

# Driggs Elementary School Community Council Meeting

Monday, January 8, 2024 at 7:45 A.M. in the front conference room of Driggs Elementary School

Meeting attendance:

- Community council members present: Tayler Khater, Heidi Baer, Gabriella Friel, Cameron Shellum, Walter Codes, Paul Stuk, Elliot Sorenson, and Jake Smith
- Community council members absent: none
- Others present: Ellen Haley (University of Utah student) and Drew Quinn

Written minutes of council meeting:

Motion to approve the meeting notes from December; all council members voted in favor of approval.

Cell phones in schools. The governor, not the district, sent email to all principals in Utah and said no more cell phones or smartwatches in schools. Evergreen Jr. High already implemented this policy last year. District and schools are trying to figure out how to implement this new policy. If there's an emergency, it goes through the front office (like it was before kids had cell phones). Driggs needs to create a no-cell-phone policy by the end of the school year for next school year. Please start giving the community a heads-up to let them know this is coming. Parents may be concerned about accessibility to their students. Mr. Khater has experienced many problems with cell phones and schools and feels this is a good change.

Teacher Survey results. 66.7% paraprofessionals, 27.8% software programs, the rest is Chromebook renewals. Software was itemized and for the most part we'll be able to keep all but one. Ms. Friel said several teachers didn't really understand what "software programs" entailed and so they picked paraprofessionals. The math program, iReady, was paid for this year by the district but next year they won't pay for it. So, it's up to the schools to pay for it and it's not optional. It's about \$4k to pay for each of the individual student licenses, some might be paid by a small grant. Explore Learning is used by fourth grade and Utah studies. Scholastic for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade subscription. We also need to purchase ten Chromebooks. Driggs will be able to take care of some of the software and Chromebooks with some money from the district for technology.

Middle of the year test results. ELA is slightly better than last year (443 vs 447). It is common that ELA test results go down a bit middle of the year for K because the test is different than first of the year. Driggs had the highest kindergarten ELA proficiency rate to start the year (93%) in the entire state of Utah! Math score for 1<sup>st</sup> grade went down and is concerning; one teacher made good gains and the other teacher did not. 1<sup>st</sup> grade score is not acceptable, and that teacher is getting help to bring up the scores. The problem is lesson delivery and not anything to do with software. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade went up significantly. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> also went up. 5<sup>th</sup> has a small decrease, may be partly due to new math components and standards. Also, 5<sup>th</sup> grade is doing honors rotations with math. One thing discussed by staff is to stop doing rotations next school year. Kindergarten math scores are impressive, and the teachers deserve praise for their efforts. This can also help with recruiting kindergarteners for next year. Cameron wanted to know how much more data will come in before we need to start making a decision around April. There will be progress monitoring and Mr. Khater will be closely watching 1<sup>st</sup> grade and somewhat 5<sup>th</sup> grade. There will be iReady progress monitoring nearly weekly. Mr. Khater can pull reports anytime. Some things are up, and some are down and it's difficult to match the needed solutions.

TSSA \$40k and Land Trust \$59k. Community council is responsible for the land trust money and the principal is responsible for the TSSA money. Both should be considered and planned at the same time. As a reminder, ESSER is going away next year. One paraprofessional earns \$26,820 (\$19/hr) plus benefits at 29 hours per week (this is the maximum they can work) and 0.5 FTE-Teacher Interventionalist \$56,000 plus benefits. The district

will pay for most of the software. Club supplies can come out of TSSA if we want. Stipends for teachers who come to back-to-school night (they don't get paid), that could come out of TSSA. Grade level teacher supplies. Lots of stuff that totals way more than TSSA can pay for, so hopefully some can come out of Land Trust. We could use the rest to pay for two paraprofessionals, but one would be 29 hours and the other would have to be around 15 hours per week. The rest of the list is very tight without ESSER funds, some things need to be cut. In Mr. Khater's opinion the lower grade interventionist is essential for Driggs. This is a unique situation because most schools have to get a part time interventionist from the district, and we get ours every day. Unfortunately, we don't have room in the budget to pay for a full-time social worker, but we can have a part time social worker, unless we want to trade the interventionist for the other half of the social worker. The current workload for the social worker can easily be handled part time. Most schools have a part time social worker and a much higher number of students who need that support. In addition, the social worker has four paraprofessionals and a BHA that helps significantly. The BHA can be particularly helpful by doing much of the work that the social worker does. Each kindergarten class has a paraprofessional making a 15:1 ratio of students to adult in each class, even though the classes are huge. This is one of the reasons the kindergarten classes are doing so well. Two of the paraprofessionals are licensed teachers and do an amazing job, these are the two that Mr. Khater would like to keep on next year if possible.

One of Mr. Khater's goals is to keep all of the existing software subscriptions for next year. We may have to cut one, it depends on what the district is willing to give the school and what can roll over from this year to next year. Cameron noted that there isn't enough evidence to show that either software or teacher support is better. Jake asked if the pre-K Waterford online program has any influence for this school on the high literacy rates of incoming kindergarteners. Do we have a higher percentage of students that have done this program? This is a good example of how software could be beneficial. All the software is \$12k versus \$27k for one paraprofessional. A single person can only help in one room at a time whereas software can benefit every student. There is no data for usage of Waterford in the area and it would have to come from a survey to parents. Ms. Baer noted that 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades uses software a lot because the paraprofessionals are not available to them. She would like to know exactly what software teachers are using. Software companies can arrange different ways to pay, can be by student, by grade, by those in yellow or red, etc. Jake would also like to know how often the Chromebooks are used in class. Mr. Khater noted that we can do fund raisers for software, can't do that to supplement someone's salary.

All schools in the district are full day kindergarten, no more half-day programs anymore.

Motion to end the meeting; all council members voted in favor.