

From Board Meeting

Report on Board Meeting of February 1, 2005

Action:

Sale of Bonds

The Board of Education approved a resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of approximately \$35 million in general obligation bonds. The money from this bond sale will be used to pay for construction projects in the district. Dale Okerlund from Wells Fargo reviewed the interest costs for the bonds. He said the interest rate on the sale of the bonds was extremely low. That is due to a good bond market and the district's AAA bond rating.

Discussion:

Policy Revisions

The Board of Education reviewed recommended changes to Policies JH – Child Abuse and IB – Academic Freedom. The changes to Policy JH were made to update the policy and bring it in line with state law. The basic intent of the policy will not change. Board members agreed to place the policy on the consent agenda for its next business meeting.

The discussion on Policy IB was a follow up to January's discussion. Curriculum Director Shauna Carl brought back two options to the Board. The first option was to eliminate the policy. The second option was a change in the language to say that teachers have academic freedom but must also comply with federal, state and local guidelines and laws. Board members reviewed both options and also discussed how academic freedom ties into the district policy on sensitive materials. At the end of the discussion, the Board agreed to place the option of deleting Policy IB on the consent agenda for the next business meeting, but Board members also agreed to future discussions on finding a way to publicly state the Board's support for innovation and creativity in teaching the core curriculum.

Reports:

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent McKell Withers gave board members a short review of the current legislative session. He handed out a legislative tracking sheet and thanked Board member John deJong for the time he has spent tracking bills and meeting with legislators. Dr. Withers said he will forward more information to the Board as new bills are introduced.

Superintendent Withers then told Board members a discussion about school starting times will be needed in the near future. Construction schedules and the need to bus students to other buildings during construction are leading to an increase in overall busing needs in the district. He said if we keep the current start times for all schools, the district would need approximately ten new buses for the next school year. However, he said the busing needs could be alleviated by changing start times at some schools. An in-depth discussion will be scheduled for a future meeting.

Other Items:

Recognition

The Board of Education recognized and congratulated Aileen Aviles, a Spanish teacher at West High School. Ms. Aviles was named the 2004 Teacher of the Year by the Utah Foreign Language Association. She has been teaching at West for 17 years.

The Board also recognized the district Reflections Contest winners. Each student was given a certificate and a medal. The theme for this year's contest was "A Different Kind of Hero."

Consent Agenda

The Board of Education reviewed and approved the consent agenda, consisting of the Purchasing/Accounting report; the Human Resources Department report; minutes for the Board Business Meeting held on January 4, 2005, and the Board Study Session on January 18, 2005; revisions to Policies IAA, IC, IGCA; and a ETS/Utah TRIO State Leadership Congress trip request.