

# Western Placer Unified School District

Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees

**July 23, 2019**

WPUSD District Office/City Hall Building – 4th Floor Zebra Room  
600 Sixth Street, Lincoln, CA 95648

## MINUTES

**2018-2019 Goals & Objectives (G & O) for the Management Team:** Component I: Quality Student Performance; Component II: Curriculum Themes; Component III: Special Student Services; Component IV: Staff & Community Relations; Component V: Facilities/Administration/Budget.

**All Open Session Agenda related documents are available to the public for viewing at the Western Placer Unified School District Office located at 600 Sixth Street, Fourth Floor in Lincoln, CA 95648.**

### **Board Members Present:**

Damian Armitage, President  
Paul Long, Vice President  
Kris Wyatt, Clerk  
Brian Haley, Member  
Paul Carras, Member

### **Others Present:**

Scott Leaman, Superintendent  
Kerry Callahan, Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services  
Gabe Simon, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Services  
Mike Maul, Lincoln High School Principal  
Jim Houck, CSEA Representative  
Maria Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

### **6:00 P.M. START**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – WPUSD District Office/City Hall Bldg. – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Zebra Room

2. **COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Denise Alves** read the following: *Though many of our members are out of town this week, we felt it was important for those who remained to take this opportunity to speak to you one more time.*

*First, we would like to request clarification on the timeline of the submission of the investigative reports and the resulting action plan. We've had to blindly trust this process, while being told different versions of what to expect. So, we are hoping to get a better understanding of how this is all unfolding at the end. It was shared in an email (sent on July 9) that the board will review the final reports during tonight's meeting. We were told there would be a closed door session immediately following this open discussion, concluding with an additional open meeting at approximately 7:00pm, in which the board will report on any actions that were taken. What is the purpose of that closed door session? We're not asking for details on the content or discussion. Just clarifying, is the review of the entire investigation, and decisions of how you will respond, going to be completed in that portion of the meeting? If so, has the board discussed intentions or plans for actions prior to receiving the reports?*

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*Second, we would like to follow up on a phrase that has been used in multiple conversations with parents and in emails to our group, variations of "the district continues to expend substantial resources to ensure a successful season next year." As noted in a recent reply email, we appreciate the efforts being made to resolve the issues and conflicts that have arisen, but it must be noted: this investigation is not happening because of a team or a season. It is happening because of the poor behavior of a small group of adults, and the mismanagement of that behavior on the part of school and district administrators. It just so happens to be centered around a team and a coach. It is not rooted in them. We feel this is worth emphasizing because 1) the team players and the coaches are NOT responsible for what is going on. And 2) to label the current efforts to restore what has been broken as simply working towards a successful next season, lessens the scope of the problems and deflects responsibility for what is occurring.*

*The fact is, we find ourselves in the middle of this process not because we want to stir up problems or cause issues. On the contrary, we are here to stop a long pattern of appeasing erratic behavior that has continued over multiple seasons and coaches. In the past, those who noticed, and tried to voice concerns, were too nice, too polite, too trusting of those in authority to take a stand or rock the boat when standards were not enforced, coaches were not supported, and player safety was not prioritized. The difference this season is NOT a problem coach. The difference IS you finally have a group of parents who have come together and said, enough. We have found strength in the common goal of supporting a coach who has demonstrated character, leadership, and tremendous sportsmanship to our daughters; and purpose in standing up to behavior that has no place in a school gym.*

*We are completely confident in every concern that our group has raised.*

*We stand behind every submitted document and piece of evidence.*

*We have followed the district's plan for seeking resolution.*

*We have done our part in providing information and shining a light on what has been going on.*

*And now, we pass this baton to you, and trust that your decisions will be guided by commitment to doing what is right.*

*As you review the facts and consider all possible outcomes, please be mindful of what is at stake, and the message that will be sent to our players, their peers, and the community of wpusd. You each have the responsibility to right wrongs that have been in place for years, and the honor establishing a culture of support, encouragement, and security for our athletes of both genders.*

*Thank you.*

6:05 P.M.**3. CLOSED SESSION – WPUSD District Office – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Overlook Room****3.1 PERSONNEL**

Public Employee Employment/Discipline/Dismissal/Release

**4. ADJOURN TO OPEN SESSION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – District Office/City Hall Blvd., - 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Zebra Room**

The Board of Trustees will disclose any action taken in Closed Session regarding the following items:

**4.1 PERSONNEL**

Public Employee Employment/Discipline/Dismissal/Release

Mr. Armitage reported the board had meet in closed session concerning item 3.1 Personnel and read the following statement: Before the 2018-19 Lincoln High School Girls basketball team played their first game, the administration at Lincoln High School received complaints about the program. These complaints continued throughout the basketball season. At the April 2, 2019 Board meeting, a group of parents presented additional complaints about the program to the Board.

The Board engaged an outside investigator to look into concerns about the coaching staff and Lincoln High School administration, an outside lawyer was charged with investigating the inequities between the boys and girls' basketball program, and the WPUUSD Assistant Superintendent of Personnel looked into concerns about another district coach. Some of the results of these investigations are personnel related, so some of the content of the investigations must remain private. All the investigators shared information as it was relevant to their particular area.

All the investigators used a "preponderance of evidence" qualifier to determine the validity of a complaint. This means that one person might have a strong opinion about the truth of an allegation, but if this opinion was not shared by the preponderance of others, it was not deemed a fact.

The Board would like to make the following comments about the results of the investigations:

- 1) Concerning the coaching staff, the investigation found the serious concerns of favoritism and discrimination were "not sustained" by the preponderance of the evidence. However, the investigation found all parents interviewed confirmed a divide persisted throughout the season and parents and players had good reason to be frustrated that the coaching staff was unable to remedy it during the season.
- 2) Concerning the administration, the investigation found the serious concerns of a lack of response to complaints were "not sustained" by the preponderance of the evidence. However, the investigation found the Administration, at times, did not abide by, and enforce its own rules. The investigation also noted social media posts and comments contributed to the turmoil of the basketball team.
- 3) Concerning the inequities between the boys and girls basketball program, some of the incidents were substantiated, but the differences did not amount to improper discrimination as alleged in the complaint.
- 4) Concerning another district coach, the evidence did not support the allegations. However, improvements will be implemented to assist the middle school basketball program in supporting the high school program.

The Board took these allegations very seriously. While acknowledging improvements and changes can be made in areas connected to the basketball



program, all investigations found the serious allegations presented to the Board were not supported by the preponderance of the evidence.

Due to these findings, the Board is returning to the Lincoln High School Administration the ongoing management of the basketball program including, personnel, funding, oversight, and adherence to legal and district policies.

**5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC**

**Brian McCommas** asked if the audience was allowed to ask the Board about their decision. He wanted to know if it was unanimous or was it majority. Mr. McCommas stated that he felt that with all the evidence and documentation that was submitted and with the people that were hired, he could not believe that this is what the Board had come up with. He felt the someone summarized the information for the Board and that the board did not actually look over everything.

The Board Members shared that no vote was taken in closed session but, the board members wrote the statement that was read by Mr. Armitage. The board also advised that the investigator was the lead in the investigation and reviewed all the documents submitted. A copy of the statement would be emailed to the PDDA (Parents Demanding District Accountability) group after the meeting.

**Ramey Nutter** stated that she has two students at Lincoln High School currently that are going to be a senior and a junior, both play sports at Lincoln High School and she wanted to express her disappointment and that she really felt let down. She further stated, "We were coming to you for help, we came to you because we feel like we got nowhere with administration and we came to you for help and I feel very disappointed, I don't know if I can speak for everybody else but I am extremely disappointed and I feel let down that you let us down and we asked you for help and I don't feel like you really helped us., you didn't even read all the reports and all the documents that we gave the attorney and the investigator. I'm just really disappointed and feel like I needed to express that".

Mr. Armitage commented that the investigator took this very seriously and interviewed 18 individuals and evaluated each of the individuals statements and came to the conclusion that most of the items were not substantiated according to the preponderance of evidence.

**Denise Alves** wanted to get some clarification on what was happening now. She stated that they were told by the investigator that was hired that the process of this being wrapped up would be that a summary of their investigation would be handed over to you and that in addition to that there would be documentation, samples at least if not, the culmination of the evidence that was given that would be handed over to the you so you would have a summary, that often times in past investigations the summary acted as a public document that would be something that summarized their findings and that could be made public but then there would also be the gathering of all the evidence the was provided that would be shared with you. Was that shared? Did you have opportunity to go through and look at the samples of emails that showed correspondence between administration and parents and coaches and text messages? My point in asking that is that when it was stated that it was found that there wasn't evidence of what we were brining to you, there absolutely is

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evidence that everything we wrote in that letter, every line of that letter was carefully crafted as a group after going through what we personally had experienced what we had nothing in that letter that we did not have documentation to absolutely back up nothing was brought to you. If anybody just had an opinion, it was left out, because we wanted this to be purely based on facts and purely based on what we could present with evidence so much so that when we out of pocket paid to go to a separate attorney to say how are we supposed to be handling this, because we were blinded by this, we didn't know what avenue we should be taking. We separately paid to have a consultation with an attorney, and when she looked at a portion of what we had, her recommendation was that the case was so strong that we should go straight to a lawsuit over that. That's not what we wanted. Our goal was not to cause anything, we've said that every time we've come to you. Our goal was to make this better and we trusted that when we handed over all of the evidence that there was, that the findings would be ok, now we are going to take steps to make that better, we weren't asking to do any big upheaval we didn't want to cause pain to anyone else. We didn't throw accusations out at other people, we just stated fact and stated this is what happened, these are the avenues we've taken to make it better they haven't work and so now following your procedures, to find resolution, what is it that is supposed to happen, and now if I understand correctly what your saying is after the investigation is that your saying "no", that what we brought up was not founded that there was no evidence go back and we are just going to start over from scratch.. Mrs. Alves also questioned if parents could feel confident that their players could return to the program and the players could feel safe and the behaviors that they experienced this past year would be management and that their concerns will be addressed.

Mr. Armitage advised that the investigator evaluated each of the statements and each piece of evidence and came to a legal conclusion. That was his job, to look at all the evidence and all the statements and come to the legal conclusion. The board also advised that there are some actions that were taken that are personnel issues, which cannot be discussed.

Mrs. Wyatt advised that the board is confident in the administration, they will take some steps and move forward with the program, and they are going to be moving in the right direction.

**6. ♦ACTION ♦DISCUSSION ♦INFORMATION****6.1 Action**

**Page 9 – APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 19/20.1 THE STATE ALLOCATION BOARD AND SCHOOL FACILITY PROGRAM BEYOND BOND AUTHORITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – Adell**  
*(19-20 G & O Component I, II, III, IV, V)*

Scott Leaman presented a Resolution on behalf of Mike Adell for approval. Motion by Mrs. Wyatt, seconded by Mr. Long and passed by a 5-0 (*Ayes: Haley, Long, Wyatt, Carras, Armitage No: None*) roll call to approved Resolution No. 19/20.1 regarding the State Allocation Board and School Facility Program beyond Bond Authority.

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**6.2 Discussion/ Action** **Page 12 – APPROVE CONTRACT EXTENSIONS FOR DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY AND DIRECTOR OF MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS – Simon** (19-20 G & O Component I, II, III, IV, V)

Gabe Simon presented Contract Extensions for approval. Motion by Mr. Haley, seconded by Mr. Carras and passed by a 5-0 (**Ayes:** Long, Wyatt, Carras, Haley, Armitage **No:** None) roll call to approve the Contract Extensions for Director of Technology and Director of Maintenance and Operations.

**6.3 Information/ Discussion/ Action** **Page 13 – APPROVE FIRST AMENDMENT TO SCHOOL FACILITIES AGREEMENTS FOR BELLA ROSA, LLC, LEAVELL RANCH PARTNERSHIP, AND LAYN AND DUFF (VILLAGE 1) – Leaman** (19-20 G & O Component I, II, III, IV, V)

Mr. Leaman presented the First Amendment to School Facilities Agreements. Motion by Mr. Carras, seconded by Haley, and passed by a 5-0 (**Ayes:** Armitage, Carras, Haley, Long, Wyatt **No:** None) vote to approve the First Amendment to School Facilities Agreements for Bella Rosa, LLC, Leavell Ranch Partnership, and Layn and Duff (Village 1).

Board comments was not on the agenda but Mr. Carras stated he had something to share:

**Mr. Carras** shared that he met a retired Lincoln Chief of Police who stated that he lives near GEMS and is very proud of the school updates at GEMS.

**Mrs. Wyatt** shared that the Potter's baseball team had a Zebra alumni night at one of their games. The LHS Zebra mascot also attended and came out and raced the Potter's mascot, Piper. It was a fun game and a great turn out. The Sierra College Wolves played against the Potters and there are several LHS alumni on the Sierra College team.

**Mr. Long** shared that the Lincoln Museum has several items on display from the retired Chief of Police.

**Mr. Haley** had no report

**Mr. Armitage** shared that he just return from a two-week trip to Florida.

**7. ESTABLISHMENT OF NEXT MEETING(S)**

The President will establish the following meeting(s):

➤ **August 6, 2019 7:00 P.M.**, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees – District Office/City Hall Bldg., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room

➤ **August 20, 2019 7:00 P.M.**, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees – District Office/City Hall Bldg., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room

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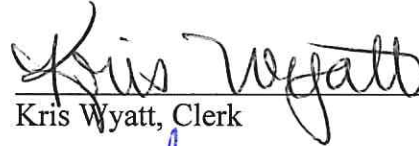
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8. **ADJOURNMENT**

No further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm



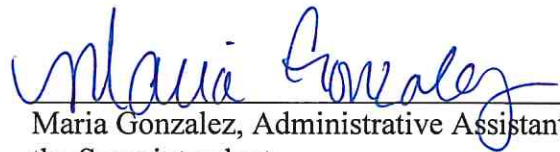
Damian Armitage, President



Kris Wyatt, Clerk



Scott Leaman, Superintendent



Maria Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

**Adopted:** August 6, 2019

**Ayes:** Haley, Wyatt, Carras, Armitage

**Noes:**

**Absent:**

**Abstain:** Long

**Accommodating Those Individuals with Special Needs:**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Western Placer Unified School District encourages those with disabilities to participate fully in the public meeting process. If you have a special need in order to allow you to attend or participate in our public meetings, please contact the Office of the Superintendent, at (916) 645-6350 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting you wish to attend so that we may make every reasonable effort to accommodate you, including auxiliary aids or services.