**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

Nevada Union High School - SITE COUNCIL

Thursday, October 9, 2014

Library Conference Room

3:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Carol Lee (Staff), Courtney Wadman (Staff), Cynthia Slayton (Parent), Dan Frisella (Staff), Junet Bedayn (Student), Joy Davis (Staff), Kyler Vaughn (Student), Mitch Giles (Staff), Megan Ross (Staff), Risa Roseman (Parent), Tori Newman (Student)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Carolyn Bronson (Parent), Jordan Horowitz (Staff), Michael Hill-Weld (Parent), Scott Mikal-Heine (Staff), Skyler Trent (Student)

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Dr. Louise Johnson (Superintendent), Karen Suenram (Assistant Superintendent)

Welcome: Dan Frisella, Principal

PUBLIC MEETING

1. Call to Order at 3:04 p.m.
2. Discussion of Roberts Rules of Order: Tabled discussion until Jordan Horowitz attends.
3. Agenda (Consent Approval): Correction 7a. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Moved by Tori, seconded by Kyler, APPROVED BY ALL

Recognize new Site Council members Mitch Giles and Megan Ross, both teachers at Nevada Union High School. Scott Mikal-Heine will also be a new member on Site Council but is unable to attend today due to just having a baby last weekend.

1. Moved Carol Seconded Cynthia that the motions and elections of the September 18, 2014 meeting be ratified en masse and the September 18th meeting minutes be approved. APPROVED BY ALL.
2. PUBLIC FORUM
   1. Invitation to members of the public to address the School Site Council with issues not on the agenda (non-action items which may be added to future agendas): None.
3. REPORTS
   1. Students (student council, non-action item)

We are looking for new avenues for introducing and promoting Nevada Union to middle school students and specifically 8th graders. We are hoping to bring them on campus and to provide a rally. This will give them a sense of the Nevada Union “spirit”.

We had a blood drive at school today with several donors. Our school was named “Donor School of the Year” in California for last year. Ages 16 and up are eligible to donate with parental consent.

The Eco Club needs to raise $36,000 to improve recycling and composting on campus. They will buy gold mesh trash cans and put them by the blue recycling cans. They will make this very clear with signs and videos/education. These will last 10 years. They are going to apply for grants. The students in the club and workability will be doing the recycling. The money will be used to purchase the cans and the lids (approx. 100), with hopefully some extra money leftover to purchase additional cans.

* 1. Principal (non-action item)

We hired an Assistant Principal, Shaun Hurtado, from Richmond, CA to start next Monday after October Break. He is coming with great experience in Restorative Justice, a positive approach to school discipline, revolving around student mediation circles. Peers will discuss incidences (e.g. fighting), with positive behavior intervention and supports. Mitch asked if an administrator is present in this meditation circle. Dan said that it is solely student directed and run, so only students will be present. Kyler asked if a victimless crime would be involved (e.g. vandalism), and Dan confirmed that peer mediation can still be used to address these incidences as well.

Tuesday night we had College and Career night, and there was a lot of positive feedback. College representatives from 8 different schools have been on campus this week. We had a board meeting here in the Science Lecture Hall, and Martin Mortensen for Area 5, South County, was elected to the Board.

There were 270 sign ups and more walk-ins for our Blood Drive today. Over 100 schools across the state are included, based upon 6-criteria. The organization of this event, the level of respect/attitude of donors (student and staff alike), and the consistency of donations were all cited for reasons why we were selected “Donor School of the Year.”

Many events will be going on tonight: Freshman football, girls volleyball, golf match, cross country event, swim-a-thon, middle school basketball, tennis, band program ice-cream social tonight as well. Nevada County teacher of the year dinner is tonight to recognize Lori Osmond this year, who will go on to compete for State Teacher of the Year.

We got our test results for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). We made 13 of our targets, but we fell short in English Language Arts for our school wide as well as our white subgroup and socioeconomically disadvantaged sub-group. We will be moving into program improvement year 3. We will be discussing corrective action steps at our next meeting.

Dr. Johnson said that it is likely 2 or 3 kids that would’ve made the difference. Our math scores showed big strides in improvement on the CAHSEE. Risa asked about our expectations from last year if math was below the required level. Dan said last year both English and Math needed improvement. This year we did make our Safe Harbor gains for Math.

* 1. Facilities Report ( Assistant Superintendent Karen Suenram)

Karen said that we are currently creating a master facility plan. Our current plan is old and has only focused on immediate needs (e.g. flooded room that needs flooring replaced). Community members have showed interest in joining a committee to discuss the new plan, as well as some Site Council members. There are immediate needs that must be addressed, including: No ADA access for NU Tech (no elevator, no lift). This costs over $100,000. We know we need to redo our parking lots, but this will cost well over $200,000. We have gas lines that need to be replaced; we had to cancel a day of school last year due to a gas leak. The architects will come to a meeting in November to present their list and plans, so Site Council can review these plans. They will do the same thing at Bear River. Cynthia asked if it is possible to review the guidelines beforehand. Karen said that we develop the guidelines and then present to the public what we want to fund. Once that occurs, we have to stick to those guidelines. Any building that we do any adjustments to will have to be brought up to the current ADA requirements. Cynthia asked if there are guidelines on what you have to address (ADA/Gas Line/etc.). Karen affirmed that they are identifying those and it will be part of what is presented to the Site Council. Our money is going to safety/infrastructure. We had to replace every sprinkler head in this building due to a recall and a potential leak issue. That is a $25,000 project. In the Don Baggett Theatre, there were major rigging issues that had to be addressed, so they also did some cosmetic upgrades at the same time. Cynthia asked if they have to address earthquake retrofitting. Karen said that about 5 years ago both gyms were addressed, so we are up-to-date with earthquake protection in our gyms. Some things planned for next summer include flooring in the library. Dan asked if the football/track was on the list. Karen said yes, it is on the master plan, but the timeline and money for when that will occur has not yet been determined. Cynthia said that the Athletic Department is working on funding towards this as well.

Tori asked if gutters were on the list. She said it is the number one student concern because the gutters are leaking and there are huge puddles being created. Karen said she was aware it was an issue but she was not aware that it was the number one student concern. Dr. Johnson said that it is important to have an architect examine everything first to determine what is possible and needed prior to writing up the bond. Risa asked if it can be written so that maintenance of the projects can be included. Dr. Johnson explained that general obligation bonds cannot typically include any salaries, so maintenance cannot typically be included. Karen said that the Board, at least in the past, has been supportive of ongoing, continued maintenance needs. Risa said that she feels and has heard from others that this is a well-maintained school that feels safe. Cynthia also agreed, especially in comparison to schools in Marysville, and she also feels as though the school is well-maintained. Karen also said that infrastructure and wireless access points are new and upgraded, so we are planning to get technology in the hands of all students. Partnership will have chrome books after October Break, and Bear River is getting 3 carts. There is also a classroom set for AP Chemistry ordered.

Mitch said that the process of getting this new technology has been very positive and smooth. The engineering lab last summer was also a large project from last summer. If anyone from our Council interested in being part of this facilities committee, they are welcome to join. Cynthia recommended that a student or two be involved. Tori and Kyler said that they would talk to Student Council to see if anyone is interested. Junet said that she would like to be involved. Jordan and Michael both said they were interested at the last meeting, so it will be important to follow up with them at our next meeting.

Kyler noted that the new outdoor tables outside the library are really nice.

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
   1. Coordination of Single Site Plan for Student Achievement (SSPSA) and Western Alliance of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Plan. (Principal Dan Frisella)

Principal Frisella and Joy Davis met to review the goals and look for overlap/connections between our Site Plan and WASC recommendations. Looking at our Planned Improvements in Student Performance: Goal #1: Increase Proficiency Rates on CAHSEE census for sub-groups. In math, we have 2 math support classes that are provided to Algebra 1 students targeted in need of additional support. We also offer Title 1 tutoring 4 days per week before school, after school, and at lunch. For English Language Arts, we offer 2 support classes for 9th graders targeted in need of additional support. We also offer remedial support in literacy for students in need of additional support. We are continuing for Year 3 supplemental support, and we are interviewing for tutoring vendors. Risa said that she believed some Title 1 families either didn’t receive a letter or didn’t read it. Cynthia said that an “All-Call” was sent about it specific to Title 1. Risa said she didn’t remember getting that automated call regarding Title 1 this year, only for Free and Reduced Lunch. Cynthia said it did mention Title 1 specifically. Risa said that the first round last year was well-received, but later in the year it seemed to slip through the cracks. Dan said that there is a way to do an All-Call specifically for Title 1 families, so he will plan to do an all-call about the program. There are also letters being sent out to all families regarding the possibility of transferring to a different school within our district (e.g. Bear River). This letter is a requirement for our status of Program Improvement.

Our only indicator for our current 10th graders who may need support would’ve been from the state testing, which did not happen last year due to the elimination of the CSTs with the transition to new Common Core.

We are looking into a contract with a new testing program to provide a practice test. We will provide 4 hours of test prep, pulled out of history classes, excluding advanced placement classes, and the English department will do some targeted test prep 2nd semester. The pull-out test prep time showed success in Math last year through their collaborative efforts with social science classes. The testing will be in March. Access to a practice high school exit exam has been recorded as an area of need. The English Department is collaborating strategies to help with testing prep. For example, Dan suggested each teacher provide a test prep question as a warm-up each day. Risa asked how to help students who really don’t have the skills to read/analyze/write. Dan said that last year they looked at the data from last year’s 10th graders, and there were no significant deficits, but this will be a new group of students. The only way to track current students’ needs will be in their classrooms. Junet asked if the Exit exam is supposed to be an assessment of everything you’ve learned. Dan said that it is based upon 9th and 10th grade standards. He explained that the national target for proficiency is supposed to be 100% this year. There is talk of program improvement going away, but no action has yet been taken by the politicians. Kyler said that the key to success on standardized tests is about strategies for taking these tests. English is so broad, so study books for the SATs - mostly vocabulary/obscure words, strategies help to get the answers right. Test taking skills taught in those classes would be helpful. Junet said that it doesn’t seem like these assessments are a true reflection of your knowledge. Cynthia said that even 30 years ago it seemed to be more about testing strategies than true depth of knowledge. Risa said that it could be looked upon more as critical thinking skills - able to look at the data and analyze it objectively. Kyler said that it seems subjective and it is hard to know the “right” answer for a subjective question. Mitch said that other classes, such as history, could also help with developing these critical thinking skills. Risa said in other parts of the WASC plan it includes overall education quality, not simply test-taking.

Dan said that during the staff development days we had great training focused on student learning and the use of assessment to nurture student learning. Formative assessment to inform instruction as opposed to summative assessment (end of chapter/unit/semester exam). By focusing on more comprehension checks and graded or ungraded progress assessments as a tool throughout the unit, student learning can improve by seeing areas of needed improvement. The staff also received more training about Professional Learning Communities for improved collaborative teams on campus and consistency among all teachers in a department. This will include more common assessments and review of the data to share best practices among staff. In this goal we are looking at this one test, but that is not the bigger picture for our school wide plans/goals.

7 out of 14 of our Adequate Yearly Progress requirements were met in our 12-13 school year. 10 out of 13 for 13-14. We made improvements, but not enough to make Safe Harbor.

Goal #2: Develop local assessments in core areas to inform instruction as we transition to Common Core testing in 2014-2015. Dan said that Algebra 1 has a 1st semester final and a 2nd semester final that is common among all teachers. Ongoing use of collaboration time, which has increased this school year by 8 additional days. This occurs once per week on Mondays. We made changes to our testing procedures last year by having a late start and reducing the testing environment with 25 students in a classroom rather than mass testing of 200 students together. Mitch said that the kids who are just bubbling in random answers or not taking the test seriously may be the ones we want to identify and focus efforts towards to help them see the importance of this test.

Kyler said that he knew it was a necessary test to graduate, but there is probably a sense for many students that it is another standardized test that won’t directly affect students or be important to them. Some students perceive it as easy to pass, so they aren’t motivated to try hard or to get a perfect score. Risa said that students may also not care if they can just take it again next year. Perhaps painting a “bigger picture” would help. Dan said that an assembly to emphasize the importance of this and to highlight/celebrate perfect scores. Cynthia asked if students feel as though they are taking so many standardized test if the CAHSEE is just not considered very important? Kyler said that some tests feel unimportant to the students because it doesn’t immediately impact them at all. Kids will typically take an Advanced Placement test seriously because there is a positive benefit to get college credit. These incentives make a positive difference. Tori said that many kids are scared of standardized tests; no one really enjoys taking them. By dispelling the fear of the test, and emphasizing that students try their best, that might be helpful. Kyler said he felt as though the CAHSEE is a waste of time, especially for upper-level students, simply because they don’t want to have to sit for that amount of time and test; it doesn’t seem productive. Joy said that many of the students she works with struggle more on this test, but they don’t want to appear to be needing extra time, so they will quickly just bubble in responses to make it look like they aren’t struggling. Having smaller testing groups in classrooms made a positive difference last year. Also, when everyone stays the entire time, that makes it less intimidating for the kids who struggle on the test. Rewards for achievement could help to boost motivation for high achievers. Risa said that perhaps a school picnic afterwards to celebrate completing the test for immediate gratification on everyone’s effort. Celebrate the effort, not just the high achievers. Kids who are at elementary and middle school students are more relaxed about assessments, and it’s not part of their grade, but they are more familiar with the process. Junet said that if we were to have a demonstration/assembly, she would advise being “real” with the kids; list why it is important to our school and to those students. Present the facts. Cynthia agreed that this is really important for students to be aware of the cause and effect for the testing results so that students can take responsibility for their efforts.

Kyler moved Carol seconded to table further discussion until our meeting. APPROVED BY ALL.

1. NEW BUSINESS

Risa moved, seconded by Dan, to table the bylaws discussion until our next meeting. APPROVED BY ALL.

* 1. Report to the Board of trustees
     1. timeline development and areas of responsibility

Dan moved, Joy seconded, to table discussion of the timeline development and areas of responsibility for report to the Board until our next meeting. APPROVED BY ALL

1. Comments from Council members and public (non- action items): None
2. Next meeting date set for Thursday, November 13th at 3:00 p.m. in the Library Conference Room  (consent approval): Moved by Cynthia, seconded by Kyler, APPROVED BY ALL.

Moved by Tori, Seconded by Dan and APPROVED BY ALL to adjourn the meeting at 4:37 P.M.