Russell expressed support of the system, especially with its ability to translate messages in English and Spanish, and grades do appear as soon as teachers upload the grades. He stated parents feel ParentLink is a good system, as opposed to Edline or InTouch, because you can go into one account for multiple children. He stated that overall he was pleased with the system.

Mr. Day stated communication was extremely important at his school and that ParentLink promotes communication. He also stated teachers were required to attend ParentLink training if they encountered problems. He explained plans for next year of ParentLink tutorial programs online to assist parents, and he requested help from ParentLink to develop these tutorials.

Dr. Kohut-Rost suggested that the district needs to support communication by getting the committee back who went through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to serve as the group that receives concerns from principals or ECS staff. She also agreed that there was a need to support the importing and exporting of data and a need for a validation step for teachers.

Trustee Moulton thanked Dr. Brody for the work he has done for the district and extended congratulations on his new endeavors outside of the district. She also thanked Mr. Day for his engagement of students and parents he has worked with at Centennial, and she suggested that the tutorials Mr. Day mentioned be available in Spanish also. She also suggested that computers be available at the schools that have a large need for students' and parents' access. She agreed with teacher training and suggested surveying schools on whether the product is working or not. She requested the minutes of the Board meeting be provided to staff wherein ParentLink representatives were present and the Board approved the product after ParentLink representatives stated that the product would work.

Trustee Wright stated that there has been dissatisfaction with ParentLink expressed at her PAC meetings. She stated, on a personal note, that her son's grades are incorrectly displayed on ParentLink on a weekly basis, and she questioned why she has never received any information concerning ParentLink, noting that her son attends a year-round elementary school. She also stated that she feels that trust has been broken because ParentLink did not live up to its word resulting in schools and parents who have stopped trying.

Dr. Brody stated he would get back to Trustee Wright regarding her concerns.

Trustee Janison thanked Dr. Brody for his work in the district. She expressed concern with principals not receiving appropriate responses from ParentLink regarding their concerns, and she urged that ParentLink needs to accept responsibility. She opined that a service level agreement should be extended at no cost to the district because the district had not received what it was promised in the first two years.

## **APPROVE PARENTLINK** (continued)

Trustee Edwards thanked Dr. Brody for his work in the district and wished him well. She stated she had not heard anything at her public meetings either way regarding ParentLink. She noted a concern with what she was hearing from others, albeit not from her schools. She asked how the parents and students applying to college could be assured the transcripts that would be printed would not be considered an official transcript, and she expressed concern with the lack of information on the transcript. She stated that it needs to be communicated that parents or students need to come in to obtain an official transcript.

Dr. Brody stated there would be some verbiage on the transcript that would make it clear that the transcript is not an official transcript when it is printed.

Trustee Young asked, regarding the service level agreement, how the district could enter the contract and have six months of frustration and operation without service and with grades not being accurate in the system. She also expressed concern for hearing impaired parents and the homeless students who do not have access to a telephone.

Dr. Brody, in response to the hearing impaired issue, stated it is communicated that parents should get a card when they sign up that should have the text telephone (TTY) number, and if it had not already been communicated, he would ensure that it is. In terms of incorrect grades, he believed most of it had been resolved. He stated that the biggest reason for inaccurate information was because teachers enter numbers incorrectly. Regarding the homeless issue, the alternative would be to go to a library with computers or a school with computers they could use.

Dr. Kohut-Rost stated she would make certain that schools communicate to parents that there are computers available at school sites for their use.

Dr. Brody stated he would ensure production of a card to show how to dial in for information if they have access to a phone.

Trustee Young suggested that a partnership with public libraries was an important source of support for this process.

Trustee Mason thanked Dr. Brody for his service with the district.

Trustee Janison requested that Dr. Kohut-Rost report back the results of the surveys from the schools regarding what is and is not working regarding ParentLink, and how ParentLink would address their service, and what their response would be regarding concerns. She requested a written report on how she planned on rebuilding employees' confidence in the system.

Dr. Kohut-Rost stated she would work with the instruction side on school issues in addition to working closely with the technology division on levels of support and features to provide a comprehensive report, as requested.

Mr. Weiler stated he would work with Dr. Kohut-Rost over the next several months.

## **APPROVE REVIEW – CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS 5141.1 AND 5114.2**

Approval regarding Clark County School District Regulation 5141.1, Discipline: Control of Dangerous and Antisocial Behavior, and Clark County School District Regulation 5114.2, Expulsion Procedure.

Dr. Goldman clarified that his division does not make recommendations for expulsion, that recommendations come from the specific schools, and issues are addressed so that they do not have to come before the Board. He also clarified that parents do not get to choose which school their child attends after expulsion, although they are given the opportunity for input. He concluded that students are given a second chance after due process is conducted and consequences are completed by the students.

Trustee Janison clarified her concern that these regulations were not currently working for CCSD. She asked that Dr. Goldman's division address or to bring to the attention of the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) the issue regarding the regulation, as it currently reads, that if a student is expelled or suspended, and after behavioral school, they are transferred to another school, and they are immediately eligible to play sports, whereas if a student is on a zone variance they are ineligible to play for 180 days. She asked for an investigation into the way students are rotated out after minor infractions at the high school or middle school levels. She stated that, for the safety of students and staff, after two rotations or infractions, the student should not be allowed back into a comprehensive campus, and there needs to be some responsibility for students who continue to get in trouble and who continue to be a threat. She asked Dr. Goldman if the Academy for Individualized Study (AIS) was its own high school and what was the difference between AIS and the virtual high school.

Dr. Goldman responded in the affirmative regarding AIS being recognized by the state of Nevada as a four-year high school, and he explained the differences between AIS and virtual high school.

Trustee Janison asked that the AIS programs be addressed for students with minor infractions.

Dr. Goldman responded that determinations were based on the competency of the student, although it was an option for certain students. He noted that six years ago the Board gave the discretion to the principals and determined which infractions were worthy of expulsion in Regulation 5141.1.

Trustee Janison stated the community has changed, and discussion needed to take place regarding changing the regulations accordingly.

Regarding the policy on zone variances and the NIAA, Trustee Mason stated that the district makes the decisions, not the NIAA. He expressed concern with the district being a pipeline to prison for minority students and agreed with tweaking the policies to make them better.

Trustee Young stated that it is imperative that all schools need to be safe for students and staff. She agreed with reviewing the policies in accordance with changing times. She asked how often behavioral plans are being utilized. She requested meeting with staff regarding the process and to share her thoughts regarding the review board, the dropout rates, and what could be done to connect with schools to keep the campus safe while salvaging problem students.

Dr. Goldman accepted Trustee Young's suggestion to meet and discuss her concerns.

## **APPROVE REVIEW – CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS 5141.1 AND 5114.2**

(continued)

Trustee Edwards praised Dr. Goldman's department for the good job they do resolving issues with the students and families. She expressed concern with the large number of African American students being referred to Dr. Goldman and asked staff to figure out a way to conduct an analysis of where the problem lies.

*Consensus of the Board was had to have staff figure out a way to conduct an analysis of where the problem lies in the large number of African American students being referred to Dr. Goldman and his staff.*

Trustee Edwards expressed concern with timeline issues so referrals are being made at the appropriate time and requested that it be pinpointed more clearly to prevent students from losing seat time. She agreed with the sports issue and recommended a waiting period of at least one semester. She questioned whether there was the need to address issues regarding Internet websites, such as YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace, to determine whether language needs to be included in the policy to address those websites, in addition to language to address electronic communications of harassment, particularly sexual harassment, being distributed through cell phones. Regarding page 13 of 20 of Regulation 5114.2, she expressed a need to address the issue of suspended students ending up at the same school in the same environment. She expressed concern with outlying schools and whether a hardship issue needed to be addressed with the alternative placement causing students to travel great distances, and she expressed concern with the issue of assigned work to students and the loss of the student's school progress. She indicated that the Expulsion Review Board language is completely outdated and may need to be reevaluated. She thanked Dr. Goldman and staff for their work in the district.

Trustee Moulton commended Dr. Goldman and his staff on reducing the average number of days between incident and date received by the Education Services Division, as indicated on page 6 of 12 of the backup material. Regarding page 2 of 12, she expressed concern with the large growth in the number of expulsion data. She agreed with reviewing the policy for change, and she agreed that the diversity issue needed to be explored. She stated that families need to be involved when students are disciplined.

## **BOARD MEMBER LEAVES**

Trustee Mason left the Board meeting at 10:58 a.m.

## **APPROVE REVIEW – CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS 5141.1 AND 5114.2**

(continued)

Trustee Young asked whether the community could get involved with inputting their opinions regarding behavioral problems and the process surrounding that issue.

Dr. Goldman responded that regional meetings are held with police, administrators, and the School Safety Action Committee, and that some parents do attend. He stated maybe an effort could be made to get more parents involved in the meetings. He suggested, with Dr. Rulfes's approval, that a parent advisory committee could be formed for this issue.

## APPROVE REVIEW – CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS 5141.1 AND 5114.2

(continued)

Dr. Rulfes clarified many options are offered to students, in addition to very expensive avenues that are offered to students who do not even want to be there. He urged the need for creating a balance, but he noted that to expand options to students would not be without cost. He agreed that athletic regulation could be changed, in addition to expanding distance education and independent study to accommodate students. He noted that safety is a concern and asked whether the Board wants to continue offering multiple options to repeat offenders or transferring cost to parents after a second chance is given. He stated he does not oppose a parent advisory group. He requested direction from the Board in terms of offering multiple opportunities to repeat offenders.

Trustee Moulton agreed with second chances, but no more, after which she agreed with transferring the cost to parents. She suggested possibly a boot camp or jail visits as deterrents. She also suggested having a truancy phone number.

Trustee Janison agreed with freeing up behavioral school seats by handling issues on campus for minor infractions. She stated something is missing in trying to help a child on a campus before they get to the point of expulsion, and she requested Dr. Goldman and staff to look into ways to keep issues on campus before the step to behavioral schools. She liked the idea of getting students back on track.

Dr. Kohut-Rost explained that there is a pilot program, Schools Targeting Alternative Reform Onsite (STARon), whose goals are to transition academics for the students, identify behaviors that lead students to the behavioral school, and to free seats in alternative schools by having minor infractions dealt with at the comprehensive sites. She stated she would bring to the Board the principals of the four schools involved in STARon at the end of the third quarter for their opinions on the pilot.

Trustee Wright agreed that the language of the policies and the offenses need to be reviewed. She stated she felt parents do not understand the gravity of cyber bullying and the problems associated with cell phones. She also stated at some point parents need to be held responsible for behavioral issues if students continue with repeat offenses.

Trustee Young reiterated the lack of connection and support for Hispanic and African American students with behavioral issues. She suggested having more counseling or educational developmental programs starting at the elementary level that teach students how to handle frustration and anger.

Trustee Edwards noted that the only disproportionate ethnic group is African American, which needs to be addressed. She agreed with getting tough after students are given a second chance. She cautioned the Board that it was not the district's job to provide counseling and mediation, although the district could recognize a problem, refer it, and offer guidance. She agreed with educational programs on how to handle frustrations and anger up to a certain point before referring out.

Trustee Janison requested that Dr. Rulfes provide direction to the Board.

Dr. Rulfes clarified that he understood the Board would like options brought back for alternative schools, to tighten up multiple choices, correct the athletic issue that was raised, and provide more information to remedy the number of African American males in alternative settings.

## **APPROVE REVIEW – CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULATIONS 5141.1 AND 5114.2**

(continued)

Trustee Janison requested that staff come up with suggestions on how to tweak the language in order to make schools more accountable for minor infractions.

Dr. Rulfes agreed with a filter or screening of some kind before referring out to the Education Services Division. He noted that the district already has Internet safety features in place in the curriculum.

Dr. Kohut-Rost explained that a filter had been utilized years ago and felt it could be easily implemented again.

Trustee Young noted when she reviewed the data analysis, many students, particularly Native American and Hispanic students, dropped out of school.

Dr. Goldman agreed with Trustee Young's comment, and he followed up with what Dr. Kohut-Rost stated by reiterating that the principals have the authority on referrals for expulsion.

## **APPROVE DISCUSSION ON ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS**

Approval of discussion and review of Clark County School District regulations and procedures governing enrollment of students.

Dr. Kohut-Rost directed the Board to the backup material provided on Regulations 5111 and 5112 to which she gave a review and recommendations that included the following: That during preregistration, principals can require every parent to bring a proof of address every year; schools can run queries to ensure mail is not being returned to confirm that an address is accurate; and once a date arrives of a move-in date, that the school send out a request for proof of address document.

Mr. Carranza explained an incident with an elementary school that had a concern with creative addressing which contributed to their conversion to a year-round calendar. He stated that the principal decided to send out a form to parents with their selection of track preferences in addition to a proof of address in order to narrow down those families that were utilizing creative addressing. He urged keeping in mind that there may be many families in the process of losing a home and relocating.

Trustee Janison explained that parental feedback has been that of frustration because of creative addressing which was causing rezoning or calendar changes and administration not having time to police creative addressing on a yearly basis. She asked Dr. Kohut-Rost if there was something the Board could do to strengthen the regulations for the principals who do not have time or resources to follow through.

Dr. Kohut-Rost expressed concerns with actual rental and sales lease agreements that exist, and she suggested making all principals aware of practices and procedures they could utilize to confirm proof of addresses. She suggested not making it a burden to perform this process every year, but a principal could require it if they feel there is an issue.



## **APPROVE DISCUSSION ON ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS (continued)**

Trustee Edwards stated she was concerned whether the recommendation addressed all the issues and concerns, and she was not sure that leaving it up to the on-site principal was necessarily the solution. She acknowledged the concern with creative addressing and how the Attendance Zone Advisory Commission (AZAC) also struggles with this. She suggested that if an allegation is brought up, that it be referred to the region for an investigation. She also suggested an accounting of a mailing be performed to confirm whether creative addressing is occurring. She stated that the creative addressing problem needed to be addressed.

Dr. Kohut-Rost explained principals do follow up when mail is returned as not deliverable. She stated attendance officers are available to schools when there is a suspicion of a violation regarding creative addressing. She cautioned against violating the federal law protecting the homeless. She agreed with being proactive with proof of address when rezoning is being reviewed, especially when there is no correlating growth in the community.

Trustee Edwards asked whether post office box addresses are acceptable.

Dr. Kohut-Rost responded that she was unsure and could investigate and follow up with a response.

Trustee Edwards suggested if a post office address is utilized as a mailing address, that a requirement should be that two proofs of address are mandatory.

Trustee Wright stated she felt there were inconsistencies with documentation among schools requesting either one or two proofs of residency, and she felt the information was not being filtered to new principals and was inconsistent to staff regarding what they should require. She questioned whether the district needed to address custodial parent residences. She agreed that the policies need to be strengthened to request proofs of address every year or every other year, and it needed to be consistent among all schools.

Trustee Moulton questioned how to accomplish all that needed to be done in the time that it needed to be done with cuts in pay and staff reductions being imposed. She suggested imposing a fine on those who lie about their addresses. She also agreed with giving support and knowledge to principals so that they can accomplish what they need to do.

Trustee Janison explained that the Board is trying to make the system work and balance everything out and asked that principals try to understand their role. She agreed with diligent communication to principals and proactive investigation of address verification when a school is triggered for rezoning or change in calendar.

## **APPROVE BUDGETING AND PURCHASING PROCESSES**

Approval regarding budgeting and purchasing processes, including, but not limited to, purchasing award recommendations, purchase orders, and warrants, as recommended in Reference 3.04.

Ms. Tollen gave an overview on how budgeting and purchasing interacts with the Board.

Trustee Moulton explained that her confidence in the purchasing system was because of the audits.

Ms. Tollen explained the backup material, including the standard expenditure process, a template for noncompetitive recommendations on Regulations 3312 and 2310, and the recommended format for purchase order reports.

### **APPROVE BUDGETING AND PURCHASING PROCESSES (continued)**

Regarding page 3 of 7 of the backup material, Dr. Rulffes questioned whether the school approves all grants because many times schools submit grant applications directly.

Ms. Tollen responded that she thought they approve the grant applications.

Trustee Wright stated it was her understanding that everything had to go through the Grants Development and Administration Department.

Dr. Rulffes agreed to investigate Trustee Wright's comments.

Trustee Edwards agreed with the recommendations made by Ms. Tollen, including changing the format to 13 pages and sorting by supplier. She explained that if she had a question, there would be more information available for perusal and clarification.

Ms. Tollen continued her discussion with the recommended format for change order reports.

*Consensus of the Board was had to change the process to 13 pages as opposed to 39 pages.*

*Motion to accept the recommended changes as presented.*

*Motion: Edwards Second: Wright Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustee Mason was not present for the vote.*

### **APPROVE PURCHASING FOR CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

Approval regarding control of purchasing duties for construction contracts.

It was agreed to postpone this item to the April 1, 2009, work session.

### **APPROVE BUDGET UPDATE**

Approval regarding possible updates to the budget.

It was agreed to postpone this item to the March 26, 2009, regular Board meeting.

**ADJOURN:** 12:28 p.m.

*Motion: Edwards Second: Wright Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustee Mason was not present for the vote.*