



# GRANT SCHOOL DISTRICT #3

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## BOARD MEETING WEDNESDAY, August 25, 2021 • 7:00 P.M. DISTRICT OFFICE

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### MINUTES

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#### 1.0 PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

##### 1.1 Call to order

##### 1.2 Pledge of allegiance

Pursuant to notification of Grant School District 3 board of directors and news release to The Blue Mountain Eagle, KJDY and posted on the district web site. Haley Walker called the school board meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Other board members in attendance were Chris Labhart, Aaron Lieuallen and Dr. Colleen Robertson. Jake Taylor and Kelly Stokes were absent. Superintendent Bret Uptmor and Business Manager Heidi Hallgarth were also present.

##### 1.3 Agenda Review

4.24 Accept Letter of Resignation from Humbolt Educational Assistant – Dovie Wood

##### 1.4 Public Forum

Casey Hallgarth, Prairie City School District Superintendent/Principal, asked the board if they were going to make any decision on the baseball co-op at this meeting. Walker told Hallgarth that the board was going to have a work session to discuss the protocol before the September meeting and that they would have a decision for him at that meeting.

LeAnna Perkins read a statement to the board regarding the mask mandate.

Tirza Shaffer asked what happened to the meeting that was scheduled on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Walker explained to the audience why the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was canceled by the board.

Lieuallen asked if Uptmor could explain the intent of the letter that he sent out to the public regarding the mask mandate. Uptmor said that he understood that his letter offended several people and that was not his intent. He said that he was not sure how he was going to be able to earn their trust back but that is what he was going to try to do.

An audience member asked about the idea of possibly pushing the start date of school back and that not being expressed to the parents. The audience said that they feel like there is not any communication or transparency from the board.

A member of the audience asked the board what the purpose of the two different letters was. Walker said that the board was asked at the last meeting what their stance was going to be on the mask mandate so the board issued the statement.

Jessica Moore said that she thought that there was not supposed to be any decisions made during executive session and the board did. Walker said that the board did not make a decision during executive session.

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#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Lieuallen and Walker explained to the audience what would require a vote and what would not require a vote on the mask mandate.

Walker explained that the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was changed to an executive session because there was already information from the districts' employees that could jeopardize the start of school.

Jessica Moore said that the board keeps saying that a decision was made and so that suggests that the board did make a decision at the executive session board meeting. Walker said that the statement was already prepared and ready to be released at the August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting so there was not a decision made at the executive session.

John Ralph told the board that they have the power to push back against issues. Ralph asked the board what the bigger concern was for the students, COVID or masks.

Tirza Shaffer asked what Uptmor and the board were doing to get back local control. Walker told the audience that the board had written a letter advocating for local control, that she personally has been in contact with our legislatures, that Uptmor had written a letter and that Uptmor has been on several superintendent meetings. Shaffer said that she didn't believe that writing a letter was fighting and that the audience wanted the board and district to fight and the parents will fight with them. An audience member said that actions speak louder than words. Another member of the audience said that Uptmor's letter was very hurting to parents so he believes that "actions speak louder than words" does not really apply in this case.

Stephanie Parsons said that Bret's letter was very disheartening and has possibly pushed them to decide to do something different for their children. Parsons said that she didn't think that the last paragraph needed to be in the letter. Parsons told Uptmor that he needed to do some fixing because there are some very upset people in the community and there needs to be some fixing. Parsons said that she was pleased with the way the masks were being enforced this year and that her children weren't getting harassed about making sure that they are wearing their masks correctly this year.

Jessica Moore told the board that Prairie City is not doing anything differently than Grant School District in regards to the mask mandate but they are willing to communicate with and have a conversation with the parents about masks and that is the reason that Grant School District lost 30 students this year because the parents aren't getting the conversations or transparency here.

Uptmor said that he had received lots of questions on what was going to happen this year regarding masks so he along with his administrators decided they needed to issue a statement. Uptmor said that he wished he could take the letter back but he can't and he's sorry. Uptmor told the audience that he was still fighting for the school. An audience member told Uptmor that his statement would work for his apology letter.

Jessica Moore told the board that all they wanted was a conversation and they didn't get that from them. Walker said that if people wanted to have a discussion with the board please contact them and try to get that topic on the agenda. Jessica Moore said that they wanted to talk about mandates.

Jenna Hendrickson said that parents are getting a coalition together with board members and schools from the eastern side of the state and asked the board if that topic could be added to the September agenda. The board agreed that this was a good idea for a discussion with the public. Lieuallen asked what the coalition was fighting for. Hendrickson said "local control".

Lieuallen asked the audience what will happen when the district gains local control back and the local health department recommends that we wear masks, what will that mean to you. Jessica Moore said that we would be able to have a discussion at that time. Justin Galbreath said that he didn't want local control he wanted to be able to make the decision for his children, not the school.

Shanna Northway told the audience that masks are not the focus of the building this year. Northway said that the staff and students are moving about the building and the staff are not being forced to enforce the students wearing their masks. Northway said that there are things going on this year that are better than last year and that they are really making a point as a school not to make masks a focus.

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Tirza Shaffer asked what the new vaccine mandate was going to look like for the school and if they had a plan for that. Uptmor said that there will be medical and religious exemptions but the rule just came out an hour before the meeting so he only got a chance to glance at it. Uptmor said that the rule was a little loose but he was under the impression that the rule was going to be even looser than it appears. Uptmor said that he had a meeting about the vaccine mandate tomorrow so he should know more after that.

Cindy Dougharity-Spencer said that JDEA (John Day Educator's Association) supports teaching and student learning but they are not going to jeopardize their livelihoods to violate the mandate. Dougharity-Spencer said that the teachers support taking preventative measures, including cleaning, testing and wearing masks, but with appropriate accommodations. Dougharity-Spencer said that the staff do not want to be the mask police and are willing to work towards keeping the doors open and the students in school but they are not willing to risk their licenses by violating the law.

Walker told the audience that they were wrapping up public input and apologized for not being transparent with them.

Robertson thanked everyone who came and spoke. Robertson said that she always feels like we're all on the same team so, thank you.

## **2.0 Reports**

### **2.1 Superintendent's Report**

Uptmor gave an update on the new website and the status of it.

Uptmor told the board that there were enough athletes in both middle school and high school to warrant hiring a middle school cross country coach. Uptmor also told the board that the need has risen to the point that we also need to hire a girls' wrestling coach so both of those jobs will be posted shortly.

Uptmor told the board that he signed the district up for the COVID screening testing program.

Uptmor told the board about an open OSBA position on the State OSBA board for the Eastern region. Uptmor said that Chris Cronin currently holds the position and the board could nominate her if they so choose but he's not sure if she wants to do it again or not. Walker said that she will ask Cronin if she wants to run again.

Lieuallen asked what the status of the new camera system was. Uptmor said that after the vendors come do a walkthrough they do not make any contact with him. Uptmor said that the only one that has been in contact with him is the original vendor and their quote was out of our price range. Lieuallen asked if there were any opportunities to collaborate with other schools or agencies in the area. Walker said that she tried to work with the district and got a quote for the airport and the airport's quote was \$80,000. Lieuallen said that he thinks that there needs to be a push to get this taken care of. Robertson suggested Bret try Safeguard Security out of Enterprise. An audience member asked what the requirements were for the installation companies. Uptmor said that they need to have experience on the camera system and be licensed for low voltage electrical. Lieuallen asked if the holdup was because of procurement of the cameras and if so he said that there is a way to figure this out.

Labhart asked when the district had to report our enrollment to the state for our funding. Uptmor said October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Tirza Shaffer said that she understands that there are several staff in the district that may not be qualified in the positions that they're in. Shaffer asked what the plan was to recruit and retain staff that are qualified to teach our students. Walker said that the district doesn't currently have a plan for that but are having a work session in September to discuss this exact topic. Gerry told Shaffer that this is a statewide issue and not just a John Day issue. Shaffer said that she understands that but she's talking about what she's seeing in John Day. Shaffer said there seems to be a lot of staff that aren't qualified or only have a few college credits teaching the students. Stephanie Parsons asked if the teachers leaving the district are offered exit interviews. Uptmor told her that yes they are offered interviews but they don't always give all of the facts and we can't do anything about it if we don't know what's going on. Labhart said that it is not only the teachers that he's worried about and that one reason he's on the board is to figure out why are we hemorrhaging kids. Labhart said that he believed that Aaron was on the board for that same reason. Labhart said he wants to know why we are losing students. Labhart said that he is here to ensure that the students are in school.

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## **2.2 Administrator Reports**

2.2.01 Grant Union Junior/Senior High School Principal, Ryan Gerry, told the board that this year Grant Union was able to provide one to one devices for their students. Gerry said that the first day of school included 9<sup>th</sup> graders this year with them attending a freshman orientation in the morning and their regular classes in the afternoon. Walker asked how Grant Union was doing with bandwidth and speed. Gerry said that there were not any issues at this point and that the only issue they had run into so far was not having enough IP addresses for all of the devices. Dougharity-Spencer said that the internet was a little slower this year. Labhart asked what was being done for students that don't have Wi-Fi at home. Gerry said that the district has hotspots for students but that is typically for distance learning.

2.2.02 Humbolt Elementary Principal, Janine Attlesperger, told the board that as of this morning onsite enrollment was 255. Attlesperger went over her board report that is on file at the district office.

2.2.03 GU Athletic Director, Ryan Gerry, told the board that there was a volleyball tournament this Saturday at both Grant Union and Humbolt gyms. Gerry said that as a district we will not require athletes to wear masks indoors when they are playing sports. Gerry told the board that all of the open coaching positions except baseball have been filled. Gerry said that he's had a couple people interested in the position so he's hoping for applications from them soon. Gerry told the board that there were 17 players out for high school football and 26 out for junior high. Gerry said that 6<sup>th</sup> graders were being allowed to play junior high football again this year. Labhart asked if there were enough upperclassman to safely participate in the games. Gerry said that there was. Parsons asked why cross county didn't have uniforms. Gerry said that they had uniforms but not enough for the numbers that we are seeing. Gerry said that they will be ordering uniforms for cross country this year.

2.2.04 Seneca Head Teacher, Dana McLean, told the board that there were 17 students enrolled at Seneca. McLean said that there was currently a secretary position open. McLean said that they were having a good week and were looking forward to a good year.

2.2.05 District SPED Director/Diagnostician/DTC/ Tag Coordinator, Rhonda McCumber, told the board that they have had 10 new SPED students join them. McCumber said that this can be interesting because they sometimes receive the student before they receive their paperwork. McCumber said that the staff are incredible and working through this though. Lieuallen asked if the TAG committee was convening again this fall. McCumber said that they were and they were even working on a chess club on Fridays. McCumber said they have a lot of plans for TAG.

2.2.06 Assistant Principal, Karen Shelton, told the board that enrollment is up 25 new students so that's pretty much all that she's been doing. Shelton said that there are 237 students currently enrolled at Grant Union and that that number includes DVA students that are back in the building this year. Shelton told the board that they were going to push the ACT test back to September 17<sup>th</sup> this year.

2.2.07 Engagement Specialist, RC Huerta, told the board that there were about 200 people at the welcome back BBQ. Huerta said that Attlesperger and Gerry were in the dunk tank that Huerta rented and that he thought the night was a really big success. Huerta said that he held staff team activities at GU and Humbolt during in-service and he believes that these activities were successful as well. Walker said that it was great to see the students interact with the staff outside of the hallways. Lieuallen said that he had a great time at the event. Lieuallen asked Huerta to include the board on these sorts of event communications because he heard about it from a parent at soccer.

## **3.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **3.1 New Board Member Announcement**

Uptmor explained that we have an open position on the board and what that process looks like. Walker asked who would be willing to be on the interview committee. Robertson and Walker both said that they would do it. Uptmor said that we'd send an announcement out tomorrow with a closing date of September 8<sup>th</sup> so the new person can be appointed at the September meeting.

### 3.2 Board and Superintendent Working Agreement

Uptmor told the board that sometimes these are things that are developed in work sessions so if there is something that needs to be changed please bring that to the work session. Walker pointed out that she feels the board takes number 5 very seriously.

Robertson moved to approve the Board and Superintendent Working Agreement as presented. Labhart seconded. The motion passed with 4 for; 0 opposed.

### 3.3 Mission and Vision

Uptmor said that this was developed years ago and if we need to have a deeper discussion about this then we need to do that before we approve it. Labhart said that he thinks that as a district we need to go above and beyond the state requirements for graduation for our students. Robertson said that now that Governor Brown passed SB744 how does requiring more from our students work and if we do that are we breaking the law. Uptmor said that the past law says if you are doing more that's legal if you want to do less that is breaking the law. Shelton said that Governor Brown did not do away with the graduation requirements it is the assessment test that she did away with it. In the past students had to pass the test in 11<sup>th</sup> grade to graduate and that is no longer the case.

Labhart moved to approve the Mission and Vision as presented. Robertson seconded. The motion passed with 4 for; 0 opposed.

### 3.4 Establish 2021-2 Board Priorities

Lieuallen said that there needs to be some sort of effort or something added to the “communicating with stakeholders” portion of the priorities. Lieuallen said that he thinks there should be more understanding of the board goals. Shanna Northway suggested that the board communicate more with the staff because the staff are probably the boards best advocate for communicating with parents and community members every day. Labhart suggested that maybe a board member could sit in on staff meetings. Uptmor told the board that his leadership meetings are also open to the board members. Dougharity-Spencer said that the teachers would love to have the board come in and visit with them

No action was taken on this tonight because the board would like further discussion on communicating with stakeholders.

### 3.5 Easement Modification and Flood Control Structure Agreement

Uptmor told the board that the county came by and asked him if the district would like the sandbags removed. Uptmor said he said yes before he talked to Cyndi Nelson and some of his other employees that were here in the last flood. The county said that they need the Easement Modification and Flood Control Structure Agreement from the district with either a yes or no answer on it. Uptmor said that after talking to the staff his recommendation is to keep the sand bags in place.

Lieuallen moved to retain the Easement Modification and Flood Control Structure Agreement as presented. Robertson seconded. The motion passed with 4 for; 0 opposed.

### 3.6 TAP Grant Application for Asbestos Environmental Hazards Assessment

Uptmor explained that he tries to get the TAP grant applications in front of the board ahead of time. Uptmor said that the application isn't due until January but he wanted to have the discussion now. Uptmor explained that the grant will pay for the assessment and turn that information into an electronic system, currently there is a book at each site and that is very archaic. Uptmor said that the system can be updated with all of the projects that the district is working on so everything is in one place. Robertson asked if the grant is just for the electronic system or will a new inventory of the asbestos in our buildings be included as well. Uptmor said the grant will cover both. Robertson asked if the buildings will have to close if they find more asbestos then what was originally noted. Uptmor said that as long as we don't disturb it we can keep the buildings open. Walker asked if Uptmor anticipated getting grants to address the asbestos found from the assessment. Uptmor said that yes, he was more comfortable with asbestos grants now so that is the plan. Uptmor told the board that the grant was a \$25,000 grant.

#### **4.0 CONSENT AGENDA**

- 4.1 June 9 and August 3 Board Meeting Minutes
- 4.2 Recommend Adopting Resolution 2022-1 – District Organizational Procedures for the 2021-22 School Year
- 4.3 Recommend Adopting Resolution 2022-2 – Fund Transfers
- 4.4 Approve Humbolt Behavior Interventionist – Marci Judd
- 4.5 Approve Humbolt SPED Teacher – Shanley Cobb
- 4.6 Approve Humbolt 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher – Kristal Hansen
- 4.7 Approve GU Science Teacher – Jessica Suchorski
- 4.8 Accept Letter of Resignation from GU Spanish Teacher – Sharon Fritsch
- 4.9 Accept Letter of Resignation from Humbolt 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher – Elsa Spence
- 4.10 Accept Letter of Resignation from GU Middle School Football Coach – Kyle Erickson
- 4.11 Accept Letter of Resignation from Assistant Transportation Manager – Terry Harper
- 4.12 Accept Letter of Resignation from Bus Mechanic – Wayne Saul
- 4.13 Approve Humbolt 6th Grade Teacher – Amanda McBride
- 4.14 Approve 2021-22 Coaches – See Attached List
- 4.15 Approve Humbolt Instructional Assistant – Rachael Darrah
- 4.16 Approve Humbolt 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher – Kelley McDaniel
- 4.17 Approve Humbolt Kindergarten Teacher – Margaret Murphy
- 4.18 Approve Humbolt Library Assistant/Instructional Assistant – Kimberly Hernandez
- 4.19 Accept Letter of Resignation from Seneca School Office Specialist – Laurie Stinnett
- 4.20 Approve GU Spanish Teacher – Marcus Teague
- 4.21 Approve District DVA Teacher – Greg Fitzpatrick
- 4.22 Approve GU Computers/Business Teacher – Stacy Durych
- 4.23 Approve GU/Humbolt Cook Helper #1 – Fawn Brandon
- 4.24 Accept Letter of Resignation from Humbolt Educational Assistant - Dovie Wood

Robertson moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Labhart seconded. The motion passed with 4 for; 0 opposed.

#### **5.0 OLD BUSINESS**

##### 5.1 New Telephone System

Uptmor told the board that the new phone system was installed over the summer so this is a completed project and will be removed from the agenda.

##### 5.2 Student Store

Gerry told the board that the resource rooms are all connected now with an office and the school store. Gerry said that the floor and painting are complete and the staff will start moving furniture in today. Gerry told the board that the maintenance staff will start on the cabinets Friday. Northway said that the new location is creating more communication with the other staff in the building.

##### 5.3 Website

Uptmor told the board that the website was discussed in his board report.

##### 5.4 Long Range Facility Plan

Uptmor told the board that there is not a lot going on with this. Uptmor said that the board was hoping for a work session to talk about the long range facility plan but he thinks that the district's focus should be on recruitment and retaining staff and students right now. Lieuallen said that he thinks that the board still needs to look at this and have discussions on this and after this upcoming work session this should be the next one.



Uptmor told the board that this was discussed earlier.

Labhart asked if there is a cell phone on the playground. Attlesperger said that she encourages the staff to have their personal cell phones on them. Labhart said he didn't think that was good to use their personal cell phones. Attlesperger said that they are currently using a blow horn to communicate with the staff on the playground.

## 6.0 FUTURE AGENDA AND CALENDAR ITEMS

August 25 ..... Board Meeting  
September 7..... Work Session (7:00 – 9:00)  
September 15..... Board Meeting  
October 20..... Board Meeting  
Nov. 11-13..... Annual OSBA Convention  
November 17..... Board Meeting  
January 19 ..... Board Meeting  
February 16 ..... Board Meeting  
March 16 ..... Board Meeting  
April 20 ..... Board Meeting (Seneca)  
May 4 ..... Budget Meeting  
May 18 ..... Board/(Optional) Budget Meeting  
June 1 ..... Budget Hearing/Board Meeting  
June 2 ..... Last Day of School  
June 3 ..... Teacher In-service

## 7.0 GOOD OF THE ORDER

Labhart said that he thinks that there should be microphones in front of every board member and a microphone/stand in the front of the room for people to come talk at with speakers in the back of the room for people to hear.

Labhart said he really enjoyed serving at the in-service breakfast.

Robertson said that sometimes at meetings like this it feels like our communication is broken so she wanted to thank everyone in the room for all of their hard work and for getting the doors open for the students.

Lieuallen said that it sounds like there is a lot of excitement and he appreciates all of the work from the staff and administration. Lieuallen told the audience that if they knew of anyone that wanted to be a substitute please have them get on the list.

Tirza Shaffer asked if the district has loosened the sub requirements. Shaffer said that she has a teaching degree/license but not in the state of Oregon so she can't sub here yet but we have opened the teaching pool for teachers that don't have the credentials. Shaffer said that she thinks that is something that needs to be looked at. Uptmor said that Superintendents advocated three years ago to get some leniency for teachers but TSPC did not do the same for the subs.

Walker said that it is great to be back in school and her daughter feels like everything is normal again. Walker said she was super happy to hear the enthusiasm from the staff and that we're all in this together and if we work together we will have a great year.

John Ralph said that he would really like the board and superintendent to drill down and continue to work on this mask issue. Rand said the district needs to look deeper into this and really work on it to make some changes that are beneficial to our young people.

## 8.0 ADJOURN

Walker adjourned the meeting at 9:34 pm

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Haley Walker  
Chairman's Signature

September 15, 2021

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Bret Uptmor  
Clerk's Signature

September 15, 2021

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