

# Naselle-Grays River Valley School District No.155

Lisa Nelson, Superintendent  
Rhiana Jacot, Executive Secretary

Board of Directors:

Tyson Vogeler, District 1  
Amy Hunt, District 2  
Aris Campbell, District 3  
Amy Chadwick, District 4  
Lonnie Eaton, District 5

Minutes of a workshop of the Board of Directors held on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the library and via Zoom.

Present: Amy Hunt, Lonnie Eaton, Amy Chadwick, Tyson Vogeler (by Zoom), Aris Campbell (by Zoom), and Lisa Nelson.

## **Call to Order**

Ms. Hunt, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Public Comment**

Before the board began discussing the topics for the workshop, community member Trenton Garlock, President of the Youth Sports League, invited the Board to a chili and chowder feed on December 17<sup>th</sup>, in the middle school commons. The chili was going to be provided by Hunters Inn and the chowder provided by Mo's Chowder House. He said there will be basketball games all day that day and they are partnering with the junior class for the chili/chowder feed. Mr. Garlock and the Youth Sports League are making t-shirts to give to each youth sport participant. He asked the Board whether or not they were allowed to use the Comet logo on the t-shirts. Mr. Garlock stated he is trying to instill a sense of pride in the community for parents and kids. The t-shirts are paid for through sponsors. Each sponsor is listed on the back of the t-shirt.

Ms. Chadwick thanked Mr. Garlock for taking on the youth sports program. She said her sons participated in youth sports programs in Ilwaco and Warrenton and she volunteered for the crab feed in the past. She stated the crab fee was a very successful fundraiser. Mr. Garlock said they intend to do a crab sale rather than a feed. Ms. Chadwick asked if they had enough volunteers for the December 17<sup>th</sup> chili and chowder feed. Ms. Chadwick suggested high school students could volunteer for community service. Mr. Garlock responded that they are not able to ask for volunteers from the students because they are combining with the junior class for fundraising and the junior class will be receiving 20% of the proceeds. Mr. Garlock also stated they would like to start selling concessions at games when there were available slots not selected by student classes or clubs.

Ms. Nelson said having the words Naselle and basketball on the T-shirts is fine. She suggested adding Grays River Valley to the T-shirts for full representation of all community members.

Mr. Eaton stated that we do not have a specific emblem for the sports programs, so what Mr. Garlock was using on the youth t-shirts is probably fine. Mr. Garlock stated that they also plan to sell coffee cups, license plate, etc., and the school will continue to sell clothing items for their fundraisers.

Mr. Vogeler recommended that the Youth Sports League make it clear when selling concessions that it is not the school doing so in order to avoid problems with the State Auditor.

Mr. Garlock also told the board that there will be a Christmas light parade on Knappton Road on December 18<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 p.m.

## **Safety Planning**

Ms. Chadwick stated that she had looked through the safety plan and began to wonder if she had enough training to even know whether the plan was adequate.

Mr. Vogeler said the statute that drives the safety plan was revised right before he began working for OSPI. The work he did at OSPI for three years was to help districts implement their safety planning and required drills. Mr. Vogeler said when the plan was first forwarded to the Board, he noticed deficiencies. Ms. Nelson told him the plan template was provided by the ESD 112 and Mr. Vogeler acknowledged this is a common approach. The later version sent out included additional pages and Ms. Nelson had filled most of the holes in the plan. Mr. Vogeler said the safety plan probably meets the minimum requirements. Mr. Vogeler said some districts still, after all these years, do not have a plan, and most of the plans are similar to what the District has. Mr. Vogeler said that the plan checks the boxes, but the intent of the statute wasn't to "make a plan" it was to do planning. He also stated this was not a criticism of Ms. Nelson or former superintendents, because unless a Board tells a superintendent that emergency planning is a priority there are many other tasks to do.

Mr. Vogeler said it is important whether or not the district has thought through different scenarios and considered the EMS and fire department and police department responses.

Ms. Nelson said she started with the template, but also met with the local fire department and several police officers. Ms. Nelson said she is currently meeting with the Pacific County group to plan a tabletop exercise.

Mr. Vogeler asked if the district had done tabletop exercises. Ms. Nelson said that when Ms. Wirkkala and Mr. Tienhaara were at the school that there was an active shooter drill. She said her exercises have been discussions with Pacific County. Ms. Nelson said we had a real-life scenario lockdown when a truck crashed into the ditch in front of the school and a man ran from the truck up towards the school.

Mr. Vogeler said there are three types of exercises, the first are tabletop exercises and they are essentially paper and discussion. Tabletop exercises can be done multiple times a year and will show the holes in planning with far less effort than the other exercises. The second is a functional exercise, where you can practice an element of the plan. The third is a full-scale exercise where you can test the entire plan. Full-scale exercises are expensive and require significant time and effort.

Mr. Vogeler also stated that since 2010 and 2011 the Legislature has not put money towards safety planning.

Ms. Nelson said that in the spring or early summer of this year we will be doing a tabletop exercise. There will be a full-scale drill at South Bend and Ocean Beach Schools in late summer.

Mr. Vogeler said one of the holes to plug is to make sure we are compliant with the State statute for safe school plans. Mr. Vogeler said the statute considers the way school facilities may be used as a community asset during a community-wide emergency. Mr. Vogeler recommended the Board may want to talk about programs that provide surplus generators. Ms. Nelson replied that the school does have a large generator in the basement. Mr. Vogeler asked if it would run the whole building, and Ms. Nelson said by the size of it she thought it would run a good portion. Mr. Vogeler asked if it was connected up, and Ms. Nelson said she didn't think so. Mr. Vogeler said the Board may want to think about how the school building could aid the community in the case of a very big disaster.

Mr. Vogeler said the safety plan also does not talk about drills and exercises. He said that the reunification procedures were not specific. He stated it is important that if the superintendent and principal are unavailable that there are additional people that know what to do.

Ms. Nelson said that the reunification plan is left purposely vague in case someone was coming to do harm we do not want that person to know where everyone will be.

Mr. Vogeler said it is important to know whether or not the reunification sites have internet access where you can run

Skyward and whether or not you have the necessary forms on site. There also needs to be additional information about transportation and bus staging areas. There should be agreements with other schools to send transportation.

Ms. Nelson said the district has a mutual agreement with Ocean Beach School District for transportation in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Vogeler asked if the district has a mass notification system. Ms. Nelson replied that we do have a callout system with School Messenger.

Mr. Vogeler said you can basically trash most of your procedures because there are only about four different things you can actually do with kids. Either it is more dangerous inside the building than outside, so you evacuate; there is a threat so you will lock down; if it is more dangerous outside than inside so you shelter in place. He thought the number of procedures could be pared down to six or eight. He explained that safety plans are legally binding, so if the plan states that the District will do something and it doesn't happen the district is potentially liable. Ms. Nelson said she thought that was only if we don't exhibit a good faith effort and that is what insurance and risk management is for. Mr. Vogeler pointed out that after the Uvalde shooting, people are being held individually liable.

Ms. Chadwick commented on the possibility of an emergency that would require outside resources to use the school building. She asked about the different teams and processes listed in the safety plan. The Board looked at the different roles assigned to staff at the school.

Ms. Nelson detailed her experience as a principal at Adna School District during a devastating flood. She said their job was mostly to get out of the way and they basically became ground support people.

Ms. Nelson said that one of her largest concerns in an emergency at the school is social media, Facebook, etc. Students will immediately be contacting parents on their cell phones, or parents will learn about the emergency through social media and are very likely to grab their personal weapons and come up to the school to retrieve their children. This is a concern in the sense that these parents could be mistaken for a shooter.

After some discussion on communications with parents during an emergency, Mr. Vogeler suggested preparing messages that would be available on School Messenger that could be released in the event of an emergency.

Community member, Kevin Pellervo, who had emailed his comments to Mr. Vogeler, asked about replacing ground level windows with polycarbonate to be bullet resistant. He asked about lockdown procedures and having students evacuate the building. Ms. Nelson said they had discussed that at a recent staff meeting. Mr. Vogeler said that when he was in Cowlitz County, they adopted the ALICE procedure as an intruder protocol. Mr. Pellervo also asked about arming staff members, which has been raised by other community members.

The Board continued discussing the safety plan. Ms. Chadwick asked if law enforcement had a copy of the plan. Ms. Nelson said they do not have a copy of the most recent plan. Mr. Vogeler said a table top with law enforcement would enable holes in the plan to be found.

Mr. Vogeler recommended that Ms. Nelson talk with law enforcement about lockdown procedures. He said that some of the lockdown procedures in the plan were templates he developed many years ago at OSPI, and they were revised, but those changes are not in the District plan. He explained some of the changes. He said that the red and green cards referenced in the procedures had been found to communicate to intruders where students are in the building. Ms. Nelson said they don't do that any longer, but the lockdown procedure had not been changed.

Ms. Chadwick asked about how many drills are done each year. Ms. Nelson said one at the beginning of the year and then one each month. She said sometimes "something happens and it becomes a drill."

Karen Bertoch commented on how informative the workshop was and that she wished more people would come.

An audience member commented that it is difficult to know when the Board meetings are scheduled. He tried to find it on the website and had difficulties. Ms. Nelson said it is on the calendar and on the main page. Mr. Vogeler said he thought it

would be a good idea if meetings and workshops could be put on Facebook because he has had people say they can't find them on the website. The Board discussed posting announcements of board meetings and workshops on Facebook. Karen Bertroch said she puts the meeting announcement in the Wahkiakum Eagle, but that is mostly Grays River and Rosburg residents; she said that Facebook might be the best bet for notifying the public. Mr. Vogeler said that many people follow the District on Facebook that may not go to the website. Ms. Chadwick said she doesn't do Facebook, but she chooses to use the website, so she recommended doing both.

The Board discussed possible options for a table-top exercise. Mr. Vogeler volunteered to put together a scenario. Ms. Nelson suggested the half-day in January as a possible day.

Mr. Vogeler suggested preparing an emergency declaration that could be acted upon quickly in the event of an emergency. He explained how tabletop exercises are conducted and said they are usually less than an hour.

Mr. Eaton suggested determining who was next in line in the event that the superintendent and principal were unavailable. Mr. Vogeler recommended incident command training for backup staff. Mr. Eaton talked about doing a walk-through of the building to look at any security concerns.

Luke Gardner passed out papers and asked the Board who the primary stakeholder in kid's education was.

Ms. Chadwick said it is the parents.

Mr. Vogeler requested that Mr. Gardner email the policy to him. Mr. Campbell also requested an emailed copy.

There was a conversation about the ability to hear the meeting on Zoom. Mr. Vogeler said that Ms. Nelson was clear but that the other participants were "muddy" and that he suspected it is the type of microphone being used. Mr. Campbell said he cannot hear any of the other Board members, and Mr. Eaton said that was not good.

Mr. Gardner asked to put something in the policies stating that the parents are the primary stakeholders in their children's education. He read a policy the Richland School District recently adopted.

Mr. Eaton said he would like to look through the policy

Ms. Chadwick said she loved the idea of having some sort of statement that says what the role of the parents is. She would like to be able to think more about it and possibly put it on a future agenda.

Ms. Nelson said the policy presented wasn't on the agenda and she would like to look at Richland's policy. Mr. Gardner suggested the Board could form a committee to look at the policy. Mr. Eaton said he would like have more information so he could decide if he liked what he sees.

Ms. Nelson said the policy presented doesn't address the CRT issue that Mr. Gardner had concerns about; she said the policy reads like a "warm and fuzzy" mission statement from the other side of the table and doesn't really put anything into action. She wanted to compare the proposed policy with other Board policies.

Mr. Gardner asked about next steps. Ms. Chadwick observed that the policy was not on the agenda so there could be no action taken on it.

The Board discussed the board/superintendent operating principles. Ms. Nelson said the Board had not reviewed the operating principles any time recently and with new members she thought it was good to put it out there to see if there are thoughts, comments, changes, or questions. She could not remember exactly how the document came to be, but said that most boards and superintendents have some working agreement.

Ms. Chadwick said she didn't see anything glaring that needed to be changed.

Ms. Nelson said in the past there were Board members concerned about the language regarding Board members coming to the school and going into classrooms unannounced.

Mr. Vogeler said the overall gist of the document is okay in that it says the Board and Superintendent are going to be respectful even though we may have differing opinions. He said on Page 4, number 7, the document says that items brought to the Board will be done so in an “objective fashion” and that both the positive and negative will be presented. He said he didn’t think this had been happening when receiving information from the superintendent. He reiterated a previous comment about the language used on the agenda which presupposes an action. He does not believe the Board and Superintendent are following number 7, and he would like to have more information. He said he has heard from multiple people before that the perception is that the Board is rubber stamping the agenda and not actually making decisions in the Board meetings. He thinks we need to overcome that public perception and thinks there are steps the Board can take to do that.

Mr. Vogeler commented on the guideline that all questions should be answered before the meeting. He said that this again adds to the public perception that the Board is rubber stamping the agenda items instead of governing. He stated that the Board’s responsibility is to govern as elected officials. When questions are asked and answered before a meeting and the answers are shared with all Board members, the practice is on the “ragged edge” of discussing matters outside a public meeting and violating the OPMA.

Ms. Nelson said she could see where Mr. Vogeler was coming from, but she did not think that was the intent of that item. She thought it was about questions related to the agenda. Mr. Vogeler said that indicated the need to discuss further and agree on the intent and fix the wording.

Mr. Vogeler said he was also concerned about number 9 on the document, which states that Board meetings are for decision making, action, and votes. He said that is what he has heard from the public – that the Board does not discuss matters and only takes votes.

Ms. Chadwick commented that’s why there is a rationale document. Mr. Vogeler stated the superintendent’s rationale document is a public document and should be posted online. He observed that District policy states that all materials made available to the Board for the meeting will also be available to the public. He emphasized that the policy states “all” materials.

Ms. Nelson said if that was the practice that she would send less information to the Board. She gave the example of a recommended hire and not wanting to share the reasons the candidate was chosen.

Ms. Chadwick asked if the rationale document could state the recommendation and additional information could be provided in the meeting.

Mr. Vogeler observed that when a recommendation to hire is made, he would expect that the candidates have already been notified. He said he would never write in a rationale why a candidate was not hired.

Ms. Nelson said she was struggling with some of the concepts, referring back to number 7 and how it relates to hiring recommendations. Mr. Vogeler said he thought the Board could work through some of these questions. He thought the basis of number 7 was good, in stating that the Board should get balanced information on agenda items. Personnel items are usually the purview of the superintendent. Mr. Vogeler said he does not think the Board gets enough background information.

Mr. Vogeler said in his view, Board meetings are not only for the Board. They are also for the public and are a way for the public to learn about the District and the requirements placed upon the District. He said if the Board simply takes votes at meetings and there is no information disseminated, he can see why the public does not attend.

Ms. Chadwick observed that Mr. Laine gives updates frequently. Mr. Vogeler stated that the public may not even know what the Highly Capable program is about. He said he is a strong believer in open government. In his opinion, open government means that in a meeting you give enough information so the public knows what the Board is taking action on. He said he hoped that everybody else sitting at the table agrees with that statement.

Ms. Chadwick said she agrees.

Ms. Nelson asked for clarification. She said that often an employee has started before the Board actually takes action to hire. He suggested for personnel items, something like “approve recommended hire” would be fine.

Mr. Vogeler suggested looking at Kelso School Districts agenda as a sample of an unbiased agenda. He said that their agenda would simply have an item that read, for example, “Policy 2312” rather than “Approve Policy 2312.” Ms. Nelson asked if that was the case on a second reading. Mr. Vogeler said yes, because otherwise it would assume the policy will be adopted on second read.

The Board discussed the first and second read of policies. Mr. Vogeler thought that the current practice doesn’t follow proper procedures because there is no recorded action or vote on edits or changes to policies. Whether there are changes or no changes, there should be an action to move a policy to the next reading.

Ms. Chadwick said she was looking at the Kelso School District agenda and she liked it. Mr. Vogeler noted it is neutral.

Ms. Nelson expressed her confusion about why action is needed at first reading. Mr. Vogeler said, for example, if there is disagreement at first reading about policy language, what will Ms. Nelson bring to the Board for second reading? Ms. Chadwick said it would be up to the Board. Mr. Vogeler observed that with no action scheduled, the Board cannot vote.

Ms. Nelson asked if Mr. Vogeler was saying there should be action on first read, and he replied yes. Mr. Eaton asked if that was only if there were changes. Mr. Vogeler stated that there should always be action to move the policy to second reading or subsequent readings if needed. Ms. Chadwick said she agreed. Ms. Nelson said her understanding was that the agenda should not say “Information Only” for policies, it should say possible action.

Ms. Nelson asked if that change would mean that policies can be adopted on the first read. Mr. Vogeler said no, then clarified that it is possible in limited circumstances if necessary for the best interest of students. There is statute that says if a policy is not required in statute, it cannot be adopted on first reading.

Ms. Chadwick said that Board members should read the policy before the meeting and come with notes about potential changes and any questions. Mr. Eaton asked for clarification that changes would only be made on the first reading. Mr. Vogeler explained that changes can be made at any reading up to adoption. Ms. Nelson said that the agenda should say “possible action.” Mr. Vogeler recommended that policy versions be sent with “track changes” so that the Board members can see what changes have been made; this has been the practice on task forces and committees he has participated in. Mr. Vogeler said that legislative committees do Robert’s Rules pretty well, and at any reading there is action to advance the matter.

Ms. Nelson had an additional question on number 7. Mr. Vogeler suggested that he could do some work on the document and bring it back for consideration. He said he also had concerns about number 2. He did not think that Board meetings were the place to argue or disagree with the public, but he thought it does not serve the Board well to sit silently and not respond or dialogue with the public. He said that it behooves the Board to respond to questions or comments in the moment even if it is the view of an individual elected official and not the entire Board.

Ms. Chadwick said she agreed with Mr. Vogeler. She remembers attending Board meetings prior to being elected and feeling frustrated because the school board chair would not give much information back. That experience is part of the reason she decided to run for the school board. She loves that we are doing workshops and have more time to dialogue with the public. She agrees it is important to respond to the public during the meetings.

Karen Bertroch said the more information the public can receive to help them understand the issues and how the Board votes will help make people comfortable. She said if discussion continues too long the question can be called. She said when the Board makes a decision without much discussion, she questions how much they have thought about the matter. She thought it was important for the public to believe they have a voice.

An audience member said it is important for him to hear discussion because it helps him to understand what individual directors think and that will affect how he votes.

Mr. Vogeler observed that because of OPMA, conversations need to happen during public meetings. It is possible to

violate OPMA with serial phone calls to multiple Board members. Being an elected official in Washington State means that sometimes messy conversations need to happen in public – that’s the law.

The Board discussed the superintendent evaluation policy/procedure. Ms. Nelson said they have been using the evaluation tool for the last ten years. She said the current tool can be cumbersome. There is not much in RCW governing superintendent evaluations.

Mr. Vogeler said it would be odd timing to change the evaluation tool in the middle of the year. He said he has seen some rubrics that are simpler and maybe better to get to the areas of focus the Board wants.

Mr. Eaton said he would be in favor of something different.

Mr. Vogeler said that is just a matter of finding an evaluation tool the Board likes better or one that can be massaged into what the Board likes.

Ms. Nelson said Board policy requires three occasions of evaluation, but RCW says no less than two.

Karen Bertroch asked if the evaluation is based off of Board goals.

Ms. Nelson said there are multiple criteria, but the tool is broad and kind of vague.

Mr. Vogeler said there are things that could be cleaned up and clarified, such as how the superintendent goals are stated. He suggested Ms. Nelson ask other superintendents for their evaluation tools, and the Board could schedule another workshop time to look at those tools and discuss them. He suggested if the Board had about six evaluation tools that would allow them to find something that works. He suggested a January workshop, but observed that the new evaluation tool does not need to be in place before June.

Luke Gardner asked why the evaluation is not done in public. Mr. Eaton said it is because it is personnel. Discussion followed.


**Adjournment**

Mr. Eaton moved, seconded by Mr. Campbell to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m. Motion carried.

  
Secretary to the Board

1-17-23

Date

  
Acting Chair

1-17-23 AH

Date