

Canyon Creek School District #4
Yellowstone County, Billings, MT
6:30 p.m. – Library

Call To Order

August 10, 2021

Chair Amy Sironi called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 6:30 p.m. by leading those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following trustees and officers were present: Amy Sironi, Chair, Amy Gibbons, Vice-Chair, Kelly Hickey, Trustee. Brent Lipp, Superintendent and Seara Stovall, Business Manager/District Clerk were also present.

Additional guests present: Haley Morales, Dean of Students, Amanda Agyeman-Budu, Laurie Stricker, Carey See

Public Comment

None submitted.

Consent Agenda

Amy Gibbons moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence

1. Letter of Resignation – Ali Helgeson – Superintendent Lipp recognized Ali for her efforts. *Amy Gibbons moved to accept the Letter of Resignation for Ali Helgeson as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*
2. Letter of Resignation – Lynette Brug – Superintendent Lipp recognized Lynette for her efforts. *Amy Gibbons moved to accept the Letter of Resignation for Lynette Brug as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*
3. Letter of Resignation – Katie Kading – Superintendent Lipp recognized Katie for her efforts. *Amy Gibbons moved to accept the Letter of Resignation for Katie Kading as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Committee Report

Negotiations Committee – Amy Sironi, Kelly Hickey, Superintendent Lipp and Ms. Stovall met with the Canyon Creek Education Association (CCEA) to continue contract negotiations on July 21, 2021. Kelly Hickey gave a summary of the negotiations team discussions held with the CCEA. The Board of Trustees declined the salary proposal from the CCEA.

The Board of Trustees, Administration and the CCEA met throughout the afternoon, with several different proposals discussed. One proposal was 0% on the base, leaving the insurance allocation amount at \$638.60 per month. Discussions concluded with the following; a two year contract (2021-

2022 and 2022-2023). New insurance was proposed at a significant premium savings with better plan coverages. The District will provide three insurance options and pay the amount of \$550 per month with current contract language stating that any additional insurance rate increases shall be split 50-50. Adoption of language under Article 7, "All participants must subscribe with the same insurance company chosen by the District." Upon acceptance of the insurance proposal, the board of trustees proposed a 1.5% increase to the base on the salary matrix for two years, with entry level teachers beginning at step 5 and remaining at step 5 for five years. Free lunch will be provided. Additional relatives will be added to the immediate family leave definitions (Aunt, Uncle, Aunt-in-law, and Uncle-in-law). The FMLA language will remain as is in the current contract. Teachers working conditions, Article 11c – Employers who are assigned by administration the responsibility of another classroom for a half-day or full-day of instruction due to the unavailability of substitutes, the teacher shall be compensated at the current substitute rate. 7:30 – 11:30 equals a half day and 7:30 – 3:30 equals a full day. Compensation will result in students being in the class for the entire amount of time and compensation will align with a half-day of sub pay or a full-day of sub pay. Currently the sub rate of pay is \$45.00 for a half-day and \$90.00 for a full-day. The Canyon Creek Board of Trustees has the right to adjust the substitute pay at any time during a contract without approval of the Canyon Creek Education Association.

Upon completion of an afternoon of negotiations, the CCEA requested the contract negotiations be tabled in order for them to speak with Jeff, Union Representative of the Billings Education Association. There is a follow-up meeting scheduled for August 11th at 6:00 pm to resume negotiations.

Administrative Report

- Superintendent's Report –
 1. Building and Grounds – Superintendent Lipp shared details to the following facility projects. The new gym boiler is very near completion with electrical work being the final component. The furnace replacement installation began August 9th and was completed August 10th. Bradford Roof Management has begun the roof replacement project and will be done prior to school starting. The door replacements project is on hold due to materials being backordered. The project will begin upon arrival of materials. The building cleaning is in great shape with Mr. Ross and Mr. Brakke doing an amazing job!
 2. Open House – The school-wide open house is scheduled for August 19th from 6:00 – 7:00 pm. Superintendent Lipp shared that he felt that time frame was short and shared that he may adjust that.
 3. Staffing – Superintendent Lipp gave an update of the current staffing status. Health and Physical Education is currently open as well as a Custodial position. He has received a qualified application for the Health and Physical Education position and will pursue interviewing.
 4. After School Program – Superintendent Lipp shared that his intention is to start an after school program this fall. He has chosen to push that back to a later start date. This program is required and funded through ESSER III – American Rescue Plan funds. The program could possibly be a 2-year program. The goal is to provide additional assistance to any student who requests additional support. The planning is in the works.
 5. Activities – Superintendent Lipp shared that extra-curricular staffing is not complete. 5/6

Girls Basketball, Mathcounts and Student Council have not been filled. He shared that the Cross Country program will be competing with School District 2 meets. This is an addition from last year that the District is excited about.

6. Enrollment - Superintendent Lipp shared that he did not have exact numbers to share as numbers are fluctuating in and out.
7. Covid-19 – Superintendent Lipp shared that he is still participating in the weekly meetings with John Felton. The county numbers are up and the Delta variant is concerning to him. He shared that he is conflicted with his reopening plan due to politics. He will cover the proposal in detail during the agenda item. He is very worried about “super-spreader” events. He noted only minimal students are eligible for the vaccine.
8. Welcome 2021-22 – Superintendent Lipp welcomed everyone back to a new school year. His vacations were reinvigorating and he is excited for the new school year.

Old Business

- A. Open Board Trustee Positions recruitment status update was given. There is currently two unexpired, one-year terms vacant with no known interests. James Wiesner recently picked up a Trustee Application but it has not been received to date. Mrs. Cassel has reached out to Superintendent Lipp and has shared her interest. He will follow-up with her.

New Business

- A. Approve FY22 Staff Handbook – Superintendent Lipp recommended to the Trustees the approval of the FY22 Staff Handbook. He noted that no significant changes have been added. The document will need to be reviewed again after the policy revision is completed this fall. *Amy Gibbons made a motion to approve the FY22 Staff Handbook as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*
- B. Approve FY22 School Reopening Plan – Superintendent Lipp shared that the plan will go into effect on the first day of school and will be reviewed as needed with the Policy 1900 Series during the pandemic. Discussion was held and Superintendent Lipp shared his reopening plan in detail, noting the conflicting guidance being provided. The reopening plan implements the following in all phases:
 - Establish and continue communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation level in Yellowstone County
 - Protect and support for staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness, such as providing options for telework and virtual learning
 - Follow CDC’s Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs
 - Follow State of Montana guidelines for reopening
 - Ensure external community organizations that use the facilities to also follow this guidance

The following phases will be implemented for the 2021-22 school year.

Phase 1: School will be in session with limited restrictions, masks will be optional based on what the individual parents would like the student to wear. Quarantines of individual students will take place as needed and contact tracing will still be in effect. Masks are optional for staff.

Phase 2: Remain open with enhanced physical distancing, use of masks, and implementation of cohorts if needed with the quarantining of individual students or contact tracing as necessary. In some cases, an entire classroom could be quarantined if exposure is significant.

Phase 3: School-wide emergency closure will be implemented with an online platform taking place. Student activities will be restricted, if not cancelled.

The entire School Reopening Plan will be available via the school website.

Amy Gibbons clarified that in Phase 1, the facility would be open to all visitors, i.e. parents/visitors for lunch and visiting etc.

Amy Sironi is not personally comfortable with the noted reopening plan. She shared that her children will attend with masks, as they are not safe because they are not eligible to attain the vaccination. She personally would rather see the school district coming back with a full masking policy, as the children are the ones at risk. She does not feel that the reopening plan is the best option for the children.

Superintendent Lipp shared this is the hardest decision he has had to make in a long time. He shared his decision was based on the consensus of the other schools in Yellowstone Country. His personal concern is that he has many children in his care that are at risk and are unable to get vaccinated. He is struggling with putting kids at risk. He shared he doesn't think there is a right or wrong answer. The directive being given from the state is that they want schools open.

Amy Sironi shared that multiple schools are trying to put masking policies in place and it is a disaster with the community and parents. Superintendent Lipp has relied on what other districts are doing and is willing to make adjustments in the future, even if there is parent and community push-back.

Amy Sironi asked those in attendance if they had any thoughts or contributions to the discussion. Amanda Agyeman-Budu inquired if the District polled the parents and Superintendent Lipp shared that he felt he already knew the parents/community thoughts on it and that surveying the parents/community would only open a "hornets' nest".

Carey See shared that she is vaccinated but will continue to wear a mask every day. She feels it is her duty to wear a mask.

Amanda Agyeman-Budu shared that she has concern that students will be bullied for choosing to wear masks. Carey See noted she felt the same way, as she herself has experienced the same as an individual.

Amy Sironi inquired if the contracted busing company will be responsible for providing masks.

Laurie Stricker felt that it was worthwhile to ask the busing company if they will be providing student masks. Superintendent Lipp noted that he would follow-up with the busing company.

Amy Gibbons shared that she in a bit of a different situation, as all of her children are vaccinated. She noted that they do not wear masks out in public unless required. She stated that her children will do whatever is required.

Superintendent Lipp noted that the other option is to fully mask. Haley Morales shared that multiple people have inquired at the office if masks would be optional. Kelly Hickey shared there is outside discussions that enrollment will tank if masks are required.

Carey See inquired if School District 2 required masks, if that would help steer the direction of Canyon Creek School District? She shared there is currently a petition going around to get physician signatures to recommend the requirement of masks for all school districts.

Superintendent Lipp asked that everyone put a little faith into him and Haley to closely watch the status of everything and they will take action as needed.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to approve the FY22 School Reopening Plan as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Policy 1900 Series Review/Revision – Discussion was held. Upon Superintendent Lipp’s recommendation to the board of trustees to the revisions of the Policy 1900 Series, he recognized an error in his revision to Policy 1900 and recommended the series review be tabled until the next meeting.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to table the Policy 1900 Series review/revisions until the next board meeting. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. MTSBA Policy Services Status – Superintendent Lipp shared that it is in a review status and a meeting will be scheduled in the future.

- E. Extra-Curricular Contracts – Superintendent Lipp recommended the following hires to the following coaching positions for FY22.

- Rylan Kuntz - 5/6 Boys Basketball
- Jeff Morales – 7/8 Boys Basketball
- Jeff Morales – 7/8 Girls Basketball
- Kaylee Trentman – 5/6 Girls Volleyball
- Delaney Johnson – 7/8 Girls Volleyball
- Luke Larson – 6-8 Cross Country
- Jake Anderson – 7/8 Assistant Boys Football

The following positions have not been filled at this time: 5/6 Girls Basketball, Mathcounts and Student Council. Discussion was held.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to approve the hire for all extra-curricular coaching positions, contingent upon background checks, as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The

motion passed unanimously.

- F. Approve Out-of-District Students FY22 – Discussion was held. Superintendent Lipp recommended the approval of five additional out-of-district students based on the guidelines in Policy 3141. This puts the total out-of-district student count at seventy-one.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to approve the additional Out-of-District Students attendance for FY22 as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

G. New Hires

- a. Tami Hawkins – Long-term Substitute – Discussion was held. Superintendent Lipp recommended the hiring of Tami Hawkins for the long-term substitute position in the first grade. After thirty-five consecutive days of employment from the start of school, Tami will be offered a teaching contract for the term of the absence. The days prior to day thirty-five will be paid at the District sub rate. The long-term substitute position is scheduled to terminate November 10th.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to hire Tami Hawkins as a long-term substitute teacher for the 2021-2022 school year as presented. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Amanda St John – Certified Teacher – Discussion was held. Superintendent Lipp recommended the hiring of Amanda St John for a 1.0 FTE 2nd grade teaching position. Amanda has fourteen years of experience in education and has taught in Montana, Washington and Oregon. Amanda will be placed at the MA+20, Step 6 level on the salary matrix, contingent on background check results, official transcripts and Montana teaching licensure.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to hire Amanda St John as a 1.0 FTE teacher for the 2021-2022 school year at a MA+20, Step 6. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- c. Stephanie Heaps – Certified Teacher – Discussion was held. Superintendent Lipp recommended the hiring of Stephanie Heaps for a 1.0 FTE 6th – 8th grade teaching position for math and 6th grade English Language Arts. Stephanie will be placed at the BA, Step 2 level on the salary matrix, contingent on background check results, official transcripts and Montana teaching licensure.

Amy Gibbons made a motion to hire Stephanie Heaps as a 1.0 FTE teacher for the 2021-2022 school year at a BA, Step 2. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Items for the Next Special Meeting – August 18th

- A. Trustees Financial Summary 2020 – 2021
- B. Transportation Cost Allocation Plan
- C. Final Budget Adoption 2021 – 2022
- D. Policy 1900 Series Review/Revision

- E. Ratify Contract with CCEA
- F. Reissue Contracts per updated Master Agreement
- G. Approve Health Insurance Contract FY22

Agenda Items for the Next Regular Meeting – September 9th

- A. MTSBA Policy Services Meeting Scheduled
- B. Extra-Curricular Coaching/Activities Contracts
 - 5/6 Girls Basketball
 - Mathcounts
 - Student Council
- C. New Hire – Health & Physical Education Certified Teacher
- D. Superintendent Presents Goals for FY22 to the BOT

Adjournment

The next Special Meeting will be held Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Canyon Creek School District Library.

The next Regular Meeting will be held Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Canyon Creek School District Library.

Amy Gibbons moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Kelly Hickey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Amy Sironi, Chair

Seara Stovall, Business Manager/Clerk