

A **Regular** meeting of the Buellton Union School District Board of Trustees was held on **Wednesday, November 18, 2020** via video conference.

Trustees Present: Elaine Alvarado, Marcilo Sarquilla, Andrew Morgan, Elysia Lewis and Jessie Skidmore

Administration Present: Dr. Randal Haggard, Beverly Sherman, Rebecca Holmes and Lisa Melby

I. **Call to Order, Roll Call and Public Comment on Closed Session Agenda Items**

II. **Closed Session**

- A. Personnel Matters - (Pursuant to Government Code § 54957)
- B. Public Employee: Superintendent Evaluation (Pursuant to Government Code § 54947)

III. **Opening Ceremony –**

- A. Call to Order and Roll Call - *Elaine Alvarado called the meeting to order at 7:03pm and said all members were present.*

Report of Actions Taken During Closed Session - *Mrs. Alvarado continued to say that the Board just came out of closed session and on Item II.A and Superintendent evaluation and goals we approved by the board. Jessie Skidmore **MOTIONED** to approve and Andrew Morgan **Seconded** the motion. **Roll call was then made. The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.***

- B. Pledge of Allegiance – *Led by Elaine Alvarado*
- C. Buellton/ Consortium Pride – *Lisa Melby recognized Carrei Hicks, Jessica Moffat and Janette Porter for their continued work on keeping staff and students safe during this COVID Pandemic. Mrs. Melby also recognized Jazmine Nungaray for being recognized as the Jonata Principal Award. Beverly Sherman gave Consortium ride to Eric Hemming, Shilani Hemming and Brittany Mullenary. Eric Hemming for his continued work on keeping students connected. Shilani Hemming for the work she does in the STEP Class at Oak Valley and Brittany Mullenary for her continued work as a long term substitute teacher.*

IV. **Continue Opening Ceremony**

- A. Establish Order of the Agenda – *No Changes*
- B. Governing Board Comments – *Andrew Morgan reported on the Joint-Use Committee meeting and said he is excited for the progress of these meetings. He also said that the December 9th meeting will be his last unless his new baby comes before that time. Jessie Skidmore reported on the ballot she will be submitting. She ended her report saying that as a board member she is asking that please be kind in their actions and words. Marcilo Sarquilla thanked the parents for the emails they have been receiving. Elaine Alvarado thanked the staff and administration for their outstanding work during his crucial time.*

V. **Public Comments/Staff Comments**

A public comment was received from Natalie Godfrey:

Hi Terri,
just wanted to submit my question for the board meeting next Wednesday.

What is the procedure for notifying parents and staff when Covid Cases arise? Through ParentSquare? Will parents/staff be notified how many cases?

Thanks,
Natalie

VI. **Correspondence – No correspondence**

VII. **School/Community Reports**

- A. Superintendent – *Dr. Haggard started his report by adding for the Buellton Pride Mrs. Kathy Fayram who will be retiring in a couple of weeks. Dr. Haggard talked about his recommendation for the options for reopening of our schools. Dr. Haggard talked about the joint use meeting and thanked the City of Buellton for their approval of paying part of the HVAC repairs.*
- B. Principal – *Lisa Melby started her report that she is incredibly grateful for the staff she works on daily. Mrs. Melby thanked our incredible food service staff for their hard worked in serving food*

to our students and families. Mrs. Melby said that 1st Trimester has been completed. Mrs. Melby ended her report by talking about the Socio-Emotional support and work for students.

- C. Special Education – Beverly Sherman reported that SYVSEC received notice from California Department of Education and report that we are 100% compliant.
- D. B.E.A. – Debbie Goldsmith started her report by saying the BEA continues to be concerned for staff and students. She asked the board to reconsider reopening especially since we are now in the Purple Tier once again.
- E. P.T.S.A – No report

VIII. Information Items

- (Information) A. Enrollment/Staffing for 2020-2021 school year-projections will be presented based on current enrollment.

*Dr. Haggard brought forth an Enrollment report for Board review. As of November 12th the student enrollment is down 84 students which is a significant loss of revenue for the district of approximately 12% of our revenue. **No Action was taken on this item. Information Only.***

- (Information) B. Budget Update/Monthly Financial – Dr. Haggard and Director of Fiscal Services Rebecca Holmes will provide a summary of the key features in the state budget and update the Board on the monthly financials for the District.

*Rebecca Holmes presented the Budget Update and Monthly Financial Report with the Board. Mrs. Holmes also reviewed the CARES ACT funds with the board. **No Action was taken on this item. Information Only.***

IX. General Items

- (Action) A. COVID-19 Update – Dr. Haggard will update the Board on district issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and options for school re-opening.

Eight public comments were received:

From Alexis Donkin:

I am writing to urge you to maintain the OV Virtual Academy as it is for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.

A hybrid model of learning would expose children, faculty, and staff to more potential disease vectors (<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/hsph-in-the-news/why-hybrid-schooling-could-be-risky/>)

With disease spikes across the country and people attending family events during the holidays, this would be disastrous to our school community.

As someone living with post covid syndrome for going on eight months, I feel it is not worth it to expose our community in this way.

Additionally, the hybrid model places the onus of teaching on parents during home days. It would also increase this burden for families who elected to stay distanced.

Even in-school time is not the same as it was during a pre-covid year. The benefits we see for in-person school would be limited at best, while exacting high costs. Students would be shuffled to different teachers. Expectations would have to be re-learned. A new routine would need to be developed. All this while there are visual retraumatizing cues of limited play, distance, masks, shields, and more.

As a parent of a first grader at Oak Valley Elementary, I have been impressed with the care and effort put into my child's education. This is especially true in the OV Virtual Academy, which considering the circumstances, has been a success for my child.

Yes, distanced learning isn't perfect, but it gives us safety. We have routines. These routines offer continuity and a sense of security in an insecure time. We have built structures and my child is learning language skills, mathematical concepts, science, social studies, and tech.

Considering the options, maintaining the Virtual Academy as it is, is the best and most logical choice.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Alexis Donkin

From Jennifer Klamm:

To the Buellton Union School District Administration and School Board,

I am an Oak Valley parent writing in regards to returning to school via a hybrid model. I have a first grader and a third grader.

This is a huge decision and should not be taken lightly. We are now into the 2nd trimester and Covid fatigue is real. We parents are tired. We long for our schools to be back in session and are desperate for normalcy. Over 8 months (but who's counting?!) at home with my 3 boys ages 3, 7 and 8 is.... wild. Yes, the possibility of in person school is enticing at first glance but really, we all need to consider what the hybrid plan does to our other 3 school days at home. 30 minutes of instruction is not enough. And for those who opt to continue distance learning that equates to 2.5 hours of teacher instruction per week. That is not an education we are prepared for.

Our virtual academy is what we have become accustomed to for this year. A switch to 30 minute zooms then we parents are on our own is frightening. MORE responsibility, I'm not confident that parents are going to be successful in stepping into that "teacher" role even more so than we already have. This is in no way going to be a quality education.

As of now my kids have their school routine down. Is it ideal? No. Is it tolerable, yes. If we go hybrid, this all changes. There's a possibility that they will even be assigned different teachers. I can't begin to imagine what shaking up their entire schooling again would do. Kids are resilient but new teacher assignments at this point in the year would be detrimental to their well-being.

Bottom line, I'm advocating for the continued use of our virtual academy, distance learning as we now know it. I do not think not returning to school with a hybrid model is appropriate at this time.

Thank you.

Kind regards,
Jen Klamm

From Rachael Cardoza:

After completing the survey, I felt I had to clarify my selection. While there were 2 choices, the keep as-is choice was missing. I only selected the hybrid model because it was the better of the 2 options. Having only 2-days of teacher instruction does not compare to the current virtual academy model. While the struggle of the current model has had challenges, it is by far more sustainable and provides more of a stable learning environment for our students than a 2-day a week hybrid model. The survey numbers may show that parents selected the hybrid option, but please note that it may have been the lesser of the bad choices offered. Considering current events and the often changing covid numbers, I think it would be wise to wait until the end of the 2nd trimester to make a final re-opening decision that would involve changes to the students current learning model.

From Matthew Pennon:

Good evening President Alverado, Dr. Haggard and the District Trustees,

This evening we are faced with the continued challenges that COVID-19 has brought upon us as a school community. Daily, we are seeing changes that are hard to follow and that are making the prospects of re-opening our schools ever so daunting. There is no easy answer or solution to the question of how do we re-open our schools safely. Just this week our county along with 27 other counties in California have been moved back into the purple tier. That means that 41 of California's 58 counties are currently experiencing widespread COVID-19 virus outbreaks and that we are not able to re-open without a waiver.

The constant unknowns and questioning of what direction should we move-in place a huge burden on our school's administration, teachers and support staff. In addition these unknowns also decrease the stability our students and their families are experiencing with the current virtual academy. If we were to move forward with applying for a waiver and potentially re-open, we risk the chance of not being able to further improve our current virtual academy, support our educators, and hopefully implement additional supportive services for our families and children. We have some students at Oak Valley and Jonata that remain disconnected from learning, we have students with special needs that require one on one instruction, and we have families that need individualized support in order to support their children's education. We need to prioritize serving these students and families before we can move forward with safely re-opening our schools.

We can all agree, distance learning is not ideal. We can all agree, we all want our students back in the classroom with their peers. And yes, we all want COVID-19 to be over and done with. However, our focus now should be on maintaining course with our current virtual academy, addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in our school community, and supporting our educators in their mission to teach our children as effectively as possible during these challenging times.

I respectfully request that the Buellton Union School District Board postpone the discussion of re-opening until we are at a point that re-opening our schools will be a sustainable and safe option. I also respectfully request that you support our administration and educators, by providing the resources and support necessary to ensure improvement to our virtual academy and the safe, successful completion of this school year.

Respectfully,
Matthew Pennon

From Wendy Campbell:

Hi Terri!

This is my comment regarding Action item 'A' regarding the school's reopening plan.

Unless the school board has more information about what the two school options, hybrid or at-home, will actually look like, I urge them NOT to make a decision at this time to reopen the schools in January. As parents, we were asked to commit to one option or the other without a clear picture of what either option will look like in real time. After attending the town hall meeting last week, my takeaway was that both options sounded worse than what we are currently doing now. The options as sketchily outlined in the town hall seem to reflect a desire to cater to a group of vocal parents who are adamant about getting their children back in the classroom, even though it sounds like it will be additional work for teachers AND will result in less actual instruction time for the students, regardless of the option they choose. It is my understanding at this time that the children whose families who opt for them to stay home will have even LESS instructional time and will basically be on their own.

Neither option, at this point, sounds like the district is keeping the children's best interests in mind. Changing the children's teachers mid-year does not sound like the

district is keeping the children's best interests in mind. Convincing Mrs. Fayram to retire mid-November does not sound like the district is keeping the children's best interests in mind. I urge you, school board members, to please vote WITH our children's best interests in mind, and delay this decision until we have more concrete information.

Respectfully,
Wendy Campbell, parent of a 7th grader

From Jenn Matsukas:

Dear Buellton Union School Board Members,

I am a parent of three young children, two which attend Oak Valley as a kindergartener and second grader. Coinciding with being a wife, mother, and now teacher, I also own/run an essential childcare for the frontline workers serving in our community.

I am writing to tell you that with "distance learning", or virtual academy, we have worked very hard to accommodate these changes we were all thrown into. Is it ideal? Definitely not. Is it easy? Absolutely not. Is it doable? Yes. We have made it work for the last 8 months.

The two options that were given in the parent survey on Friday, are not realistic for most parents. Our kids are missing out on so much already, and these new models now take away the little time they do have with their teachers and friends. The options suggested allow for teacher to student interaction either 30 minutes each day or for 3 hours two days a week. Neither of these options seem feasible.

Here are just a few of my concerns...

1. As you know, many essential workers work either 12 or 24 hour shifts, which means my day starts at 6:30 or 7 am. If the bus is not running, my children will not be able to get to their neighborhood public school. Without the bus my children will also not have a way to return home after attending the 3 hour school day.

2. With these new models, my kindergartner who has never attended Oak Valley in person, meaning he will go to a "new school", will be forced to have a new teacher, as his teacher is unable to teach (and my son absolutely loves his current teacher). Without having a prior school experience, this is a lot to figure out on top of having to make a new set of friends he can't even play with.

3. If we choose to keep our kids home, we are now pressured even more as parents with two full time jobs, to teach our kids EVERYTHING. This is a huge concern. Either option we choose we are now losing a ton of teacher to student interaction time. Parents do not have the time or capabilities with working from home and caring for siblings to proficiently teach their children the required state standards.

In short, this is a huge decision for everyone and parents are tired. Everyone is tired. I would like you to reconsider the two models proposed in Friday's parent survey. Perhaps look towards schools who have already opened and assessing what models are working, while taking into account our community. I would like you to please consider all stakeholders when making this very crucial decision. I can't begin to imagine what shaking up our students' entire schooling again would do. These children have been flexible, but new teacher assignments and schedules at this point would be harmful to their well-being. Being consistent is crucial to our students' development. I do not think that returning to a hybrid model is appropriate at this time. I would like the board to take more time to research successful hybrid learning models and continue to speak with stakeholders while also closely watching our current COVID state.

Thank you for your time,
Jenn

From Danielle Hilligoss:

To the BUSD board members,

As the Board decides to open to Hybrid or not, I ask that you take a moment to remember that school is so much more than education. Public in-person schooling offers a safe environment, mandated reporters, exercise, socialization, social workers, community relationships, important teacher-student mentorship, play and so much more.

1. Mandated reporters. According to experts, the school system accounts for 1/5 of all abuse reports. In a time when all types of abuse are globally skyrocketing, as of September, we have not seen a surge in abuse in the US and it is directly attributed to under-reporting. To me, this is the most heart breaking aspect of school closures. I really worry about these children who need our schools to be open to keep them safe or keep them fed or give them respite.

2. Psycho-Social enrichment- During school closures-who's child has regressed or shown symptoms of increased stress? Children need to socialize! In times of great stress, children need a community to give them purpose. School provided this. Even with all the attempts of the virtual process, nationally there has been alarming increases of teenage suicide and childhood depression.

3. Scholastically- It's simple, our children are not learning as well virtually as they would in-person. That is evidenced by 20% of Jonata showing alarming decline in scholastic achievement.

Lastly, our original goal for campus closures was to flatten the curve. When we graduated to the Red Tier, we achieved this. Why did other schools open and we did not? When did the goal change from flattening the curve to something else? And why were parents not notified of this? No one wants to get sick from COVID-19 and everyone has a reason why this is particularly frightening. Would I chose hybrid or not....that is not important....let's start speaking for the ones without a voice....what would be best for them?

Thank you, Danielle

From Deanna King:

I would like the board to consider continuing the current online learning model. My children have found a rhythm with the current schedule. Disturbing that schedule and creating a new plan would be exhausting for our family. Especially if that were to be interrupted by school closures in the future. The current model is not ideal and I do understand the hardship this has created socially and emotionally for our students and community. I believe our current school model for online learning is the best scenario of all the bad scenarios. Thank you to all the teachers and staff for everything they do in this challenging time.

From Jansen Harwood:

Hi team!

I just want to thank you all for your hard work for these kids. I also want to say, I know how difficult this decision is for everyone. Any choice that is made can either make someone happy or make someone miserable but in the end it is ultimately what's best for everyone.

This being said, from a special education mom, it would be truly amazing if we could stay in the current distance learning model. Both of my kids have IEP's for autism and they are thriving right now! It definitely took some time but after plenty of prep and social stories we are a well oiled machine!

I am so nervous to have this change coming but I know it's not totally up to me... we are not too concerned over the COVID-19 illness, but the difficulties with transitions, unknowns, and time changes we will be struggling more than most. It was difficult enough to get the kids ready to come back for their special education resource classes but we made it and they love it! Thank you for opening those up even if it is just for one hour, one day a week.

Please continue the Virtual Academy for Oak Valley! We love what we're doing, it's working for us, and we don't want to stop. Again, I know it's not totally up to me, and we have also reentered the purple tier, but if we can continue with the way things are I think it will be best for everyone!

Thank you so much for your consideration! I truly appreciate all of you!!

The Harwood Family

**** A speaker slip was taken from Shelley Silva**

*Elaine Alvarado said that even a last month ago a hybrid model was something to consider. She said the pandemic is guiding what the board needs to consider. She feels that opening up too soon would not be in the best interest of our students and staff. She does not feel we would even be ready to make a different decision in January. She feels we need to continue in the Virtual Learning as we are doing now. Dr. Haggard spoke on the feedback he has been receiving from the Town Hall Meeting. Now that we are in the Purple Tier Option "A" is the only option we have. Jessie Skidmore, Elysia Lewis, Andrew Morgan and Marcilo Sarquilla all spoke on their thoughts on the direction they feel we need to take. Elysia Lewis **MOTIONED** to approve continuing with the current virtual academy and distance learning setup until such a time the superintendent believes a viable change could be made but not before moving back into the next tier. Andrew Morgan **Seconded** the motion. **Roll call was then made. The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.***

- (Action) B. Approve use of CSBA Program for Governance – Dr. Haggard will update the Board on the use of the CSBA on-line governance program to streamline record-keeping and make meetings of the Board of Trustees more transparent for the public.

*Dr. Haggard brought forth a recommendation for the use of the CSBA Gamut Meetings governance program for the streamline of transparency of the board meetings. Elysia Lewis **MOTIONED** to approve the CSBA GAMUT Meetings as presented. Elaine Alvarado **Seconded** the motion. **Roll call was then made. The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.***

- (Action) C. Approve Resolution 21-07 – Dr. Haggard propose this Resolution to create a Fund for Capital Improvement Projects.

*Rebecca Holmes brought forth Resolution No. 21-07 "Resolution to create a fund for Capital Improvement Projects". Elysia Lewis **MOTIONED** to approve Resolution No. 21-07 as presented. Jessie Skidmore **Seconded** the motion. **Roll call was then made. The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.***

- (First Reads) D. 1st Reading of Board Policies - The board will conduct a first reading of the following board policies:

E 1113 "District and School Web Sites"
BP 3280 "Sale or Lease of District Owned Real Property"
BP & AR 3530 "Risk Management"
BP & AR 4157/4257/4357 "Employee Safety"

*Dr. Haggard brought forth E 1113 "District and School Web Sites", BP 3280 "Sale or Lease of District Owned Real Property", BP & AR 3530 "Risk Management" and BP & AR 4157/4257/4357 "Employee Safety". **No Action was taken on this item. First Reading of policies only.***

- (Action) E. 2nd Reading of Board Policies- The board will conduct final reading of the following board policies:

AR 4030 "Nondiscrimination in Employment"
BP 4119.11/4219/11/4319.11 "Sexual Harassment"
AR 4119.11/4219/11/4319.11 "Sexual Harassment"
AR 4119.12/4219/12/4319.12 "Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures"
BP 5141.22 "Infectious Diseases"
AR 5141.22 "Infectious Diseases"
AR 5145.3 "Nondiscrimination/Harassment"

*A second and final reading of AR 4030 "Nondiscrimination in Employment", BP 4119.11/4219/11/4319.11 "Sexual Harassment", AR 4119.11/4219/11/4319.11 "Sexual Harassment", AR 4119.12/4219/12/4319.12 "Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures", BP 5141.22 "Infectious Diseases", AR 5141.22 "Infectious Diseases" and AR 5145.3 "Nondiscrimination/Harassment". Elysia Lewis **MOTIONED** to approve the second*

*reading of policies as presented. Marcelo Sarquilla **Seconded** the motion. **Roll call was then made. The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.***

X. **Approval of Minutes/Action Consent Agenda**

Consent Agenda Summary

- (consent) 1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting held October 7, 2020
- (consent) 2. Approve for payment - General Fund Warrant Report
- (consent) 3. Personnel Action Form - See Attached
- (consent) 4. Approval of Interagency Agreement for School Stability for Foster Care

XI. Closing


A. Future Meeting Dates

- Regular Meeting, December 9, 2020
- Regular Meeting, December 16, 2020 – Organizational Meeting


B. Adjournment

*Elysia Lewis MOTIONED to approve Consent Agenda as presented. Andrew Morgan **Seconded** the motion. **The Ayes have it with a vote of 5-0.** Elaine Alvarado read the Consent Agenda. There being no further business the open session of the meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Terri Schrepel
Buellton Union School District



Jessie Skidmore - Clerk of the Board
Buellton Union School District