

**GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 6, 2020**

The Grand Forks School Board met in regular session on Monday, January 6, 2020, at the Mark Sanford Education Center with Bill Palmiscno presiding.

Board Members Present:

Bill Palmiscno, President/Voting Member
Amber Flynn, Vice President/Voting Member
Doug Carpenter, Voting Member
Jacqueline Hoffarth, Voting Member
Jeff Manley, Voting Member
Shannon Mikula, Voting Member
Cynthia Shabb, Voting Member
Matt Spivey, Voting Member

Student Board Members Present:

Riley Thoreson, Non-voting Member

Board Members Absent:

Eric Lunn, Voting Member

Student Board Members Absent:

Oliver Wolfe, Non-voting Member

Others Present:

Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools
Scott J. Berge, Business Manager
Jody Thompson, Associate Superintendent of Elementary Education
Catherine Gillach, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
Amanda Weston Caillier, President, Grand Forks Education Association (GFEA)
Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

December 9, 2019, and December 16, 2019, minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Celebrating Success. Travis Thorvilson, Principal, Martie Wesley, Instructional Design Coach, and Stephanie Krueger, Classroom Teacher, gave a presentation about the staff and students at Winship Elementary School. Topics included were the school's belief system, focus on academic growth and social and emotional needs, events, and personal connections throughout the school and community.

Citizen Comments (non-agenda items).

Courtney Davis Souvannasacd, enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians and co-organizer of the Indigenous Peoples' Day resolution that was recently passed in Grand Forks, requested discussion about adding Indigenous Peoples' Day to the school calendar at a future school board meeting.

Approval of Agenda. It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Shabb to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Review School Board Norms. Flynn read aloud the school board norms.

Approval of Minutes. It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Carpenter to approve the

Native American Programming Update. Travis Neil, Century Elementary School Associate Principal and Elementary Social Studies Chairperson, and Amy Bartsch, Chief Academic

Officer, spoke about the district's elementary social studies programming. Shabb discussed issues she has with language in the North Dakota Studies curriculum and the curriculum's age. Bartsch explained the curriculum is created by the State of North Dakota and she reviewed the district's curriculum adoption cycle. Hoffarth suggested Native American resources be used in developing curriculum.

Brian Loe, South Middle School Associate Principal and Co-Chair of the Secondary Social Studies Committee, spoke about the middle school social studies programming.

Terry Bohan, Community High School Principal and Co-Chair of the Secondary Social Studies Committee, spoke about the high school social studies programming, including dual credit courses and electives. He said an English literature component is missing at the high school level and suggested the reading of books authored by Sherman Alexie and a book entitled "Touching Spirit Bear."

Chad Ward, the district's Native American Program Liaison and member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, spoke about American Indian cultural services and presentations that are provided to all of the district's schools and about the South Middle School Cultural Club. He has discussed with District Administration doing a pilot for the State of North Dakota in curriculum areas of languages and more in-depth history and having a Tribal Day in the schools. He explained the American Indian population is very complex and different and cautioned against grouping different American Indian cultures into one group. He suggested reaching out to tribal leaders/elders as resources. He said 32 different tribes are represented in the district and that it is hard to reach all of them. Ward also explained work that is being done at the high school level by a volunteer UND student.

Thompson spoke about the Native American Parent Committee (NAPC) and its purpose, membership, and powers and duties.

Future of West Elementary School. Palmiscno explained the process for discussion of this topic.

Following introductory comments, Dr. Brenner spoke about the historical fluidity and change process of the district's school facilities. He explained the district hired a third-party neutral consultant firm to work with the district and to form a community-wide task force that will involve people with diverse perspectives to help the district move in a direction that provides educational equity and adequacy for all students.

Thompson reported on transition planning for students/families and staff should the Board decide to close West Elementary School.

Mikula asked what the options for the building were if it were to close this year. Berge said the district would look at all options but more than likely the district would try to sell it. Mikula then asked what the cost for maintenance and repair of the building until it was sold would be. Berge said that would depend upon how long it took to sell. It would be maintained minimally with normal mowing and random facility checks by staff. Chris Arnold, Buildings & Grounds Director, said in-house Buildings & Grounds staff would provide maintenance and daily facility checks to the building so the cost is imbedded and not easily separated out from the overall budget. Mikula also asked when a decision would be made to demo the building if it did not sell after a period of time, what the demo cost would be, and what the building was valued at. Dr. Brenner said there would be more conversation about this at the board table and work with a realtor to be done. Palmiscno said it was premature to determine because the board has not made a decision whether to close the school or not.

Thompson continued the presentation with information regarding educational and professional equity at West.

A brief delay took place due to technical difficulties with the presentation.

Spivey said he has not heard a lot of opposition to keeping West open and that while he has not yet made a decision either way, he has thought about treating West like all of the other facilities and including it in the Unesco plan, facilities plan, and strategic planning plan and go from there.

It was moved by Spivey to table discussion on the future of West Elementary School and include West Elementary School in the Unesco pre-referendum planning and the district's facilities planning. Motion died due to lack of a second.

Berge continued the presentation with information regarding the district's current financial state and projections assuming the referendum fails and assuming the referendum is successful with all facilities continuing to be operated in both assumptions. He said from an occupancy perspective, the district is operating too many elementary schools for its enrollment and that the district has to be able to operate differently in the future. In the interest of time, the bus transportation portion of the presentation will be discussed at a future meeting.

Audience members who spoke in favor of keeping West Elementary School open were:

Kathleen Coudle-King, Grand Forks, ND
Emily and Alaina Marto, Grand Forks, ND
Adrienne Derenne, Grand Forks, ND
Nicole Derenne, Grand Forks, ND
Noel Letexier, Grand Forks, ND
Angela and Madelyn Letexier, Grand Forks, ND
Brycen Schroeder, Grand Forks, ND
Sheylyn Taylor, Grand Forks, ND
Riley Carriere, Grand Forks, ND
Amanda Walker, Grand Forks, ND
Kathy Bressler, Grand Forks, ND
Christin Hoselton, Grand Forks, ND
Lee Hensrud, Grand Forks, ND
Justin Berry, Grand Forks, ND
Whitney Berry, Grand Forks, ND
Cindy Peterson, Grand Forks, ND

Discussion continued.

- Hoffarth talked about administrative decision-making versus board decision-making.
- Mikula talked about learning from the past, following through with the mission, and investing in ourselves.
- Carpenter said he thought the general consensus is that the board should not go forward with this at this time. He said that if the district is serious about small

neighborhood schools, then the conversation isn't just about keeping West open and raising funds for deferred maintenance because there are at least two areas in the community with growing populations that may need its own schools, so if the board is going to have the conversation, to have it wholeheartedly about everything and not just about West.

- Flynn talked about communication methods.
- Dr. Brenner announced the Public Forum will be held on February 10 at South Middle School.
- Palmiscno talked about changing boundary lines in the past to help schools north of Demers and asking students to go to a different school in order to enhance enrollment at that school. He said if the district was going to keep small schools, the small schools had to support themselves and the district could not continue to pull students south of Demers Avenue and force them to go north just to keep those schools open.
- Thompson explained the criteria for accepting in-district transfers and open enrollments.

Following discussion, the board recessed from 9:18 p.m. to 9:28 p.m.

Student Board Member Thoreson left the meeting during the recess.

Consent Agenda. It was moved by Spivey and seconded by Shabb to approve the consent agenda as follows: Open Enrollment applications as presented and Resignation of Mary Sand effective May 29, 2020. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Substitute Teacher Pay. Dr. Brenner explained the administrative recommendation to increase substitute teacher pay by 3.8% to \$135 per day.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Carpenter to increase the substitute teacher pay from \$130 per day to \$135 per day effective January 13, 2020.

Flynn offered an amendment to the motion to create a subcommittee to study substitute

teacher pay with discussion to include a timeline of when substitute teacher pay is reviewed, any bonus structures, the difference between licensed sub teachers and certified teachers, and possible incentivizing substitute teacher pay.

The amendment was accepted.

Flynn clarified the timeline is to start the conversations to be prepared for the next school year.

Motion, as amended, carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

General Fund Financial Statement. Berge reported for the period of July 1, 2019, through November 30, 2019, total general fund revenues were \$41,805,359 and total general fund expenditures were \$34,570,955, resulting in an excess of revenues over expenses of \$7,234,404. The district is at 40% of the budget on revenues and 32% of the budget on expenses. The budget for the fiscal year is for a deficit of \$4.7M. Construction Services is a \$1.3M increase from last year and is 57% of the \$3M annual budget.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Shabb to approve the General Fund Financial Statement for the period July 1, 2019, through November 30, 2019. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Joint Powers Agreement with Grand Forks County for Election Services. Berge explained the joint powers agreement is identical to the 2018 agreement, including the proposed cost of \$8,000 for providing election services.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Shabb to approve the Joint Powers Agreement with Grand Forks County for the school district's election to be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2020. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Board Member Request to Attend NSBA 2020 Annual Conference. Palmiscno explained Flynn's request to attend the National School Boards Association (NSBA) 2020 Annual Conference. Because she has attended two national conferences during her current four-year term, school board policy requires board

approval for her to attend.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Hoffarth to approve Flynn's request to attend the NSBA 2020 Annual Conference. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Lunn.

Announcements. Administrators will be on KNOX Radio tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. This is the start of a twice-a-month rotation.

Board Requests for Future Consideration.
None.

School Board Norms - How Did We Do? Flynn said the board had some improvements to make in following its norms but ended the meeting on a good note.

Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Approved _____
(Date)

Bill Palmiscno, President

Scott J. Berge, Business Manager