



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

**Governing Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
August 12, 2021**

**I. CALL TO ORDER THE REGULAR MEETING**

Mrs. Doucet, Governing Board Member at 5:01 p.m., called the regular meeting to order.

Administration Present:

*Kristine Morris, Superintendent*

*Ana M. Avalos, Director of Human Resources*

*Susan O'Reilly, Executive Director of Business Services*

*Jonathan Stewart, Dos Rios Principal*

*Melanie Block, Director of Academic Services*

*Carrie Brandon, Director of Student Service*

*Michael Welsh, Union Principal*

*Matthew Haley, Network Administrator*

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mrs. Nubia Briceno, and Mrs. Susan Doucet were in attendance. Mr. Delson Sunn was not in attendance.

**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: Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes.

*The call to the public will be restricted due to social distancing guidelines, therefore, limiting the number of participants at the meeting. This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Governing Board may not discuss items that are not on the agenda. Therefore, action taken as a result of public comments will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.*

No public comments.

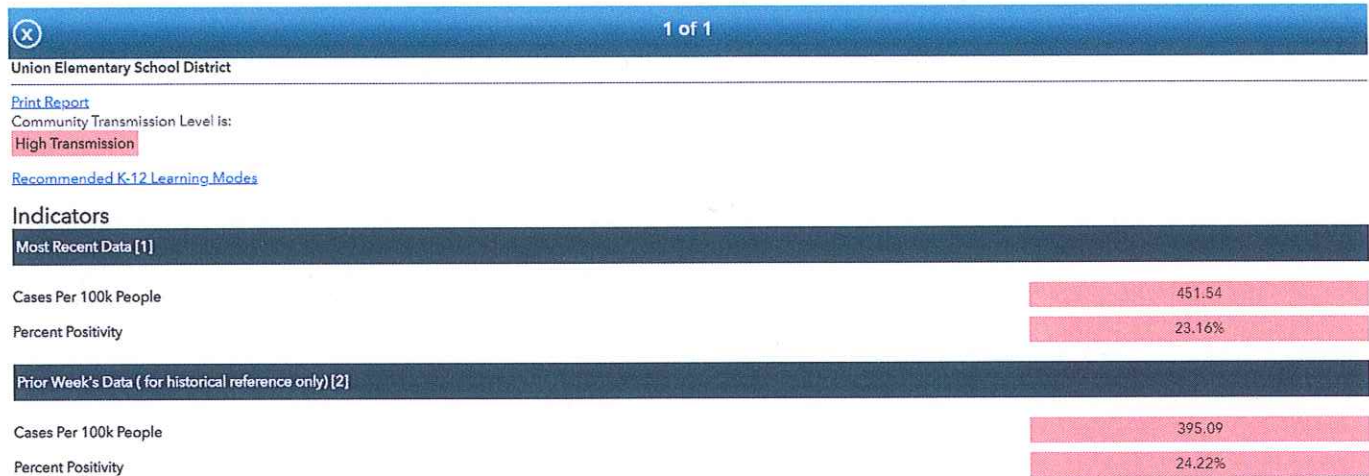
**VI. SUPERINTENDENT SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS**

Our school year started off very positively, and it was great to see everyone back in our buildings and working to employ our mitigations. I've attached the video from the first day that I shared at the meeting.

We are pleased that we have been able to open with most of our homeroom positions filled; and we are looking to add Kindergarten and 8<sup>th</sup> grade due to growth. Districtwide we have 18 positions open, most for supplemental instructional support, classroom coverage & growth; however, some of our paraprofessionals, and office/clerical positions are on our urgent hiring list. We are hopeful that we have some solid candidates for those roles. The more difficult to find are the teacher positions. At this point in time, we may be hiring additional paraprofessionals to support the teacher vacancies. We will take the highest quality candidates we can find.

We are pleased with where we have started; however, we are running slim and if anybody has to be out for appointment, isolation or quarantine, it really does put a strain on the rest of the system.

COVID cases continue to rise. This week's cases in our community are included below.



It was a rewarding and challenging week. I want to celebrate our amazing team for their preparation, diligence and dedication to ensuring safe teaching, learning and working environments.

## VII. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Mrs. Doucet seconded by Mrs. Briceno to approve the consent items. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for July 8, 2021
- 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
- G. Approval of IGA with Littleton Elementary School District No.65 and UESD No.62
- H. Approval of IGA for Specialized Educational Services for Special Education Students

## VIII. PRESENTATIONS FROM DISTRICT PERSONNEL

- A. UESD 2022 Back to School Safety and Services Plan

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked if there were any questions?

A. Mrs. Briceno stated that she thinks we really need to wait until September 29<sup>th</sup> to see whether or not anything happens with the law. Ms. Kristine Morris responded if you want to minimize risk you have to wait until September 29<sup>th</sup> to see what happens. If you want to take risk you could change the plan and allow for an opt out provision. You are mandatory masking but there is an opt out provision which is less risk, it's still risk, but you could implement something like that. If you did want to tighten the mitigations, legal counsel said you could adopt a mandatory option with an opt out. It doesn't eliminate any risk, again, someone could choose to sue and lump us in with the lawsuits that are going on, so there is a risk there.

Q. Mrs. Doucet asked what happens if there is a naysayer who doesn't wear a mask, and you highly recommend, and they say I'm not wearing one?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded they sit in class without their mask on. We encourage and thank others for wearing their mask.



Q. Mrs. Doucet asked how problematic is it in the classrooms with them not wanting to wear masks?

A. Mr. Jonathan Stewart responded the majority of our students are wearing masks, there are a few exceptions.

A. Mr. Michael Welsh responded that it's the same at his campus. Our families, because it's not mandated, I see less and less students coming to the gates with masks. We are providing the masks for the students. Which means the mask wearing is not happening outside of school which is leading to a higher rate of transmission. That is a concern. Also, for teachers, remembering what kid/family is not choosing to wear a mask, and which are, the littles seeing kids in the room that aren't wearing the mask because of a family choice versus those that are. We are giving a higher rate of masks out at the gate, but kids will put them on. I believe less families are wearing them, buying and providing them.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris stated the hardest part, in sitting in my seat, is the contact tracing part. How do you remember who was masked and who wasn't, and for how long? Is he a sporadic masker, versus a consistent no or a consistent yes? It makes the contract tracing piece a little bit harder. If there is staff who don't, it's hard to reinforce to the kids. That's the other part. Are the staff who aren't choosing, actually encouraging and highly recommending to students? I don't know about that.

Q. Mrs. Doucet asked do we see a problem if we do mandate masks? Do we actually see staff quitting over this?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded I don't know. If we had the opt out provision, they could just file the opt out.

Q. Mrs. Doucet asked do you think several would opt out where it wouldn't make a difference if we did a mandatory mandate?

Q. Mrs. Briceno stated that we do live in the community and many do not wear masks. Do you believe we will have more that don't wear masks and "opt out" because we are giving them that option? A lot more students not wearing it. Mrs. Doucet added we should probably keep it where it's highly recommended and not change anything. If we change it and they see they can opt out of it, that may open it up where people just sign it and that way their kid doesn't have to wear it. That is my worry.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded the only benefit to the opt out would be you actually know in your contact tracing of who actually opted out.

A. Mr. Michael Welsh stated he believes the community looks to the school for guidance at what we should do, and that is why I haven't had one parent have a fit at the gate for offering their child a mask or anything like that. I really do think they look to the schools for guidance. Mrs. Doucet added I do think it's different with the littles versus the littles on up to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. They are completely different with the littles and the way that a family may act.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that what I've seen at school, anecdotally, is that the kids take the lead of what you are encourage them to do, for the most part. You guys are out there, what are you seeing Melanie and Carrie?

A. Mrs. Carrie Brandon responded that even some of our special population, I was concerned that they would embrace the "I get to say no now," and they haven't really done that. They may not come with it but for the most part I will say if we offer it students will take one. I was at Hurley on Monday supporting pooled testing. I would say 95% or higher of students were masking. I would have anticipated when school started it was a little lower, but once they started, they got right back into it. Michael is absolutely right the parents are coming without masks and that is a significant change from last year.

A. Ms. Melanie Block stated that she has been to all 3 campuses and will use the work half-hazard, it's random. Some days we are on our "A game" with our routines in the classrooms, some days we are on our "A game" with how we line up and sometimes we are not. Some classrooms have consistency with masking, reminding what proper use is, and if they need another mask. I see all campuses handing out masks, and people take them. There are multiple entry points and if we run out of masks or don't have them at points of entrance that's when kids are coming without them. Being the liaison to 2 schools



gets tricky, some classrooms are tight and others I ask, “were they really masking,” “what’s happening here” and were just chasing our tails.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked Susan, do they wear their masks on the bus?”

A. Mrs. Susan O’Rielly responded yes, they are required by federal law.

Q. Mrs. Briceno asked if we do the opt out option, we are still practicing within the law, where we won’t get in trouble?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded, I don’t know, there is risk. Our attorney said there is risk. You could have a staff member bring a case and say you are out of your authority. This is why they are recommending an opt out provision. If this employee says you are out of your authority, but you give them the authority to opt out, maybe you minimize your risk. Same with a parent, a parent says you are overstepping your authority, but yet you give them an opt out, is it really mandatory? Therefore, you are within the guidelines of the law. How is it mandatory if you give an opt out?

Q. Mrs. Briceno asked would that cause any issues if they come on campus and they have opted out? You may have some parents get riled up with you offering them a mask. Is it going to cause an issue?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded I don’t know. We wouldn’t discipline for those things because they are opting out. Just like now you don’t, you just highly encourage and recommend.

Q. Mrs. Briceno asked so it would be more like trying to keep track of who is wearing a mask verses who is not? Make it easier on the teacher in that classroom versus checking the boxes on who is wearing a mask.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded yes, contact tracing. The other piece is, if you just think about messaging, it sends a strong message that this is really an important mitigation strategy. That would be the only other benefit to it. Important protective factor until everybody can be vaccinated.

Q. Mrs. Doucet asked with regards to the Phoenix Union court case, if they do win, are others banking on them to win and then follow suit with them?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded I believe it would roll back to Governing Boards probably deciding unless Public Health decided to see if the counties would propose a mandate or something like that. I don’t know how that would play out.

Q. Mrs. Doucet asked was theirs with an opt out? Do you know?

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded I don’t think they were. Subsequently, Osborn opted out, Washington opted out, and Madison has an opt out, I believe.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris referenced recommendation #4 and asked do we talk to our community; do we want to draft a letter from our board encouraging masking and send that out? We could explore incentivizing staff as well as maybe students to mask and follow all the CDC guidelines. Those are things we could think about, it could even be combined. I did ask all admin and we didn’t come to a consensus on which way to proceed. If I did a tally it was leaning toward #2 but it wasn’t a consensus. There are definitely some concerns about what this does to culture, staff, and are we going to have any challenges from our families. All I can look to is last year. We mandated it but we did have an opt out there, as they could stay home. If you didn’t want to adhere to the guidance, we had an online learning model.

Q. Mrs. Doucet said she wonders how the staff would feel about that? An opt out mandate.

A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded that she could send a survey to staff and see what they would feel. I could gather some more data and we could hold an interim and meet back in 2 weeks if we need to and see if the Phoenix Court Case has been decided. We can see if we can keep it together in the next 2 weeks.

Q. Ms. Kristine Morris asked if there were any other questions.

A. Mrs. Briceno stated no, she is trying to keep things within the law.

## IX. ACTION ITEMS

- A. 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: Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet.
- B. Motion by Mrs. Doucet, seconded by Mrs. Briceno to recommend the Superintendent to collect data from staff on an opt out provision, monitor the Phoenix Union case and our data, and come back in 2 weeks to visit our mitigation plan. Motion carried. Aye: Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet
- Q. Mrs. Briceno asked if this is something we will table until we get further data?
- A. Ms. Kristine Morris responded its how you want to recommend. What I'm thinking I'm hearing the board say is they would like to direct the Superintendent to collect data from staff on an opt out provision, monitor the Phoenix Union case and our data, and come back in 2 weeks to revisit our mitigation plan.
- A. Mrs. Doucet and Mrs. Briceno responded yes.
- C. Motion by Mrs. Briceno, seconded by Mrs. Doucet to approve the draft 2022 Delegate Assembly presented by the Arizona School Boards Association and approve a delegate, Mrs. Susan Doucet, to attend the proposed 2022 Delegate Assembly on September 11, 2021.

**X. INFORMATION ITEM ONLY**

1. Governing Board Financial Report


**XI. FUTURE MEETING ITEMS**

1. September 9, 2021 – Pay for Performance Plan for Teachers and Administrators
2. September 9, 2021 – First Reading Policy Advisories 680-711 (possibly will be tabled till October)
3. September 9, 2021 – IGAs
4. September 9, 2021 – Qualified Evaluators for the 2021-2022 school year
5. September 9, 2021 – 2022 District Budget Study Session at 4:00 p.m.
6. September 9, 2021 – 2022 District Budget Revision
7. October 14, 2021 – Superintendent Goals
8. Request to have a Special Meeting in 2 weeks revisiting mitigation plans

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mrs. Doucet, seconded by Mrs. Briceno, to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. Aye: Mrs. Briceno, Mrs. Doucet

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Governing Board Member

  
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Date