

ADOPTED MINUTES  
El Dorado Union High School District  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Special Board Meeting  
July 21, 2020

Submit to  
Board \_\_\_\_\_

**A. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS**

1. Call to order

This meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Board President Kevin Brown in the Union Mine High School Theater.

The meeting was opened for public comment on Closed Session agenda items. There being no public comments, Mr. Brown closed the portion of the meeting and the Board adjourned for Closed Session discussion on the following agenda items (GC 54957.7, 54954.5):

- a. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release (Cal. Govt. Code § 54954.5)
- b. Conference with labor negotiators (agency negotiators for the Board are Assistant Superintendent Tony DeVille, Assistant Superintendent Christopher Moore and Assistant Superintendent Robert Whittenberg) to discuss with the Board represented employees: Discussion related to Proposals from Faculty Association. (GC 3547 {a})
- c. Conference with labor negotiators (agency negotiators for the Board are Assistant Superintendent Tony DeVille, Assistant Superintendent Christopher Moore and Assistant Superintendent Robert Whittenberg) to discuss with the Board represented employees: Discussion related to Proposals from CSEA. (GC 3547 {a})

The Board reconvened Open Session at 6:45 p.m. in the Union Mine High School Theater.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Timothy Cary.

3. Attendance

Board Members

Kevin W. Brown  
David J. Del Rio \*\*  
Lori M. Veerkamp  
Jessica K. Rodgers  
Timothy M. Cary

D.O. Staff

Ron Carruth, Superintendent/Secretary to the Board  
Christopher Moore, Assistant Superintendent  
Tony DeVille, Assistant Superintendent  
Robert Whittenberg, Assistant Superintendent  
Pam Bartlett, Senior Director  
Chuck Palmer, Senior Director  
Serena Fuson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

\*\* Board Member David Del Rio conferenced in to participate in the Board Meeting. He is located at 4239 W A Barr Rd, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067.

Association Representatives

Stephanie Davis  
Jason King

4. Requests to change the agenda and approval of agenda.  
Mrs. Veerkamp moved to approve the agenda. Mrs. Rodgers seconded. Motion unanimously carried (5-0).

**Brown:** Aye  
**Cary:** Aye  
**Del Rio:** Aye  
**Rodgers:** Aye  
**Veerkamp:** Aye

**B. INVITATION TO BARGAINING UNIT PRESIDENTS/DESIGNEES AND/OR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

1. Mrs. Stephanie Davis, President of the Faculty Association, commented that it has been a busy year and she is appreciative to have been able to work with an incredible District team.
2. Mr. Jason King, CSEA President, shared that he is thankful for the professionalism of the Board of Trustees and he is looking forward to hearing how the District will re-open school.
3. The following staff and community members submitted speaker cards and addressed the Board on the matter of schools re-opening for the 2020-21 school year: Logan Barth, Ashlyn Glancy, Regina Miller, Theresa Del Biaggio, Carissa Drummond, Molly Smith, Lance Gunnerson, Kelly Bettencourt, Kristen Bowyer, Casey Rhyan, Paul Tomei, Kristen Roeder, Wade Allan Klinetobe, Leah Applegarth, Denise Soroka, Jennifer Rezentes, Myra Otter, and Hayden McGowan.

**C. Discussion of the 2020-21 District's Re-Entry Plan.**

Superintendent Carruth welcomed everyone and commented that he has received and forwarded to the Board of Trustees many emails expressing concerns about coming back and not coming back. This is a moment of high anxiety for everyone. Emotions and worry are present in all members of our community including our students, parents, families and staff alike. He thanked all of those who participated in the District's Re-Entry Committee who have had a significant voice in developing our plan for distance learning, hybrid education, and five days of instruction with safety protocols developed for each scenario until we are able to open as normal. Last Friday, Governor Newsom introduced criteria from the California Department of Public Health for opening schools. Specifically, he noted that those Counties not on the Watch List could re-open schools with conditions in place. In speaking with County Health, with our recent spike in numbers, there is a very high likelihood that we will be on the Watch List over the next 3 weeks. The timing for this could not be more difficult as we plan to determine how to open school. If you go on the Watch List, you go immediately to distance learning. In addition, State and local Guidance along with common sense recommend levels of COVID-19 testing that is available for students and staff to address a reasonable outbreak on top of normal community needs. These issues include the number of tests as well as the turnaround time for results. El Dorado County, in contrast to many other areas, has had relatively manageable levels of COVID-19. As a result of lower cases, our County has not been supplied significant resources from the State similar to more heavily impacted Counties. Our County Health leaders and officials have been excellent partners in managing our situation and are aggressively pursuing additional resources from the State of California. Since the Department of Public Health Guidance on opening up school was released on Friday, we

have been working extremely close with Public Health on their testing capacity. Based on a phone call at 4:00 p.m. today, with our current numbers of allocated and available tests, it is deemed by County Health that we are unable to open our schools for students and staff until we are better resourced. Therefore, our recommendation for action at a Special Board Meeting at another date will be to focus our energy on distance learning to start the school year and pivot as soon as it is safe to in person learning. We realize that our students need to return to school. We also recognize that Public Health has not been allocated the resources needed and are not able to meet the basic needs of testing for students and staff at this time. Thus, it is clearly unsafe to bring everyone back starting on August 10, 2020. We look forward to our County Health being provided the resources from the State to safely open schools. We believe the resources are there and just need to be deployed to our County. This is new information and it will take us all some time to emotionally and logistically unpack it. At the same time, schools will hopefully sooner than later open and we need to be prepared to provide quality, rigorous education for our students. We will be updating our community with this information. Tonight is an important meeting to come together as a community and family to listen, understand, empathize and think through how best we can transition from distance learning to, as soon as feasibly safe, coming back to in-person instruction.

Assistant Superintendent Christopher Moore thanked the parents, faculty members, CSEA staff members, and Administrators that participated in developing the District's Three Plan Continuum for re-opening our schools. New State Guidance was released on July 17, 2020. Schools can physically re-open this fall, but only if they have been off the State's COVID-19 monitoring list for 14 days. If schools do not meet this requirement, they have to start the fall with distance learning. Mr. Moore reviewed the six indicators used to place counties on the Watch List:

- A seven-day average of fewer than 150 tests conducted per 100,000 residents.
- More than 100 cases per 100,000 residents over 14 days.
- More than 25 cases per 100,000 residents over 14 days and a seven-day average of test positivity over 8%.
- A 10% increase in the three-day-average for hospitalizations.
- Having less than 20% of ICU beds available.
- Having less than 25% of ventilators available.

Mr. Moore reported that once schools are re-opened to at least some in-person instruction, it is recommended that surveillance testing be implemented based on the local disease trends. Staff will be tested periodically, as testing capacity permits and as practicable. Examples of recommended frequency include testing all staff over 2 months, where 25% of staff are tested every 2 weeks, or 50% every month to rotate testing of all staff over time. If a school opens and then goes on the Watch List, they should begin testing staff, or increase testing, but are not required to close. Currently, in El Dorado County, there are challenges to testing staff due to a shortage of testing locations and there are delays in reporting test results that negatively impact the effectiveness of contact tracing. For in-person classroom instruction, all school staff and students in third grade and above must wear masks under the new guidelines unless medically exempt. Students in second grade and below are encouraged to wear masks or face shields, but are not required to do so. Staff have to maintain at least six feet of distance with other staff and students. Schools shall intensify cleaning, disinfection and ventilation. Teachers must be six feet from students. Space must be maximized between seating and students are assigned seating. Singing must take place

outdoors and sharing of equipment should be limited. In secondary schools, an attempt to limit mixing of students among cohorts is encouraged to minimize contact. Staff, students, and parents should be educated on COVID-19 symptoms and staff and students who are sick or have recently had contact with a person with COVID-19 should be actively encouraged to stay home. A location on campus should be provided where students who are exhibiting symptoms may be screened and isolated from others until they can be transported home or to a healthcare facility as soon as practical. Schools should consult with a Public Health Officer before closing. A classroom cohort goes home when there is a confirmed case and a school goes home when multiple cohorts have cases or more than 5% of the school is positive. A District closes all schools if 25% of their schools are closed within a 14 day period. Mr. Moore reviewed the new distance learning requirements:

- Access to devices and connectivity for all students.
- Daily live interaction with teachers and other students.
- Challenging assignments equivalent to in-person classes.
- Adapted lessons for English language learners and special education students.

Mr. Moore gave an overview of the Three Plan Continuum based on community transmission rates of COVID-19:

- **Full-Distance Learning** – Students receive daily online interactions.
- **Hybrid** – Students attend school twice a week with approximately 50% of students on campus per day. Mondays would be reserved for shorter online activities for students and professional development for teachers.
- **All-Students Returning Every Day with Safeguards** – This would require at a minimum decreasing community transmission for two weeks with few to nearly zero new cases, little to no COVID-19 hospitalization, and approval from El Dorado County Public Health.

Mr. Moore shared that the Administration and the Faculty Association are negotiating utilizing the collective bargaining process to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding for working conditions under all three plans in the continuum and fall school schedules are dependent on the outcomes of these negotiations. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 22, 2020.

Senior Director Chuck Palmer reported that on July 20, 2020 CIF released their plan for athletics in the 2020-21 school year. From now through December 7, 2020 all schools in the District will be under “summer” rules. The current guidelines for athletics developed this summer will continue unless El Dorado County Public Health says otherwise. There will be 2 seasons with season 1 starting in December. The length of the season will be essentially the same as usual; all sports will be offered, with the calendar including playoffs and championships. However, due to the reduction from 3 seasons to 2, some multisport athletes may be forced to choose which sport they will do. For example, a girls’ basketball player who also plays softball will have to choose. This will be a tremendous challenge for facilities planning and transportation with fifteen to sixteen sports in the spring.

Mr. Moore stated that District employees and families need to be prepared for all three plans in the continuum this fall depending on community transmission of COVID-19. An Online Distance Learning Program has been created for students who wish to receive 100%

online instruction regardless of the community transmission rates during the semester. Currently, 318 students are enrolled in the program.

Mrs. Veerkamp inquired if the rigor via distance learning will look different from the last semester. Mr. Moore commented that our community expects the District to deliver a rigorous curriculum for our students. The difference will be that learning will be more synchronous and students will be interacting with each other online. Last semester, it was not a requirement to have student engagement online, so some families might have had packets previously. The expectation now is that learning needs to be more engaging and students need more social experience.

Mrs. Veerkamp inquired if rural families would be provided hot spots because a lot of these families will not have access to the internet that is close to what is needed for virtual learning. Mr. Moore stated that the District has looked for a variety of online providers who provide a footprint of where coverage resides within the County. The District is prepared to assign hot spots to the locations where families will have the best coverage, but there will be circumstances where there will be families that cannot access internet. The District will do something unique for those families under those circumstances. In addition, all schools in El Dorado County have Wi-Fi in their parking lots for families to access.

Mr. Brown commented that the State is not providing resources that the County needs at this time to be able to do the testing that is required based on Friday's guidance from the Governor. He asked if there is a timeframe on when the State would be providing more resources for our County. Superintendent Carruth stated that he would follow-up with the information in order for our District to be able to access the resources sooner rather than later.

Mrs. Rodgers inquired about the District bringing students with special needs or IEPs on campus during distance learning as they, depending on their disability, need greater services that cannot be provided in a home. Mr. Moore stated that the District is investigating our options with the County. The waiver process runs through the County Public Health Officer, but there is not a form created as of yet. It is the District's goal to provide services for our students with needs so that they can receive educational benefits and the District will work diligently so that our students can have their needs met.

Superintendent Carruth thanked everyone for their participation in tonight's meeting. It is incumbent upon the District to make sure that we do a great job. The Faculty Association is working in the same way to make sure that our teachers step up and meet the needs of our students educationally. We will be creative and find ways to fulfill their emotional and mental health needs as well as support our English learners and our special education students. We will find ways to welcome our freshman to campuses in this type of environment and make them feel like they belong to something. The challenges are significant and profound, but they are also achievable. The District will work hard together to think how best to address those. To truly be responsible to meet the needs of our community. It is a call to action to do the best we can given the challenges in this situation that we are presented with which is a once in a generation moment and we have to rise to take on that challenge.

Mrs. Rodgers thanked everyone who spoke tonight and stated that this is a hard decision to make as a Board, but they are making the decision the best that they can. She commented

that accessibility to internet is very important and the District will do everything possible to get access for our students. It breaks her heart hearing that students had no contact or very little contact from their teachers because they were unable to connect to the internet. That is not acceptable and that will not happen again this year. Our teachers are dedicated in providing the best instruction and will connect with every student, every single day.

Mr. Cary said that this has been one of the most challenging years for everyone in his experience as a Board Member and one thing that he has learned is that what we think today will be changed by the facts that we are delivered tomorrow by the pandemic. A virus is a dangerous adversary. In spite the fact that we live in divisive times and have different political views, no one on the Board of Trustees is going to make decisions based on politics. They are going to make them based on giving the best education that they can give to our students while keeping them safe as reasonably possible, along with our staff and the community.

Mrs. Veerkamp stated that this has been a challenging year for the District, State, and Nation. She commended everyone for all of their hard work for the betterment of the District. This was personally not the direction she was wanting to go with the new school year, but stated that the District's hands are tied unfortunately. She shared a personal story regarding distance learning and read a quote from Luo Holtz "Don't keep me alive by keeping me from living." She stated that we all need to keep that in perspective, appreciate each other's views, and be respectful to others. This was not an easy decision for the Board, but the District will work together for the betterment of the community.

Mr. Brown commented that he agrees with what everyone has shared tonight, but the District has to follow the Governor's Guidelines, the State Department of Health, the State Department of Education, the El Dorado County Department of Health, and pull all of the pieces together to see what the Board can implement. In addition, the District has to work with its partners including teachers, classified staff, and the Administration to try to make a decision that everyone can work together with. It is a difficult decision to make and the Board hears the cries of parents and students wanting to get back together for some normalcy in their life. He thinks that our students' mental health is the most important and we need to find a way through distance learning to find solutions to work with this model until we can get them back in school in-person. He stated that the Board hears everyone, but their hands at this moment are tied right now. When the District can implement the required State Guidelines, we can move one-step at a time and get things back to normal. Normalcy is what we all need and the sooner the better.

**D. CLOSED SESSION**

This session was not needed.

**E. OPEN SESSION**

This session was not needed.

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

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Ron Carruth  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees