

MINUTES

Boulder Elementary School District No. 7
Regular Meeting

April 12, 2021
Boulder Elementary School

Board members present:

Eric Rykal Carrie Harris Matt Strozewski Andrea Dolezal
Niki Conroy – via Zoom

Administrators present:

Maria Pace, Superintendent/Principal
Britton Mann, District Clerk

Staff: Devyn Ottman – Zoom Meeting Operator

Visitors: Kessie Strausser, Rochelle Hesford – Visitors via Zoom: Matt Bowman, Megan Dawson, Erin Ritchie, Brent & Andrea Sarchet

CALL
ELEMENTARY
BOARD TO ORDER

The Elementary Board was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Eric, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW

None.

APPROVAL OF
CLAIMS

Eric had mentioned that claims seemed a bit high this month. Britton stated that there were a few high invoices (Harlows and Intermountain) that were received late and went on this claim cycle. The board, Ms. Pace and Britton went over the warrant/claims report together. Eric had a question regarding the claim to Lexia. He asked what is Lexia. Ms. Pace stated that Lexia is a computer-based online intervention program that is used for K-8. At this time there were no more questions. Matt motioned to approve the April 2021 claims and warrants with the prior month ending with warrant # 9252 and the current numbers 9253-9309 in the amount of \$113,816.98. Andrea seconded all board members approved. Claims were present for review.

REVIEW OF
PREVIOUS MONTH
PAYROLL

There were no questions or comments regarding March 2021 payroll.

APPROVAL OF
PREVIOUS MONTH
MINUTES

Carrie motioned to approved the minutes for the March 9, 2021 Regular meeting. Andrea seconded, all approved. Andrea motioned to approved the minutes for the March 22, 2021 Special meeting. Carrie seconded, all approved.

APPROVAL OF
STUDENT
ACTIVITIES

The Student Activities Binder was present for board review. Eric asked what the expenditures were. Britton stated that she uploaded the expenditure report on the drive for the board to review. Eric stated that they were for referee checks and one to Leaning Tower. He asked if there were any questions regarding Student Activities. No other board member had any questions. Andrea motioned to approve March 2021 Student Activities. Carrie seconded, all approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT
COMMUNICATIONS

Eric read the public comment.

LETTERS: There was a letter received from Erin Ritchie, Jefferson County Health Department School Nurse. Eric read the letter and then asked Erin if she had anything else to add. She just wanted the board and the public to be aware that the school is doing a great job of maintaining the mask policy and felt like the board should leave everything as is until the end of the school year. A copy of Mrs. Ritchie's letter will be added to the official minutes. A second correspondence was received from the board on 3/30/2021 from Andrea & Brent Sarchet. In the email it was requested to add the following to the April agenda: 1. Opening up Fridays for in person learning or making Monday – Thursday full school days. 2. Discussion on summer school and the Summer Program. Eric stated these are on the agenda and will have a discussion later in the meeting.

STUDENT ISSUES: None

COMMENDATIONS
/RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Pace stated that the school was able to successfully complete boys' basketball, girls' basketball and wrestling. All coaches did a great job. Track will begin on April 19.

UNFINISHED
BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE
REPORTS

Leadership – Chair and Vice chair: Eric Rykal & Carrie Harris: This committee did meet.

1. They reviewed and set the agenda.
2. They discussed the current Superintendent Search and decided to re-post the position for another three weeks. Eric reached out to MTSBA to send the ad out again. The committee is hoping for a more robust pool for the best fit for the school. MTSBA did say that there will be added cost to the contract.

Handbook/Policy – Matt Strozewski & Niki Conroy: This committee did meet to go over new policies and required revisions.

Budget/Finance and Negotiations/Personnel – Carrie Harris & Niki Conroy: This committee did not meet.

Facilities – Matt Strozewski & Andrea Dolezal: The committee did meet. They discussed the proposal from ACE Inc. Matt emailed the contract to Bob Warfle, who is a professional engineer with the State of Montana and a previous Boulder Elementary board member and chair, for his professional opinion. Mr. Warfle thought the contract looked good and in his professional opinion he would recommend moving forward with the contract.

Transportation – Andrea Dolezal & Eric Rykal: This committee did not meet.

ADMINISTRATORS
REPORT

Ms. Pace provided notes for the official minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel –

1. Personnel –
 - a. Subs: None
 - b. Ms. Pace would like to recommend Jered Padmos as a long term sub for Mrs. Ottman in 4th grade. Matt motioned to accept the recommendation made by Ms. Pace. Carrie seconded, all present approved.

Non Resident Student Acceptance – *Standing Agenda Item* – None

Liquidation of School Property – *Standing Agenda Item* – None

Clerk Evaluations – Ms. Pace completed and filed and recommends re-hire.

Board Evaluation – Ms. Pace recommends the Leadership committee looking at different tools. Carrie asked board members to reach out to her or Eric and offer input on what they would like to see as an evaluation tool for the board. Ms. Pace will reach out to JHS and MTSBA for recommendations.

Ace Engineering Contract – In the agenda this was listed as Johnson Control's Engineering in error. The Board and Ms. Pace reviewed and went over the contract. Eric asked where the \$22,000 fee would come from to pay for this service. Ms. Pace recommended using Metal Mines. She stated this would be a fiscally responsible choice using current funds. Ms. Pace also stated that the board has been conservative with the Metal Mines funds and this would be another good use. There is no impact on our tax payers. Carrie motioned to approve the contract and add the 1st Metal Mines vote to the May agenda. Andrea seconded, all approved.

Legislative Changes – Ms. Pace went over the current week updates provided by MTSBA.

Election Update – The Trustee Election was cancelled due to acclamation.

K-8 Reading Data Review – Ms. Pace discussed the K-6th grade DIBELS. A more detailed description/grade is added to the official minutes.

Policies – Matt motioned to approve and adopt the following policies that contain no options, policy 1700, 3310, 3130, 5122, 5120F, 5232, 5328P and 7220P. Niki seconded all approved. There was discussion on policy 5120P. After Niki went over the options and what the Handbook Committee recommended, Ms. Pace read the following: For Policy 5120P – Fingerprint Background Handling Procedure – for the

Basis to Collect and Submit Fingerprints for Purposes of Federal Background Check the board has decided to choose option 3. For the LASO the board has assigned the District Clerk. For retention and Storage, the board chooses option 1. For the Dissemination Procedure, the board chooses option 2. For Destruction Procedure the board chooses option 1 and names the District Clerk. For Applicant procedures for challenging or correcting their record the board chooses option 2. Niki motioned to adopt 5120P as read by the Superintendent, Ms. Pace, and to be reflected in the meeting minutes. Matt seconded, all approved.

Gauges for Increasing Onsite Learning – Ms. Pace provided information regarding increasing onsite learning. She highlighted 4 critical points that would impact this decision.

1. Staff Vaccinations – Staff that chose to receive vaccination received the 2nd dose on April 8. 15 days after the 2nd dose would be April 22.
2. Currently staffing levels due to COVID – 19. We are short 3 staff members. There is a challenge to fill all areas on site – para educators or subs could be used, currently we only have 1 sub on our list. A survey was sent out to the 34 staff members and 73.5% (25) staff members recommended continuing with the schedule until the end of the year. 14.7% (5) recommended adding full days Monday – Thursday. 5.9% (2) recommended adding Fridays and 2.9% (1) recommended going back to regular schedule and combine the kinder class.
3. Bus Routes – After speaking to Joe Canzona his response was; we currently have limited drivers. He stated it would be doable but a challenge for Harlows to go back to a regular route this late in the year. If we had been able to do this in January, it may have been possible.
4. Summer Program Scheduling and Support – The leadership team is planning to add additional staff, and using literacy grant funds and ESSER funds to pay for curriculum and staffing and support to meet the academic needs of the students. Also, planning for additional staff in the before and after school program for next year.

The CDC along with Erin Ritchie, County School Health Nurse, both recommend continuing wearing masks to protect others as well as yourself. Rochelle Hesford added that the school should stay with the current recommendations regardless of the number of cases to prevent COVID-19 transmissions in the school. Such as, universal and correct use of masks, physical distancing, handwashing, cleaning and maintain healthy facilities and contact tracing. Eric asked if there was any questions or comments from the public. Brent Sarchet stated that first and foremost he valued Erin Ritchie and all other health professionals. He was also wondering what were the questions in the survey. Ms. Pace asked Devyn to share on screen the questions and results so the Zoom and in person participants would be able to see. Mr. Sarchet and his wife Andrea both agreed that an increase in In-Person Instruction would be crucial and better for students' education at this time. Eric asked if they felt like the school is falling short or doing something bad. The Sarchet's stated that other schools are opening back full time and it is their opinion that as parents they would like to see more in person hours. Whether that be extending the day or going back full time on Fridays. They also stated that there are students out there who are struggling with online learning. Megan Dawson stated that for her family Friday's are a struggle. With Fridays being dedicated to online learning, there are more demands on work schedules and flexibility is becoming more difficult. Mrs. Dawson would like to know what the issue is with going longer days Monday – Thursday. Mrs. Dawson stated that screen time is the issue, she is concerned about the physical, mental health and overall well-being of the students. She did ask the board if Fridays can either go away completely or at least change how Fridays look. Ms. Pace also suggested reaching out specifically to the individual teacher and discussing how Fridays can change for your student. Ms. Pace said the teachers have been extremely supportive and she is sure they would be willing to work with the families. Mrs. Dawson stated that she did reach out but that didn't work. Eric suggested talking with Rochelle. She has Fridays open for any family who needs help while they are at work, the program offers extra school support, plus other activities. Both families (Sarchet's and Dawson's) didn't feel that was a fit or that would be helpful for their concerns and families. Ms. Pace stated that it's balancing what is best for all stakeholders involved. Right now, she is putting her staff on the top of the list.

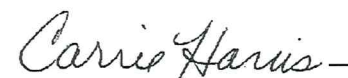
The staff has been under chronic stress and are susceptible to getting sick. She asked Ms. Strausser to weigh in on the discussion from a teacher's standpoint. Ms. Strausser stated that there is a challenge when changing the schedule, this includes re-doing preps, it takes time to implement new schedules. There is a multitude of logistical concerns. Ms. Pace agreed with Ms. Strausser and again stated that the staff is at the top of the priority list. Eric said even if the board waited for all staff to be vaccinated and safe, we are really only looking at 6 Fridays. He did say that as a parent he also understands the frustration they are feeling. Mrs. Dawson asked why the school couldn't go back to a regular schedule Monday – Friday and have the busses run at normal regular time (3:20). Ms. Pace reiterated what she discussed earlier from Harlows and Joe Canzona. Currently Harlows has limited drivers and it would be difficult to get back to Boulder to run the busses at 4:06 for the high school students. Mrs. Dawson asked if students at Boulder could be dismissed around 4 and share the bus with the high school students like they do in the morning. Ms. Pace stated that again this would involve changing schedules and would also impact the Teachers Negotiated Agreement with the School Board and their working hours. If this was something the board wanted to look into then there would also need to be a meeting with the Union and Board. Matt and Andrea both agreed that the schedule is not ideal and they both would prefer as parents to have a “normal” schedule again. Niki also stated that being online doesn't mean your student is online from 8:00-3:00 daily. Matt did ask the board if there was a way to see how to make it work for full days Monday-Thursday. Andrea asked if scenarios can be put together in the next few weeks to see if anything can be changed. Ms. Pace said that currently the District is looking for a new Administrator. Rochelle, Mrs. Breker, and Ms. Pace are discussing summer school and the summer program to see how and what needs to happen in order to provide extra academic support to any student. After a lot of discussion, Eric asked if there was a motion from any board member to change our current plan for onsite learning. Matt did not have a motion but wanted to say that he sees both side and would hope there would be something the board can do to help out the families. There were not motions to change the schedule.

TOPICS FOR
FUTURE AGENDAS

Board Evaluation Tool
Revision Policies
Policy 7220 P
Approve Clerk
Renewal/Non-Renewal Certified/Classified Staff
Graduation
Board Re-Organization
Metal Mines – 1st Vote ACE Engineering

ADJOURNMENT

Andrea motioned to adjourn at 8:20, Matt seconded, which passed unanimously.


Chair, Elementary Board


Clerk, Elementary Board