

GEORGE-LITTLE ROCK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

The George-Little Rock Board of Education met for a special meeting on Friday, March 1, 2024, in the community/board room in the GLR central office building in George. President Austin Lloyd called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Board members present were Jason Fugitt, Austin Lloyd, Andrea Johnson, and Matt Mitchell. Andrew Sprock was expected soon. Also in attendance were Superintendent Tom Luxford, School Business Official/Board Secretary Cathy Bonestroo, Principal/Activities Director Tyler Glanzer, and guests Les Douma, Valecia West, Sheri Stratman, Trish Rockman, and Samantha Everhart.

A quorum was established. No public comment requests were filed, so no public comment was received.

A motion to adopt the amended agenda adding action for a CD was made by Mitchell, seconded by Fugitt, and approved 4-0. Sprock arrived at 5:03 pm.

Douma presented on the culture and climate study thanking the district for the opportunity and the focus groups for meeting. Every district needs to access culture and reinforce and encourage improvement with incremental steps focusing that you can get nowhere without proper planning. Discussion was held about making what's good even better at GLR and preserving the best and improving the rest. It is important to recognize to not lose sight of all the accomplishments including facilities, academics, and activities. Addressing culture is to cultivate a community of learners by behaving in a kind, caring, honest, and compassionate manner in order to challenge and inspire each member of the GLR community to become more than they ever thought possible. Build culture to the highest level possible to determine excellence with the realization that culture is defined by the worst behavior tolerated in the district sharing you will get what you tolerate. Four core principles to remember are: all staff need to be champions for kids, not just lip service; every staff is to expect excellence of one another and of students; all staff must carry GLR in a positive light at all times; and staff must strive to be a merchant of hope for students.

Addressing average includes facilities and the bathrooms which communicate to visitors along with needed textbook updates. While buildings don't create good education, nice things help and multi-year plans assist in budgeting accordingly. Lack of accountability does not serve the district well with inconsistent accountability impacting trust negatively. Making all staff feel welcome is a need along with consistent communication that is not contradictory creating confusion. Above the line behavior must be the expectation. Quality people are necessary for productive district culture and the need to collaborate between all three buildings. Culture is part of everyone's responsibility, but leadership is important with the superintendent and principals needing to work together and carry unity to all buildings fostering unity of all staff between all buildings. Accountability needs to be consistent for everyone with lack of accountability

creating employee issues impacting the district. Leadership modeling behavior in a professional relationship with the superintendent addressing district conflict with urgency having fierce conversations when needed. Leadership roles are addressing issues noting the longer they go, the deeper and wider the split gets so don't let problems exist. School board could consider culture periodically on the monthly board agenda and should implement the Iowa Standards for Effective School Boards. Good boardmanship was shared noting board is policy making and hires and evaluates the superintendent. The board approves hires but does not hire other staff. Personnel issues must be addressed at the administrative level, not board level. Board listens to stakeholders but continually refers back to the appropriate level whether it be a coach, teacher, or administrator. Confidential board business must remain in private sessions.

Hiring process was discussed reminding that candidates are evaluating you as much as you evaluate them. Treating new employees well, always making them feel welcome, and supporting them to do the best in their job is critical. Expectations are dedication to success of all colleagues treating them right personally and professionally. Lack of consistent accountability impacts district culture in a negative way and always will. Trust employees to do their jobs and responsibilities while holding them accountable is imperative. Expectation is trust must improve. Administrative conversations held must then have follow-through and maintain confidentiality by both parties. Words matter everywhere remembering words are not forgotten and sometimes harbored. Responsibilities of fostering trust at all levels is needed with no inappropriate conversations or rumors between or about employees as it destroys trust. Staff awareness of what is being said about colleagues and treating people right is necessary. Following district procedures and policies is important for desired outcomes and central office enforces board policies and procedures with constant changes from the Department of Education and IASB. Leadership erodes by ignoring obvious problems. Commitment to excellence is necessary while always challenging to be better.

Expectation must be all employees do the right thing, do the best that is possible, and treat others as they want to be treated. All districts will communicate what is valued through planning; a united effort; unity between buildings; monitoring; paying attention, modeling and communicating what is valued by each building; confronting inferior and average; and celebrating the good. School business is not appropriate to share with students and needs to be addressed. Everyone in the district must show respect both ways. Board consistency is needed in appropriate engagement and professionalism remembering not board's job to get into the details but the principals' and superintendent's jobs. The importance of principals getting into the classrooms and showing support to staff preventing new staff from floundering and feeling lonely and ensuring unified learning expectations was shared. Recommendation is to focus on 2-3 things accessing and addressing district culture. Remember to be kind, honest, compassionate, conscientious, and show integrity was encouraged.

Glanzer, Rockman, Everhart, and Stratman left the meeting.

Resignation was presented from Bethany DeBoer, 4th grade teacher, and Tom Luxford, superintendent. Luxford expressed his appreciation to the board with a lot of work to be done yet before he leaves.

SIAC committee members were presented for approval. Discussion was held on having spouses on the committee with the majority of the board fine with the committee recommended.

Discussion was held on considerations for the superintendent succession with hiring or sharing a superintendent for 9 students in funding if shared. Positives and negatives were discussed noting we have young administrators that need guidance and people are not treating each other well. Strong leadership is needed in order to share. Discussion was held with questioning commitment when shared between districts but good examples of it working. Reach outs were made for possible shared superintendents. Candidate pool was discussed with AEA concerns and their staff looking at returning to schools. Volatile time with district culture and projects was also noted. District priorities need to be determined for next candidate. Advocate in community was previously top priority bringing communities together. Culture needs to be a high priority. G & R previous search firm with Grieves and Richardson was absorbed by Grundmeyer. Lloyd shared was told Douma is no longer offering searches. Both Richardson and Grieves will again likely be serving the district for the search if Grundmeyer proposal is approved for a total of \$10,151.20 presented. A list of interims is available if the right candidate is not found. Public hearing #1 for proposed property tax was discussed for April 4 at 5:30 pm in George. Activity CD 7-month CD has matured at Security Savings Bank with Bonestroo's proposal to move to a new CD for a higher 5.25% was discussed.

A motion to approve consent agenda was made by Mitchell, seconded by Johnson, and approved 5-0. Consent agenda included resignations from Bethany DeBoer and Tom Luxford, SIAC committee members, hiring Grundmeyer for superintendent search, setting public hearing for proposed property tax rate for April 4, and moving activity CD to new 7-month CD rate at Security Savings Bank.

A motion to adjourn at 6:42 pm was made by Mitchell, seconded by Johnson, and approved 5-0.