

Minutes of the Board of Education
Emery County School District
November 1, 2006
Emery High School, Castle Dale, Utah

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Board President Laurel Johansen. Other board members present were Royd Hatt, Marie Johnson, Sam Singleton, and Rue Ware. Superintendent Kirk Sitterud was present as was the Business Administrator, Ross Huntington.

Jed Jensen, Elementary Supervisor, and J.J. Grant, Secondary Supervisor were present. Kim Player represented the Emery Education Association. Jared Black, who will replace Mr. Huntington as the Business Administrator in January was also present. Both the Principal, Gwen Callahan, and the Vice Principal of Emery High School, Mr. Kelly Alton, were in attendance.

A motion was made by Royd Hatt and seconded by Sam Singleton to approve the warrants, the minutes, and the September financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Callahan reported that the recent change in the attendance policy from 10 to 6 days excused per term was having very positive results. The number of students who exceeded the allowable absences had decreased significantly compared to last year. Only 6 kids, 4 of which had surgeries, had gone over the 6 day limit this past quarter compared to 32 kids last year. She thanked the Board for their support of this change in policy.

Mrs. Callahan reported that math students are being tracked and monitored individually with accurate placement in classes being emphasized. Ultimately, this strategy will lead to higher test scores because students will be in classes where they can best achieve success.

Mrs. Callahan will be meeting tomorrow with other officials to discuss region placement for the next two years. Travel is a major concern. Hopefully, those issues can be worked out so that travel to competitions and student and teacher/coach time out of the classroom can be minimized.

Mrs. Callahan presented the Board and the Superintendent with a letter from Emery High School's football coach, Jimmy Jones, requesting 9th grade football be moved to the high school. Superintendent Sitterud stated that there had been discussions on the matter, that there were many ramifications, including an impact on the Carbon District. Mrs. Callahan indicated that Emery has a difficult time competing against schools that include their 9th graders in competitive activities.

Mrs. Callahan displayed a book published this year containing stories Mrs. Wendy Whittle's class and students from the Carbon School District had recently written. The book titled "Yarns From Carbon and Emery Counties" is a series of interviews with old coal miners from the two counties. The book is a tremendous accomplishment for Mrs. Whittle and her students.

Steven Gordon, the Girls Head Basketball Coach, was recently honored by being named 3A Coach of the Year. Lee Moss represented the Emery District at the Teacher of the Year Banquet.

Mrs. Callahan concluded her remarks by mentioning that Dean Nelson's wife, LaRita, was recovering at home from a very serious illness and that Valene Wakefield was recovering from a serious automobile accident.

Noting there were no findings of noncompliance, a motion was made by Rue Ware and seconded by Marie Johnson to accept the report of Kimball & Roberts, CPA's, the Independent Auditor, for fiscal year 2006 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Sitterud recommended the following personnel be approved for hire with the District: Tiffany Conover, as a three hour per day Educational Assistant at Ferron Elementary; Keith Brady, as a bus driver at Green River; and, Buck Taylor, as the Wrestling Coach at Emery High. A motion was made by Marie Johnson and seconded by Royd Hatt to approve the recommendation. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Sitterud recommended the Board approve the NCLB Consolidated Plan as written and presented. The Board having reviewed the plan, approved on a unanimous vote following a motion by Sam Singleton and a second of the motion by Marie Johnson.

Superintendent Sitterud recommended the Board approve the formation of a committee to study and develop options and recommendations regarding the District's Early Retirement Policies. A motion was made to form a committee consisting of the Superintendent, the Business Administrator, the Business Administrator Designee, Mr. J.J. Grant, two board members, and two representatives each from the Emery Education Association and the Emery Classified Employees Association. A motion was made by Marie Johnson and seconded by Sam Singleton to approve the committee. The motion passed unanimously. Rue Ware and Marie Johnson both volunteered to serve.

Non-action items discussed by the Superintendent included 1) a Memorandum of Understanding between the District and the Emery County Sheriff's Office concerning use of District property during emergencies, 2) the Utah School Boards Association Convention, January 12th and 13th, in Salt Lake City, 3) the merger of the College of Eastern Utah and the Southeast Applied Technology College, and 4) Public Education Issues.

Ross Huntington gave an update on the progress of construction at the new gymnasium at Green River High School.

A motion was made by Rue Ware and seconded by Laurel Johansen to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.