

MOUNT VERNON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 320
REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 17, 2021: 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order and Flag Salute

A regular meeting of the Mount Vernon School District Board of Directors was called to order by Director Otos at 6:05 p.m. on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 via zoom and in person at Madison Elementary School, 907 E. Fir Street. Director Otos led the board and gallery in the flag salute.

Roll Call of Members

Board Members present included Director Otos, Coffey, Samora, Cailloux, and Ragusa. A quorum was present. Superintendent Vivanco and students Conde-Martinez, Rochelle, and Grechishkin were present. There were 61 attendees.

Set Consent and Regular Agendas

Upon motion by Director Ragusa, seconded and unanimously approved, the board set the regular and consent agendas as presented.

Review and Approval of Consent Agenda

Upon motion by Director Cailloux, seconded and unanimously approved, the board approved items included in the consent agenda including:

Agreements

- Memorandum of Understanding; Compass Health; continuing

Personnel Report

- Certificated: Employment; Out of Endorsement; Leave; Retirement/Resignation/ Termination
- Classified: Employment; Reassignment/Transfer/Adjust; Leave; Retirement/Resignation/Termination
- Extra/Co-Curricular Stipends and Supplemental Contracts
- Unfilled Certificated and Classified Positions

Public Comments

Denise Robison, PSE1 co-president and paraeducator at Centennial Elementary shared a video comment. The video expressed concern with communications to PSE1 staff and the worries that PSE members have regarding the return to in-person learning.

Board Member Comments

- Director Ragusa said she recently visited several classrooms and is very appreciative of the hospitality and courtesy demonstrated by staff. She is looking forward to the upcoming return of 4th and 5th grade students, as well as the information regarding secondary opening.
- Director Cailloux said she also visited classrooms via zoom and in person. She stated she was very impressed with the quality of teaching and what is happening in the schools. She said the students have learned the safety procedures and are respectful of the requirements. She commented in Governor Inslee's recent address, he discussed racial health policies and mental health requirements for students. The district is also looking to address equity in the classrooms, cultural

development, and supports that will help with mental health issues.

Superintendent's Report

Washington Elementary School Report: Assistant Principal, Dan Villescas, shared a video from Washington Elementary that included several staff and reports on multiple topics. He said Washington has been running an ILC program since September. He added the parents are great and the kids demonstrate resiliency. Washington has been serving 340 meals out of the doors, plus send meals to homes. The Board thanked the Washington team for the informative presentation. Director Samora commented on how clearly the teachers care for the students' wellbeing. Included in the video were Stephanie Jones Flores, Principal, Dan Villescas, Assistant Principal, Amanda Rodriguez, Instructional Coach, Lia Strong, Resource Room teacher, Erin Leonhardt, 4th grade teacher, Laura Howard, ILC teacher, Rene Caro, Community In Schools, Rosa Juarez, Parent/Community Liaison, Sarah Carpenter, 1st grade teacher, and Ali Algara, Student.

Reopening Update: Superintendent Vivanco reported on March 12, Governor Inslee provided options for districts to be open. Included was a requirement that all districts that have not had an opportunity to engage in in-person learning will do so. This aligns with our current availability. We will have 4th and 5th grade students return in person next week. Vaccinations are available to staff, who have done a good job taking advantage of the opportunities.

Assistant Superintendent, Bill Nutting, briefly reviewed planning for the return of secondary level students. He shared that Dr. Wattawa has collected information via surveys from parents. This week, teachers were surveyed about options. Those surveys help refine our planning work. The intent is to get the schedule built based on the clearest information we have. We are on track to work with families prior to spring break. Mr. Nutting said that he has been meeting with the teacher leadership group. They have done a good job getting organized. The conversation today included the refinement of schedules to put us in an improved place to allow families to make decisions on whether to return to in-person or to stay remote. Mr. Nutting also acknowledged Denise's comments made in the public comment section. He said she does a good job representing her group and that he heard her comments and will continue working with her to make improvements on their behalf.

Director Ragusa inquired about the communication to MVHS parents and the 16 possible tents. Where would they be and how big are they? Bill said that Dr. Wattawa needs to consider the school's total capacity and at this time doesn't know how many students will return in person. While we have data, we won't know for sure until schedules are built. The tent vendors walked the site to look at placement, which would be along the north fence line from the shop to the east. She has considered use of up to 16. Whether any will be needed will be driven by the survey results. There are 1,800 students at the high school, if 30% or so of those students stay remote, that would mean 1200 students in person. Then split that in half for an AM and PM program, resulting in approximately 600 students to house. There are complications with using tents such as city permitting and power. We do understand the concern, but also understand the need for space. Director Ragusa thought it was an innovative approach to a complex problem. SeaMar began vaccinating school staff, allowing many educators to get their vaccines. There was also an opportunity at LaVenture Middle School, in partnership with Skagit County Health Department to receive vaccines.

Superintendent Vivanco shared that we are learning from others and watching the neighboring districts and statewide to see what is working. Director Ragusa congratulated Clint Carlton and his nursing team for consistently distributing timeline information. Director Otos inquired whether Lincoln Elementary could still be used as a swing school. Mr. Nutting said yes, that is a possibility and he spoke with city staff a few weeks ago on that topic. He shared the district had investigated that possibility last year and began the

conversation again recently. Director Otos said that we are not in control of the city, state, and federal regulations, but that we are obliged to follow them.

Executive Director Carlton shared the district staff is at 95% vaccinated. Director Cailloux commented it is important to meet the thresholds for in person accommodations as required, while staying within the available space.

Black History Month: I. Vivanco

Superintendent Vivanco requested information from each school on their activities related to Black History month activities during January. He presented a summary of some of the projects undertaken at each school. Some of the examples are very comprehensive, some less so. Activities ranged from discussions – to slide shows – to art projects – to reading.

Director Coffey appreciated hearing what each school is doing. Director Ragusa said it is amazing to have so many black Americans shaping our modern history. She would like to see activities like these year-round. Dr. Cailloux, agreed she would like to see activities year-round. Dr. Vivanco said this is just the beginning.

Old Business: There was no old business to review.

New Business

Partnership Agreement with Latino Civic Alliance; 03/01/21 to 08/31/21

Superintendent Vivanco said that Covid has been a huge component of the experience for students and families. He is pleased the LCA has reached out to support our students. This allows us to provide front line support services to 50 students and their families. It includes tech support and social emotional support. Director Cailloux asked if this is free to the district, how does the funding work? Superintendent Vivanco replied they have their own resources.

Upon motion by Director Cailloux, seconded and unanimously approved, the board agreed to enter into the Partnership Agreement with Latino Civic alliance through August 31, 2021.

Director Cailloux said commented the governor’s proclamation referenced a second round of funding to support student mental health. She would like to see the district planning ahead with various resources.

Public Comments

Due to earlier technical difficulties, the video public comments from Denise Robison were played again.

Student Comments

Student Grechishkin said regarding returning to school, there is a lot of confusion in the public. Schools are facing many decisions and she believes most people want more concrete decisions. She appreciated the presentation by Washington Elementary School.

Student Conde-Martinez said he has been looking at the positive outcomes of the last year and to see what will happen moving forward. He hopes with the reopening, we will be stronger and better. He said that clubs and programs are supportive and feels they support academic success.


Student Rochelle said that he appreciates the hard work needed to return students to school.

Adjournment

Director Otos and Superintendent Vivanco thanked guests for their patience with the audio and video connections, and thanked Information Services Supervisor, Tim Papendorf for his hard work. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:17.



Larry Otos, Director
Board President



Ismael Vivanco, Superintendent
Secretary to the Board