



MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

I. OPENING BUSINESS

A. CALL PUBLIC SESSION TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm by Mrs. Chrissy Falk, Board President.

B. ROLL CALL: Board Members: Chrissy Falk, President; Tom Mendenhall, Vice President; Ron Eldridge, Clerk; Jason Schroer; Wes Qualls; Connie Schlaefer (L); Don Fowler.

C. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Motion to adopt agenda with the following revisions: Agenda Item V.A.6-Approval of Interfund Transfers (Resolutions 01-03 – 19/20) moved to New Business Agenda Item VII.H for a roll call vote: Eldridge: Second: Mendenhall: 6/0

D. IDENTIFY CLOSED SESSION TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

1. *Individual Student Disciplinary Matters*
2. *Personnel*
3. *Potential Litigation*

E. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Tom Mendenhall led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. RECOGNITIONS

A. Summer Work Crew

Dr. Harris recognized a very important group of individuals in our district. This summer, Craig Barnes began the role of leading our Facilities and Maintenance crew, and as he stepped into it, there was a summer work list that was really too long to list. Over the course of the summer, these men and women have gone above and beyond, with over 200 work orders completed. You can see it in the band room, and the work that was done there (twice because of flooding and other things). If you go by the football field, you'll see the green grass, and clean planters. If you go to Foothill you'll see the work done in the classrooms including carpets laid. There are many things you can't see, that these people do on a regular basis, day in and day out. As we have come back to school, repeatedly heard by teachers and community members, what an honor it is to walk on these campuses and see how great they look. It's because of these individuals that are here tonight, we are recognizing our summer work crew, for really, truly, this summer, exemplifying the idea of vocation in this district. "We're very proud to have you and can't thank you enough for the work you've done this summer."

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carly Ervin thanked everyone who had a hand in the band room renovations this summer. Thank you to Craig and Sean for making this project such a high priority. Thank you to Craig who also went dumpster diving when some of the percussion stuff accidentally got thrown away. Thank you to Eric and his crew for all the heavy lifting and making themselves available any time help was needed to clean. Thank you to the District and the Board for starting this new chapter of Sierra music on the right foot. "I've never worked a job where I felt so invested in right from the start, and I don't take that for granted. I hope that I can cultivate a music program that the district can continue to be proud of." She invited the Board to come take a look at the band room. "You'll be really proud of the work that our crew did. They did a great job."

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Reports

1. ASB Vice President – Emma Zelasko
Miss Zelasko, standing in for Sarah Page, spoke about Sierra activities including: Prom venue at the Schoolhouse in Sanger; beautifying the campus and helping the maintenance crew putting woodchips in planters around the campus; the 1st day rally which was a big success; new teacher recognition; and coming up home Volleyball games, girls tennis, football, and water polo.
2. Site Reports
 - a. Sierra Junior/Senior High Schools, Sean Osterberg – Principal
Mr. Osterberg spoke about what a great summer they had. There's such a great energy. Speaking of Craig and his crew, it's not just the amount of projects accomplished but more the level. It's pretty remarkable. We had a great start to the school year. There is excitement about the new recent hires. Andrea Marjala will be teaching our Leadership course and helping build our extended day program through a grant we received. Robert Brookey will be teaching Industrial Design to JHS students, which is part of our elective wheel. The course was pulled from Thiessen's old drafting course and lasts 12 weeks. Both Robert and Angela have CTE credentials which allows them to teach a lot of really interesting things. Exciting things are going to happen with both of them. Our dual enrollment numbers are at 50 students, as opposed to 17 last year. 20 students signed up with Reedley College for the Ag Welding course. This includes a lot of kids who hadn't really talked about college.
 - b. Foothill Elementary School, Heather Wheeler, Ed.D. – Principal
Dr. Wheeler agreed with the word for the day, "exciting". It's been an amazing start to the school year. Craig's team was amazing. There was a request sent to Craig at 8:00 or 9:00 at night, for shade for the students waiting at the bus. That was taken care of by the next morning, and it was amazing to know that someone has your back on that level. Thanks to the crew, but also to the office staff, and to the teachers who had an amazing 1st day with the kids, coming on campus with their adorable outfits. It was so smooth, and hardly any crying. It's been wonderful. The team at the District Office has been so helpful. Teresa Page has been working tirelessly to make sure our classrooms are supported, with almost full-time aides in Kindergarten for the 1st 4 weeks of school, to really get them off on the right foot. Aides are also placed selectively in 1st and 2nd grade classes. "As a new person in this district, I didn't feel new. I felt supported. I felt welcomed, enough that I brought my own son to attend Sierra Junior HS. He's having a really great time and feels very welcome. Overall it's been a wonderful feeling of family. Everyone's glad to be back. The new teachers are fitting in and having a wonderful time with their teams. All in all, it's been a really amazing start to our year.
 - c. Sandy Bluffs Alternative Education, Ara Keledjian – Director
Mr. Keledjian reported a wonderful beginning to the new school year. At Sandy Bluffs, the set for the year was a discussion on the soft bigotry of low expectations. The discussion was on what that means and it was the lead in for the teachers so that the students could understand why we're starting off with some very high behavioral expectations. So far, the greatest battle has been with dress code. If that's all we're dealing with we're doing great. With everything that the summer crew got done, we also got beautiful new flooring through the entire cafeteria/office, as well as room 1 and 4. Independent study is beginning this week. So far, 2 former students have been disallowed to re-enroll based on last year's attendance and credit accrual. One enrolled in Sandy Bluffs. Preschool started today with 49 students. It's only expected to go up. A meeting with Big Sandy Rancheria staff revealed an interesting idea. It's a big vision about a CTE school tying in to adult school, and some services for the Rancheria and the community at large. It's very early. The exciting part was to have a community organization reaching out to our adult school and the district to see what kind of partnerships we can put together. A follow up meeting is scheduled for next week.

4. Superintendent Report – Alan Harris, Ph.D.

Dr. Harris thanked everyone and was humbled and honored to have the opportunity to begin working as Superintendent, and it continues. “I have really enjoyed the first 45 days or so, learning about the District, and more importantly learning and getting to know the people more deeply. That’s been a real joy.” He gave a little presentation to show what he had done so far and tell where things are headed. Please see links below for the presentation highlights, as well as a Communication Plan intended as a living document emphasizing our efforts to focus on communication with our community. The focus is on both expressive and receptive communication with district stakeholders. Consider it a starting point of some baseline expectations as well as system development to be responsive to input.

 - a. [45-Day Report](#)
 - b. [Communication Plan](#)

5. Department Reports
 - a. Facilities, Maintenance and Transportation – Craig Barnes, Supervisor

Mr. Barnes reported that the F&T staff did a phenomenal job this summer with quite a bit of adversity doing 98% of a nearly impossible [list](#). They did it during management transition and nobody missed a beat. They had his back keeping both departments up and running smoothly. Some of the adversities were the vacancies due to the retirement incentive. Transportation has shown that they are willing to stand up and make it happen, leaving the department the way it’s structured, and they are really taking on the responsibilities that are needed. Regardless of the vacancies, we’re moving forward. He reiterated what an outstanding crew he has, what a great job they did, and thanked them.

 - b. Business Services - Janelle Bryson, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Bryson reviewed the budget report noting that in June there was a large increase proposed to come in for special education funding. After receiving information from the County SELPA, the SELPA itself is receiving the \$557.27 per ADA. However, there are some reductions. There is a state deficit that gets applied to that money of 3%. There is 12 million dollars in property taxes that comes out and goes to the County operating programs. There is another almost 9 million dollars that gets set aside for the County operating programs. Then there are reserve funds within the SELPA set aside for non-public school claims and for large legal claims. Now, of the 45 million dollars that our SELPA is going to get in this 2019-20 school year, school districts will be getting 23 million. So, rather than us getting \$557 for ADA, we’ll be getting \$286.45. This means our surplus that was proposed at approximately \$427,000 is closer to approximately \$184,000. There will be estimates in increases in the surplus in the next 2 years because our enrollment is stabilizing. The budget report, as well as enrollment figures can be viewed in the links below.

 1. [Budget Report](#)
 2. [Enrollment](#)
 3. Update on Sale of Auberry Elementary

According to Christina Azevedo, with the Department of General Services at the State, the check is on her desk. They will let us know when the check is in the mail, probably mid-September.

 - c. Education Services – Teresa Page, Director

Ms. Page updated the Board on our education services. The start of a new school year is a critical time for students. As said last Spring, the reality is that schools are facing steep increases in both numbers of students that are struggling with things like autism, severe and untreated ADHD, and/or a history of trauma, and dealing with the intensity of the negative behaviors that can be associated with these circumstances. Our district is all in on supporting and serving every student at their home school. We have put extra staff in place to support both returning students that qualified last year for Tier 3 Social/Emotional supports (now up to nearly 20 students), and for the new kindergarteners starting school for the first time. The partnership we have with the county-sponsored All 4 Youth program has expanded, we have additional staff assigned to the district, and the previous 19 hour cap on time has been lifted, so this year more

students and families can be served. We are starting to work with another agency, Behavioral Interventions for Autism, because All 4 Youth does not work with students who have autism. BIA provides a variety of supports for families and schools and is also funded through private insurance and Medi-Cal. In the classroom, we are always focused on keeping kids in their initial grade level instruction, and we are providing technological supports such as Google Talk on Chromebooks, Dragon Speak, MobyMax, and Reader Pens to increase students' independence and increase their skills. In the area of assessment, we are working on ways to accurately and efficiently determine the appropriate designated supports for every student in the district that will take the state assessments in the spring. In addition, we are in the process of purchasing a comprehensive program that will allow us to universally screen every student in the district for social emotional health, provide instruction as needed, and measure outcomes for students who need intervention. There is much more that is in place and being explored to catch the earliest signs that a student is struggling and help that student with whatever speed bumps that have presented themselves.

- d. Curriculum and Instruction – Tammy Montgomery, Director
Mrs. Montgomery spoke about the California Math Initiative Grant, (Sierra being one of the 30 that received it). The purpose of the grant is to beef up our foundational skills, Preschool through 3rd grade. At a training for trainers, we learned that we need to let kids play again, not sit with a tablet, or a workbook and pencil. Let them play with blocks. Let them figure out how many counters are on the table. We are tasked with hosting 3 professional development training days around math. We will participate in some coaching calls. Tomorrow, FCOE Math Department Head, will be here visiting the K-3 classrooms. His purpose is to see what we already are doing with math, see how classrooms are set up, and how teachers are having those math conversations with students. More information to follow at a later date as a plan is formulated. Another thing that will be talked about a lot this year are data conversations. Heather and Sean presented to the whole teaching staff on the 9th (PD day) talking about protocols and data. How do we look at it and what information are we gaining from it? What does the information tell us? Teachers in mixed level teams had meaningful conversations about data. Our hope is to actually have a formal data plan, 2-3 years out. It will start growing this year and we will continually add to it. Our ultimate goal in collecting that data and analyzing it is to measure growth. Are we reaching our target growth and if not why? The data will include lists of data that teachers would like to see in their reports, their CAASPP scores, DLA's, attendance, and behavior, as well as site specific types of information. We'll see how all of that information pulled together, gives us a bigger picture of how a student is doing.

6. Program Reports – NONE

7. Sub-Committee Reports – NONE

B. Board Reflections

Don Fowler was excited to be with the teachers the other day at the breakfast, feeling their enthusiasm.

Connie Schlaefer agreed it was a great kick off, how it set a great tone with the students. It was very inspirational and touching.

Wes Qualls also agreed. Looking around at different staff members in key positions who helped put that together, it's such a good team.

Chrissy Falk concurred with all. She gave a shout out to Alan for the hard work he's been putting in, the trust he has in his team, and seeing the plans come together.

VII. CONSENT CALENDAR AGENDA

Motion to approve Consent Calendar Agenda: Mendenhall: Second: Eldridge: 7/0

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: [Governance Handbook](#)**
The Board discussed and approved revisions to the Governance Handbook.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. DISCUSSION ITEM: Sierra Unified District-Wide Facilities Request for Proposal (RFP)**
Dr. Harris shared his belief that a complete analysis of the facilities need to be done. There will be a 2.3 million dollar check coming in and lots of ways to look at it. The idea of doing an RFP, and have a full analysis of all the facilities in the district, including Sierra Elementary, to get to 21st century facilities, what it looks like and what it would cost. So, that by spring we could be able to sit down, look through, dialog, and prioritize where we're at. We know there is work to be done in certain places, but we don't have a real handle on what is most/least needed. The specific request would be to have an architectural firm come in and do a full audit of our facilities, showing our current standings and what possible cost projections for modernization. The Board directed staff to research possible organizations to do the audit, and bring back information and costs for an audit.

- B. INFORMATION: [Update and Forecast of Daycare and Preschool](#)**

- C. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: Adoption of [Resolution #04-19/20](#), Board Authorization for Temporary Interfund Transfers**

Education Code Section 42603 provides authorization for temporary interfund transfers, at the direction of the District's Governing Board. In actual practice, these temporary transfers often need to happen on very short notice (e.g., needing a same-day cash transfer to cover an Accounts Payable run or Payroll). The County Office cannot process these without District Board approval.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 04-19/20: Schlaefer: Second: Eldridge: 7/0

Board Member	In Favor	Opposed	Absent
Chrissy Falk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Tom Mendenhall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Ron Eldridge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Jason Schroer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Wes Qualls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Connie Schlaefer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Don Fowler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

- D. INFORMATION: California School Employees Association ([CSEA](#)) Initial Proposal for Collective Bargaining**

- E. INFORMATION: Sierra Unified Teachers Association ([SUTA](#)) Initial Proposal for Collective Bargaining**

- F. DISCUSSION ITEM: [Attendance Material Decrease](#)**
California Department of Education allows Districts to request an allowance for attendance due to emergency conditions when attendance on any particular day is less than 90% of average attendance. On February 5, 2019, our attendance was less than 85% districtwide due to a snow day. The attached form is filed with the California Department of Education when applying for an allowance. We compare an average day in both October and April and replace the snow day with the higher of those average days.
The Board of Sierra Unified School District must approve the request in order for the allowance to be granted. It is recommended that the Board approve the request to replace February 5th, 2019 with an average day in the month of October.

G. INFORMATION: [Fresno County Cooperation and Shared Responsibility Agreement](#)

With the award of the 2019 California Early Math Initiative Grant, Sierra Unified School District needs to enter an agreement with the Fresno County Superintendent of School's office. The purpose of this agreement is to establish the participation role of the District and establish the financial delivery through the course of the grant.

H. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: Approval of Interfund Transfers/Resolution #01-19/20 - #03-19/20

Motion to approve Resolutions #1-3 – 19/20: Eldridge: Second: Mendenhall: 7/0

#01–19/20 Transfer of \$100,000 – From General Fund to Deferred Maintenance

#02–19/20 Transfer of \$50,000 – From General Fund to Capital Reserve

#03–19/20 Transfer of \$71,207 – From General Fund to Cafeteria Fund

Board Member	In Favor	Opposed	Absent
Chrissy Falk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Tom Mendenhall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Ron Eldridge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Jason Schroer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Wes Qualls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Connie Schlaefer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Don Fowler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

X. ADVANCED PLANNING

A. [Governance Calendar](#) - Addition of Workshops 4th Monday of Month

B. Next Regular meeting date: September 9, 2019

C. Next Special meeting date(s):

D. Requested Future Agenda Items:

1. Detailed Update on District Benefits Package and Compensation Package (Janelle Bryson) – September 2019 Budget Workshop

XI. CLOSED SESSION The Board of Trustees went into Closed Session at 7:42 p.m.

A. Individual Student Disciplinary Matters (Government Code Section 48918)

1. [Student #2019-2](#)

B. Personnel - Public Employee Discipline / Dismissal / Release / Complaint / Appointment / Employment (Government Code § 54957)

C. Potential Litigation (Government Code § 54956.9)

XII. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

A. Adjourn Closed Session and Reconvene Open Session

B. Report Action Taken in Closed Session

XIA.1 – Student #2019-2: The Board voted unanimously to uphold the recommendation of the administrative panel, which is a probationary status, and the suspended expulsion may be revoked should he violate any portion of the California Education Code which permits suspension.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Chrissy Falk, President

Alan Harris, Ph.D, Superintendent

Ron Eldridge, Clerk

Sierra Unified School District