THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Study Session
and Closed Executive Session

September 18, 2012

The Board of Education of Salt Lake City School District met in a Board Study Session and Closed Executive Session at 6:05 pm on Tuesday, September 18, 2012, in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 440 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: President Kristi Swett, Vice President Heather Bennett, Rosemary Emery, Dr. Douglas Nelson, Amanda Thorderson, Alama Uluave, Laurel H. Young, and Martine Cao, Student Member.

Also Present: Superintendent McKell Withers; Janet Roberts, Business Administrator; Dorothy Cosgrove, Associate Superintendent School Support; Patrick Garcia, Executive Director Human Resources; Jo Ellen Shaeffer, Director of Performance and Accountability; Kenneth Grover, Director of Career and Technology Education and High School Support; Paul Sagers, East High School Principal; Paul Schulte, Highland High School Principal; Mindi Holmdahl, Horizonte Principal; Parley Jacobs, West High Principal; David Martinez, Horizonte Assistant Principal; Mike Harman, representing the Salt Lake Teachers Association; Cindy Mills, representing the Salt Lake Educational Office Personnel Association; Jason Olsen, Public Information Officer; Tina Hatch, Business Administration Office; and others in the audience.

In accordance with the agenda prepared for the Board Study Session of September 18, 2012, two motions were made. Items are reported as listed in the agenda and not necessarily in the order they were considered.

The meeting was called to order by President Swett, who presided.

Prior to the Study Session, USBA Master Board training was held.

1. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:05 p.m. a motion was made, after which members excused the audience and remained in the board room:
*(1) That the board meet in Closed Executive Session to consider litigation, negotiations, personnel, and property items.  
**(Thorderson and Young)

Present for Closed Session were Kristi Swett, Heather Bennett, Rosemary Emery, Dr. Douglas Nelson, Amanda Thorderson, Alama Uluave, Laurel H. Young, McKell Withers, Janet Roberts, and Dorothy Cosgrove.

Board members adjourned from the Closed Executive Session at 6:25 p.m. and returned to the Board Study Session at 6:43 p.m.

2. BOARD STUDY SESSION

• President Swett welcomed everyone in the audience. She recognized the presence of Mike Harman, representing the Salt Lake Teachers Association, and Cindy Mills, representing the Salt Lake Educational Office Personnel Employees Association.

• David Martinez, Horizonte Assistant Principal, led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

• Limited Consent Agenda

*(2) A motion was made that the board approve the items included in the Limited Consent Agenda. These items are listed below.  
**(Young and Emery)

a. Purchasing Report dated September 18, 2012, which included an increase to a purchase order and a breakdown of items costing over and under $50,000.

b. West High School Student Trip Request for the Mock Trial team to participate in the 2012 Providence Cup Invitational in Denver, Colorado, from October 18-20, 2012.
A. STUDY TOPICS

1. Student Achievement Plan - Internal Communications and External Relations.
   Michael Williams introduced Jason Olsen, Public Information Officer, and Andy Shaffer, Web/Graphic Designer.

   Jason Olsen gave a Powerpoint presentation which included some findings of the communications audit that was done. Although the audit pointed out many areas where the district was doing well, it also found a few weaknesses, which the Communications Department has been working to improve. The audit suggested adopting a unifying theme that would run throughout the district’s communications, as well as addressing additional channels of two-way communication. Mr. Olsen outlined the main message of the district, with the supporting messages and data. He said he would like to send a districtwide newsletter to parents via email. Departmental newsletters would be located on the district website, and would contribute to the district newsletter. School Messenger is separate, and can link to the schools’ newsletters.

   Superintendent Withers noted the district is proactively collecting information for students, and should have email addresses for most students. He said those issues requiring universal knowledge will continue to be sent home in letters, postcards, etc. The board discussed resources for those families who do not have electronic capabilities.

   Andy Shaffer continued the presentation, showcasing the new cohesive look of the high school websites. School websites will have similar templates, standard navigation, will be searchable, and will have key components in the same place. They will be compliant with all Federal Communication Standards and will be responsive to all devices. Each school’s website will have distinct school colors and mascots, and the schools will have the ability to add important information and personalized pictures. He said he is providing training and support for the schools as they transition to the new sites. Schools will be accountable for the content of their websites.

   The board thanked the Communications Department for the work they have done to improve the websites. A copy of the presentation has been added to the official minutes.

   Kenneth Grover, Jo Ellen Shaeffer, Paul Schulte, Paul Sagers, Parley Jacobs, and Mindi Holmdahl discussed High School Priorities and Progress with the board.
Superintendent Withers showed a Powerpoint presentation about the attendance metric before the principals addressed the board. He said attendance is an indicator of which students will drop out of high school. A copy of the presentation and the handouts distributed by each of the principals has been added to the official minutes.

Parley Jacobs, Principal of West High, gave a handout to the board. He said there are fourteen Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at West High this year. The PLCs are focused on increasing student achievement and building relationships. West High will once again have an attendance interventionist who will work directly with students. Mr. Jacobs talked about the PACE program that is available at West this year.

Mindi Holmdahl, Principal of Horizonte, gave a handout to the board. She said their biggest efforts are based on the School Improvement Grant, and they have focused on math and language arts. They have math and language arts coaches, have pre- and post-assessments, and can track student growth within the school year. Horizonte is continuing its professional development efforts and have instructors working along with the teachers. Ms. Holmdahl said they are working to increase attendance using Advisory period teachers to call after a student has three days of absences. Horizonte has incentive programs for students who attend regularly, as well as active MESA and Latinos in Actions groups. She also noted the US Department of Education Bus Tour stopped at Horizonte.

Paul Sagers, Principal of East High, gave a handout to the board. He said East is a school that focuses on student learning. Reform efforts include AVID, Equity, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS), an increase in AP classes, and a high level of students who participate in concurrent enrollment classes. The students in the AVID program have had great success, last year students were awarded more than $170k in scholarship money. East High promotes a rigorous pathway for seniors, who are encouraged to have six core classes, not just four. Mr. Sagers said students are required to carry ID cards, which are used to track tardies. Students receive rewards and recognition for good attendance, and citations after a third tardy.

Paul Schulte, Principal of Highland High, gave a handout to the board. He said Highland had a wonderful start to the year. Students took 600 AP tests at the end of last year, and the 6:00 am ACT prep class is thriving. Highland also has a partnership with the University of Utah Lowell Bennion Community Service Center. Mr. Schulte said Highland is incorporating some of Horizonte’s techniques within their school in an effort to help students succeed, and they have two Horizonte classes at Highland. The Freshman
Team is having a positive effect at Highland. He said teachers are enjoying working as teams, and the PLCs are going well. Highland’s attendance policy is in the third year. In addition to positive rewards, there is a tardy policy which includes fifteen minute detentions. Mr. Schulte also said they are working to improve the flexible schedule, but have seen great benefits in the ninth grade class.

Jo Ellen Shaeffer told the board the district will be sending three people to Indiana for a Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) project. The conference will explain scholarships, financial aid, and how the schools can tap into the databases to help students. Ms. Shaeffer said 28% of the students in the district complete the FAFSA form, but many come back because they are missing an item. The conference will show how to help students complete the form.

Superintendent Withers talked about ‘A Call to Action: Make Every Day Count’. This program focuses on chronic attendance issues, and addressing them early and often.

Ken Grover, Director of Career and Technology Education and High School Support, and Principal of Innovations High, said things are going extremely well at Innovations High. Mr. Grover said attendance is different, due to the flexibility of schedules. Attendance is sent to the parents, and a mentor works with each student. He is working on legislation to change the requirements for seat time. In October, there will be a Digital Learning Summit. Innovations High will be recognized at this Summit as a top school.

B. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

1. Bully Prevention and Early Intervention.  
Superintendent Withers will address this topic at a later meeting.

2. Legislative Priorities.  
Superintendent Withers will address this topic at a later meeting.

Superintendent Withers is working with a small group to match the Metric to the district’s Student Achievement Plan, and with the Capital City Initiative Plan. He will know how successful this has been after the Governor’s Summit scheduled on October 15, 2012, at Salt Lake Community College.
4. **Mayor’s Summit.**
Superintendent Withers gave the board a Cultivation Model that will be addressed at the Mayor’s Summit, which will be held on September 27, 2012, at Glendale Middle School. The handout has been added to the official minutes.

D. **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board Study Session was adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

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Janet M. Roberts
Business Administrator

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