

The Board of Directors of the Yakima Public Schools met March 2, 2007, at Yakima School District Central Services, Professional Library, 104 North 4th Avenue, Yakima, Washington. This meeting was advertised as required by law.

Present were: Vickie Ybarra, President; John Vornbrock, Vice President; Martha Rice and Walt Ranta, members; and Jack Irion, Deputy Superintendent. Others in attendance were Cece Mahre, Rick Doehle, Scott Izutsu, Becky Scholl, Karen Campbell, Norm Ames, Steve Lembeck, James Joyce, Sharon Surbrook, and other members of the staff and community. Board member Raymond Navarro, Jr., was excused from the meeting for a previous commitment. Dr. Jack Irion, Deputy Superintendent, represented Superintendent Benjamin A. Soria who was excused from the meeting for an out-of-town commitment.

President Vickie Ybarra called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 a.m.

Discussion

1. Legislative Issues Discussion

All board members and the superintendent attended the annual WSSDA Legislative Assembly in Olympia where they meet with all 14th Legislative District representatives and discussed WSSDA's list of legislative priorities. All school directors meet with Senator Clements regarding the simple majority, and board members Ybarra, Ranta and Navarro, Jr., met with Representative Mary Skinner regarding the WSSDA priorities. Martha Rice, legislative representative for the board, reported that education-related issues including the education funding shortfall for K-12 needs, WASL, and math are still big issues to watch. She will have further discussion with Senator Clements regarding the alternative routes to certification, especially for math. Terry Bergeson joined the board and superintendent for a dinner meeting where they shared issues from a local perspective, including a request to delay the WASL math graduation requirement. The board will continue to monitor legislative activities.

2. Community Linkage Debriefing

This was the first opportunity the full board had to spend time debriefing Community Linkage meetings. The intent was to get a general impression of community input from the five linkages held to date. Each linkage is recorded and the content of the discussion transcribed. Transcripts are provided to the board and will also be shared with the superintendent and associate superintendent so they can glean input that will be helpful to the district. The same question, "Envision what the Yakima community will be like when our kindergartners graduate from high school. What skills, knowledge and abilities will they need in order for them to live successful and productive lives and to contribute to the community?" is being presented at each linkage. Board members each shared their input regarding the process and community feedback they have heard. Consistent themes have come from the linkages, despite the great diversity of the groups. It was suggested that a public linkage be held with an open invitation to the community to broaden the scope of input. Cece Mahre, Associate Superintendent, clarified that the timeline for the update of the Roadmap allows for input from the board and that time could also be provided to include community input as well.

3. Policy Governance Discussion

Communication Plan - The board discussed ways to communicate information about policy governance over the next few months. Their intent is to develop a communication plan that is specific enough to set a precedent for future communication needs, including greater use of website capabilities. Communication to staff could include going through the District Improvement Plan Committee of approximately 40-50 staff, parents, and administrators. Consultant training opportunities could be better published for those who would like to attend, perhaps through media and on the district website. The board should be available to speak to specific staff groups who indicate they would like more information about policy governance. An invitation could be extended to staff groups letting them know they can contact the board to hear from them directly.

Timeframe for policy adoption – The timeframe for governance policy adoption was discussed. The board reviewed the four policy sections: 1) Ends/Goals; 2) Executive Limitations; 3) Governance Process; and 4) Board-Superintendent Linkage. Most comments and concerns have been directed at Section 4 and the board has addressed these concerns. The 11 policies of Sections 1 and 3 are targeted for approval at the March 20 business meeting. Section 1 could be revised later after the Roadmap is updated. Section 3 is the board’s operations and commitment to one another, and closely matches the policies the board currently operates under. The 15 remaining policies in Sections 2 and 4 would be left on Second Reading procedurally and targeted for adoption in the fall, allowing time for more communication and consideration. Required reports from the superintendent, as stated in Section 4, would not start until January 2008 and would be included in the superintendent evaluation process in Spring 2008. Approximately 11 existing Series 1000 policies will be considered for retirement at the March business meeting. Vickie Ybarra will review the points of the discussion with Raymond Navarro, Jr., who was not in attendance at the meeting.

March 8 Work Study Session – A revised model for board self-evaluation and Community Linkage debriefing will be topics of the training led by Connie Fletcher, policy governance consultant. The debriefing training will be covered after the Education Partnership Community Linkage to be held at Franklin Middle School that same evening.

4. Issues of Board Interest

The board reviewed their Meetings and Events Schedule.

5. Adjournment

At 8:13 a.m., there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Signature on File
Vickie Ybarra, Board President

Signature on File
Jack Irion, Deputy Superintendent