



# STEAMBOAT SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-2 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes  
March 17, 2025  
4:30 PM

**Board Members present:** Chresta Brinkman, Kevin Callahan, Lara Craig, Leah Helme, and Katy Lee

**District Administration present and presenting:** Superintendent Dr. Celine Wicks and Steamboat Springs High School Assistant Principal Karla Setter

## **1. Business Meeting - Call to Order**

Katy Lee called the business meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

## **3. Roll Call**

All members present.

## **4. Approval of Agenda**

*Kevin Callahan made a motion and Leah Helme seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **5. Consent Agenda Items**

Background information is provided in Boardbook under item 5.

- 5.1 Retirement
- 5.2 Employee Post Retirement Employment Request 25-26
- 5.3 Extended Leave of Absence Request 25-26
- 5.4 Resignations
- 5.5 Employment
- 5.6 Substitute Paraprofessional 2024-25

*Katy Lee made a motion and Kevin Callahan seconded to approve consent agenda items 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **6. Approval of Minutes- March 3, 2025 Business Meeting**

Background information is provided in Boardbook under item 6.

*Lara Craig made a motion and Chresta Brinkman seconded to approve the minutes for the March 3, 2025 business meeting, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.*

## **7. Reports and Communication**

Background information is provided in Boardbook under Item 7.

### **District Wide Celebrations - Superintendent Dr. Celine Wicks**

- SSHS Boys Hockey are the state champions. This is the first state championship for any SSHS team sport since 1998. Thank you Coach Brian Ripley, the rest of the coaching staff, and all the student athletes for a superb season!
- The SSHS Science Olympiad Team earned nine event medals including five 1st place results. The team scored 3rd overall out of 29 high school teams and will be headed to the state tournament in Colorado Springs, April 5th. Thank you coach Dan Brabec for your leadership.
- The SSHS Concern Band and Jazz Band performed in the annual Strings Festival School Day. Thank you Ryan Seyedian and student musicians for such a wonderful performance.
- SSMS and SGS Winter Sports - Teamwork, communication, promoting positive behaviors, and building confidence are all part of middle school sports. We want to celebrate our strong participation along with the dedicated coaches who make a difference daily. Being a middle school coach is so much more than just athletics, it is about character development, teamwork, collaboration, and connections. Nordic - 22 students and coaches Anne Barbier, Jackie



Buratovich, and Ingrid Sheehan; Girls basketball - 32 students and coaches - Cara Melland, Courtney Wiedel, and Sequoya Bertron; Wrestling - 31 students and coaches Cory McGrady, Marty Melland, Cara Melland, and Sequoya Bertron.

- SSMS/SGS - a Special shout out to Dennis Alt and Karen Draper for being phenomenal athletic directors and working together to make sure students and coaches have positive experiences.
- SSMS/SGS Debate - Thanks to the coordination of debate sponsors, Elena Maddox and Colin Campbell, along with community members, and high school students who participated as moderators, a successful debate between SSMS and SGS occurred on February 7th. The goal of developing communication skills, enhancing persuasive skills in writing and speech, practicing evidence-based arguments and deep reasoning, and broadening perspectives were all in action at the debate at SSMS. A second debate will occur at SGS later in the spring.
- SGS - Celebrating the 4th grade Ski-a-thon and KIVA Project- SGS is thrilled to celebrate two fantastic 4th grade teachers, Heidi Hamric and Teri Whitbeck, for their creativity, determination, and leadership in organizing a recent ski-a-thon. They partnered with the Ski Touring Center and the result was a fundraiser where students skied to raise money for KIVA microloans. The supportive turnout from parents made the day even more special- demonstrating SGS's mission of building community. In the coming days, the 4th graders will count the funds they raised - creating spreadsheets and practicing real-world math skills- before writing persuasive statements beginning with "I care because..." to determine which KIVA projects they find most deserving. They'll consider whether a loan helps more than one person, whether it is likely to be repaid, and whether it meets quality criteria. With hopes of repayment before the end of the year, students will reinvest the money, exploring geography by tracking each project's location.
- SPE Reading Jamboree - The inaugural Reading Jamboree came to life on March 6th! Staff and community partners: Catherine Stewart, Heather Overstake, Robin Alt, Kelly Gasau, Christine Russell, Sarah LaPine, Off the Beaten Path, Book Trails, Steamboat Art Museum, Healing Friends, Steamboat Reading, Spellbinders, Yampatika, Bud Werner Memorial Library, and the Tread of Pioneers Museum all contributed to the success of the event. They provided a variety of engaging reading opportunities, including reading with dogs, a book walk, a raffle, storytelling, and many other exciting activities. The PIC generously served pizza and desserts, and there were balloons everywhere, adding to the festive atmosphere.
- SPE Wellness Committee - Carrie Abalos, Kelsey Spahr, Amber Neeley, Kelly Gasau, Erin Kreis, and Sara Boyle have been instrumental in fostering a culture and climate within the building that makes everyone feel appreciated, seen, and energized. The kick-off of the first-ever Underground Spirit Week, starting with "Anything But a Cup" day. Students didn't bat an eye as they saw teachers sipping from beakers, cowboy boots, and other creative containers! Students started to catch on when the fun continued on Thursday when everyone embraced the trend of wearing socks with sandals. By Friday, the excitement was palpable- especially when five of the teachers showed up dressed as "Where's Waldo?"
- SCE Reading Extravaganza is underway! Students have been actively participating in the school-wide Read-a-thon for the last two weeks and will continue until March 24th. Students who read 20 minutes a day typically achieve at a higher rate than 90% of their peers. Money raised will go to support our local elderly community at Casey's Pond. The funds will also be used to purchase a Buddy Bench for the playground to give those feeling lonely a place to connect with others. A huge thank you to Cailin Ryan-McKeever, Jess Aldigheri, June Gornell, Libby Creamer, and Natalie Fisher for organizing the Read-a-Thon and all of the fun activities like door decorating, guest readers, dress like your favorite character, and book specific treats for all staff!
- SCE would like to recognize Natalie Fisher and Alison Feyen, who provide invaluable support to SCE students as school counselors. They lead counseling lessons during electives, overing essential topics such as recognizing emotions, strengthening self-advocacy, and developing conflict resolution skills. Additionally, SCE is grateful for Meghan Howard and Kayla Guttich, school mental health providers, who offer small-group, one-on-one, and family counseling. These members of the counseling team have been instrumental in helping students regulate emotions, build healthy friendships, and cultivate positive family relationships.
- SCE- One of Soda Creek's building initiatives for the last number of years has been the improvement of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process. This has been a significant undertaking led by assistant principal Kalie McHaffie. She, with the support of the special education team: Heather Sloan, Lucas Sherman, Courtney Moline, Molly Jenkins, and Molly Arndt, have worked extremely hard to refine how teachers identify students' needs and implement supports. Data-driven instructional cycles, supported by the interventionists, Andrea Johnson, June Gornell, and Nancy Hvambasal, and our literacy coach, Dimmye High, have led to a decrease in special education referrals and have increased the number of students achieving Above and Well Above Average growth in both math and reading.

#### **District Accountability Committee Update - Superintendent Dr. Celine Wicks**

- Last meeting was March 12, 2025 and next meeting will be May 14th



- Update is from the March 12th meeting- DAC will provide another Board update on May 19th
- SACs understand that they are maintaining their budgets and not looking for increases

Strawberry Park Elementary - SPE - represented by Jennifer Mack and Erin Benderly

- Enrollment is looking at a 3% decrease
- UIP achieved 2 year goal; mid-year check in with Early Literacy Gant - met mid-year goals
- Artist in Residence - performance with students, integrating with Specials teams
- Mental Health support - two counselors, Lunch Bunch groups, and Mindful Movement in the Mornings
- Clubs in action: All State Choir, STEM, Library Book Club, Crafts, Chess (to name a few)
- Attendance Awards for students has seen an improvement with attendance across the board; Family Events for parent involvement: Science Fair, Reading Jamboree; Community Meetings with the entire school once per month; Fifth grade leadership doing announcements for school; PLCs going well; SHINE Bucks program; Summer Reading Program
- Areas of Improvement: Math - implementing new strategies without major overhaul to curriculum; improve communication on safety protocols; get communication out regarding club opportunities

Soda Creek Elementary - SCE - represented by Amy Bohmer and Sarah Burg

- SCE does not have any budget requests, however, the staff would like to share future concerns which will possibly fall under budget
- Translation/Interpreters - with the increase of multilingual students and also students with medical needs, two interpreters who rotate between schools may not be adequate to meet all the translation needs
- Programming for Multilingual Students - SCE has 78 multilingual students with 65 of those being in biliteracy; this has created an unmanageable caseload; need to look at strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the Language Instruction Educational Program; increased need for translator devices
- Multilingual student numbers for reference: SCE 78 multilingual with 65 in biliteracy; SGS 77 multilingual with 53 in biliteracy; SPE 47 multilingual with 47 in biliteracy
- Incoming 4th grade class - current 3rd grade has 4 sections (one section funded by EFB) due to the significant support needs of this highly impacted class; 3 sections in 4th grade for these students will be 23-24 kids per class - concern that this will not be manageable
- Successes: continued improvement in Reading with HMH Into Reading implementation; PLC work and increasing effectiveness of the Data Protocols; Essential Skills in Math - having conversations around other subject areas where Essential Skills Program can be applied; 4th and 5th grade adoption of new reading curriculum; Building Thinking Classrooms book study aims to transform traditional classroom practices to enhance student thinking; providing many opportunities for students
- Areas for Improvement: Programming for the growing population of students who are not Native English speakers; curriculum adoption and instructional support for 4th and 5th grade reading; continuing work on the Master Schedule; continued work with Essential Skills Program and exploring its potential

Sleeping Giant School -SGS - represented by Joe Laliberte

- Budget focus is on middle school staffing ratios - want to maintain six core teachers in the middle school; align with SSMS and ensure there is opportunity for student enrichment
- Current full-time Social Emotional Learning staff is resigning and SGS is restructuring the program; current Spanish teacher will now teach some wellness courses
- Incredible progress in mid-year data; iReady reading and math are well above average; collaboration with other elementary schools has been beneficial
- Parent survey - all Spanish speaking families gave SGS a "10" on the survey; over 85% of all respondents gave an 8, 9 or 10 on the survey; Staff survey - 93% state SGS is a great place to work
- Focusing on parent/community engagement - more programming, not just events; book study on "The Anxious Generation"; building parents capacity to help with educational endeavors

Steamboat Springs Middle School -SSMS - represented by Meghan Alexander and Torey Wodnik

- PIC is helping with classroom supplies, wish lists, etc.; PIC and SAC have active participants
- In a great place with staffing numbers currently and wish to maintain current programming for next year's budget
- Student participation in clubs and supports keeps going up
- Authentic displays of student work viewable in the building
- Improvements in mental health
- Setting parameters for students while on district devices
- Focusing on improving community engagement
- Focusing on student awards/recognition
- May increase student fees next year



Yampa Valley High School - YVHS - represented by Jenn Haden and Kristyl Boies

- Not asking for any increase in funding; however, looking for external grant funding options; looking to do more with less money
- Exploring CTE opportunities and industry certification programs
- Reviewing BYU courses; focusing on decreasing expenses for online classes
- Many students are participating in concurrent enrollment
- Five students in welding program and all five received industry certificates
- Focusing on increasing student attendance

Steamboat Springs High School - SSSH - represented by Connor Payne and Jay Hamric

- Programs are growing and may need additional funding for CTE programming in the future
- Would love to have another emerging bilingual teacher; want to have co-teaching opportunities (push in model)
- Would like to have a Dean of Students in the future (Dr. Wicks - there are currently 3 assistant principals)
- Future budget - CTE/Innovation space needed; need another indoor athletic field
- Successes: 48% decrease in unexcused absences; 24% decrease in tardies; Restorative meetings have been working well; Detentions during free periods have worked well to deter absences and tardies; Minga system in place and helpful; Cell phone policy working well; Bringing back SAIL cards (raffle for students for positive behaviors)

District - represented by Dr. Wicks, Dr. Ridder, Stephanie Juneau, and Lara Craig

- DAC Chair - two year appointment

**Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) Update - SSSH Assistant Principal & SEAC Co-chair Karla Setter and SEAC Parent Co-chair Annie Lorenzo**

- SEAC attended a training at Boulder Valley School last year and built an operations manual based on their model
- Current members include three district office staff, one school board member, one school administrator, two special education teachers, and six parents; there is one district admin co-chair and one parent co-chair
- SEAC Purpose: The responsibility of the SEAC is to advise the school district on special education programming to improve the educational outcomes of students.
- SEAC Goal: The goal of the SEAC is to determine 1-3 focus areas per school year and develop recommendations for district leadership. These focus areas are intended to address concerns identified by the SEAC and to be areas of improvement with attainable recommendations that can be influenced by the advisory group.
- Started the year by identifying celebrations and concerns for the school district's special education programming
- Each of the six meetings for the year include district updates, community updates, and time for collaboration to identify focus areas for recommendations to the district; one meeting left for 24-25
- Survey to parents helped to identify two items to work on: Parent Support and Parent Communication- divided into 2 teams
- Strategic Theme 1: Cultivate an inclusive communication culture throughout SSSD that encourages educators, employees, and parents to have clear, and transparent communication to promote the well-being of students, families, and employees.
- Strategic Theme 2: Provide parents with a multifaceted support plan in collaboration with educators with a customized support plan to best serve students.
- Lisa Powell is coordinating community outreach and engagement; community events are posted on the district website and published out to the community; Updates are included in the SEAC parent newsletter
- Some community events have included: Halloween dance at Heart of Steamboat Methodist Church; STARS registration Stat sensory blast, partnering with YVAP
- Working on ways to get information out to families and community members regarding partnerships and programs available
- SEAC will share final recommendations at the end of the school year
- Karla Setter - we have a great group of parents and staff working together in SEAC
- Leah Helme - Thank you to Karla and Annie for their work; nice to see the progression being made
- Kevin Callahan - Sounds like effective committee work - excited to see what you do
- Chresta Brinkman - Meaningful growth for parents and students and great collaboration
- Dr. Wicks - District can help with the communication by continuing to provide a special education spotlight in the newsletter

*Katy Lee made a motion and Leah Helme seconded to acknowledge receipt of reports and communications as presented by the superintendent. The motion passed unanimously.*



## **8. Public Comment - 5:03 pm**

No public comment on non-agenda items.

## **9. Governance Process Policy Review**

- Board to discuss Board Policy Governance Review project
- Kevin Callahan and Leah Helme have been working on revising existing Board policies based on CASB sample policies
- Need to set up a work session with a CASB policy specialist to determine the best starting place for policy revisions
- Kevin, Leah and Deb will meet with CASB as soon as practical
- Katy Lee - other Board members can participate if they want to but the meeting will have to be posted if attended by more than Kevin and Leah
- Kevin Callahan - We won't know what the policy review project (for the Board) will look like until we are able to meet with CASB
- Leah will work on scheduling a work session with CASB

## **10. Board Member Updates/Comments/Debrief**

Chresta Brinkman

- Spoke at SCE PIC and SAC and SSHS SAC regarding Board vacancy; no SSHS PIC meeting at this time
- Attended Bargaining meeting - groups shared potential policy changes
- Attended girls lacrosse game - they had their first win at Aspen
- Attended the SSHS production of Our Town

Leah Helme

- Attended SSMS and YVHS SAC meetings and talked about the Board vacancies; will visit NRCCS this week
- Attended the CASB Resolutions Committee meeting - Committee continues to reach out to our legislature and governor regarding education funding and supporting averaging for funded pupil count

Lara Craig

- Attended the DAC meeting
- Attended Coffee with the Board with Kevin - no one showed because the Facebook post had it listed as 4:30pm; all other posts had the correct time of 11:30 am; this has been addressed for the next one
- GEAC meeting postponed till March 26th
- SAC meeting at SGS was cancelled

Kevin Callahan

- Attended Coffee with the Board with Lara
- Reviewing recordings of other school district Board policy adoption process
- Continue to talk to community members about Board vacancies

Katy Lee

- Attended the SPE Reading Jamboree - enjoyed the reading dogs
- Attended SSHS Our Town production - had a lot of student participation

Dr. Celine Wicks

- Met with Robin Schepper from YVHA and they would like to present at a future board meeting regarding the Cottonwood development

## **11. Plan for future meetings**

- SPE 5th Grade students - Single Use Plastic Presentation - April 7
- Transportation Update - April 7
- Cell Phone Update - May 5
- Summer Facilities Projects Update - May 5
- DAC Update - May 19
- FY26 Budget - Presentation of Budget Draft - May 19
- Discussion of Monitoring of Board Policies - TBD
- YVHA Cottonwood presentation - TBD

## **Board Workshops**

- Katy Lee - Working on dates for two half day workshops in August for Board review of the District Strategic Plan and Priority Discussion- week of August 11th

## **Coffee with the Board - Off the Beaten Path Bookstore**

- April 9 at 4:30 pm - Leah Helme and Katy Lee



- May 14 at 11:30 am - Kevin Callahan and Leah Helme

**12. Adjourn**

The Steamboat Springs School District RE-2 Board of Education business meeting adjourned at 5:16 pm.

Board of Education Business Meeting minutes for March 17, 2025 are submitted by: Deb Ginesta, SSSD Administrative Assistant and Secretary to the Board of Education.

Minutes approved by the Board on April 7, 2025:

-----  
Katy Lee, President