

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2011
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Chairman Alexander, Trustee House, Trustee Rodney, Trustee Reynolds, Trustee Murray

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim McMurtrey, James Gilbert, Cliff Ogborn, Sharon Whitman, Phil Raney, Kerrie Reynolds, Brian Hershey, Erin Acarregui, Jeff Johnson, Ernie Elliott, Anita Straw, Sherri Ybarra, John Clark, Albert Longhurst, Phil McCluskey, Nikki Crusier, Connie Donahue, Polly Sanders, Kelly Everitt, John Lay, Richard Urquidi, Decker Sanders

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193 was convened at 10:03 a.m. on the 4th day of February 2011, at the District Administration Office, 470 North 3rd East, Mountain Home, Idaho, in said district, pursuant to authority provided by Title 33 Chapter 5, Sections 33-506, 33-510, 33-512, and Title 67-2340 through 67-2347 Idaho Code, and pursuant to affirmation by the Clerk that notice of the special meeting had been given to each trustee and had been announced by written and posted public notice as required by law. A copy of the Notice of a Special Meeting of School Trustees so posted follows:

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MOUNTAIN HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 193
Mountain Home, Elmore County, Idaho**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Mountain Home School District No. 193 will be held on Friday, February 4, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., at the school district office, located at 470 North 3rd East, Mountain Home, Idaho, in said District, during which the following business will be conducted:

- I. DISCUSSION OF BOARD'S POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT LUNA'S EDUCATION PLAN
- II. ADJOURN

This Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193 is called pursuant to Title 33 Chapter 5, Sections 33-506, 33-510, 33-512, and Title 67-2340 through 67-2346, Idaho Code.

Dated the 2nd day of February 2011.



Sharon M. Whitman
Clerk, School District No. 193

Chairman Alexander called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193 to order, at 10:03 a.m.

- I. **DISCUSSION OF BOARD'S POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT LUNA'S EDUCATION PLAN** – Board of Trustees/Tim McMurtrey. Chairman Alexander explained that the Board of Trustees has drafted a position statement regarding Mr. Luna's education plan. He asked the other board members whether they wanted to adopt the position statement as is or have further discussion.

Mr. McMurtrey stated, as the Board knows Mr. Luna filed his proposed budget with the JFAC committee and also testified in front of the legislators. He said it's important to note that when

they found out about the testimonies, he, Mr. Gilbert, and Chairman Alexander all attended the hearings and Chairman Alexander signed up to testify, but never got the chance. Mr. McMurtrey said that since then he has asked Mr. Ogborn to put together numbers of what would happen in MHSD with not only Luna's plan but with our declining numbers.

Mr. Ogborn then reviewed the Appropriations Request from the SDE website showing the differences between 2010-11 school year and 2011-12 school year. There are some significant changes and he is waiting to get clarification of how this affects MHSD, but if you look on line g, there is a \$2.2 million reduction going to education from the Cigarette and Lottery Taxes, line h shows a \$3.3 million reduction in revenue; the big decline is the \$22 million in reduction from the Endowment/Lands Funds, and it shows the total increase in State Revenue for the year is \$14.5 million.

Mr. Ogborn explained the Program Distribution side of the SDE Appropriation Request. He said transportation will be funded about the same, but the big change is the reduction of salary and benefits apportion by \$28 million and Mr. Luna is not funding early retirement. The other significant change is the added funding of Dual Credit for Early Graduates, the Redesign for Math and Science, and the funding of \$24 million to technology to presumably purchase laptops. Mr. Ogborn heard Mr. Luna is buying laptops for about \$250 for 21 thousand students, which amounts to about \$5.5 million; he's not sure where Mr. Luna is spending the other \$19 million. Mr. Luna is also funding \$600,000 for Contract Severance.

Mr. Ogborn reviewed last year's ADA numbers and using the proposed changes to the funding formula, he explained that presently, we have 207.61 FTEs (the allowable amount of teachers the state will reimburse our district) and 188.74 Support Units (part of the formula the state uses to reimburse our district). Mr. Ogborn said with the changes, Mr. Luna's increased divisor is 1.25 that means we will have a reduction of 8.46 Support Units, which is a reduction in funding for certified staff of 9.31 FTEs (loss of 9.31 teachers). He said if we carry this forward one more year to FY2013, Mr. Luna's proposal is to increase the divisors again by .75, which will result in another a reduction of another 5.30 Support Units and another 5.83 reduction to teachers. This is a total reduction of 15.14 FTEs (loss of 15.14 teachers) and a reduction of 13.76 Support Units over the next two years.

Mr. Ogborn said to note that a little over 2 of the FTEs is supposed to be in the special education department, but as the Board knows, even if the state reduces the funding for those FTEs we as a district are required by the Federal Government to maintain Maintenance of Effort (the amount of money spent on special education can never be less than the year prior), so we aren't able to reduce in those areas and we are required to maintain the same FTEs in special education that we currently have and we will have to force 2 FTEs from other regular grades.

Mr. Ogborn went on to say that in addition, we're looking at the reimbursement for discretionary of certificated, administration, classified, and the benefits components looks like we're losing \$697,547 in funding just on the salary and benefits portion. There is also included in Luna's plan a reduction in entitlement money. We get a certain amount of money for entitlement that's not tied to salaries and benefits based on the support units. Mr. Luna is reducing the funding by \$300 per Support Unit, which will cost us \$57,564. We use that money for utilities, school supplies, and medical premiums, and anything that's not covered specifically by the salary apportionment piece.

Mr. Ogborn summarized by saying that overall, in the next two years, we will be losing about \$1.1 million if Mr. Luna's plan is implemented. This does not take into consideration any additional decrease of enrollment and we already lost another squadron at the base. Mr. Ogborn suspects we will lose another 8.3 Support Units based on the declining enrollment; combine that with Luna's plan next year in which we lose 8.46 Support Units added to the declining enrollment and we're looking at reduction of 16.5 Support Unit, which equates to a loss of 18 certified teachers.

Chairman Alexander said the dismal truth in this scenario is that we are going to be losing some pretty significant programs over the next couple of years. He said in the position statement, his emphasis is that if you continue to grant diplomas to students do they have a workable document that is accepted at all colleges or will the diploma be worthless. There are states around us that aren't doing the things Luna is suggesting, so that means our students will have no choice but to go to college in Idaho.

Trustee House would like a statement added after the hot-potato comment that this capitalizes on the state funding emergency. She said this is not the way to solve the education problems.

Chairman Alexander stated that if this goes forth and doesn't work; one couldn't go back to the old way; this is permanent. Every study he has ever seen goes back to the same axiom of smaller classrooms with good teachers produces good students. These online non-interactive courses can hardly be of the quality that we know and love, and yet we are held responsible for AYP and if AYP isn't met then classroom teachers will be the ones who pay the price and not the online teachers.

Trustee Murray asked if districts are sending suggestions to the legislators or just pointing out the problems. Chairman Alexander replied that he didn't know of any district that has sent suggestions; he even read Boise's Position Statement and they didn't get into solutions. He said Boise wrote about what the state did to incur these problems through its own direction. Chairman Alexander then stated that Position Statements are to let legislature know the flaws of the proposed legislation. He then reminded everyone that districts were never asked for their opinion and this solution was basically drafted by IACE to solve the money/tax problem, it has nothing to do with the quality of education.

Trustee House said that she felt that Luna's plan is going to pass no matter what we do.

Mr. McMurtrey said it's important to note that with the many meetings we have been to, we have asked legislators if they looked at increasing taxes such as bottled water tax, or an increase in the cigarette tax, or an increase in alcohol tax, but the legislators said they would not look at any type of tax increase. He said his issue, in his opinion and only his opinion, is that Luna's plan is that he is playing a shell game with the budget by moving money around to get technology into place, and it will devastate the district, and this is wrong and not good for kids.

Mr. Gilbert said that from a personnel standpoint, this means a substantial RIF (reduction in force) district wide, elimination of the block, elimination of electives, and by the way, a RIF does not mean it only affects the secondary; it will affect all the buildings in the district. He said the other thing is that for next year, according to Luna's proposal, we will have to cut another five (5) teachers, this is a total of twenty-four (24) teachers over two years, 1/5 of the teacher workforce.

Trustee House stated that the most important person in a student's life is the classroom teacher. Charter schools can pick and choose which students they want in their schools and they can pick and choose the number of students they enroll to keep class sizes down.

Chairman Alexander said that regarding the laptops, he would like to know who pays for the technical support and who pays for the bandwidth and who pays for the maintenance and up keep, etc. He then said that we've asked the questions but they (Mr. Luna and legislators) won't answer.

Mr. McMurtrey added that Luna's plan is that there will be a 24-hour turn around with laptops, that unrealistic, not to mention we would have to increase our bandwidth to accommodate all the computers.

Chairman Alexander stated that we would have to increase the electricity and outlets in all the buildings just so students could plug in their laptops to use, not to mention that we know that there

will be students who forget to charge their laptop nightly.

Trustee House asked what do we do with students who lose their laptop; what about students who choose to sell their laptop for other things; and what about those families who don't have internet connection at home, who pays for that?

Councilman Urquidi approached the Board and said that on behalf of the city, that losing 22 teachers would be detrimental to the city. He said that we don't have jobs available in the city that could pay the same teacher salary and so the teacher and his/her family will leave our community. Councilman Urquidi added that means loss of business to the community, a loss of circulated money, a loss of tax revenue, etc. Chairman Alexander asked if the city would be willing to send a Position Statement letter. Councilman Urquidi said he would bring this up with the other City Council members. He said Luna's plan would seriously affect our community.

Chairman Alexander stated that Luna seems to think there is a plethora of teachers looking for work, but at the cost of what, good teachers. Councilman Urquidi said this would affect our city budget as well as the county budget. Mr. Gilbert mentioned that until now the focus has been on certified staff but you can bet the number will double with the cut of classified personnel.

Discussion continued regarding how Luna's plan would affect this community. Chairman Alexander said it would benefit the city and county to submit Position Statements and to include how this affects rural communities. Chairman Urquidi said he would take the aforementioned figures to City Council; the district will send the figures to the County Commissioners.

Trustee Murray asked how the online courses affect college entrance because a school such as Stanford doesn't accept online courses.

Chairman Alexander said this will also affect the military because they want the best for their personnel and family members do not have to live here; how will affect their mission. He said the first time a military student can't enroll into college because of the online courses, will no doubt be a concern of the military. Chairman Alexander asked what happens to the Singapore students. The Singapore students are educated 1500 hours a year in their country and that is significant; we only educated our students about 900 hours. He went on to say teachers in Singapore and other countries are considered one of the most important people in the community.

Trustee House said from the outside, this looks like a great plan and if you don't know anything about education than it probably looks great, but to those of us who know we understand the cost to students, education, and the community.

Chairman Alexander asked for a motion to approve the Position Statement. A motion by Trustee Murray to approve the Board's Position Statement received a second from Trustee House. Motion passed.

Mr. McMurtrey asked the Board's permission to put the Position Statement on the website. The Board all agreed. Trustee Murray asked if any of our representatives have come by the schools to at least try to explain what is going on. Mr. Gilbert said Senator Corder has been in contact. Trustee Murray then stated that Pete Nielsen was on the Education Committee. Chairman Alexander said Pete Nielsen hasn't contacted anyone but he knows MHSD isn't pleased, but this won't go anywhere with him and we haven't seen nor heard from Mr. Wills in years and probably won't. Senator Corder is the only one who has been interactive with us.

Mr. McMurtrey said that Senator Corder stated that the only support of this bill is the extreme right wing of the Republican Party, which is a lot of people. He also said that Senator Corder told him that he hasn't heard anything from parents or from the community.

Mr. Gilbert said one of the problems is that this came about so suddenly that parents and the community haven't had time to digest any of the information and they don't know what is happening or how this affects their children.

- II. **ADJOURN** - All business of the Board having been completed, a motion by Trustee Rodney to adjourn was seconded by Trustee Reynolds. Motion approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Chairman Alexander

Clerk Whitman