

Granite School District
Board of Education Meeting
July 14, 2020

A meeting of the Board of Education of Granite School District convened in Auditorium D at the Granite Education Center, 2500 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah. President Karyn Winder called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m., those in attendance were:

Karyn Winder	President
Connie Burgess	Vice President
Connie Anderson	Board Member
Gayleen Gandy	Board Member
Nicole McDermott	Board Member
Todd Zenger	Board Member

Those participating electronically:

Terry Bawden	Board Member
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The following members of the administration were present:

Martin Bates	Superintendent
David Garrett	Business Administrator
Don Adams	Assistant Superintendent
Rick Anthony	Assistant Superintendent
Leslie Bell	Assistant Superintendent
John Welburn	Assistant Superintendent

Ben Horsley, Communications Director, Doug Larson, Policy and Legal Services Director, Donnette McNeill-Waters, Human Resources Director, and Stacy Bushell, Executive Secretary, were in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance: Steve Hogan

Reverence: None

INTERVIEWS

The board interviewed three candidates for Precinct VII board member: Dawn Warner, Kris Nguyen, and Darrell Curtis.

ACTION ITEM

The board appointed Kris Nguyen to fill the vacancy in Precinct VII created by the resignation of Gayleen Gandy. The appointment will be effective August 4, 2020 and the term will go through December 2022. Kris will be sworn in at our next board meeting on August 4, 2020.

Motion: **I move that we appoint Kris Nguyen as board member for Precinct VII.**

Made by: Connie Burgess
Seconded by: Gayleen Gandy

Board comments:

Gayleen Gandy stated that we could not have gone wrong with any of the three candidates tonight. Every one of them are excellent candidates and this is not an easy decision. She is very comfortable with the choice.

Karyn Winder agreed with Gayleen and said we knew we could not lose. All three were very qualified and they nailed their interviews. Each spoke to their strengths and we appreciate their time.

Called for vote: President Winder

<u>For:</u>	<u>Against:</u>
Connie Anderson	Todd Zenger
Terry Bawden	
Connie Burgess	
Gayleen Gandy	
Nicole McDermott	
Karyn Winder	

Results: Motion Passed

INFORMATION ITEMS

Davis Demographics Study

Don Adams said Granite District sought the services of Davis Demographics to look at demographics across our district. Steve Hogan, Associate Director of Planning and Boundaries, said that this is a five-year enrollment forecast. Davis Demographics representative Scott Torlucci presented their findings. Their forecast is based on residence of our students rather than where they attend school. There were three factors used in their forecast: future kindergarten students, new housing, and mobility. The results project a loss of approximately 5,000 students in Granite School District over the next 5 years. This is consistent with trends across the country. The board appreciated the unbiased input from an outside consultant and looks forward to their return with boundary discussions in several months. (Exhibit 2103)

4th Quarter Experience

Rick Anthony presented information on fourth quarter grading results. During the fourth quarter we created a grading rule set in secondary schools which had options for 4/A, pass, and incomplete. Elementary grading was pass or incomplete. Across both the district and state, grading was forgiving in favor of passing or incomplete grades over failing grades. The percentage of incomplete grades for elementary students was lower than secondary. Results show a disparity in socio economic stability and success with distance learning. The percentage of "F" grades reported does give us a sense of the number of students who were not engaged. Last quarter, teachers and principals individually developed systems to track engagement. We did not have a district-wide platform for tracking that information. Now we are aware of ways we need to track student engagement as we look at distance learning in the future. (Exhibit 2104)

ACTION ITEM

USBE Assurances

John Welburn presented the completed USBE template of assurances for School Reopening Requirements. This template addresses district-wide plans for fall. Once the plan is approved it will be posted online. Schools were given similar templates to work on with School Leadership and Improvement directors over the next two weeks. All district departments and divisions submitted information to assist principals in formulating their plans. Phased guidelines do continue to change and influence our planning. The Leavitt Group has studied mitigation of risks of virus transmission and they have provided guidance for plans in our state. Mr. Welburn's presentation referenced guidance and research from The Leavitt Group. Included were three models for school attendance: regular schedule, dismissal schedule, and modified schedule. Dismissal or modified schedules will be implemented if we receive direction from the state and/or health department. (Exhibits 2105 and 2106)

Administration reports:

Teaching – John Welburn: Administration recognizes the challenges of providing in person and distance learning simultaneously. There is a need for increased planning time for our elementary teachers. A possible option for elementary schools is for parents to decide each quarter which modality their student will participate in. This will allow some teachers to be designated as distance learning teachers while other teachers teach in person. Teaching teams will be required to design instruction and lesson plans together. This will be helpful as we may transition from one type of attendance schedule to another. Secondary teachers have significantly more planning time than elementary teachers. The designated teacher (in-person and distance) model is not feasible in a secondary setting.

Environment Safety - Don Adams: Support Services has procured Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, disinfectants, etc. They have products that are effective and safe for use in our schools. We will teach students to clean personal spaces during the day in addition to daily cleaning by custodial staff. The district is providing adequate supplies and the custodial supply budget is doubled so that cleaning supplies can be replaced. We have conducted detailed evaluations of custodial practices and retrained when necessary. Many schools use tables and we are studying the effectiveness of additional partitions for those circumstances. We studied ventilation and air circulation in schools and classrooms. As a result, we will have MERV 13 or 14 filtration to maximize fresh air exchange.

Employee absences and leave - Donnette McNeill-Waters: The Health Department establishes protocols for contact tracing, reporting of symptoms, and cleaning areas of exposure. We have created a document of FAQs to guide employees through their leave options and to address options for those with high-risk circumstances. Employees can contact Berkley King in our Benefits Office for more information. PPE equipment may be provided to employees based on their specific circumstances. Donnette also discussed the district's plan for substitute teachers. We hope to hire long term (permanent) substitute teachers. We will likely use certified district personnel to fill some sub jobs.

Questions from GEA - Dr. Bates said that many of the questions he has received over the past few weeks will be answered once schools develop specific plans. GEA and district administration will form a committee to work through concerns.

Board comments:

Gayleen Gandy asked why we are not considering starting the school year in the distance model. Dr. Bates said that we do have the tools to make distance learning easier for students to use and for teacher and parents to access. The greatest challenges with distance learning are delivery of instruction for our teachers and equity for our students with 60% receiving free and reduced lunch which essentially means that they live in poverty. Of that group a significant number do not have access to internet and are not able to engage in distance learning.

Ms. Gandy has observed a consensus that we are not comfortable with going back to school the way it was. We must realize that if we go back to school it is not going to look the same. It will be different in many ways. She feels confident in our ability to mitigate the risks and this allows us to give a choice and flexibility to our students. She is impressed with the detailed effort of administrators to make this doable. Let us do everything possible to make it work.

Connie Anderson feels it is important for us to know which option our students will choose this fall. We have different plans available because we do not know what COVID numbers will be in the future. She hopes everyone in our community will work together to follow safety guidelines.

Connie Burgess appreciates the efforts by the district to get this ready. She is grateful for the choice that parents have to keep children at home or send them to school. She sees the benefit of face to face learning and how much children need it. She asked when parents would need to declare their preference. John Welburn responded; we would hope to have parent decisions by the end of July.

Terry Bawden thanked the board for their questions and comments. He thanked parents, teachers and others for their emails and their desire to protect our students, families, and employees. This pandemic has made the academic process much more difficult. He clarified that the CDC makes recommendations and we are under the direction of our local Health Department. He asked what the Health Department is saying about going back to school. Dr. Bates responded that we received a checklist from them today and we meet the conditions of the checklist for reopening school. Mr. Bawden thanked the staff for their thought and effort to protect students, teachers, staff, and families. Some will like our decision and others will not. It is evident that our educators have studied this subject and have given us wonderful information tonight.

Nicole McDermott knows that teachers are concerned about enforcing masks. We will work with families to resolve the issue on an individual basis. Specific directions for wearing masks in schools will be coming from the governor's office. She wonders why we are receiving different direction and guidelines from the state than businesses receive. She emphasized the importance of communicating our plans to daycares and other caregivers and asked who will communicate

with them. Leslie Bell answered that our school nurses will be the point of contact for working with caregivers and the health department on student health concerns. Ms. McDermott voiced concern about secondary teachers teaching in both modalities and wanted clarification that secondary schools will be able to choose to designate one teacher for online learning when that works best for the school. Dr. Bates responded, we will give schools as much flexibility as possible. Addressing other comments she received, Ms. McDermott said the district has budget limitations and we cannot hire more teachers than FTE allows. She said the board did not survey teachers because the purpose of the survey we conducted was to find out from parents if they would send their students to school under various attendance models.

Karyn Winder asked about best practice guidelines for students to refill water bottles. We will allow water bottles in all schools. Karyn believes that the way the USBE template is written with requirements, recommendations, and an action plan to mitigate risk implies that we are expected to open schools. She is concerned about the digital divide when we use the modified or dismissal model. She feels it is important to consider the equity issue. These are complex problems and our decision will not make everyone happy. Hopefully, people understand the difficulty of the decision we are about to make. Also, GEA rep Star Orullian messaged Ms. Winder - she has been watching the meeting and looks forward to the committees' work to address challenges and concerns. Karyn assured teachers that the board appreciates all that they do.

Motion: I move we approve the reopening plan according to the USBE assurances that we have.

Made by: Gayleen Gandy
Seconded by: Connie Burgess

Modified Motion: Todd Zenger motioned to modify the motion on the table to state that we will adopt CDC guidelines; wear masks and stay 6 feet apart in any school attendance mode. The motion was not seconded and failed.

Board comments:

Nicole McDermott clarified that within this motion there is latitude to implement a schedule of face to face learning four days and distance learning one day if that model is needed.

Terry Bawden confirmed that we will start school in person and the only reason we would change to a modified schedule is if the state or Health Department mandates or if we decide otherwise.

Called for vote: President Winder

For:
Connie Anderson
Terry Bawden
Connie Burgess
Gayleen Gandy
Nicole McDermott
Karyn Winder

Against:
Todd Zenger

Results: Motion Passed

SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD REPORTS

Dr. Martin Bates: Beginning at our August 4 board meeting, we will transition back to our former schedule. A 5:00 meeting with administrative reports, executive session if needed, dinner and then begin the 7:00 meeting. The location will continue to be in Auditorium D & E with board members and administration attending in person. The meeting will be streamed for the public. In cases of public comment, a resident or patron may contact our communications office prior to the board meeting.

Superintendent Bates presented Gayleen Gandy with flowers and an engraved vase as recognition for her years of service.

Gayleen Gandy said she has felt so much support from schools in her precinct and that has meant so much to her. This has been an absolutely incredible journey. She is so grateful for it and for each person in the room.

Connie Anderson expressed appreciation to our teachers. She was so impressed with all they did for students. She admires those people who made online learning happen throughout the district.

Nicole McDermott thanked all those who have worked so hard on this plan. This is unprecedented and we have never done this before, and it is not easy. She has expressed the frustrations of teachers, but she knows administration is in tough positions as well.

Karyn Winder said she knows that this night ends with a vote that is difficult. We have heard and voiced many of the concerns of our teachers. Karyn also acknowledged she and the board received many calls and texts from those on the other side of this issue. There are many concerns from parents asking to have their students in classrooms. She asked families to start now practicing with their students wearing masks so that they will be more comfortable with them when school starts. Please do not put the burden of mask wearing on our teachers and do what you can to help. We all need to pull together to get through this. Our hope is that COVID goes away as quickly as possible. Thank you to board members for discussion and open dialogue. She thanked Gayleen for the lessons she taught her and said the board will miss her.

Motion: **I move we adjourn.**

Made by: Connie Burgess

Seconded by: Gayleen Gandy

Called for vote: President Winder

Results: Motion Passed Unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 p.m.