



*Inspiring Hope and Empowering All Students To Courageously Pursue Their Goals and Dreams*

**Governing Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
January 14, 2021**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER THE REGULAR MEETING:** Mr. Sunn, Governing Board President, at 5:00 p.m., called the regular meeting to order.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Delson Sunn, Mrs. Nubia Briceno, and Mrs. Susan Doucet were in attendance.  
*Administration Present:*  
*Kristine Morris, Superintendent* *Melanie Block, Director of Academic Services*  
*Ana M. Avalos, Director of Human Resources* *Carrie Brandon, Director of Student Service*  
*Susan O’Rielly, Executive Director of Business Services* *Michael Welsh, Union Principal*  
*Dr. Randy Watkins- Hurley Ranch Principal* *Jonathan Stewart, Dos Rios Principal*  
*Matthew Haley- Network Administrator*
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**  
Motion by Mrs. Briceno seconded by Mrs. Doucet to approve the agenda. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet
- V. **2021 GOVERNING BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION**
- A. Motion made by Mrs. Briceno seconded by Mrs. Doucet to elect Mr. Delson Sunn as the 2021 Governing Board President for the 2021 calendar year. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet
- B. Motion made by Mr. Sunn to approve projected meeting dates, times, and locations for Union Elementary School District No.62 for calendar year 2021. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet  
Q. Mr. Sunn asked if anything really changed?  
A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that we made a change in February as that is usually when the national superintendent’s conference takes place. Also, we have set some tentative dates with all that is going on for a second meeting in January, February, and March.  
Q. Mr. Sunn asked if we can change if we need to?  
A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded yes, standing policy states that we can cancel a meeting at anytime.
- C. Motion made by Mrs. Briceno seconded by Mr. Sunn to approve the agenda posting locations for Union Elementary School District No. 62 for calendar year 2021.
- VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**  
The call to the public will be restricted due to social distancing guidelines, therefore, limiting the number of participants at the meeting. The meeting is open to the public to listen via phone by calling: 1 (646) 749-3122 and entering access code: 440-747-085.  
No public comments.

**VII. SUPERINTENDENT SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS:**

Welcome back to the second part of our 2020-2021 school year! We entered 2021 with 1680 students and have added an additional 18 students over these two weeks. We are now proudly serving 1698 students and families, offering two viable public-school choices with our hybrid model.

For almost a year, I have used this time to update the Board on COVID-19. I want to acknowledge the struggle, illness, pain and loss that our community and staff has experienced. It will take us time to heal and some families will never be the same, we will be there to help them navigate what lies ahead. Together we have navigated a challenge like no other, and while the road ahead will present us with uncertainty. I praise and celebrate our staff and community for their innovation, resilience, and tenacity. I will reserve the rest of my usual COVID update for the presentation later in our agenda.

While COVID has seemingly dominated every aspect of our lives since March of 2020. Your Union ESD team has also been moving forward with some important work. First, we implemented a new mathematics adoption PK-eighth grade. We looked at our student achievement data and listened to our staff, and adopted and trained on a research-based, high quality mathematics curriculum. That adoption has helped provide much needed support during our first semester of the school year. Having workbooks, a standards-aligned curriculum, and the support for our students and staff has provided a source of stability amidst uncertainty.

We launched a 1:1 technology initiative! The traditional slow roll of such an initiative was thrown out the window! 😊 Technology gurus to our most novice staff, have become pros at using technology to engage in remote learning, assessment, and assignment completion. Although we still believe in-person learning is the best model and are eager to return, we have opened opportunities to serving students; changing when, where, and how students can learn in the years to come.

Speaking of technology, we learned to host family events on-line. On January 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be hosting our first Virtual Kindergarten Round-Up. Feel free to stop by! We also continue hosting job-fairs on-line, giving us greater access to individuals throughout the nation and world.

We have reduced staff and student illness for non-Covid reasons. Due to all our handwashing, masking and distancing, regular in-person student and staff illness has been reduced.

We have implemented strategies to contact all families. When essential, we have shown the ability to reach 100% of our families through phone, text, social media, emergency contacts and just plain house calls!

While 2020 was incredibly difficult and challenging, we have much to celebrate. Which takes me to another first! Next week we will be sending our first community-wide Quarterly Newsletter "Union Connects". This bilingual newsletter highlights some of the great things about Union ESD and shares how we are good stewards of our taxpayer resources.

We have an amazing and wonderful team, and community that I am so grateful to be a part of. So long 2020, we navigated a worldwide tragedy and are hopefully stronger and wiser from it. I know this team will use our shared wisdom to make 2021 our best year yet!

**VIII. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA:**

Motion made by Mrs. Briceno seconded by Mrs. Doucet to approve the consent agenda. Vote was



unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for December 10, 2020
- B. Approval of Personnel Consent List
- C. Approval of Accounts Payable Vouchers
- D. Approval of Accounts Payroll Vouchers
- E. Approval of Student Activity Transaction Report
- F. Approval of Gifts and Donations

**IX. PRESENTATION FROM DISTRICT PERSONNEL:**

- A. Mr. Michael Welsh presented Union Elementary's Integrated Action Plan (IAP)
  - Q. Mrs. Briceno asked a question about focusing on proactive development of the school team. What does different rates of team development and the value of differentiation mean?
  - A. Mr. Michael Welsh responded that we cannot assume all the team members are at the same spot of development. You have new members, a more senior staff, and some may be more opinionated about things. Let us not agree everyone is ready, every team is at a different spot. Where do you think your team is? As a leadership team we will see where are we, and where do we want to go?
  - Q. Mrs. Briceno asked if you have noticed that with everything that is going on that it is easier or more manageable when you do have those meetings. Are teachers and staff willing to work together towards the goals? Is there a difference from this year over last year?
  - A. Mr. Michael Welsh responded that it is modeled at the District level, principal level, and then moves to the school level. The teachers feel it and we know that we are in this boat together. We can focus on what we have control of. Not going to point, blame or make people feel bad, that is not the purpose. We need everyone's collective ideas to navigate this. I think teachers feel that and they feel they are being honored and listened to. When they feel like there is buy in and feel like they have influence in the decision that is why we are seeing the good things.
  
- B. Superintendent Kristine Morris presented on the COVID-19 School Learning Model and Mitigation Strategies.
  - Q. Mr. Sunn asked if bigger districts are making a difference?
  - A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded it might. In our District 1 or 2 can drive our cases way up or way down. They can fluctuate our results either way. Large districts have less fluctuation because they have more numbers. This is what public health has told me.
  - Q. Mr. Sunn asked how often do you talk to the principals and/or staff about this stuff?
  - A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that I speak with the principals daily. Liaisons see me because they are doing a line list and they give a heads up with ones we are testing and follow up with that data so we are in constant communication. All admin meetings are monthly, principal meetings biweekly, and council meets weekly.
  - Q. Mr. Sunn asked if those are actual meetings or if those are online?
  - A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that we do a combination. One of the things we agreed on as a team, from the beginning is that we said that if we are bringing kids back into our rooms and teachers back into rooms with kids, then we need to show that we can be safe coming together. We have kept as an administration team coming together with our mitigation's strategies, distancing, all of that, and to this day we have not had an administrator come down with it. We maybe had one that was considered a close contact. We practice what we preach. If we are going to put teachers in a room and say, "teach them," we have to not lock ourselves in our offices and show that we can do it. If we get comfortable with it, it helps our teachers feel more comfortable.
  - Q. Mr. Sunn asked where is the school nurse in all of this?
  - A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that our school nurse is leading the testing. Our RN will test all employees. Our school health aides will test students. It is kind of sensitive when someone is testing a peer, so if a staff member ends up being ill the RN will do that testing and honor their confidentiality. She does testing all the time and is sending out communication to our staff on being safe. She follows up with them and family members and sets their return dates. Additionally, our health aides are doing the same thing. They are following up with anyone who is out, making sure they are ok. If there are multiple people in the house, we are making them aware of Maricopa County isolation housing. There is a service where you can apply for isolations



housing where you can recover if you are sick, they will bring you 3 meals and do your laundry, and things like that, so they don't infect the rest of their house. We want to make them aware of the resources.

A. Mrs. Ana Avalos contributed that our health office works closely with attendance clerks to work with unverified absences. They contact the family who are symptomatic to come get tested. This is for those who are online too.

Q. Mr. Sunn asked how long does the rapid test take for results?

A. Mrs. Ana Avalos responded 15 minutes.

Q. Mr. Sunn asked how the daily screening is done? Is that a temperature check?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded no; we don't do temperature checks. Early on temperature checks were one of the ways they were saying to screen but quickly found out that most folks don't present a temperature. We do a visual screening. When kids walk through the gate our staff conducts a visual screener. Once the student is in the classroom the teacher will do a visual screener. For example, if a student is laying their head on the desk, we will ask them how they are doing and go through multiple questions. If they feel symptomatic, we will call the health office, and someone will come for the student. The adults do self-screening as well as principals are checking in daily.

Q. Mr. Sunn responded so it sounds like everyone is monitoring everyone?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris answered yes.

Q. Mrs. Briceno asked how are we keeping our teachers calm and reassuring that they are safe? That is one of my main concerns. If you can't keep our teachers safe, then we can't keep anyone safe.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris asked if Mr. Michael Welsh wanted to address this. Mr. Michael Welsh responded that it goes back to our mitigation strategies. If someone goes home, then there is usually a concern. You have to ask yourself personally if you are engaging in safe behaviors? Reminding everyone these are the mitigation strategies that we are employing and if we weren't our numbers would look drastically different. To me I always utilize if we are effectively using the strategies. Also, if you were a close contact, without a doubt, you would be notified.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that almost all of our cases were a close contact outside the school building. I think of what we've done internally to mitigate, that's what public health would say. We are able to control the mitigations, they see colleagues are masked, washing our hands, keeping our distance. It's when we let our guards down and we go outside our safe bubble, "relatively safe bubble" then folks are forgetting the mitigation strategies. The things we are doing here have kept you safe in the midst of storm, so let's continue to use them. Because we have navigated and they have seen it, I think there becomes a little more confidence with things.

Q. Mrs. Briceno asked if teachers have had access to this?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded we have not shared it. We can share it. It will be shared now because it's a public meeting, so there is no reason not to share. The only reason we may not have shared is because I would never want them to think we are lying because we have to change a number. We are a small staff and to keep up to date like a dashboard would be a lot. We did not want to create anxiety over a number shifting by a typo or something like that. We are proud of this information and we can share it with our staff.

Q. Mr. Sunn stated along the same line of teachers and their anxiety, Mr. Welsh in your school have you noticed anymore absences or teachers saying they don't want to come to work?

A. Mr. Michael Welsh, responded no, fortunately in my school we have not seen a spike in absences or trends in absences. They have done a great job in reporting or if they feel symptomatic, they are good about coming to see me. No, we haven't really experienced that.

Q. Mr. Sunn asked if that is the same with the other 2 schools?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that each school has a little different makeup of their population. When I did these numbers everybody's curve was slightly different. The beauty of Mr. Welsh's campus is that it is K-2 kids. Those are where the numbers tend to be less. That will be a staff that is comfortable, since K-2 kids are less likely to get it. When you get to your middle schoolers, they are less likely to follow the mitigation strategies as easily.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked Mr. Stewart if he would like to speak to his staff?

A. Mr. Jonathan Stewart stated as an example when we were moving to 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, we had to have an online teacher for each grade level. I had to assign for online because they wanted to be in



person. There are some who have who have a medical waiver, so they have to do it online. At the beginning there was more anxiety, we have been doing this awhile now and they are used to it. Almost everyone at some point in time was a close contact and had to deal with that whole process and they don't want to go through that again.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked Dr. Randy Watkins to answer about Hurley Ranch.

A. Dr. Randy Watkins responded that when we came back the first week and we had grade level meetings at the beginning of the week. Each grade level meeting, you would have folks that would express some concerns as it relates to what is happening. I'm incredibly proud of the staff. I did home visits, predominately with families that are struggling a bit. We are making a significant difference in this community by providing a choice to parents that provides a choice of in person learning. Attendance for both students and staff has been outstanding this week. I'm incredibly proud of our teachers and to be a part of this District.

Q. Mr. Sunn asked about the number of kids and teachers that you said were positive. You said they didn't get it from our District or whatever campus they are on, however, they are still getting it. How does that work with us shutting down? I know that part of the reason is if they have a lot of contact. Is that the only reason we are staying open?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded if we were to see a spread, for example these 4 kids that had it in a classroom because they were in that classroom that would make us stop and say something must be going on. Traditionally, what public health would look at are the numbers. For example, a 5 turned into a 15, and then turned into 30 they would say you don't have your stuff under control. Because we are 1s, 2s, 3s in this case you could expect it because it was the holiday, it is not exponentially growing, you are not contributing to the spread. We're also actually providing a service. We're helping folks realize that they have it and now they can take steps in their home to prevent it from spreading. If we weren't here, they could be at the neighbors double bunking and spreading amongst themselves. We are a source of helping contain it. We identify it and they either isolate or if they are a close contact they quarantine until they know if they have it. We follow up subsequently to see if they get it. All our mitigations are helping ourselves here from helping it spread. There is some education we provide to the community to test, isolate, and educate.

Q. Mr. Sunn asked if the cleaning process helps as well?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded yes. Every classroom has cleaning products, and throughout the day they sanitize. We also have barriers when they eat. Those barriers are between the kids, with doors open. We can also take students outside because we did purchase tables for them outside.

#### X. ACTION ITEMS:

A. Motion by Mrs. Briceno, seconded by Mr. Sunn to approve the maximum capacity of 2378 students for the 2021-2022 school year. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

B. Motion by Mrs. Briceno, seconded by Mrs. Doucet to approve the removal of the attached listed equipment from the District's General Fixed Assets and Stewardship listing. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

Q. Mr. Sunn asked if these are absolutely useless where no student can use them?

A. Mrs. Susan O'Rielly responded they do use some for parts but only if they are absolutely useless. Laptops you don't repair as it's too expensive. Being a 2011 that is pretty old for a laptop.

C. Covid-19 School Learning Models & Mitigation Strategies. The Governing Board had no questions, and no action was required for this item.

#### XI. INFORMATIONAL ITEM ONLY:

A. Governing Board Financial Report

#### XII. FUTURE MEETING ITEMS:

1) January 28, 2020 – Executive Session, Superintendent Evaluation

Q. Mr. Sunn asked if we are holding this at the regular starting time at 5:00pm?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded yes.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked the board if they wanted the evaluation blank or if they would like her to type in notes for each standard like she has done historically. Do you want me to do that or have a blank form and we can work through it together?

A. Mrs. Briceno and Mrs. Doucet asked that she add notes.

- 2) February 4, 2021 – Integrated Action Plan (IAP) Hurley Ranch – Presented by Dr. Randy Watkins
- 3) February 4, 2021 – District Data update DIBELS (MOY) – Presented by Ms. Melanie Block
- 4) February or March (TBD) – Budget Study or Planning Session

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Mr. Sunn, seconded by Mrs. Briceno to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mr. Sunn, Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

  
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Mr. Delson Sunn, President of the Board

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Date 2/4/2021