

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
MAY 5, 2020
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193 was convened at 6:32 p.m., May 5, 2020, via Zoom, to discuss graduation plans for the district, Mountain Home, Idaho, in said district, pursuant to authority provided by Title 74, Chapter 2, Section 74-202(4)(c)(6)(b) – Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees, 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 via electronic mail and posted public notice as required by law. A copy of the Notice of a Special Meeting of School Trustees so posted follows:

May 5, 2020
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WORK SESSION – GRADUATION PLANS
MOUNTAIN HOME SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 193
Mountain Home, Elmore County, Idaho

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a special meeting – Work Session, of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193, will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom, to discuss graduation plans, Mountain Home, Idaho, in said District, during which the following business will be conducted:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/93612967336?pwd=RnJMaTFJT15UEd0N05oM1JQeG16Zz09>

Meeting ID: 936 1296 7336

Password: 850357

Dial In:

Dial by your location

- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 936 1296 7336

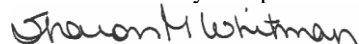
Password: 850357

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aboYchmZy>

- I. **CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER (ACTION)** – Chairman/Vice-Chairman
- II. **WORK SESSION** – Graduation Plans – School Board of Trustees/James Gilbert/Sam Gunderson/Stehvn Tesar
- III. Adjourn

This Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Mountain Home School District No. 193 is called pursuant to Title 33, Chapter 2, Section 33-512(12)(13)(16) – Governance of Schools, and Title 74, Chapter 2, Section 74-202(4)(c)(6)(b) – Open Meeting (Special Meeting), Section 74-204(2) Open Meeting Law (Special Meetings), Idaho Code.

Dated the 30th day of April 2020.



Sharon M. Whitman
Clerk, School District No. 193
Mountain Home, Elmore, Idaho

At 6:32 p.m., Chairman Abrego convened the special meeting of the Board of Trustees – Graduation Workshop to review and discuss the 2020 graduation plans of both MHHS and BMS.

- I. CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER (ACTION)** – Chairman/Vice-Chairman – Chairman Abrego explained that this was a work session for the board to hear the plans developed by MHHS and BMS. This will be an informal discussion and he then he called upon Superintendent Gilbert to begin the discussion.

Superintendent Gilbert informed everyone that it was understood that everyone had thoughts on what should or shouldn't be done regarding graduation ceremonies, with school closures, etc. He explained that everything the district has done has been for the safety of the kids and staff. The first phase of graduation plans was to build a virtual ceremony, which is what every district has done. We have said from the beginning that this was not set in stone and that it would evolve as the pandemic evolved. As a school district we are required to follow the governor's orders that are in place and we must follow the stages of reopening. Some of the things that we want to do we cannot because of the restrictions in place. It's important to remember that in all these scenarios, there are going to be people impacted right, wrong, or indifferent, we cannot design something that meets the needs for everyone. It's important that people need to understand that there was never any ill intent towards anyone to not recognize kids and to celebrate those graduations.

Superintendent Gilbert said that every single one of us including the board would love nothing more than to have a live graduation ceremony on May 22, but that isn't the reality at this time. The plans that MHHS and BMS have worked on involved a lot of thought, considerations, and how to figure out a way they could celebrate the seniors. This isn't traditional and you are not going to see a lot of traditional graduations this spring. Some districts have decided to postpone ceremonies until July, but that is a big what if. Speaking with St. Luke's today, they said that they will have a pretty good idea in the next three weeks what the impact of opening the economy would look like regarding the transmission of the pandemic. Postponing ceremonies is a big risk and if those districts cannot have a traditional ceremony, they will have to resort to a virtual one. The plans that MHHS and BMS came up with included input from the seniors that give us the ability to have those ceremonies and we can do a good job celebrating those seniors and their families on May 22. Not everyone will agree; there is no plan that everyone would agree to, even if we were to postpone the ceremony until July; it has to be understood that there would be seniors gone in July, and there are going to be high-risk parents that aren't going to be able to attend even a limited access ceremony in which we could try to control the number of people who attend.

Superintendent Gilbert added that the one certain thing is that even when the Governor's orders end, there will still be the requirement for some social distancing. This is the discussion that school districts are having with the State Board of Education (SBOE) regarding what school would look like next fall with having social distancing requirements. These are challenges for school districts, and it is understood that there will be parents who won't be happy, but this is to try to do the best that we can in the situation we are in to honor those seniors. Superintendent Gilbert called upon Mr. Gunderson and Mr. Tesar to review their graduation plans to the board.

- II. WORK SESSION** – Graduation Plans – School Board of Trustees/James Gilbert/Sam Gunderson/Stehvn Tesar. Mr. Gunderson and Mr. Tesar reviewed their graduation plans with the board.

Mr. Tesar explained the process of how their and MHHS's plan came to be and that BMS and MHHS wanted nothing more than to have a traditional graduation ceremony. He said that immediately after spring break BMS and MHHS started to plan alternative graduation ceremonies. They both explored many options and how to include the student speeches from the valedictorians, class presidents, and administration, how to incorporate the important aspects of graduation and celebrating the seniors, incorporate students being able to wear a cap and gown and walk across the stage, and how to incorporate family and friends, etc. By the second week of April, we had come up with a plan that would allow us to incorporate everything that was mentioned. The first element was the virtual graduation that was developed in April, and the second element is why we are here today. The important thing was to keep our plan that we had created for over a month, we wanted certainty that we could deliver on a plan, we didn't want to create false hope for people. We have our Senior Celebration Diploma Pickup that incorporates the students wearing a cap and gown, walking across the stage, having pictures taken of the seniors on the stage, and getting their diploma with family members present. He said that MHHS and BMS have basically the same plans just that the locations will be at two different places.

Mr. Tesar and Mr. Gunderson shared their plans with the board. Mr. Tesar explained that BMS has 45 seniors and MHHS has 200+ seniors, so logistics was important. Mr. Gunderson stated that MHHS and BMS are very excited about the plan. He said that the plan allows them to distribute diplomas to every single graduating senior yet follow the social distancing requirements. Mr. Gunderson informed the board that MHHS's virtual graduation is Friday, May 22, at 5:00 p.m., and the diploma handout is Saturday, May 23. He added that they are envisioning teachers lining up along Tiger Alley, but they are still trying to finalize the logistics of staging vehicles, etc. Mr. Gunderson explained that MHHS will have the staging starting at MHJH parking lot and have radio transmission to send 10 cars over to MHHS at a time. There would be check points for vehicles coming into Tiger Alley; the end of Tiger Alley is where the diplomas will be handed out. The vehicles will go around to the front of the school and there would be three stages for vehicles to park, one vehicle at a time and one vehicle per family. The seniors would be able to get out and walk across the stage, turn their tassel, and pose for pictures. BMS is very similar. The board reviewed the plans of both MHHS and BMS.

Chairman Abrego stated that it was a good plan.

Trustee Knox said it is a great plan and she was very happy that students would be able to walk across the stage and receive their diplomas, but asked why two days, the virtual graduation May 22 and the diploma May 23, and if there was any reason why we couldn't squeeze this into one day. Mr. Gunderson and Mr. Tesar explained that most people would be able to tune into the virtual ceremony, but it would be hard to do this in one day. Mr. Cotton added that Saturday would be better for those parents who work.

Trustee Monasterio concurred and that he was very appreciative of the thoughtfulness and sensitivity that was considered when planning and trying to include several important elements, and then asked what happens if the weather doesn't cooperate May 23? Mr. Tesar said we will pull this off come rain or shine, the families and seniors will be in vehicles and protected. Chairman Abrego added that we could rent a commercial tent to cover the stages. Trustee Knox agreed.

Trustee Binion asked if BMS was also having two parts. Mr. Tesar replied that the virtual graduation is Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m., and the diploma handout is Friday, May 22, from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Trustee Binion asked if the virtual graduation ceremonies would be live or recorded and then published? Mr. Tesar explained there was a lot of prerecorded things that needed to go into the virtual graduation such as speeches. Trustee Knox asked how long the virtual ceremony would last. Mr. Tesar said it was hard to tell, but that it would take longer than a traditional ceremony because we are recognizing each senior and each senior will have a spotlight within the virtual. Mr. Gunderson agreed and added that they are trying to highlight each senior and add information of what clubs and activities the seniors were involved in and we don't want to rush through it, so it will be longer than normal.

Trustee Knox asked about divorced family situations. Mr. Tesar said it was considered because it is a lot of our student population, but honestly, we have no idea of how that would work. Trustee Knox asked about the big break between the two sessions. Mr. Gunderson replied that with all the staff working, they will need to eat lunch at some point and it also gives them a cushion. The board volunteered their time to help. Discussion continued regarding the logistics.

Trustee Donahue said that she loved the plan and hoped logistically wise regarding vehicles that people showed up on time. Chairman Abrego asked if the city and law enforcement would be involved? Mr. Gunderson replied that they are hoping to keep 14th street open and that is why we are only sending ten cars at a time. Mr. Cotton added that both the Mayor, MHFD, and MHPD are all willing to help.

Trustee Donahue said it seemed like once we got through the parent frustrations, what they just really wanted was someone to hand their senior their diploma and this plan should please parents. The board thanked both schools for the time, the work, the thoughtfulness, and the consideration of all that they put into the planning. Chairman Abrego commended them on a great job.

Superintendent Gilbert thanked Mr. Tesar, the administrators at MHHS, and everyone else who worked on this; he added that there was a lot of behind the scenes work on this. Everyone would like a traditional graduation ceremony, but that isn't realistic, he also thanked the parents for their patience throughout this process. He appreciated the hard work that has gone into the plan and commended the board and the

staff for their input. The board concurred about all the hard work and planning to create something special for the graduating senior class.

- III.** Adjourn – Chairman Abrego adjourned the work session at 7:05 p.m.

Chairman Abrego

Clerk Whitman