



LYNDEN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Lynden School District #504

Ensure that all students graduate college, career, and citizenship ready.

Board Meeting

Minutes

09/14/2023

Lynden School District
Board Room

516 Main Street, Lynden, WA 98264

1. Call to Order, Welcome & Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call

Meeting called to order by CJ Costanti at 7:00pm. Board of Directors in attendance were CJ Costanti, David Vis, Cindy Petersen, and Tonya Hickman. Superintendent David VanderYacht and Student Board Representative Kyle Tucker were also in attendance.

Director Ken Owsley and Student Board Representative Cooper Graddon were absent and excused.

2. Oath of Office- Student Board Representatives

Board President CJ Costanti administered the Oath of Office to Kyle Tucker, who will be serving as Student Board Representative for the 23/24 school year.

3. Meeting Minutes

David Vis motioned to approve the August 31, 2023 board meeting minutes. Seconded by Tonya Hickman. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0. Advisory Vote: 1-0.

4. Consent Agenda

23/24 General Fund- \$197,801.42; warrants 167010-167056 dated August 31, 2023.

23/24 ASB Fund- \$6,995.47; warrants 167057-167061 dated August 31, 2023.

22/23 General Fund- \$122,034.02 warrants 167062-167101 dated August 31, 2023.

22/23 Capital Projects Fund- \$18,367.22; warrants 167102-167104 dated August 31, 2023.

22/23 ASB Fund \$10,548.96; warrants 167105-167112 dated August 31, 2023.

22/23 ACH General Fund- \$417.85; warrants 222300572-222300575 dated August 31, 2023.

Payroll Warrant #166991 in the amount of \$0.00 dated August 31, 2023.

Payroll Direct Deposits in the amount of \$1,910,026.22 dated August 31, 2023.



Payroll Taxes Transfers in the amount of \$643,978.52 dated August 31, 2023.

Payroll Vendor DRS Transfer in the amount of \$602,143.83 dated August 31, 2023.

Payroll Vendor Warrants 166992-167009 in the amount of \$707,569.05 dated August 31, 2023.

Personnel Recommendations dated September 14, 2023.

Policy Updates- Non-Substantive: Policy 3122, 3225, 3241

Cindy Petersen motioned to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Tonya Hickman. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0. Advisory Vote: 1-0.

5. Reports

a. Superintendent

b. Teaching and Learning

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, Julie van Wijk, introduced Megan Dickson, a high school teacher who help coordinate the district's highly capable program. She shared information about the program. Information presented included the number of students served at each school and details regarding the service model at each school. She also updated the board regarding new legislation that will result in students being screened for HiCap in grades 2 and 6 beginning in the 23/24 school year. This is a change to prior practice of only screening in 2nd grade.

c. Finance and Operations

6. Information from the Audience

A community member addressed the board regarding budgeting.

7. Policies

a. *First Readings*

Policy 1400- Meeting Conduct, Order of Business, and Quorum

Tonya Hickman motioned to approve updated Policy 1400. Seconded by Cindy Petersen. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0.

Policy 2190- Highly Capable Program

Tonya Hickman motioned to approve updated Policy 2190. Seconded by Cindy Petersen. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0



b. Second Readings

Policy 2230- Transition to Kindergarten

Cindy Petersen motioned to adopt new Policy 2230. Seconded by David Vis. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0

8. Action Items

23/24 Highly Capable Grant Approval

Following the Highly Capable presentation earlier in the meeting, Cindy Petersen motioned to approve the 23/24 highly capable grant. Seconded by Tonya Hickman. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0

23/24 Student Fines & Fees

The board reviewed proposed students fines and fees for the 23/24 school year. The proposal stated that all fees and fines from the 22/23 school year should be carried over to the 23/24 school year and also recommended the implementation of specified technology fines. Tonya Hickman motioned to approve the recommended 23/24 students fines and fees as presented. Seconded by Cindy Petersen. Motion carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0

Resolution #09-23: Whatcom County Skills Center Feasibility Study

There appears to be a strong willingness from OSPI to move forward with granting a core campus skills center designation for Whatcom County. Local districts are being asked to adopt the feasibility study resolution, which would be an endorsement by the board of the research done for the study to show support for the results around the industry findings, proposed programming and feasibility of the skills center being established in Whatcom County.

David Vis motioned to approve Resolution #09-23- Whatcom County Skills Center Feasibility Study. Seconded by Cindy Petersen. Motioned carried by voice vote.

Board Vote: 4-0; Advisory Vote: 1-0

9. Board Workshop

Bond Resolution Planning

Superintendent VanderYacht shared a summary of the work done by three facilities planning committees since January 2023. He shared highlights of the Facilities Planning Committee report that was presented to the board on January 26, 2023 which included recommendations for building condition improvements, added learning spaces, collaborative learning spaces, and recommendations to expand community engagement. That committee also recommended the creation of a long range facilities planning committee and a bond planning task force.



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Superintendent VanderYacht then reviewed the findings and recommendations of the long range facilities planning committee which included the construction of a new high school to house 1140 students, renovation of the gymnasium, a performing arts center at the high school, and several other items at the elementary schools, and middle school, as well as a plan for a 4th elementary school in future years.

He then explained that the bond planning task force used the long range plan to come up with a short term recommendation regarding a potential bond resolution. We are now in a place where we are considering a potential bond resolution, the scope of work to include in it, and when to present it to the community if the board decides to move forward with a bond.

He then shared an updated tax analysis from the information that was presented at the August 31, 2023.

He then explained how the cost of \$150,000,000 for a new high school was estimated. Two reference points were used- a professional estimate from a third-party company, and a square footage analysis in comparison to Ferndale's cost to build a new high school in 2022. The average between the professional estimate and the \$/SF estimate is \$155,522,343.

Superintendent VanderYacht shared a model bond resolution so that the board could read what would potentially be included in a bond resolution.

Discussion by the board was then focused around scope, timing, and cost.

Director Hickman expressed her concern regarding approving a bond resolution during a recession, and what impact that may have on financially struggling families in the community.

Director Petersen expressed that the needs have been presented and that the goal of the board should be to present the needs to the community. It will be imperative to have students involved in that communication, as well as parents. We can meet the needs of the district facilities, and pass the bond if we present it correctly.

Questions were discussed such as what kind of schools do we want our children to be in 5 days a week? We need to focus on safe and secure learning environments that prepare them for the future.

Discussion was also held regarding "safety" and what that means. It could be argued that mental health services are more important than entry points as far as safety is concerned. Ashley McClaran with OAC Services pointed out that the new high school would include spaces that would be able to provide mental health services to students. Those were services that were not included in a standard school design 40 years ago. We need to be able to provide the appropriate spaces for counseling and other services that we now provide to students.

Director Vis expressed that we really need to begin focusing on the cost proposition, and that we should strongly consider asking for a lower amount while making sure we build an adequate high school.

Student Board Representative Kyle Tucker expressed his concern with the safety of the current high school, but also acknowledged Director Hickman's concern about the financial impact to individuals within the community should a bond pass.



Superintendent VanderYacht clarified that if the board's desire is to have a bond on the February 2024 ballot, there is a need to decide on a bond amount and finalize a scope of work to allow enough time for information to be shared with the community. He also reminded the board about the consideration of impact fees.

WSSDA General Assembly

Director Hickman facilitated discussion regarding the upcoming General Assembly scheduled for September 22nd and 23rd with the goal of identifying positions of the board in which there is a full agreement or disagreement on WSSDA's position recommendations. The bylaw regarding the removal of weighted votes was agreed upon to vote to pass. It was noted that a weighted vote will not be taken for this bylaw.

It was decided that four position proposals warranted further discussion:

Position Proposal #8- Physical Crisis Intervention

The board decided to withhold voting on this as they could not come to a unanimous agreement.

Position Proposal #27- Equity Based K-12 Education System

The board decided to withhold a vote on this as they could not come to a unanimous agreement.

Position Proposal 34- #Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

After discussion, it was decided that the board agrees with WSSDA's recommendation and will cast a "yes" vote.

Position Proposal #39- Student Civil Rights

WSSDA recommends "do pass". After discussion, Director Hickman asked if she could contact Tukwila School District and/or WSSDA to ask for clarification on why they put this new proposal and what the goal is in passing this proposal. She will contact the board via email before General Assembly with more information about this proposal.

Discussion was then held on how to handle amendments during General Assembly. There is unfamiliarity on how amendments will work so we are electing not to vote on amendments. Director Hickman will provide feedback about the process for amendments and be able to prepare the board for next year.

10. Public Comment

An opportunity was given to the audience to comment on the board workshop regarding the potential bond resolution.



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A community member stated that the dynamic of this community may impede the passing of a bond- specifically the presence of a large private school. But, we need to let the voters decide. A community member and BPTF member explained that mental health was taken into consideration when coming up with their recommendations. That includes natural light, common spaces for connection. The current structure and space can be very isolating and depressing for students.

A community member and BPTF member reminded the board that the struggling families are the exact families that will benefit the most from a new school with more resources. With regards to mental health, safe and private spaces are needed for students who are going through an emotional situation during the school day. She also stated that we don't want to underestimate costs and have to come back and ask the community for more money.

A community member asked questions regarding the financing of the bond. She also stated that transparency will be very important to the voters.

A community member expressed that he came to tonight's meeting against the bond, but after listening to the background and the work that has been done by these committees, he now understands why a bond is needed. It is a sacrifice that we need to make for our community.

A community member asked questions regarding scope of work and how the board plans to run an effective campaign.

A community member and BPTF member clarified the sense of urgency that is needed, specifically regarding the security of the campus. However, there is a much higher hidden risk concerned with mental health. The physical school is a space that students should be able to feel pride in attending and include spaces that are a benefit to mental health such as common spaces, natural lighting, and a more modern facility. He also expressed that the board should be unapologetic in asking for the needs of students. Community members have chosen to live here in large part due to the educational opportunities that Lynden has.

A community member expressed that having a positive environment for students is so important for their mental health.

A community member expressed that financial stress is going to be very impactful for many people. She asked that the board makes sure that the bond addresses only urgent needs. She also asked that the board considers waiting a bit longer to present a bond to the community voters until we are potentially in a better position economically.

A community member expressed his concern over lack of labor and the importance of career and technical skills. He said that we need better spaces, better equipment and better schooling to prepare students for the work force.

11. Information from Board Members

12. Adjourn Meeting to go into Closed Session

CJ Costanti motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:04pm



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CJ Costanti, President

David VanderYacht, Superintendent