

Ferndale School District  
**Special School Board Meeting**

Kelly's O'Deli  
5506 Nielsen Ave, Ferndale, WA 98248

**Monday, August 8, 2016**

4:00 pm – 8:00 pm

**School Board Attendees**

Kevin Erickson (School Board President), Lee Anne Riddle (School Board Member), Andrew McLaurin (School Board Member), Hugh Foulke (School Board Member), Candice Wilson (School Board Member), Ben Bagley (Student School Board Member), Jeremy Knapp (Student School Board Member), and Linda Quinn (Superintendent).

Due to traffic delays, Director McLaurin did not arrive at the meeting until 6:30 pm.

**Audience**

At the beginning of the meeting, there were three (3) others present at the meeting: Tammy Bengen (Ferndale Director of Communication), Bernie Thomas (Lummi Education Director), and Bob Wilson (husband of Candice Wilson). These three audience members came expressly to witness Candice's swearing in ceremony. They had all taken their leave by approximately 5:00 pm.

**Call to Order**

President Erickson called the meeting to order at approximately 4:15 pm and led the assemblage in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Induction of New Board Member**

At 4:20 pm, President Erickson yielded the floor to Superintendent Quinn for the swearing in of Candice Wilson, the new School Board Director selected on July 27, 2016, through and application and interview process, to take the place of Stuart McKay, who resigned his position as Director for Area #2 at the end of June 2016. Following the administration of the Oath of Office by Dr. Quinn, Ms. Wilson spoke of her feelings of honor and duty in accepting the position and several others present offered short congratulatory speeches.

For the next 40 minutes or so, Superintendent Quinn and veteran Directors Erickson, Riddle, McLaurin, and Foulke shared with Ms. Wilson and the two new student Board members, information about the state of the district and about what it means to be part of a School Board team. Dr. Quinn began by reviewing the six Strategic Commitments that express the foundational beliefs guiding all of the work in the district and the BIG THREE GOALS that summarize the district's current improvement efforts. She also shared highlights from the catalogue of accomplishments during 2015-2016, which is part of her annual performance review.

Experienced Directors talked about the Board's primary role as policy makers, not day-to-day managers of district operations. They talked about the relationship among Board members and also between the Board and the Superintendent. They talked about the

difference between serving as an independent elected official and serving as a member of a Board. The explained the way in which their interactions are governed by the open public meeting act. And so on.

During this conversation, Director Wilson was also made aware of several upcoming and/or ongoing orientation and professional development activities aimed at assisting her in fulfilling her new role. These included:

- A full-day new board member boot camp offered by WSSDA as a pre-conference session scheduled the day before (November 16) the fall conference in Spokane.
- Individual meetings (each 1-2 hours in length) with the school district's six executive administrators to get an overview of their areas of responsibility (finance, teaching & learning, human resources, etc.).
- A book by Richard E. Mayer that the rest of the Ferndale Board read together several years ago called *How Not To Be A Terrible School Board Member*.
- Weekly update letters from Superintendent Quinn emailed to each Board member on Mondays.

### **Dinner**

At approximately 5:30 pm, President Erickson invited Board members to take a break and help themselves to a buffet dinner.

### **Social Contract**

At approximately 5:45 pm, President Erickson turned the floor over to Dr. Quinn to lead the group the first part of the process of developing a Social Contract. Dr. Quinn explained that a Social Contract is an agreement made voluntarily by members of a group of people to establish guidelines for their interactions. It is a "Code of Cooperation" defining how they will treat one another. She asked Board members to work in three small groups (Ben and Jeremy; Lee Anne, Hugh, and Candice; and Kevin and Linda) to write down their answers to the following questions:

- What kind of an environment do we need to do our best work?
- How will we treat one another?
- How will we make and honor decisions?
- What will we do when we disagree?

Members of each small group took turns sharing their responses, which were all captured on flip chart paper. A discussion of some of the items ensued with the goal of reaching common understanding. Dr. Quinn said she would organize and theme the collective ideas of the group and bring back to them a draft contract for their review, revision, and eventual adoption. (See attached document.)

### **WSSDA Self-Assessment**

At approximately 7:00 pm, President Erickson shifted the Board's focus to the results of the WSSDA Board Self-Assessment, which he had emailed to them prior to this meeting. He thanked Andrew, Lee Anne, Hugh, and Linda for completing the online assessment, and he

explained to the three new Board members (Candice, Jeremy, and Ben) the purpose of the assessment.

He said, “My initial review of it revealed some areas where we’re definitely in agreement on how we’re doing as a board and some areas where we’re not. There are also some areas where we need a little more information. The great news is that this assessment will give us a starting point to review our work for the district and to move forward in our quest to do better. The results/answers are grouped by WSSDA Standards and benchmarks giving some indication of where we might need to focus on growth and improvement.”

When President Erickson emailed the WSSDA report to Board members, he asked them to consider the following questions:

1. What do you see in the data? Where do you see the most agreement/disagreement?
2. What results surprise you? What results are most interesting? Why?
3. As you look at the different standards, what conclusions do you draw?
4. How does this data impact your perspective on the job we’re doing?
5. What areas do you feel we could/should discuss more in depth (potentially at a future study session)?

Given the lateness of the hour and the fact that the three new Board members need more time to familiarize themselves with WSSDA’s Board standards (upon which the assessment is based), Director Riddle recommended that we table this discussion until a future date. She also shared with the group that WSSDA’s pre-conference session on “Governing Coherently” would likely provide valuable guidance for interpreting and using the self-assessment data. The description of the session says: *“Governing a complex school district responsibly—with accountability, systemic alignment and coherence—should be the goal of every board. Learn what Coherent Governance® is and how it can transform school boards, allowing them to lead and serve their districts and citizens with a rigorous focus on student achievement and accountability.”* Ms. Riddle also shared the book upon which the session will be based called *Good Governance is a Choice: A Way to Re-create Your Board the Right Way* by Randy Quinn and Linda J. Dawson. The group agreed to postpone further discussion of the self-assessment report.

### **Year-Long Board Calendar**

At approximately 7:15 pm, the Board decided to postpone the creation of a year-long calendar for similar reasons: (1) The time remaining in this meeting is insufficient. (2) The three new Board members do not have enough information to be expected to complete the task. (3) Mapping out a Board calendar will also likely be part of the “Governing Coherently” workshop at the fall WSSDA conference.

### **District Goals for 2016-2017**

At approximately 7:20 pm, President Erickson introduced the topic of district goals. Superintendent Quinn reiterated the BIG THREE focus areas: (1) Improving culture, climate, and communication; (2) Improving core instruction; and (3) Increasing the graduation rate. She explained that the district administrators would be meeting for five days beginning August 10, 2016, for their annual First Team Retreat and that one of their

tasks during the retreat would be to establish S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time bound) goals related to the BIG THREE. She asked if the Board would like to provide suggestions or input she could share with administrators to guide their goal-setting. They indicated they would prefer to review the goals developed by the administrative team.

### **Boards of Distinction Award**

At approximately 7:30 pm, President Erickson posed the question of applying for this year's WSSDA Boards of Distinction Award. The consensus of the group was to move forward with completing the application, which is due September 21. Everyone agreed to take part in writing and assembling the required artifacts. Dr. Quinn agreed to review the questions and bring a plan for addressing them to the August School Board business meeting.

### **Review of Procedures to Accompany 1000-Level Policies**

At approximately 7:40 pm, President Erickson introduced the subject of 1000-level Procedures. Whereas the Board generally sets Policy and the administration develops Procedures for enacting the Policies, the Procedures to accompany the 1000 series of Policies are different. Since they are specifically focused on the workings of the School Board, it seems appropriate for School Board members to be involved in reviewing and, if necessary, revising them. Dr. Quinn asked whether the group would prefer (1) establishing a block of time and looking at all of the 1000-level Procedures at one sitting or (2) putting a handful of Procedures on the agenda of each School Board business meeting for the next 6-8 months. The consensus of the group was to use the second approach.

### **Plan for Conference Break-Out Sessions at WSSDA**

At approximately 7:50 pm, Dr. Quinn reminded the group that, at their request, she had submitted proposals for three breakout sessions at the 2016 WSSDA Fall Conference and that two of them have been accepted. The title of the two sessions are:

- Celebrating and supporting our Native American students
- Partnering with the community to address social and emotional needs

Board members determined who would be listed as presenters for each workshop. Dr. Quinn agreed to schedule planning meetings with presenters to determine the content and lesson plan for each workshop.

### **Adjournment**

Board members reiterated that the agenda for this meeting had been two ambitious, and they instructed Superintendent Quinn to schedule another four-hour meeting called School Board Retreat Part 2, probably sometime in September.

At 8:00 pm, President Erickson adjourned the meeting.