

Easton School District No. 28
Meeting of the Board of Directors
January 28, 2020
Jennie Marie Giovenale-Austin Library

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Amy Grove at 5:30 PM.

Attendance: Amy Grove, John Jensen, Jen Phillips, April Simonson

Staff: Patrick Dehuff, Marilyn Fudge, Dawn Bechtholdt, Lyn Cox, Gretchen Jenkins, Jenny Jensen, Ofelia Todd, Brian Todd, Becky Houle

Board Members Absent: Chris Helgeson

Guests: Vern Armstrong

Approve Agenda: April Simonson made a motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting. John Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Board Minutes: April Simonson made a motion to approve the minutes from the school board meeting on December 19, 2019. John Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Archery Donation: Vern Armstrong, from the Amerigas propane company, presented a check in the amount of \$2,000.00 to the Easton School Archery program. Cece Badda, the archery coach, thanked Mr. Armstrong for the generous donation.

Communication to the Board: Communication to the board was sent to them via email and the board received a copy in their board packet as well.

Public Comment: None

Reports:

Financial: Business Manager, Sagi Jimenez was absent tonight. Superintendent Dehuff reviewed the financial budget status report, trends, and enrollment report with the board. Dr. Dehuff and Board Director Jen Phillips recently attended legislation hearings in Olympia. The hearings pertained to proposed laws regarding the recent financial changes for the school districts in Washington State. They shared information with the other board members and guests.

Staff: Cece Badda gave the staff report for tonight's meeting. The K-1 students are exploring force and motion using the next generation science standards "Push, Pull, Go" science kit. Student engineers have built models that include ramps, weighing sets, and spinning tops. They have explored whether or not the models are successful without all their parts. The K-1 will be working on "Weather and Sky" inquiry based science kits in February. The archery program has the upcoming tournaments: Multi Color on January 24th, YETI 3D on February 7th, Cupid

Bullseye on February 15th, Blue Face in Kennewick on February 25th and the State Archery Tournament will be on March 14th in Prosser. The district will receive \$7,500.00 for a fishing grant to teach spinner rod fishing.

Student Representative: Jenny Jensen, ASB advisor, presented on behalf of the students tonight. She shared that the students have been active and participating in spirit week. The Baby Jags performed at the girls High School basketball game.

Principal Report: Mrs. Bechtholdt reported that during our first day back from Christmas break, January 6th, the power went out in the morning and remained out for the remainder of the day. The district sent all the students and staff home at 11:30 am. On January 7, 2020, we had a two hour delay due to weather and on January 10, 2020, there was a snow day closure due to a big snow storm. Our messenger service is helpful in getting notice out when there is a delay or school closure. Computer science meetings are progressing for k-12 computer science instruction. Dawn has attended regional meetings for CTE in Ellensburg and Yakima. Tomorrow, she will be taking teachers to Yakima for networking and a tour of Perry Technical Institute. Spirit week is happening on Friday afternoons. The first one is class colors. The staff won the obstacle course. This week is twin day, and the event is dodge ball with toilet paper rolls. Today was the start to a new semester and it was a smooth transition.

Superintendent Dehuff: Superintendent Dehuff discussed the progress so far in the purchase and planning for Capital Projects. Dr. Dehuff mentioned the need to improve technology. The district has purchased chrome books for every student and has placed an order to replace all of the computers in the computer lab. In addition, all staff computers will be replaced, the server will be replaced, and the wireless connectivity improved. This will make a big difference in the reliability of our technology as we integrate technology with learning. We would like to move ahead with the purchase of an electronic reader board. It would be very beneficial to be able to communicate events to our parents and community. We are working on some logistics (moving the pole, connecting to power, etc.) and then would like to proceed with the purchase and installation of the electronic reader board. Superintendent Dehuff also mentioned the need to replace our playground to meet current code requirements. A team (Cece Badda, Lyn Cox, Steve Jensen, and Patrick Dehuff) submitted a grant request that included the replacement of the playground, but it wasn't awarded to Easton School. We will need to move ahead with the purchase of a new playground to meet code requirements and we can resubmit the other items that were in the grant request next year.

Superintendent Dehuff and Jen Phillips went to Olympia yesterday to give input to legislators during a public hearing on SB 6344, that would allow school districts to choose whether their local Educational Programs and Operations levy cap is \$2.50 per thousand of assessed valuation or \$2,500 per student instead of current law which mandates the lower amount of these two choices. Jen Phillips talked about the process and the lawmakers who were presiding at the public hearing, as well as sharing some of the concerns that were expressed by other school districts who provided input. At the public hearing, Superintendent Dehuff shared stories of academic achievement at Easton School, including the successes of our Running Start students. He mentioned that Easton School District has always had a balanced budget in the twelve years that he has been

here, with the exception of this year, because of a significant decline in our local levies (because of the levy cap). He mentioned that Easton School District had the lowest school levy tax rate in Kittitas County and one of the lowest in the state before the levy caps were put in place. He also mentioned that our community is supportive of Easton School, and all school levies in the past twelve years have passed the first time.

Superintendent Dehuff explained the seriousness of the impact of the levy cap by giving an example. Last year, many school districts throughout the state found that they couldn't balance their budget because their Educational Programs and Operations levy was capped at \$1.50 per thousand of assessed valuation (AV). The legislature passed a bill that allowed the cap to increase to \$2.50 per thousand of AV. However, it also included a clause that stipulated that the levy would be capped at \$2,500 per student, whichever is lower (either \$2.50 per thousand of AV or \$2,500 per student). Before the levy cap, Easton School District's Educational Programs and Operations levy was approximately \$1.00 per thousand of AV. With the cap, it pushed our collection down to less than 40 cents per thousand of AV.

Superintendent Dehuff explained the financial impact that this puts Easton School District in and posed this question to the legislators. If school districts throughout the state could not operate off of \$1.50 per thousand of AV and, therefore, the cap was raised to \$2.50 per thousand of AV, can you imagine the dilemma of being forced to collect less than 40 cents per thousand of AV. If SB 6344 passes, then Easton School District would be able to choose whether the cap would be \$2.50 per thousand of AV or \$2,500 per student, rather than be forced to take the lesser of the two. We should know the status of the bill in the next couple of months. Superintendent Dehuff will keep the board posted.

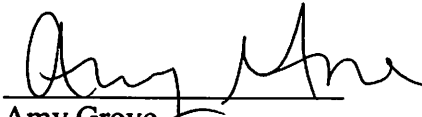
Board Business: The board was asked to approve the new hire of Freida Ellison for the position of Business Manager. April Simonson made a motion to approve the hiring of Freida Ellison. Jen Phillips seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Adjourn Regular Meeting: At 7:35 Jen Phillips made a motion to adjourn to executive session. John Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried. The board announced an approximate time of 20 minutes. Additional time for the executive session was announced.

Reconvene Regular Meeting: Jen Phillips made a motion at 9:45 to reconvene the regular board meeting. John Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Adjourn Regular Meeting: At 9:47, John Jensen made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Amy Grove seconded the motion and the motion carried.


Patrick Dehuff
Superintendent


Amy Grove
Vice Board Chair