

SWEET HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 55

Sweet Home, Oregon

Board Chairman Jason Redick called the **regular meeting** of the board of Directors of Sweet Home School District No. 55 to order at 6:30 p.m. on August 9, 2021.

Board Members in Attendance

Debra Brown, Jason Redick, Mike Reynolds, Janice Albert (Zoom) Sara Hoffman, 9:35- Jim Gourley: Absent: Jason Van Eck

Superintendent: Tom Yahraes; Administrators: Kevin Strong, Colleen Henry, Barbi Riggs, Thad Holub, Ralph Brown, Nate Tyler, Aaron Huff, Steve Martin, Luke Augsburg, Debbie Phillips, Josh Dargis, Todd Barrett Certified: Steve Thorpe Classified: none Board Recording Secretary: Julie Emmert

Other Attendance: Benny, New Era, Community members concerned with the mask mandate, applicants for board positions; Jenna Norther-Becker, Shari Melcher, Dale Keene, Mary Massey, Kevin Hill

2. Appointed New Board Member - Position # 3 and Position #6 - Crawfordsville

Chairman Redick introduced candidates Shari Melcher, Mary Massy, Kevin Hill, Dale Keene and Jenna Northern/Becker and explained the process that the board would be using to appoint the new board member. The board officers selected four questions Board members asked follow up or clarifying questions:

Board members ask questions:

- 1) *Tell us a little about yourself and why you are interested in filling the open school board seat.*
- 2) *What particular strengths will you bring to this school board?*
- 3) *What do you believe are the greatest challenges currently facing this school district?*
- 4) *What is your vision of an outstanding school district?*

#6 Crawfordsville -1st Jenna Norther-Becker, 2nd Dale Keene

#3 Foster – 1st - Shari Melcher, 2nd Mary Massey, 3rd Kevin Hill

There was not a quorum vote for either candidates so we could not move forward with either position.

After votes Mary Massey withdrew her name for #3 Foster

3. Agenda Approval/Changes

Chairman Redick called for changes and/or approval of the agenda.

Motion No. 21-33: Board Member Mike Reynolds moved to approve the agenda as with the change in date on the next board meeting September 13, 2021. Board Member Debra Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

4. Public Comments:

- Letters were giving to board members from Jenna Wolthuis, Robyn Lindsey, Sarah Wiedeman, Theo White
- Community members supporting the mask mandates.
 - Theo White
 - Char Blankenship
 - Wanda Grajeda
 - Jamie Cobat
 - Vanessa Beckler
 - Manuel Grajeda
 - Caireen Lounsburgs
 - Terry Mahler
 - Ryan Meauchaun
 - Renice Lizama
 - Micaylah Meston
 - Dan Lusardi
 - Tim Hart
 - Krista Hart
 - Valerie Groff
 - Vince Adams
 - Robert Egner
 - John Mazakey
 - Peg Pitts
 - Becky Huenergardt
 - Jared Claunch
 - Erika Masey
 - Shannon Towery
 - Steven Hayeston
 - Andrew McQueston
 - Jason (Jake) from Cottage Grove
 - Allen Temple
 - Shawn Adams

** All comments were recorded and can be found on our website

5. Student & Personnel Reports/Comments

A. Certified & Classified Representatives: Steve Thorpe – Newly elected certified union president. Thanked the board for their service, expressed that the district does say the pledge every day in the schools. He supports the boards resolution stating that the district make the local decision. However, the teachers in this district will continue to follow the mask rules if that is what happens. The district and teachers must follow mandate or lose their license, TSPC, ODE – the district will pay fines, teachers will lose their licenses. We are one team here in Sweet Home. Excited for students to return and students are excited to be back. One town one school one community. Teachers are going to teach!

B. Superintendent's Report:

In-service agenda was handed out:

- Aug 17 and 18 we have Administrator training and beginning of the year preparation meetings. We will be revisiting all of our systems that have made us successful in following our strategic plan

- These various training, are following by training for all staff: PBIIS, RTI, PLCs, review of the strategic plan: One to one device initiative, LMS, professional teaching stations, Review of Safety plans, used of PD Wednesday: Mandatory training such as abuse reporting, bloodborne pathogens
- Followed by a big district welcome back and building and staff preparation time. Planning on a big shindig on the football field. Have some team building competitions, breakfast, Address from the Superintendent, Department heads/ principals will introduce new staff, and a big speech from the board chair or his designee.

ODE Health and Safety Updates –

- Last regular board meeting Superintendent Yahraes reported to the board the Governor's June 25 Recovery Order, which gave local health and safety decision-making to local communities. Safety plans are required and must be submitted to the state.
- He explained on how he reviewed local and state health authority recommendations, consulted with our District nurse, consulted with our union leadership, directors, principals, consulted with districts with similar demographics. (all of this is what ODE asks you to do). On July 13, I made a summer school and 2021-22 safety plan. (it's in the resolution) In this safety plan masks are not required, they are welcomed. The local data was/is such that we allow staff and families to make these additional health precautions.
- On July 29, the Governor directed the ODE and OHA to issue mask mandates and guidance for schools.
- August 3, the new ODE guidance came out. There are 43 slides. All this information is public on the ODE website. I have forwarded this information to all principals, department heads, and board members.
- Review Slides
 - Slide 14 under penalties:
 - Consultation from Jim Green OSBA top attorney. \$500 per day per violation. Could be \$500 per student. Licensed educators who fail to obey this rule may face additional penalties. Could pull all funding of the schools and take over the board and all decisions.
 - Re- affirmed all licensures of teachers and administrators are at risk for violating the law.
 - Individual liability is at stake. If their personal injury up to the death of staff and/or student Board members if contact tracing can be traced to the point of contact of schools, an ambitious attorney would take up the case.
 - PACE limited liability insurance will not support not following the law.
 - OHSA, OEA, State union groups would legal actions
 - Our attorney spoke to Yahraes and Board Officers about the Oregon education system chain of command. The Governor has the power of the purse. If the Governor wanted to she has the power to withdraw funding installments to districts, of which we pay the bills to teach our kids.
 - The governor could also in effect fire the school board, and take over local control.

- If Boards and superintendents did not follow the law, we would be in effect asking/influencing or even directing kids and staff to break the lawful order.

So what can boards and superintendents do? Advocate, Petition, and Object—Outright defiance—faces all the above:

Local decision making: Means a safety committee reviews success at summer school, our safety plan; and continues to:

- analyze local data county, zip codes, schools, any cases or outbreak trends and monitor and make enhanced safety adjustments --and those could include the operational decision to don the masks.
- The localized decision would be based on data and not emotions or what is happening in say Portland or Pendleton Oregon, or for that matter Florida. Do we need to know what is happening statewide and national and learn from trends? Absolutely.

MAKE THIS CLEAR: We have to follow this mandate. This is coming from Kate Brown not the school district. ODE backs her and right now we have no way to prevent this. They can shut down our district, take away teacher and admin licenses. People, community need to go to Salem with their concerns and passions.

Board Resolution to Petition to the Governor to Rescind the Mask Mandate and Return to Local control. This does not override the Governor. It objects, which Board's free to do. It was reviewed by our attorney.

Objecting and advocating

- For many of the good reasons that were given in public comment, and in emails, conversations with staff parents and community members, when to don the masks, when to give choices is important to us. We want that ability to choose.
- Here's what Superintendent Yahraes has done:
 - I advocated for Sweet Home at a meeting with all the superintendents in the state, COSA, and OSBA leadership,
 - Wrote a letter to the Governor and the State Deputy Superintendent
 - Networked and shared my letter, drafts of the resolution with our county commissioners, Regional superintendent COSA leadership, and some of my District connections in Central Oregon.

2. Summer School Updates from all principals – showed a presentation from each school admin that showed what is happening during summer school.

6. Consent Agenda

- A. Approved minutes from the July 19, 2021 School Board Meeting
- B. Approved hire of Daphnie Collins, TOSA Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Teacher for the District beginning August 30, 2021
- C. Approved hire of Julie Harvey, .6 Counselor at Hawthorne Elementary beginning August 30, 2021
- D. Approved hire of Elizabeth Mann, 5th Grade Teacher at Hawthorne Elementary beginning August 30, 2021

- E. Approved hire of Jarid Adams, TOSA Teacher Engagement Specialist at the Sweet Home High School beginning August 30, 2021
- F. Approved hire of Ashley Wardrop, PE Teacher at Hawthorne Elementary beginning August 30, 2021
- G. Approved hire of Hannah Mather, TOSA Counselor at Foster Elementary beginning August 30, 2021
- H. Approved hire of Tiffany Irwin, TOSA Counselor at the Sweet Home Jr. High School beginning August 30, 2021
- I. Approved hire of William Coltrin, Temp CTE Construction Tech Teacher at the Sweet Home High School beginning August 30, 2021

Motion No. 21-34: Board Member Mike Reynolds, moved to approve the revised consent agenda as presented. Board Member Debra Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Information/Discussion

- A. Budget Update and ESSER Spending:
- B. Facility Report:

8. Action Items:

- A. RESOLUTION #01-2122 – End the Mask Mandate

Motion No. 21-35: Board Member Mike Reynolds, moved to approve Resolution #01-2122 – Ending the Mask Mandate. Board Member Debra Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Jim Gourley abstained from vote due to the fact he was not in the meeting during the public comments.

9. Board Comments: Thank Superintendent Tom Yahraes for his years of service to the Sweet Home School District

10. Late Items – No late items

11. Future Agenda Items

- A. Special public meeting/Executive Session, August 10, 2021 – Hold Finalists forum, 5:30pm
- B. Special Public Meeting, August 16, 2021 – Vote to hire candidate for Superintendent, 6:30 pm
- C. New Teacher Luncheon, August 25, 2021 – 11:30 a.m. at the HS Library
- D. District In-service, August 30, 2021 – 7:30 a.m. at the Husky Field
- E. Next Board Officers Meeting September 7, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. Superintendent’s Office
- F. Next Board Meeting September 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in DO Board Room

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Signature, Board Chairman Julie Emmert, Board Recording Secretary
(This meeting was also recorded and saved supt/board/audio)