



Board of Education  
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DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Granite Education Center  
Auditorium D

November 15, 2016  
6:40 p.m

Welcome and Introductions: - Linda Mariotti, Assistant Superintendent

Linda welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance and their time. She explained that the Superintendent and Board Members were finishing up with Board meeting and that they would be joining us shortly. Introductions were made so everyone could get to know each other, as there were a lot of new members. Linda took a moment to explain how important DCC is in the process of getting information out to schools and parents. She then had the District Employees introduce themselves.

Members of District Community Council (DCC), administration, and visitors in attendance were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Network/Position</u>
Daniel Burton	Cottonwood
Clarke Nelson	Cottonwood
Anitra Koehler	Cyprus
Aaron Weight	Cyprus
Darrell Kirby	Granger
Andrea Lindsey	Granger
Marni Allred	Hunter
Valerie Pingree	Olympus
Chris Betcher	Skyline
Charles Pruitt	Skyline

Celina Milner	Taylorsville
Dr. Martin Bates	Superintendent
Terry Bawden	Board President
Linda Mariotti	Asst. Superintendent
Don Adams	Asst. Superintendent
John Welburn	Asst. Superintendent
Rick Anthony	Asst. Superintendent
Ben Horsley	Communications Director
Doug Larson	Policy and Legal Services Director
Dave Garrett	Business Administrator/Treasurer
Connie Anderson	Board Member
Karyn Winder	Board Member
Sydney Johnson	Region 5 PTA President
Darla Williams	Administrative Secretary/Recorder

**FINE ARTS DISCUSSION** - Linda Mariotti said she would like to ask all DCC members their opinion on Fine arts education in granite district and she would like it taken out to SCC members for their input, also. The foundation for the discussion is as follows: We have always had a Board that is very interested in fine arts, visual arts, music, drama, and dance. The state of Utah has a prescribed set of standards for every grade level. The core standards are very detailed and the Board believes that the standards should be taught to students every year and students are expected to master the standards, as opposed to just being “exposed” to the different kinds of arts. Linda passed out a flyer that gave a website for the state and for our District so that they could look at the standards more closely. Here is the dilemma: We believe they should focus on the arts, but also that every student be college ready. We are also very aware that to ask a teacher to have emphasis on academics in all subjects, and then add arts is a tall order. How do we squeeze it all in? How can we guarantee that they get the core instructions and arts?

Several years ago, we moved the District sponsored Elementary Music out of the schools because it wasn’t part of the mandated core. We took the resources in FTE and reallocated them to schools and had a fine arts specialist assigned to each Elementary school to teach the four areas. The hope was that this would serve more students. Sixteen teachers are assigned to multiple schools. They attend each school one day a week. Friday is their collaboration day. The School Community Councils make the determination of what the arts specialist at their

school is going to teach. This program has run for 3 years and we have sent out surveys to see how it is working. Are more kids getting arts instruction? The answer is yes. Are the regular teachers picking up the instruction in areas that are not being taught? The answer is no. The Board is concerned about that fact. The Board is interested in hearing suggestions on how to address this issue. Chuck Pruitt said that clearly there has to be a curriculum out there that we could look at/model after so we don't have to reinvent the wheel. Chris Betcher asked why the Board is discounting the experience aspect? He stated that Morningside Elementary has Taylor Dance and he feels it is integrating with something in their curriculum all the time. Linda Mariotti noted that Beverly Taylor Sorensen Arts Grants participate in a lot of schools. But, as great of a job as they do, they cannot cover all the standards. Marni Allred said she feels that as the instrumental music has left the Elementary Schools, the standard of the Secondary Schools have dropped. This is a result of kids coming into Jr. High with no instrumental experience. At secondary level the arts are very specific and if the students do not have the core standards in elementary it creates a problem.

Everyone agreed that teachers are feeling the pressure of too much. At this point, Linda Mariotti wanted to make it clear that there is a difference between standards and tools for teachers. The state has standards. Teachers have latitude in instruction, but must meet these standards. The tools are what we are giving the teachers to help them meet these standards. They need to understand that they don't have to go from the front of the book to the back of the book, it is just a tool to use what you feel works. Chris Betcher asked how we get that idea to the teachers? Valerie Pingree asked how familiar teachers are with the standards, and how accountable are they? Linda referred them back to the websites that she handed out and told them to look at the curriculum maps. Valerie added that she believes that it is a lack of accountability that is the issue. Anitra Koehler asked if the Board is looking at making these standards as weighty as math, science, etc? Dr. Bates answered that, although they are not tested on it, the specialists are held accountable. Anitra added that she believes it is unrealistic to hold teachers accountable for arts – kids lose interest in things they may love if they are tested on it. Aaron Weight said that he feels like most of his kids' day is spent on worksheets, classes need integration and they need to get away from worksheets. It keeps the kids interested to have hands on learning experiences.

Dr. Bates said that what he is hearing is that there are two main concerns; one integration and the other assessment. He is concerned about the integration road if we lose art for its own sake. He is also concerned that we have Elementary teachers that have to meet standards and are going to focus on the subjects that “stamp a letter on their school”. Council members agreed that there is just too much in the schedule and asked if additional teachers could be hired to help with the situation. Terry Bawden reminded everyone that money is critical, and there is a teacher shortage. Charles Pruitt commented that it should have done it right the first time and we would not have to be addressing the issue again. Aaron Weight asked if there were electronic resources available? Chris Betcher commented that when his kids were on the K12 Online program, it had a great arts program.

Dr. Bates thanked everyone for the very helpful conversation, and asked that they please direct any comments or questions to Linda Mariotti [LKmariotti@graniteschools.org](mailto:LKmariotti@graniteschools.org). Marni Allred made one last comment that there are several teachers out there that are doing a great job with the integration. We should utilize those teachers. Have them share their ideas etc.

**FACILITY MASTER PLAN** – Dr. Bates explained that, for a couple of years, the District has been working on a long term plan for building replacement. We have had a facility assessment done for each building in the District. Ben Horsley and Don Adams are preparing to take our message concerning GSD future to the communities, and are using the DCC as a focus group of sorts. Feedback is asked for and appreciated. Ben handed out a flyer with capital planning 101, process and methodology. This is a 20+ year plan looking at facilities. Ben explained that they have addressed all areas in detail from lightbulbs and carpets to HVAC and roofing. They are looking at remodeling in addition to rebuilding. He explained that they will talk about funding sources; property tax, a general bond, and a tax increase. Ben stressed that the Board has not taken a position, as we are all still in the education process. The District will need to take in to consideration the cash flow and actual projects, be frugal and prudent with tax dollars while maintaining, remodeling and building. Our capital plan includes identifying and assessing the needs. Part of the assessment is to identify educational adequacy - what works now as opposed to what will work down the road- which includes thinking ahead at technology and other needs in 10, 20, 50 years.

Facility condition assessment facts :

- \*We have 129 facilities.
- \*The average age of our facilities is 39 years old.
- \* To replace all buildings today would cost us 2 billion dollars.
- \*The appropriate “life cycle” of a building is 67 years. \*
- \*As of today, 65% of our buildings have exceeded their “life cycle” and 31% of our buildings are more than 50 years old. This doesn’t necessarily mean that the old buildings are the worst, some are just built better than others, but older buildings do require a lot of maintenance.

In order to be where we want to be, we would need to rebuild an Elementary every year, a Junior High every 4 years and a High School every 8 years. This would require 36.6 million dollars annually. Our current budget is 17 million, with 15 million of that spoken for already to do repairs or as “bandaids”. The Board is looking at all possibilities. Option one is remodeling (no major replacements). Option two is a full remodel once in every buildings’ 60-70 year life cycle. Option 3 is to remodel twice in every buildings life cycle (every twenty years or so). Darrell Kirby asked if, when they are looking at schools to rebuild/remodel, they look at student enrollment and projected enrollment as part of the decision process? Don answered that new growth/enrollment is part of the existing budget plan. The Board is currently considering 3 options for revenue: 1) raise taxes. This would require a truth in taxation hearing and be done. 2) A series of bonds every 4 to 5 years. With this option, we could immediately take on critical projects, and the tax increase would be incremental 3) A hybrid of both models. An initial bond to bring tax revenue up and then when those bonds are paid off, maintain the tax increase. The Hybrid is a kick start into pay as you go. The Board is leaning towards the initial bond, and tax increase. However, they will not make any decisions until the community is informed, opinions are voiced, and the options are voted upon. Sydney Johnson voiced a concern that this is a risky decision to put it all out there before a decision is made. It is an arduous process, and she wonders if it will make a difference. But Don, Ben and many DCC members felt that it was important to be transparent and educate and engage the communities. Don says it is really mandatory to engage with the public to get them behind this and avoid a huge backlash. We want the public to feel good about what we are doing.

Ben and Don will begin to host Town Council, City Council, and Community Network meetings in the coming months. Coming back in 60 days, they will be giving feedback on the three

strategic choices and options for payment. Chris Betcher asked if it is cheaper to replace before it goes out? Don answered that it is always better to be proactive, but it doesn't matter how well you have it organized there is going to be a surprise. Darrell Kirby voiced that he thought it was appropriate to let the public know where the board is leaning to give them a starting point. Marni Allred noted that it seems the same as the previous reconfiguration meetings, where the District would say "the Board is inclined to do this, but wants to hear public opinion before making a decision. The end goal is that no one can say "why didn't I know about this?" To end his presentation, Ben showed a short video which is an introductory and simplified version of the in depth information. More materials will be coming out for and concerning the upcoming meetings. Everyone should be getting one, if not multiple postcards inviting you to these meetings. The postcards will have the website information so that people that cannot attend the meetings can still get all of the information.

**MEMBER CONCERNS** – President Bawden asked if there were any concerns that needed to be addressed and Celina Milner wanted to bring up the subject of the bullying situations that have increased since the Presidential Election. She stated that there are scared children, and families and she asked what the District is doing? Can we re-activate our anti-bullying program? The Superintendent asked her to read the letter that he had sent out to all GSD Employees about "Our Children". It had been posted to our facebook page, and Ben Horsley put it up on the screen for everyone to see. Doug Larson responded that each school has a Bullying/Suicide Prevention Plan in place and should be adhering to that daily. In addition, they all have recently attended trainings on Civil Rights Investigations.

President Bawden thanked everyone for their attendance, and dismissed the meeting at 8:40 pm