

**MONTEZUMA-CORTEZ SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1  
Tuesday, February 8, 2022  
400 N. Elm Street, Cortez, CO 81321**

**MINUTES**

**Work Session Meeting 6:00 PM**

**Board Attendance:**

Sheri Noyes, President, District F  
Sherri Wright, Vice-President, District C  
Jeanette Hart, Treasurer, Director District B  
Stacey Hall, Secretary, Director, District D  
Ed Rice, Director, District E  
Cody Wells, Director, District A  
Layne Frazier, Director District G  
Avery Wright, M-CHS Student Rep.  
Amita Crowley, M-CMS Student Rep.

**Absent:**

**Administration Attendance:**

Kyle Archibeque, Exe. Director of Finance  
Jim Parr, Exe. Director of Academics Serv.  
Cynthia Eldredge, Exe. Director of HR  
Debra Ramsey, Exe. Assistant

Drew Pearson, Principal  
Robert Laymon, Principal  
Eric Chandler, Principal  
Katie Nelson, Principal  
Whitney Rapp, Principal

**1. Call to Order**

a. The meeting was called to order by President Sheri Noyes at 6:00 PM

**2. Pledge to Flag**

a. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America was led by President Sheri Noyes.

**3. Executive Session – Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f) the board will discuss a personnel matter.**

Vice-President Wright made a motion to move into executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(f). The motion was seconded by Director Hart. Sherri Wright invited the Board of Education Directors to be in the session.

Aye: Frazier, Hall, Hart, Noyes, Rice, Wells and Wright Nay: None. Motion carried.

This session started at 6:02 PM and the regular meeting reconvened at 6:32 PM.

**4. Set the Agenda**

Director Hall moved to set the agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Wells. Director Rice requested a change be added, item j. appoint Executive Directors as acting Superintendent with James Parr as emergency contact.

Aye: Frazier, Hall, Hart, Noyes, Rice, Wells and Wright Nay: None. Motion carried.

Director Rice requested another addition to the agenda item k. discuss the Board of Education’s process of hiring an Interim Superintendent. With that in mind he moved to set the agenda and Vice President Wright seconded the motion.

Aye: Frazier, Hall, Hart, Noyes, Rice, Wells and Wright Nay: None. Motion carried.

## 5. Discussions Items

### a. Attorney Letter of Engagement

President Noyes asked the board members to review the letter from Miller Farmer Law that was in their packet as it will be considered for an action item at the February regular meeting. This attorney had presented at the School Board's Retreat in January. President Noyes said that the board was considering them as a second law firm to allow the district more options when seeking counsel.

### b. MOU with Grand Canyon University

President Noyes explained this will be an action item on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>. The board was asked to consider allowing a former student to work with RE-1 Health Services to complete her study hours. Noyes asked the board to review to documents.

### c. ESSER III

Mr. Archibeque showed a presentation on the application process for ESSER III funding, what it meant to the district, and a review of the community survey. There are requirements for monitoring and reporting; and limits to what the district can purchase with ESSER III. He cited that one misconception about these funds was people get confused between the allowable uses and the actual requested purchases. We did receive ESSER I and II. The district would not be required to share this money with the charters but so far it has. The district submitted the application (approval & transmittal assurances and GEPA statement) back on May 23, 2021. Now we have until March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to submit the budget. The district needs to host a community survey and receive public comment. Then the district can come up with the narrative to post on our website along with our Citizen's Guide to Coronavirus-19 Response document for public viewing. The total allocation would be \$9,751,290.00. These funds would need to be spent by Sept. 2023, or extension of Sept. 2024. Twenty percent of the funds need to address learning loss as an effect of Coronavirus and the rest can go towards IDEA, AEFLA, CTE, etc. Other suggested uses were cleaning, and sanitizing set up/prep and educational technology. Afterschool/Summer offerings like tutoring could benefit students and staff. Nonallowable expenses are bonuses, incentives, salary increases, new build construction. The survey is up on the district's website and had 264 responses as of today with 50% being parents and the rest mostly staff. As of this report the most popular response on the survey was to address learning loss. There were mixed opinions about online learning, but it was mentioned often and the need for mental health counseling was identified by many. The community survey will be available until Friday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Archibeque will report on the finalized survey on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> at the regular meeting.

### d. School Calendar 2022-2023

Mr. Archibeque gave a handout of 3 sample calendars. These were compiled by the principals and the executive team. The objective was to have a 4-day option that competes with the surrounding districts. Past options that have been put in front of the school board have had the challenge of addressing the issue of M-CSD's Improvement status up against the state ruling of 160 days. Other schools are doing waivers to get around going under 160 days, but they are not on improvement status.

Option A: 5-day Option that mimics the first half of 21/22.

Option B: 4-day Option with 147 Student days, aligns more with surrounding districts. Requires CDE approval.

Option C: 4-day Option with 160 Student Days, starts in July and goes into June.

There were no instructional times given because it's still too broad. Those options will be given when we get down to 1 calendar. Archibeque will be putting out a survey to the community and staff and then will take it to the District Accountability Committee. CDE would need to sign off as well if a 4-day option was chosen and then the board could adopt/approve the calendar at their March meeting.

Director Hall said spring break on option C should be a week earlier. Mr. Archibeque will fix that before it goes out. The board asked Mr. Archibeque to see if the options align with PCC's calendar. A conversation about support staffing concerns took place. Director Frazier expressed concerns about the 2 days around the Holiday break may not be well attended. Mr. Parr said some of those days were affected by the semester start and end times so the district can balance the days. Suggested color changes were suggested as the orange was hard to see. Mr. Archibeque said the survey he is developing will be cut and dry – option A, B, or C.

Director Rice gave a handout titled The Four-Day School Week Information Manual.

**e. Changing Meeting Times for 2021-2022**

President Noyes said the board had expressed that they wished to change the normal meeting times from 7:00PM to be 6:00 PM from this point on. She asked Mrs. Ramsey to update the website with this change.

**f. Board Packets**

President Noyes reported that with many requests for the board to be more transparent and questions coming in about the contents of the board packets that she would support the district in posting them online. This may also be a way to work around the needs for the Board Docs program purchase. Mrs. Eldredge asked if she should no longer include open positions, exit interviews, and insurance reports. The board said that Human Resources report may not be available for public viewing or any items that were not public information. President Noyes said this should go back as far as July of this school year with the most current being posted at the meeting start time.

Mrs. Eldredge reported to the board that the district had received a high volume of Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) requests this week. She said Parr, Archibque, Ramsey, Knox, Wilkinson, herself, and the attorney had all been working to get the information rounded up by the required deadlines. In the process, the district set up a new page with a form and our policies, on the district's website. This form will come before the board on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> for first reading as an exhibit to our current policy. Per our policy, fees may apply if staff's time goes over an hour or if copies are requested. Any collected fees would go in the general fund. Melissa Barber from Caplan and Earnest Law has offered to do a training with the board and administrative staff, on the Sunshine laws and CORA, if the board would like.

**g. USI Letter of Recommendation**

President Noyes asked the City of Cortez if they would recommend USI as an Insurance Broker Consultant. They responded with a letter addressed to Sheri Noyes that they would highly recommend USI, which President Noyes read aloud. Director Hall said she could attest as a spouse of a long time City former City of Cortez Employee that their benefits were great and provided a great recruiting tool. Mrs. Eldredge reported that since changing the district's Broker of Record to USI she has started receiving daily and weekly updates from our carriers. USI is currently preparing a report of finding and proposed changes that would be presented to the board at the Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Director Wells mentioned that during USI's presentation at the board retreat they claimed they could save the district 6 million in 5 years, or more. Eldredge said one problem is that all our renewal dates with the different providers are all staggered at different times of the year. USI is building the district a team of 12 people that will work directly with us on each type of needs. Eldredge said reinstating the benefits committee would give her a team to assist with learning and by-in that could eventually assist in making insurance policy changes. USI wants to work towards every employee understanding their insurance benefit and using it, but education about the offerings was important.

**h. Policy that passed 1<sup>st</sup> Reading:****i. AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity**

All these policies in items i. through vii. went through first reading with Dr. VanderWey listed as the Compliance Officer and current policy list Lis Richard. Mrs. Eldredge cannot be both Compliance officer and Title IX Coordinator. A conversation about what must happen and who has the training took place. Mrs. Eldredge and Drew Pearson suggested contracting with an outside agency for these services. This has been done before by the district and she had some she could contact and inquire about their services. President Noyes asked Mrs. Eldredge to come back with cost information and to update the wording on the policy so the board could move forward with second reading on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**ii. AC-E-1 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity****iii. AC-R-1 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity****iv. ACE Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability****v. ACE-E-1 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability****vi. ACE-E-2 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability****vii. ACE-R Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability**

**viii. CCA Organizational Chart**

President Noyes reported that changes were made by the executive team since first reading to add the position of Assistant Superintendent back to the policy. A copy of the district's working Leadership Chart was also provided as it included names and not just the titles.

**ix. EBCE School Closings and Cancellations**

President Noyes highlighted that the requested changes had been made to this draft version of policy EBCE.

**x. GDO-E Support Staff Evaluation Form**

Mrs. Eldredge said this new form will be used yearly to assist with contract renewals in March. Director Wells asked if trainings had taken place. Mrs. Eldredge reported that she has assisted with some, but trainings had not taken place. There was limited Vector training that could be assigned but it wasn't her first choice. Eldredge has asked Jaycee Syra to help in gathering and identifying some good training options.

**i. Policy that was requested for more review****i. IMB Teaching about Controversial / Sensitive Issues and Use of Controversial Materials**

President Noyes highlighted that the requested changes had been made to this draft version of policy IMB and IMB-R.

**ii. IMB-R Teaching about Controversial / Sensitive Issues and Use of Controversial Materials****iii. GBGM Staff Discretionary Leave**

Ramsey reminded this policy was not up for change, but requested as a reference to GBGM-E.

**iv. GBGM-E Request for Discretionary / Sick Leave**

Director Frazier gave a handout with suggested wording changes. Frazier did not agree with the policies lack of flexibility for our staff. A discussion ensued. Mrs. Eldredge said that the more current terminology would be "paid time off or PTO" but that would be for a much bigger conversation as new law in 2022 requires businesses with more than 16 employees to provide 1 hour of PTO for every 30 hours worked up to 48 hours a year. Eldredge said the district already offers a more generous version of PTO. If the district considers changing the policy, the effects will need to be looked at from all angles. Eldredge said that that conversation would be a good time to talk about the Sick bank as well. She asked that if the board moves that direction that new policy that would affect employee contracts be implemented as new contract years begin, not mid-year.

**j. ACTION ITEM: Appoint Executive Directors as acting Superintendent with James Parr as emergency contact**

Vice President Wright moved to appoint the 3 executive directors as acting Superintendent with James Parr being the emergency contact. Director Hart seconded the motion.

Aye: Frazier, Hall, Hart, Noyes, Rice, Wells and Wright Nay: None. Motion carried.

Noyes thanked the Executive Directors for assisting the district at this time.

**k. Discuss the Board of Education's process of hiring an Interim Superintendent**


President Noyes reviewed the process the board will follow to hire an interim Superintendent.

1. The district will accept letters of intent to apply through Monday, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 PM.
2. There will be a special board meeting by ZOOM on Friday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM to accept the resignation of Dr. Risha VanderWey.
3. There will be a special board meeting in person, at the district boardroom, on Tuesday, Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM to announce the applicates.
4. The board will then wait the required 14 days, then offer a contract to their finalist.
5. The finalist would be announced at the board's March 1<sup>st</sup> work session meeting.

**6. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

**Next Regular Board Meeting: Tuesday, Feb. 22nd, 2022**

  
Secretary, Board of Education

  
President, Board of Education