

BEAR VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR BOARD MEETING
HELD ON DECEMBER 9, 2020, VIA THE ZOOM WEBINAR
PLATFORM PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR NEWSOM'S EXECUTIVE
ORDER N-29-20 DATED MARCH 17, 2020

Present: Mrs. Cathy Herrick
Dr. Stephen Foulkes
Ms. Sudie Smart
Mr. Paul Zamoyta

Absent: Mr. John Goepf

Also Present: Dr. Mary Suzuki
Mrs. Linda Rosado
Dr. Lisa Waner
Ms. Lucinda Newton

President Herrick noted this meeting is being recorded.
President Herrick called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

President Herrick called for a motion to adopt the agenda for the meeting with the addendum for Item 11f. Motion by Mr. Zamoyta to adopt the agenda for the meeting. Second by Dr. Foulkes. Mrs. Herrick called for the vote. Said Motion was approved by the following roll call vote.

Adoption of
Agenda
M20-21-054

AYES: Foulkes, Herrick, Smartt, Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepf

Comments from B.V.E.A. President, Debi Burton. Ms. Burton expressed her appreciation of the huge task of keeping students and staff safe while trying to keep students engaged and parents sane. During a general membership meeting of B.V.E.A., which Ms. Burton felt went well, that all members were asked their opinion and that all were heard. There were varying points of view, it was largely against going back to school. After the meeting Ms. Burton stated she received several emails stating people did not get heard. She went out of her way to ask for opinions; but, some felt they would be bashed down for sharing their opinions in the meeting. Other emails stated the meeting was great and they felt heard. Ms. Burton stated people are very attached to their opinions and are not open to other opinions. There is high anxiety and divisiveness amongst the staff. Ms. Burton stated she was in a parent meeting where the parent commented that children need to be back in school but teachers are hiding behind their union. The opinions of people who feel very strongly are the opinions you will hear. Ms. Burton shared that she feels the communication she has with the District Office has been open and respected. Be prudent and know there is a big loss of learning that we will have to deal with next year. It is your job to weigh the loss of learning against the loss of health and safety. President Herrick asked for questions for Ms. Burton. There were none.

President Herrick expressed her appreciation for Ms. Burton's comments.

President Herrick called for Public Comment on Closed Session agenda items. Hearing no request to make Public Comment, President Herrick adjourned the meeting to a closed session.

Pursuant to Government Code 54957.6: Conference with Labor Negotiators: Ms. Linda Rosado, Executive Director Business Services/Classified Personnel and Dr. Lisa Waner, Executive Director 6-12 Curriculum, and Instruction/Certificated Personnel. Two Bargaining units: CSEA Chapter #415 and B.V.E.A.

Closed
Session

President Herrick called the meeting back to Open Session at 5:31 p.m.

Open
Session

All present participated in a Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Closed Session: No action taken.

Closed
Session

Mr. Ron Peavey and Mr. Phil Hamilton presented a report on the 2015 7/11 Committee Member Recommendations. Mr. Hamilton gave a brief summary of the establishment of the committee which was established in September of 2014. The job of the committee was advisory in nature. To review future use and redistricting of Big Bear Elementary School. Mr. Peavy discussed a classroom analysis which included permanent and portable classrooms. One of the plans at that time was to move 6th grade students to Big Bear Middle School which has now been Completed. Mr. Peavey stated that when you get a school population as small as Big Bear Elementary it is a clear option to move forward with redistricting. Mr. Hamilton agreed it is time for this move to be made. Mr. Zamoyta asked for an estimate of cost savings. Dr. Suzuki stated the cost savings would be approximately \$350,000.00 per year. After some discussion, Mr. Peavey and Mr. Hamilton gave their opinion that it is time to move forward with the 2015 7/11 committee recommendations.

Cmty/Staff

President Herrick opened the Hearing Section.

President Herrick read the parameters to make public comment.

Hearing
Section

Tina Wade states she currently has one child attending freshman classes in the district.

If her child had a choice she would be attending in person; but she does not have a choice.

Ms. Wade spoke to the negative effects emotionally and socially remote learning has had on her child, as well as the freshman year events and extracurricular activities her child is missing out on. She is worried for all children as this has gone on too long. Statistics tell us there is an increase in drug and alcohol use, crime, and suicide worldwide. Ms. Wade's daughter has spoken about moving out of state near her brother who is in school full time and wrestling for his senior year. This has been the best possible outcome for him. She is willing to move from a community that is near and dear to her as she has lived her entire life here. Her roots are in Big Bear but her heart is not. She wants to move to an entirely new place to feel the normalcy of school and life again. Ms. Wade states that our kids need to go back to school, every single one of them. Letting COVID control their life is not what is best for their mental health and physical wellbeing. Can we as a community do what is best and what is right for our

children instead of having a Governor make these decisions based on countywide statistics. Let's do what is best for our children utilizing all appropriate safety measures.

Melissa Grote thanked all of the teachers and staff who have worked tirelessly to continue to support and educate our children and to those who agree with everything I'm about to say. Mrs. Grote states she has two children in the District, a 5th grader and a 9th grader. Mrs. Grote expressed her concerns for her children and the events they are missing. She states that her children sit in front of a computer day in and day out. Their grades have fallen, they have lost motivation, they are falling behind and every time they see a light at the end of the tunnel, we pull the rug out from under them. Mrs. Grote states her 10-year-old has told her a few times that she feels depressed and her 14-year-old wants to go on Virtual Academy; because he is sick of Zoom school, he would rather get a job, work during the day, and do school on his own time. As a parent this is scary and heart breaking. Is anyone watching the increasing rate of suicide among children? I hope that you realize that this is a real fear among parents. Under the pretense of protecting our kids we are forcing them into depression over a virus that has a 99.997 percent survival rate for children. Mrs. Grote states that last year both of her kids were thriving, carrying A's and B's, testing for GATE and involved in many other activities. This year they are sitting at home fighting to bring up C's and D's. "Mrs. Grote asked, how can you stand behind distance learning when you see what is happening to our children. These kids not only want to be in school, they need to be in school. The benefit needs to out-weigh the risks." Mrs. Grote states that if this were about science, she would not be able to get on a plane full of passengers without social distancing, shop shoulder to shoulder at Vons, day care facilities would not be open and we wouldn't have a makeshift classroom at Camp Oaks. Mrs. Grote further stated that any teacher or staff member that is not willing to return to school with multiple protections in place are in the wrong profession for our current needs and life situation. There are many people in the workforce showing up daily doing their jobs according to the requirements of their position. This should be no different. Every school in this nation should be given just as much importance as a hospital. Schools provide our children with consistency, mental health, wellbeing, and education. We must shift the mindset. Every teacher and every school is essential. Mrs. Grote states she has spoken with many parents that feel exactly the same way. Parents are tired, concerned and they are done. We are ready to fight for our kids and we want to send a strong message. Our kids' education and mental health matter.

Mr. Jack Roberts thanked Ms. Wade and Mrs. Grote for their comments. He stated he thinks what they are saying is important. Mr. Roberts speaks with a lot of parents and has not had one parent tell him that they are so glad their kids are doing distance learning. His four kids are on distance learning and it is not working out that great. Mr. Roberts addressed the repurposing of Big Bear Elementary. Mr. Roberts states he thinks it is fiscally responsible to look at repurposing the facility and maybe finding a way that it can be a revenue stream as Mr. Peavy mentioned, not selling but leasing. Mr. Roberts stated he looks forward to being on the Board and discussing this further with his peers. Mr. Roberts thanked Ms. Wade and Mrs. Grote again for relaying the sentiments of every parent he has spoken to in the last several months and more recently as new data comes out. As many know, an Assemblyman from San Francisco has introduced a bill that would require kids return to school by March 1st. There is hope out there that it

President Herrick read the following statement from John Bidwell:

Like many other parents, I am concerned with your decision to close the school down until after the holidays. I don't necessarily think this decision is that big a deal on its own, however I do feel it shows how easy you are willing to do it. I am worried you're going to continue to make this choice for the next 6 months or more. You are permitted to work under the state guidelines, and you have shown the state that you can open the doors safely. Newsom told all of us that the schools open, can stay open. This is why the majority of parents are upset and confused. I think the town is getting information that could be partially true or false, but it's what is floating around out there.

I looked over your contracts both with the California Teachers Association(CTA) and with the branch of the Bear Valley Education Association(BVEA). According to the CTA, you as a district hold the authority to maintain employment and operations, as long as it falls within the standards, guidelines, and the law. According to the local (BVEA), there are requirements that must be met with their sick leave and workdays. Members of the local get 10 days a year of sick leave and may be granted leave under other scenarios, things like family sick leave. If there is no leave time left, then they must do leave without pay. During this time, there is rumor teachers are stating they can't work. Could be fear, could be sick or could be any other reason. However, if the teacher or other staff is not "fit for duty," then they should be using their sick time. The district should not close doors because there are staff members not willing to work. Staff members can't claim sick, while at the same time, work from behind a screen. Employees don't dictate district operations. The state pays up to 80 hours of leave for the COVID-19 Virus. If this was already used, then the sick leave must be used and a substitute placed.

The district knows of the issues the kids are having by not being in school, but I want to point them out again on a local level. Things I personally see up here in Big Bear. There are a lot of children that do things that we probably don't condone. Premature sexual acts, drugs, and alcohol. There are a lot of kids smoking and vaping even when school was in session. I work near the park up in Sugarloaf, and I see this type of activity happening on a day-to-day bases. Except where it used to be sparse and after school for a couple hours, it's happening from morning till night now. I used to see one kid vaping at the park, now I see 5 or more. I see multiple groups of kids kissing, smoking and disappearing in the forest all day now. I work in the field of seeing where some of these kids live. The cases of local suicide attempts have gone up. Drug and alcohol abuse has gone up. Child abuse has gone up. We have had more runaways up here than ever before. The district used to protect the children from home issues. The district slows down all the things stated above on a daily basis. Teachers and staff are the soldiers in these efforts and should have pride and ownership in doing so. This virus is not proven to be spreadable through asymptomatic children and is only being proven to be dangerous for the very sick and elderly people. You are giving the choice for a hybrid program, in which these protected class can stay home if they desire. But now were seeing the district listening to the few while going against the majority and science. I would personally volunteer to help you in your efforts if needed. I hope the district opens the doors after this 3-week break as permitted by the Governor and doesn't sway for personal beliefs by employees or other citizens. The district (Teachers, Staff members) holds ultimate responsibility for the children. Time to follow the science and not personal feelings.

Thanks for listening - With love - Jon Bidwell

President Herrick read the following statement from Erin Wilson:

As a parent of two students in the BVUSD I have seen first-hand how distance learning has affected my children. My husband and I provide a good home life for our kids but we both have full time jobs and are not able to assist them as they need. Despite the teacher's heroic efforts, distance learning is affecting the kids social, emotional, psychological and education needs. This learning model leaves behind the most vulnerable children in our district. Most are home by themselves, having to take care of not only themselves but other siblings, all while trying to learn from home. As you know, we have children in our district that live in

poverty and whose parents suffer from drug addiction or mental health issues. It is not acceptable that we are leaving these kids behind!

With suicide rates rising in younger children, are we doing all we can to return these kids to where they should be – school? Have we applied for waivers? Schools that received waivers are able to stay open with the newest order, why are we not fighting to keep them in school? Why not give the option for those who would like kids in school and those who do not?

I understand the concern of safety for teachers and students during COVID, but it seems the District could be creative to set up safe practices for educational and social purposes.

As you know these kids are our future, we need to do everything possible to fight for their right to be socialized and educated!

Thank you, Erin Wilson

President Herrick called for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion by Dr. Foulkes to approve the Consent Calendar as follows:

Consent
Calendar
M20-21-055

- Employ Clerk Typist - Attendance – Big Bear Middle School (Tamara Webb)
- Employ Special Education Clerk Typist – District Office (Sean Jenkin)
- Employ Classified Substitutes (Kelly Flanders-Fisher, Joshua Olsen)
- 2020-2021 Hourly Rates for Classified/Confidential Substitutes and Noon Duty Aides
- Big Bear High School Girls’ Varsity Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 School Year (Jeremy Little)
- First Read and Adoption of the 2020-2021 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)
- Second Reading and Adoption of BP/AR 5131.2 – Bullying
- Second Reading and adoption of the 2020-2021 North Shore Elementary Comprehensive School Site Safety Plan
- Obsolete Equipment
- Special Education Service Fee with Redlands Unified School District
- Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Annual Renewal of Services for Super Co-Op between San Mateo-Foster City School District and Bear Valley Unified School District Child Nutrition Services
- Purchase Order Report – FY 2020-2021 Purchase Orders Numbers 210453-210522
- Governing Board Meeting Minutes (November 18, 2020)

Second by Mr. Zamoyta. President Herrick called for the vote. Said motion was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Foulkes/Herrick/Smartt/Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepf

No items were removed from the Consent Calendar.

Dr. Suzuki introduced the employees approved under the Consent Calendar.

Dr. Suzuki expressed her gratitude for all those who shared their thoughts and concerns with the Board. Dr. Suzuki went on to say she believes everyone here shares the same concerns with you, we want our children back in school. We were one of the first districts in San Bernardino County to get the waiver so that we could start to bring our students back. There were several challenges this past week which impacted our decision to close for two weeks. One was staffing our schools and the other one was the number of ICU beds in our region. A number of our staff

Information
Section

were directly impacted by the rise in COVID cases in our community and with a quarantine period of two weeks that was required, many of our staff members were off due to exposure through direct contacts other than at our schools. At one point we were concerned if we lost one more bus driver, we would not be able to transport our students to school. Although we realize the extreme importance of having our students in school, we have to have the staff to serve. If anyone in our community would like to apply as either a certificated or classified substitute employee, please contact the District Office. We really do need substitutes in these difficult times in order to keep our schools open as the cases continue to rise. At this time, our plan is to have our TK, kindergarten, first, second and third grade students return to the classroom in the hybrid model right after winter break. On January 25th we plan to have our fourth and fifth grade students on the hybrid model. In order to bring back our middle and high school students we are still required by the County to be in the red tier. There is current legislation that may make this move more quickly but we do not believe that this will pass before March 1st. Our middle and high school principals have created their master schedules with the hope that the County's numbers will improve and we are allowed to safely serve our students in the classroom before the end of this school year. Dr. Suzuki acknowledged the pain and suffering this pandemic has caused our students and our families. We will continue to work diligently to safely bring our students back to their classrooms. We do feel what you are going through and we hear you.

President Herrick expressed that she is deeply disheartened to hear that our students and our families are struggling. For many, particularly in the higher grades, it is a terrible time to be a student or the parent of a student. We know that our Superintendent, district staff, and the Board have been faced with many difficult decisions this year based around COVID. For almost 30 years I have been an active member of our community, particularly in our schools. Parents and grandparents of our students have shared their student's anxiety, failing grades, lack of interest in school and overall depression surrounding the circumstances with distance learning. President Herrick stated that in her opinion teachers and staff are working harder than they ever have. As this continues she is concerned about everyone's mental health being adversely affected. As one Board Member, we hear you. We want to do everything we can to get our students back in the classroom as soon as it is safe to do so. President Herrick went on to say that as a community she hopes we can come together and support one another through this crisis.

Board
Member
Reports

Mr. Zamoyta followed up stating that from a functional standpoint he wondered if it would get the point where we don't have enough substitute teachers. When you have a certain number of teachers out sick and there are not enough substitutes to fill their roles, you can't open the doors to the school. It's not a decision of the Board, it is due to the virus. Mr. Zamoyta expressed that one of the things we can do for our schools is follow protocol and do what we can to slow down the spread of the virus so that our students aren't impacted by cases that are coming from outside of the school district. We only have TK through third grade open and we are being impacted. If we had all grades open there would be an exaggerated shortage of teachers to fill those classrooms and open the doors. This hasn't been easy for anyone particularly parents and students. Mr. Zamoyta states that he hopes we are in a different position when we come back in

January. All of us want the schools to be open and the kids to be there. The first thing we need is staff back in the classroom to support our students.

Mr. Foulkes commented that it is not only the people who are sick, it's the people who are exposed and have to quarantine. It makes it much more difficult when things get out of hand in our community. We have so many more people being quarantined and can't come to work. Mr. Foulkes addressed the comments that were made about bringing students back to school but comply with all the public health guidelines. That means we have to do those quarantines. We are very close to not having enough staff. Mr. Foulkes also spoke to the issue of liability and that Congress doesn't seem to recognize the liability, if we make a missed step, it is significant. Mr. Foulkes stated that he previewed the new Science Curriculum. He said that it was a great display and he was impressed by it.

Ms. Smartt agreed with Mr. Foulkes that she was impressed with the Science Curriculum as well, and thought it was exceptional. Ms. Smartt expressed her concern with regards to the pandemic.

Dr. Lisa Waner, Executive Director of 6-12 Curriculum and Instruction/Certificated Personnel provided an update on Hybrid Training for substitute teachers. Dr. Waner expressed the need for substitute teachers. She stated that at the beginning of the year our substitute teachers were called, about a third of them were willing to work, that number is dwindling. At the beginning of the school year, we offered a Google Classroom training and another on Zoom. Dr. Waner stated that she attended a training at Baldwin Lane Elementary with substitutes showing them what being in the classroom looks like. Some of our teachers are offering substitutes the opportunity to come in and have hands on training. We are making every attempt to support our subs. We are planning on offering the training again for those who did not attend.

Cabinet
Report

President Herrick called for a motion to adopt the resolution associated with the application to secure funding. Motion by Mr. Zamoyta to adopt the resolution. Second by Dr. Foulkes. President Herrick called for the roll call vote. Said Motion was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Foulkes, Herrick, Smartt, Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepp

Business
Financial
Report
#20-21-005
M20-21-056

After in depth discussion, President Herrick called for a motion to approve the contract between Bear Valley Unified School District and Miller Architectural Corporation in the amount of \$120,000.00. Motion by Dr. Foulkes to approve said contract. Second by Mr. Zamoyta. President Herrick called for the roll call vote. Said Motion was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Foulkes, Herrick, Smartt, Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepp

M20-21-057

President Herrick called for a motion to adopt the Budget Overview for Parents presented

M20-21-058

last Monday. Motion by Dr. Foulkes to adopt said document. Second by Mr. Zamoyta.
President Herrick called for the roll call vote. Said Motion was approved by the following
roll call vote:

AYES: Foulkes, Herrick, Smartt, Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepp

President Herrick called for a motion to adopt the First Interim Financial Report presented
last Monday. Motion by Mr. Zamoyta to adopt said document. Second by Ms. Smartt.
President Herrick called for the roll call vote. Said Motion was approved by the following
roll call vote:

M20-21-059

AYES: Foulkes, Herrick, Smartt, Zamoyta
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Goepp

Suggestion for January 13, 2021 Board Meeting: Proposals for demographic study.

Next meeting: Friday, December 11, 2021 at 9:00 a.m., Board Workshop – Organizational Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Secretary

President of the Governing Board