

**NORTH CONEJOS SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J**  
**REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
JANUARY 20, 2015  
District Administration Building  
6:30 p.m.

**MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at the District Administration Office was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Mark Bahr, President.

**ROLL CALL**

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, absent (in 6:43 pm); Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

**PREDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

A motion was made by Steve Sorensen to approve the agenda by moving item 9d in the department reports to 9a and moving 12b in the action items to executive session, seconded by Joseph Baroz Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, absent; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.  
The motion passed.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

Hadyn Huffaker would like to put in a flag pole between the baseball and football fields for his Eagle Scout Project. He will be donating the equipment and labor and needs help purchasing the flagpole and flag. He will be doing fundraisers for these items, but would appreciate any help he can get from the district and board. He would like to complete his project during spring break of this year. The board asked Hadyn to get some proposals to the board to see if they can help in his project. The school needs the flagpole but the board would like more detail on the project when Hadyn is closer to initiating the project (to Mr. Wilson).

Brian Shawcroft would like to install some privacy slats between the North Conejos Alternative School building and La Jara Elementary for his Eagle Scout Project. He will use the existing fence, but asks for \$1700.00 to complete his project. Brian asked the board for financial support for this project, if any funds are possible. He would like to initiate his project during the spring break as well.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Chuck Finnegan to approve the minutes for the regular board meeting held on December 9, 2014, seconded by Steve Sorensen. (**attachment #1**)

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

#### APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion was made by Joseph Baroz to approve the bills for the month of November 2014 totaling \$90,254.42, seconded by Steve Sorensen. (**attachment #2**)

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

A motion was made by Joseph Baroz to approve the bills for the month of December 2014 totaling \$142,256.94, seconded by Steve Sorensen. (**attachment #3**)

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

#### FALCON AWARD

The falcon award was presented to Gloria Valdez, CMS counselor. Mr. Wilson is very appreciative of Gloria's efforts with the McKinney Vento program. She is the district liaison for the program and has been very active seeing to the children's needs. Gloria is very smart and kind and has performed in many extra duties for the district. Julie Gomez- Nuanes was also given the Falcon Award by Mr. Wilson. Julie has given many years of service to NCSd. She has sat on many boards in the valley in behalf of kids. Conejos County is currently number one in the state of Colorado in drug abuse among kids; Julie currently sits on a board that deals with helping kids make good choices and empowering them to say NO to drugs, and has been instrumental in bringing assemblies to schools to educate kids, and generally be involved in good causes.

#### DEPARTMENT REPORTS/ACTIVITIES

##### **Best Grant Presentation:**

Jim Murray, who is a CHSQA architect in Denver, met with Mr. Wilson and walked through buildings in the district. Mr. Murray is a Best Grant ghost writer who is helping NCSd write a grant for security systems in the district. Last year the best grants were very competitive and matching funds were very

small. This year there are more funds available. Mr. Murray found many inconsistencies in the buildings in the district concerning building security. He is happy to work with the NCSD and Mr. Wilson to try and get a best grant for us. Matching funds for our district according to CDE is 45%. Jim feels that our district has a good chance in getting the grant. He asked for board support to move forward with this process. The first thing on the list is to submit the grant which is due at 4:00pm on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Once the grant is submitted, the committee will tour the site. We should know by the end of May if we receive the grant. Applying for a Best Grant is quite a process and Jim Murray is experienced and will be a great asset to our district applying for and hopefully getting a best grant for security systems in the NCSD.

**Achievement Reports: (attachment #4)**

See attached Principal reports.

**BOCES Report:**

Mark Bahr reported that BOCES will meet on January 21, 2015.

**NCEA Report:**

There was no report from NCEA. Mr. Wilson reported that he will meet with NCEA representatives on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30am in his office.

**Administration Report: (attachments #5 - #9)**

Mr. Wilson was contacted by two members of the first graduating class of Centauri High School and was notified that this year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CHS building in La Jara. That first graduating class would like to do something to commemorate this event. Curt would like to honor those graduates, and possibly all graduates of CHS, at this year's graduation ceremony for the class of 2015.

There is a new bill being proposed that would eliminate a requirement that at least 50 percent of an educator's performance evaluation be tied to student academic growth. Each district decides how to measure that growth currently, but the bill will need approval from the legislature and governor. The bill is one of many initiatives by various groups to alleviate the complexity and time that districts must take time away from instruction to handle. **(attachment #5)**

The state board of education passed a motion on a 4-3 vote to direct the commissioner to grant waivers to districts that request not to administer the performance-based portion of the upcoming PARCC tests in English/Language Arts and Math. Curt brought out that there are many TBA items on this initiative and our district is going to do what is legal currently, until more is decided by CDE and will not engage in opting out of any assessment. He said we will embrace the tests that come and not venture into areas not yet proven legal or ethical. **(attachment #6)**

There are questions as to whether the state board has the authority to grant testing waivers at this time, and state legal counsel is addressing the issue. As a district NCSd is going to stay organized and legal as the district has prepared for all assessments due to the upgrades in technology and by participating in all sample testing for the last two years. **(attachment #7)**

Arne Duncan to call for No Child Left Behind re-vamp **(attachment #8)**

Curt shared with the NCSd BOE the Colorado Department of Education 2014 fall pupil membership (by district) report, for the entire state of Colorado. We, as a district, are losing students as are most other rural schools in Colorado. Our district enrollment last year was 1001 students. This year our student enrollment is 964. Our projected student enrollment next year will be close to 930 students after Mr. Wilson has researched the up-coming student count at Little Treasures Pre-School, and by looking at census numbers. The economy in rural areas is drastically hurting student enrollment, which is tied to school funding, while there is a swelling of students in and around the metropolitan area. **(attachment #9)**

Mr. Wilson shared that the effects of a 4-day week had very little advantage in saving money for school districts according to the latest actual research on the subject. There were savings in that classified staff didn't put in the number of hours in a 4-day week versus a 5 day week. Many schools that are struggling are now returning to a 5 day week as the research specifically noted that this was a consequence if student achievement turned for the worse. NCSd needs to take a good look at our calendar for next year and schedule to the best interest of our students, and a subsequent calendar committee will be formed in an attempt to work as a single body.

La Jara Elementary has a dilemma in that the scheduled NAP test conflicts with state wrestling this year. Mr. Ricky Salazar asked for input from the board as to whether we will be in attendance in school that day or students will be released for state wrestling. It was a consensus that Mr. Salazar change the dates of the testing now in the case that the decision was made to release for state wrestling. Mr. Wilson recommended we build days into our calendar each year to easily accommodate circumstances that may arise, specifically for snow days and high school activities that traditionally cause school to be cancelled.

We are third on the list for a CASB policy review and expect that to come out sometime in February. After CASB reviews what has been placed online, they will present all the policies that need adoption and those mandated by law. Then, district staff will make a thorough and complete electronic copy of all policies and will submit them online for public access.

Mr. Wilson met with Judge Amanda Pearson concerning truancy and described the process to address students with high absences. The district has to have a policy and an intervention process in place before she (Judge Pearson) will intercede and help with truant students. Curt asked Monte Vista School District for a copy of their plan, as it has shown to be effective in their district. Mr. Wilson will be attending the court process to see how things proceed the first Friday in February to see what indeed happens when the process has been completed, and will report on the outcome.

Although there is a law mandating student participation in state assessments, much has changed due to district, student and parent protests and now the entire state is in an ambiguous position. NCS students have complied, willingly. Many more discussions will ensue that speak to the mandated assessment frequency.

Administration and staff feel like our last staff development was very effective and successful. Brad Huffaker trained all staff on proctoring the state tests, Curt Wilson presented teaching techniques, and Jesse Shawcroft and Brian Loch presented on engagement vs. compliance. A few staff attended the SLVRTTT in Center as well.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### **Building Use Agreement (attachment #10):**

The board decided they would like to further read the agreement currently in place and address the issue in February.

### **Early Retirement:**

The early retirement bonus is for certified staff and is based on a scale connected to years in the district. This policy has not been administered properly in the past as Mr. Wilson noted that mistakes have been made that cannot be corrected, but needs to be followed as written from this point in time forward. The rationale was that because incorrect actions happened, it is not right to continue to operate incorrectly and call it "fairness". Thus, policy will be followed with equity.

### **Budget:**

The school district is at 49% of their budget at this point in the year. SRS funds have not been approved as of yet and Curt is hopeful that they will be released in the very near future (\$181,000). If those funds are not allotted to NCS this year, we could have difficulty with our projected budget and be far from having anything close to our budget projections.

### **Arming Personnel With-in the District:**

Curt asked for board in-put concerning arming school district personnel. The district would follow law/procedure with strict parameters and much training. Many of the big districts have SRO (paid law officers within the school), but many small districts cannot fit this into their budgets. The board suggested that the community be polled and that we get feedback from other school districts. They would like more information on this before making any recommendation.

**3-5 year Student enrollment Projection:**

Our district student projection was previously discussed in the administration report.

**June Board Meeting Change:**

Mr. Wilson asked that we change the board meeting in June from the 16th to the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The board agreed to change the board meeting in June to the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**North Property Purchase:**

The property north of Centauri Middle School is for sale, currently owned by the LDS Church, and the seller is giving the school district the first opportunity to purchase the property (4.9 acres). The board would like to know the cost of the property and will make a decision on the property purchase once more details are obtained.

**ACTION ITEMS:****Consent Agenda Adoption:**

A motion was made by Natalie Rogers to approve the adoption of a consent agenda for the NCSB board meetings, seconded by Robert Chavez.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

**Superintendent Evaluation:**

Moved to executive session

**140/110 Retirement (double dipping):**

No action taken. According to PERA an employee must make a total disconnect from the district when retiring. Staff can come back as a new employee the following year, but they must apply for the position. Mr. Wilson was asked by the board to write up the procedure to present to the board next meeting.

**Sound System:**

A motion was made by Steve Sorensen to approve the new sound system installation for the CMS/District gym as presented, seconded by Joseph Baroz.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

Joseph Baroz feels we can get donations for at least 1/3 of the cost of the system. We need to do an organized drive for donations for the sound system such as a pledge card/send check to the District office letter. The board suggested we get Jesse Shawcroft to help with the organization. Joseph will be heading the effort to get donations for the sound system installation.

**Maternity Leave Approval (attachment #11):**

A motion was made by Joseph Baroz to approve the requested maternity leave as presented, seconded by Chuck Finnegan.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

**Substitute Approvals (attachment #12):**

A motion was made by Robert Chavez to approve the substitutes as presented, seconded by Mark Bahr.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

**Coach Approvals (attachment #13):**

A motion was made by Steve Sorensen to approve the coaches as presented, seconded by Joseph Baroz.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Natalie Rogers to go into executive session, per CRS section 24-6-402 4 Sub 4R, to discuss privileged information and personnel issues, Curt Wilson was asked to attend, seconded by Chuck Finnegan.

Mark Bahr, aye; Joseph Baroz, aye; Robert Chavez, aye; Chuck Finnegan, aye; Natalie Rogers, aye; Steve Sorensen, aye.

The motion passed.

The board met for 47 minutes in executive session; 3 minutes on topic one, 1 minute on topic two, 5 minutes on topic three, and 38 minutes on topic four.

NEXT REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 17, 2015 AT 6:30 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT