

Board Meeting Agenda

Meeting Minutes

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82897483311>

5/12/2021 06:00 PM

1. Call to Order

The Elma School District #68 Board of Directors met in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, May 12, 2021 via Zoom Meetings. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairperson Bernadette Bower at 6:02pm.

2. Flag Salute

Board Chairperson Bower led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jamie Bailey, Bernadette Bower, Ryan Cristelli, Stephanie Smith, and Jody Thompson.

STAFF PRESENT: Stacey Rockey, Mark Keating, Jeff Monroe, Kevin Acuff, Jessica Burgher, Deanne Woita, Erin Walker, Raquel Cruz, Melinda Tuttle, Kari Eaton, Rich Rasanen, Kim Weld, Shawnie Rakevich, Laura Nelson, Katie Vetter, Bobbi Smith, Carrie Vessey, Cris Cisneros, Jenny Monroe, Ruby Hartford, Kim Hinderlie, Liz Farrar, Alyssa Sutherby, Stacey Trimble, Julie Crawford, Wendy Beldin, Jane Allaire, Sunshine Perry, Lisa McGrath, Kim Bouchard, Laura Arnold, Brittney Norris, Connie Hogue, Tyler Renz, David Howard, Lisa Arnold, Jenny Baxter, Karina Brown, Crystal Fielding-Gagne, Mary Roberts, Denise Boling, Kelly Rasanen, Emily Bucy, Christopher Nesmith (incoming superintendent), Rachelle Ridout, Susie Koski, Barb Snyder, Suzanne Thietje, Debbie Woodruff, Dawn Hogue, Kerry Muprhy, Emily Severs, Alicia Smith, Marilynn Curl, and Kendis Goldsmith.

GUESTS: Talonna Hanft, Lacey McMeekin, Christi Murray, Jeff Lambert, and another unnamed community member.

4. Consent Agenda

a. Letters

i. Donna Hattel - Retirement Letter

The following letter was read by Superintendent Kevin Acuff:

This letter is to inform you that I will be retiring effective August 31, 2021.

I am grateful for having the opportunity to work for the Elma School District. It is a job that I have enjoyed coming to every day. I am looking forward to the next chapter in my life. I will miss being part of a wonderful team.

If I can be of any assistance before or after I retire, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Donna Hattel

ii. Beverly Koontz - Retirement Letter

The following letter was read by Board Chairperson Bernadette Bower:

I do not intend to return for the 2021-2022 school year. I plan to retire as of September first, so my last day would be August 31, 2021. It has been an awesome and growing experience for me these last 15+ years.

b. Business

c. Personnel

i. Hires

*Taaffe Whipple - Transportation Dispatch Secretary

ii. Retirements

Donna Hattel - Preschool Paraeducator
Beverly Koontz - HS Paraeducator

iii. Leave Requests

iv. Resignations

Shannon Easton - MS Librarian

Superintendent Acuff read the following letter:

Dear Elma School Board,

I respectfully submit my intent to resign from my position as Library Technician with the Elma School District effective September 1, 2021.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve with my fellow staff members over the past 26 years and I value and appreciate their commitment and service to the students and community.

Thank you for the opportunity to do what I enjoy for what has been a wonderful career for my family and me.

Sincerely,

Shannon Easton

d. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes for April 28, 2021

e. Approval of Vouchers

i. GF Vouchers: #159611 - #159636 Totaling: \$104,496.36

ii. GF Voucher: #159637 Totaling: \$473.01

iii. ASB Vouchers: #159639 - #159640 Totaling: \$760.20

iv. PPT Voucher: #159638 Totaling \$86.65

v. ASB Voucher: #159641 Totaling \$54.51

Motion made by Jamie Bailey, second by Stephanie Smith to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

5. Communications and Comments

a. ETO

b. EESP

c. ECOPA

d. Admin

e. Persons to be Heard

f. Good News

Superintendent Acuff reported that the boys' basketball team pulled out a thriller of a game with a 51-50 win on Monday night.

6. Reports

a. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Acuff reported on a couple of facility issues, starting with the stadium lights at Davis Field. For several years, there have been issues with them turning out on their own when they get too hot. The fix is not cheap and it does not make sense to put \$50,000 into that system. Facilities supervisor Jeff Monroe said that there are problems with the lights and the poles are also getting aged. He had a company come out and look at project costs and rebates. Musco Lighting gave us a proposal and would like to not share the numbers incase there is a bid situation. The job can be done with 4 poles and LED lights and it would be a considerable upgrade; using less power, shine on the field only, and be controlled by a cell phone. This would let us continue to play games at night. He recommends doing this sooner than later. It could be completed over the summer and be ready for fall sports. He is working on getting the pricing together. Mr. Acuff wanted this introduced as one of the items that needs to be addressed by the facilities

committee and that the Board continue to be involved with the facilities committee to prioritize the projects that need to be completed. The cost of construction right now may not give us the most bang for our buck, and while, the Board did not want to hesitate on the multi-sport facility, it may not be the best timing. The Board will need to make a list of priorities and move on it, including budgeting and cash flow. There are a number of levy items that also need to be discussed considering the levy that was passed in February of 2020. The money from that began being collected in April of 2021 and next year is the first year that the district will see the money from the levy collections. Some of the items that were talked about doing for the levy were security upgrades, which involve cameras, remote door locks, maintenance vehicles, and maintenance equipment. As we were talking with Jeff, there are many other things that need to be looked at and now is the time because the budget is being made for the next school year.

Mr. Acuff moved on to his next item, a return to hybrid instruction. He wanted the Board to know that it has been very heartening and touching to move to a four day a week model. Some of the Board members have visited the schools and know the challenges first hand with trying to maintain our health guidelines and continue to serve kids the best way that we can. However, out of that model several things have caused him to reflect on it and to recommend to the Board that we make a change and that is that we in terms of what we have to do to for the health department when we have had one Covid positive case that has been in school where they really went to a whole schedule. So there was very little prior to this one event happening last week. But out of one student being at school we have had 14 students be "close contacts" and those 14 students were excluded for the full 14 days, which is what is required by the guidance. He is concerned that the district will end up causing some heartache and difficulties and impact graduation in a negative way. It's imperative that he bring this to the Board to discuss this. As of right now, we have not met the threshold that the MOU requires which is 14 days above 200 cases. Our current case rate is 219/100,000 that is as of today. That is a current number. The gray line right now is 248, which is only 7 days in front of the blue line. He anticipates it will stay up there for at least 7 more days, which doesn't meet the standard of the MOU, but it is important to discuss these things because once these things happen the district is powerless to do anything about it. Kids and families become very upset if they are doing what they are supposed to do and they have to be excluded from things that are so important to them. It is a tough situation and he believes that the Board should discuss it, make a recommendation to him, and he will carry it out.

Board Member Jamie Bailey asked what the time frame looked like?

The superintendent responded that he didn't believe that it should happen tomorrow, which is the last day for in-person school this week. He recommends moving to the hybrid model on Monday.

Board Member Stephanie Smith asked if that was for the remainder of the year?

He responded that if the Board makes this move then logistic wise it does not make sense to come back to 4 days a week. This is a very difficult decision, but we have also had some very difficult decisions in the last week. That concerns him.

Board Chairperson Bower does not know how she can take responsibility for the fact that we have the ability to minimize exposure a little bit better if we do two days a week and protect those seniors that are graduating. She cannot stress enough that she does not want graduation to be something that is off of the table for them and if changing that for the last couple of weeks of school and we are only there for two weeks and we are further apart will lessen that, she has to support that. I cannot look at a parent and say we had a chance to reduce that number and we did not do it and your kid did not get a graduation because right now that fact is when you have a senior that is exposed or contracts Covid if they get it past the 27th of May, they cannot go to graduation. We can only do so much to limit that and she has thought long and hard about this. She knew this conversation was coming and to watch a student have basketball taken away from them through no fault of their own and we could have possibly mitigated this issue. When we were at two days, we did not have this issue and she does not want to sacrifice graduation.

Board Member Cristelli stated that his concern is that when they are 3' apart is getting the kids an extra 14 days of instruction. In light of the current situation, those kids lost 14 days of instruction and other things that are an important part of the educational process. He feels fortunate that it was only 14 kids based on how easy it is and the number of classes there are. His thoughts were to move the high school and middle school back to hybrid because of the kids moving from class to class. It increases the number of potential exposures and more kids missing instruction, which is very valuable. In the elementary school is a cohort within itself. It is easier to control those exposure points.

Board Member Smith shared that Board Member Cristelli and she spent a couple of days touring the middle school and high school last week. Their take aways were that there were a lot of people working really hard to have systems

in place, but schools are meant for interaction and engagement. They are not designed like sterile environments. It felt very difficult to uphold the distance requirement for the entire time.

Board Member Cristelli added that a lot of the kids that they did talk to were glad to see friends, but they were concerned about the number of kids there. They were aware of the struggle to do what they were asked to do based on the guidelines. It made it difficult for the kids to distance because of the number of kids that were in buildings.

Board Chairperson Bower thought that when we returned to 4 days a week, everyone became more relaxed with protocols which makes it difficult to keep the kids following the guidelines. We have to protect the rest of the school year and graduation. While there are other things going with activities and athletics, but her goal is to get the seniors to graduation.

Board Member Smith asked if we could find a compromise between the seniors and other students that would be better being in school than not. Could the district look at Friday being a 3rd school day for those students, especially for those students that are credit deficient or at-risk. This would cut the population in half and allow students that need it another day.

Mr. Acuff said that students can be brought in because that is our current practice. If you say that it is a 3rd school day for those kids that are credit deficient, then you are not following the language of the MOU.

Board Member Smith clarified that we would have to renegotiate the MOU to make a 3rd school day happen.

Mr. Acuff confirmed that would be the case.

Board Member Thompson asked if we could keep it as is, which is a lot of students are still coming in and there is bus service.

Mr. Acuff said yes that will continue. He also shared that students are coming in on Friday for MAPS testing at the MS and other events. He and the principals concur with the Board that they would like to get as many students that are struggling in the building. He agrees with the Board that he would like to have bus runs, but only if the students are there to ride it. It will need to be planned carefully.

Board Member Smith would like it to be available to all kids that need to or want to to come in.

Board Member Bailey asked why tomorrow has to be the last day for kids. The social emotional piece of this will be devastating to many, to know that their last day of high school is tomorrow of going all together and it is another change.

Board Member Cristelli shared that going into the high school is different. The kids do not get to socialize like before and they are not getting any socialization when they are exposed and are out for 14 days. They are even losing the social emotional part of it when it comes to activities. That needs to be looked at as well. He understands where Board Member Bailey is coming from, but it is difficult.

Board Member Bailey does not want kids to be in danger and she wants graduation to happen. She has an issue with saying that tomorrow and that is it. She confirmed that anything after the 27th because we gave to count 14 days prior to graduation.

Board Member Smith feels frustrated across the board that we have to go back and asked Board Member Bailey what her time frame looks like to return to hybrid.

Board Member Bailey would like to give students as long as possible before we return to hybrid. We are not guaranteeing that no one will get Covid in 14 days.

Board Member Cristelli pointed out that at 6' apart that is not an exposure according to the health department. It is only within 6' that is the problem that we are up against.

Board Chairperson Bower said that if someone comes in with Covid and we find out, they research the contact tracing and can tell that I am not a contact because I am 6' away, then there is no issue.

Board Member Cristelli mentioned that we are up against a wall because any kid that comes in contact with Covid by the 27th then they are out of school for two weeks and going to miss graduation anyway.

Board Member Bailey pointed out that that could happen anyway. This is not a fix all.

The Board agreed.

Board Member Thompson asked about how long the county has been over 200 cases because the MOU states that we return to hybrid instruction if the cases are over 200 for more than 14 days.

Mr. Acuff stated that we have been at 200 since May 10th, which would put May 24th as the date that we would have to return to hybrid if the cases do not fall below 200.

Board Member Thompson clarified that we would have to go back to hybrid on the 24th regardless.

Board Member Smith pointed out that we are talking about changing 2 days, which is the week of the 17th.

Board Member Thompson clarified that if we were in hybrid last week when the student was at school with Covid and 14 students had to quarantine because they were considered close contacts that no other students would have had to quarantine because they would have been 6' apart.

Mr. Acuff said that one additional student would have had to quarantine because they ate lunch with the student, but everyone else would not be quarantining.

Board Member Smith pointed out that there would not be wide spread quarantining, but there may still be some.

Mr. Acuff said there is no guarantee that there will be no close contacts, but there are steps that we all can take to make sure that we are not in close contact. As we are seated here now, we are all 6' apart and if one of us were Covid positive we would not be considered close contacts. But, if we were seated in a classroom as it exists, I would be doing what I am supposed to do and being where I am supposed to be and because I sat next to a positive person, I would be considered a close contact and quarantined. And, if we go to 6', all of that goes away.

Board Member Bailey asked why did the guidance change to 3' if close contacts are still considered to be within 6'.

Board Member Cristelli thinks that it was to force schools that were not attending to get them back in school. All of the research that he can find points to that because changing the guidance did not really change anything.

Mr. Acuff thinks that it was a political consideration. There is no science change that says 3'.

Board Member Smith stated that her daycare guidelines changed but there is no science to back it.

Board Member Bailey asked what would be the question of the 24th being the cutoff date, what would be the problem with going hybrid on the 24th?

Mr. Acuff said the only problem with that is excluding people who get an exposure, through no fault of their own, potentially miss school. We do not exist to do extra curricular activities, but we would have to live in a hole to not recognize that for many kids it is the reason for their existence in high school.

Board Member Bailey understands that.

Board Member Cristelli pointed out that we can only control here.

Board Member Bailey said that we could get to next week and the number drops and then we are questioning again. She feels that in her heart that the social emotional toll on these kids will be devastating.

Board Member Cristelli said that on the same part that if we have a senior it would also be devastating.

Board Member Bailey pointed out that she was just wanting one more week and that it would not effect graduation.

Board Chairperson Bower said that it could effect a senior.

Mr. Acuff gave an example of 3 students that were excluded from school and activities and May 4th until May 18th. In theory all of those athletes could come back to school on Tuesday of next week and sit next to someone that is Covid positive and be excluded for two more weeks. He is sorry to bring up that scenario but he feels like he has to because he experienced it from speaking to the parents of those kids. It was a very difficult conversation and he realizes that he is talking about these individual situations but having these situations can have a negative effect on an entire groups, years, or teams of people. He agrees with Board Member Bailey, in that, there is not a win win situation. He apologizes for bringing this up to the Board because it is not what has driven us from the beginning, but as the superintendent he looks at things that the Board brings up and he is so in agreement with you about teenagers and the social emotional issue of not being in school. We are kind of weighing one social emotional potential disappointment with another social emotional potential disappointment.

Board Member Bailey feels that tomorrow is too quick to dump this on the kids. She is not about throwing kids into a situation that is going to hurt someone or potentially not let someone walk for graduation. The whole thing is frustrating.

Board Member Smith this is about a ticking time bomb with students and families. Her daughter competed last week with state FFA and she may have not let her attend school had the competition been next week for fear of being exposed and not being able to compete at a state level.

Board Member Cristelli pointed out that you have to attend school to participate in activities.

Mr. Acuff said that one of the struggles of dealing with all issues associated with a school is the reality of dealing with what is known as a captive audience, and what that means is it is an expectation that students attend school when they are scheduled for school. In past years, that is on a school day and this year it is when you are supposed to be there. That is the difficulty for him. There is no choice there. One is a requirement and school is the reason we are here. Educating kids is the reason we are here. It is definitely the feeling of many in the high school, is those days are important; that instruction is something. He is not taking that lightly at all, but he also is telling you that when we do things that end up costing kids when it is our choice there is a lot of resentment that can make the palette having to do with school be bad. That is the best way that he can put it. It is a tough choice. He will follow your lead.

Board Member Smith wondered how does this impact the middle school. There are the same concerns at the middle school that there are at the high school.

Board Member Cristelli thinks we have to look at how can we minimize the disruption to our students and their educational process and with the logistics of how the middle school and the high school work. The kids are moving from each class period to another class. It almost forces us to look at the middle school the same as the high school with just the logistics and impact on education for all of the students. All of the middle school students are 3' apart. With an exposure, there are many kids missing out for two weeks.

Mr. Acuff pointed out that there have been very few confirmed positive cases on campus in which we have had to exclude kids. He thinks somewhere between 2 and 4 cases. Lately, since we went to the 4 days we have had one. The Board would have not been aware because there would have been minimal close contacts during hybrid instruction due to the 6' social distancing.

Board Member Smith assumes that the thought process at the elementary school is that everyone in that one particular class and one teacher would quarantine instead of multiple classes and teachers.

Mr. Acuff said that the state guidance states that high schools need to go to hybrid after they get over 200 cases for 14 days. The guidance only covers the high school. The issues are identical in the middle school. He does not mean to minimize missing events for middle school and under classmen at the high school would still cause emotional hurt. There are all of the other considerations to talk about. The schools are definitely more crowded and definitely more close contacts when all of the kids are in the schools instead of half of the kids.

Board Member Bailey wanted clarification if they were discussing the high school and middle school returning to hybrid or just the high school returning to hybrid.

Board Member Cristelli thinks that it would be irresponsible to not look at other grades as well. Based on the logistics,

the middle school is in the same situation as the high school. He was looking at it from an educational standpoint. There are students at the middle school that take their academics seriously and if they were excluded for 14 days that would be challenging for them.

Mr. Acuff explained that they are in the same situation as the high school in terms of logistics because they are not cohorted. It is up to the Board to decide. He brought the recommendation for the high school specifically.

Board Member Bailey supports waiting it out another week and see where we are at with the numbers. She understands the situation, but feels like they may be panicking a little bit. If they move it to the 24th and email parents and families reminding them of the importance of wearing masks, staying your distance, and washing your hands to see where the numbers go.

Board Member Smith is torn considering the total number of days that they are talking about, especially for the seniors.

Board Member Cristelli asked about the middle school use of the high school rooms and the impact that may have on the middle school.

Mr. Acuff said that it would not impact the middle school.

Board Chairperson Bower supports watching the numbers and going back to hybrid for the high school, but is not ready to do that for the middle school. She does not want to act on the middle school yet. She is fine with going hybrid at the high school on May 24th, but they have to do something at that point. Covid has spun us around in many directions with the quicker updates every 7 days.

Board Member Thompson would like to go hybrid regardless of the numbers on May 24th to protect senior activities.

Board Member Cristelli would be disappointed to not do our best to protect our students while they are at school. He can also live with the 24th. If we just want to look at the high school, that's fine as well.

Mr. Acuff clarified that sports finish on the day of graduation. Our graduation day is the very last day there can be an activity.

Board Member Thompson asked if we wait until the 24th for just the high school, what happens when kids can not attend practice on their off days from school.

Mr. Acuff would like to continue the activity bus. Especially, if the middle school stays at 4 days. There is already an after school program bus at the elementary school and that would make it more doable for kids that have sports practices after school.

Board Member Thompson wants to make sure that those kids won't miss out on activities.

Board Member Smith would like for some identified students to be at school all 4 days if needed.

Mr. Acuff said there would be availability for that and that may not mean that the student is in their classroom.

Board Member Smith said but if there is room in the classroom, they could be. She wants to think through the flexibility. Any student could come to school within the boundaries.

Mr. Acuff clarified that any student could come to school and see 6 teachers. They may not be in their regular schedule.

Board Member Thompson clarified how is East Grays Harbor High School.

Mr. Acuff said that they were fine.

Board Member Smith asked for the plan.

Board Chairperson Bower said the proposal is that the high school will return to hybrid on May 24th. No matter what

the number is, which will be the last change this year.

Mr. Acuff had Facilities Supervisor Jeff Monroe update the Board on the hitting facility. Mr. Monroe shared that the county meeting went well. With the size of it, we will need to have an architect involved and he will reach out to one. Then, he will bring it to the facilities committee meeting. There is concern of the price of construction right now being very high. We will explore that when he gets the numbers back. The ventilation requirements have good news.

Board Member Cristelli was also at the meeting. The county was encouraged by the project. At the meeting, they talked about having roll up doors at both ends of the building. That would be sufficient for ventilation in the building. There only needs to be parking for 3 spaces. They did hear some positive things from the meeting. They will meet with the facilities committee and help prioritize the upcoming projects and be good stewards of the taxpayer's money.

b. Student Representative Report

No report.

7. Work Study

8. Unfinished Business

9. New Business

a. Approval to Adopt Policy & Procedure 3112 - Social Emotional Climate - 1st Reading

Motion made by Jamie Bailey, second by Ryan Cristelli. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

b. Approval to Retire Policy 3200 - Rights & Responsibilities

Motion made by Stephanie Smith, second by Jody Thompson. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

c. Approval of Policy & Procedure 3241 - Student Discipline - 1st Reading

Motion made by Jody Thompson, second by Jamie Bailey. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

d. Approval to Adopt Policy 4050 - Data Sharing with Local Tribes - 1st Reading

Motion made by Stephanie Smith, second by Jamie Bailey. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

e. Approval of Policy & Procedure 6000 - Program Planning, Budget Preparation, Adoption and Implementation - 1st Reading

Motion made by Jody Thompson, second by Ryan Cristelli. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

f. Approval of Basics NW MOU for 20-21

Special Services Director Stacey Rockey shared that it is an agreement to provide ABA for students on the autism spectrum. There is no cost to the district.

Motion made by Jamie Bailey, second by Ryan Cristelli. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

g. Approval of ESD113 Contract for Autism Curriculum Training

Ms. Rockey explained that this is training for staff for autism training.

Motion made by Ryan Cristelli, second by Jamie Bailey. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

h. Approval of G12 Phone Contract

Technology Director Eric Smith explained that this will change our phone service and equipment over the summer and it will provide a cost savings for the district.

Motion made by Ryan Cristelli, second by Jody Thompson. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

i. Approval of Resolution 09-2021 WIAA Membership

Motion made by Jody Thompson, second by Jamie Bailey. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

j. Approval of Warren Hopkins Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Acuff explained that this an agreement with Warren Hopkins for union negotiations for the next school year.

Motion made by Jamie Bailey, second by Stephanie Smith. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

k. * Approval of Fall Drill Booster Fundraisers

Mr. Acuff asked Talonna Hanft for the dates of the fundraisers so they did not overlap with any other groups. She asked for the approval of the popcorn fundraiser so they could get started. She will come back with the rest.

Board Member Bailey said that some dates are hard to make ahead of time. She recommends approving the fundraisers and coming back with the dates when the booster club has them.

Mr. Acuff clarified that it does say fall and that is all that is ever required.

Board Member Bailey except for popcorn sales everything is for fall. She also asked about 32 Auctions.

Ms. Hanft explained that is an online auction that other groups have done to generate funds for the girls.

Motion made by Stephanie Smith, second by Jamie Bailey. Motion passed unanimously, motion carries.

10. Future Agenda Items

- Curriculum Adoption Policy*
- Health Curriculum K-5 Adoption in 21-22*
- ELA Adoption Committee*
- Anti-Racism Committee*
- Equestrian Team/Club Status*
- Student Representative (current Junior)*

11. Executive Session

Board Member Bower thanked everyone and asked that everyone do everything they can to protect themselves and stay safe.

The meeting entered Executive Session at 7:25pm for RCW 42.130.110(g) for personnel for 15 minutes with no action to be taken. At 7:40pm, an additional 25 minutes were announced. The meeting reentered the regular meeting at 8:05pm.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Board Chairperson

Board Secretary

Date

*Additions to Agenda