

**David M. Cox Elementary**  
**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the School Organizational Team (SOT)**  
**September 18, 2018**  
**5:30 PM**

**Location of the Meeting**

David M. Cox Library  
280 Clark Drive  
Henderson, NV 89074

**Present at the meeting**

Ryoko Ball-Aguilar  
Ana Pisano  
Anna Sowell  
Jill Stackel  
Tara Imboden  
Erica Silas  
Todd Nash  
Kristi Coleman  
Amanda Miller  
Stephanie Pandullo

The meeting was called to order by Principal Tara Imboden at 5:30 PM. It was seconded by Jill Stackel. Ms. Imboden reviewed the basic guidelines and explained the procedures of how SOT meetings are ran.

**Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda for the meeting was distributed and unanimously approved.

**Review of Previous Meetings**

The SOT Committee reviewed and unanimously approved the notes from the last meeting. Jill Stackel motioned for the minutes to be approved; Anna Sowell seconded the motion.

**Issues That Were Discussed This Meeting**

- And Introducing new SOT members:
  - Anna Sowell verified that she is representing the support staff again this year
  - Kandi Tobin, Amanda Miller, and Stephanie Pandullo won the election and will represent the parents of Cox Elementary this year
  - The PTA voted for the parents and the Union held election for support staff and teachers

- Budget proposals, discussions, votes
  - Ms. Imboden led the discussion about the budget for the 2018-2019 school year
  - Handouts for the budget were handed out to help guide discussion
  - Page 1 - our focus area/goal has been changed to academic growth because growth points are rated higher
  - Page 2 - our projected enrollment numbers was 633, but we are currently at 601 students. This does not include our student enrolled though in early childhood and our self-contained classes.
  - Page 3 - our discretionary fund helped to cover additional teaching position and then our support staff
  - Page 5 - this page showed our breakdown of licensed teachers
  - Page 6 - we had a total of \$5,160.96 of carry over what we lost this year
  - Page 7 - showed what still needs to be cut from our current budget (\$81,633.83)
  - Page 8 - showed that after losing our \$5,160.96, we still need to find a place to cut \$76,472.87 from our budget
  - Page 8 - showed how our budget would work out if we lost our Assistant Principal
  - At this time, Erica Silas (Assistant Principal) has agreed to forgo her position in order to save a teacher
  - Non-discretionary aides such as PE aides and librarian aides are not up for negotiation
  - Special Education programs are not part of our budget as they are assigned to our school
  - Page 11 - showed how if we loss our Assistant Principal, we would still have \$43,852.87 in our budget.
    - \$28,000 will go to textbooks
    - \$5,200 will go to administration/teacher comp
    - \$10,652.49 will go to general supplies
    - This leaves us with \$0.49 in our budget
  - At the last staff meeting, we discussed at great length what would be best for our school and best for our students. We had the mindset that we could have our Assistant Principal for just a half day, it would help us tremendously. Ms. Silas was willing to forgo her assignment and be reassigned to help us maintain a positive climate for our students
- Open the floor to parent concerns/discussion:
  - Parent A - the question proposed was whether our carry-over from last year was applied to our cuts; the answer was yes.
  - Parent A - Could the PTA earmark money to cover certain expenses?; the answer was yes
  - Parent B - wanted to bring up her concern that she did not want her daughter to lose her teacher. She wanted a decision to be made that would have the most positive effect on the children.
  - Teacher A - concerned about the misleading facts of the budget. He wanted everyone to understand that our teachers' income is misleading based on the way it was presented in the budget. He felt the news is presenting it as if teachers are getting raises when in reality, we are getting our step increase in one lump sum. He also pointed out that we did not have an easy decision to make. He feels that Ms. Silas is a strong leader, and he would be willing to see four more students placed in first grade classrooms than to lose our Assistant Principal; the response to this was that unfortunately, it would be more than four students per first grade teacher.

- Parent C - was concerned about the impact to Ms. Imboden as an administrator; Ms. Imboden responded that of course she is not happy about losing our Assistant Principal, but she stated that she has a strong team and that her counselor will help her with her self-contained classes and take on more responsibilities. She is devastated about losing such a phenomenal AP but as a parent, she would be very upset if it was her child that was disheveled from his/her classroom.
- Teacher A - expressed that he still supports splitting a class
- Imboden - expressed that that was not what was right for our schools
- Silas - stated that she willingly gave up her position because it was what was best for the students.
- Parent D - questioned our three star rating. Parent wanted to know what was the advantage of being a four or five star school and if there were any advantages now that we are a three star school; the response was that we were dinged in the area of participation. Eight students in one sub-group opted out and that had a detrimental 9 point penalty. That dropped our rating to a three.
- Teacher A stated that he felt that star ratings are a status thing and pointed out how our staff has not changed.
- Pisano pointed out how when you have a student body that scores in the "excel" category, it is very difficult to show growth. Students in the excel will show no growth.
- Imboden brought up her own son and how he showed growth. This earned our school points. Growth is very important and this is why we changed our focus goal.
- Parent E - added that she did not know about the opt-out option and how it could hurt our school.
- Parent F - was concerned of allocation and was very upset by the loss of our Assistant Principal. Her question was how do we know where to allocate funds; the response was that as a SOT committee, we look to see where our patterns of spending exist and apply the funds as needed; Parent F added that if money is not spent, it is lost, therefore it is best to spend it as needed.
- Parent G - wanted to know what parents can do to help their child score higher and do better; Imboden brought up how it is important to also focus on the testing window that is open from March through May. This affects our school as well as other schools. For example, if one of our student moves to another school that has already tested their students, it affects both schools.
- Kristy Coleman needed to leave the meeting at 6:15 pm. She casted her vote for Option B - losing our Assistant Principal.
- Parent H - acknowledged the humble sacrifice of our our Assistant Principal. She wanted to know when it will happen; response was that Ms. Imboden needed to submit our proposal tonight, but that the change could happen tomorrow or sometime in October. The same would be true if we proposed losing a teacher. The change would happen sometime in October. Parent H added that if the PTA earmarked a teacher's salary, could that be something that our school could do in the future?; Imboden responded that she is unsure if PTA can do that, but she does know of schools that have had parents make donations
- Parents at the meeting agreed that in the future, they were willing to donate money to help save a teacher's position
- Imboden wanted to point out though that we still have over \$3000 worth of donations from our Fun Run that hasn't been paid and a lot of families at our school that have not joined the PTA

- Parent I - felt that it was a horrible decision that had to be made and that she is upset by the cut of teachers in fourth grade from four to three. She remembered how the year before, her son was in the same situation. She was grateful to Teacher A for sticking it out. She was also upset by the projection of teachers' salaries. She doesn't want to see students go through what her son went through last year. She was very concerned about the readjustment period. In reference to testing, she wanted to point out how with resource students, the time of day can make a difference. In regards to resource students, she would like to see if the staff could take time of day into consideration; Ms. Imboden and teachers stated how last year, all students only tested in the morning.
- Educational Grant Money
  - Parent was concerned about how we received the Educational Grant Money and then one week later, we were informed of a budget cut. Clarification was made that we were actually cut twice, once at the end of last year and then again at this time. In the spring, we will ask again for additional funds from the Educational Grant Money.

#### **Final Vote**

- SOT Vote for Option A or Option B
  - Option A was to lose a teacher vs. Option B which was to lose our Assistant Principal
  - At 6:34 PM, all members voted for Option B
  - Jill Stackel motioned for the vote to be approved; Todd Nash seconded the motion

#### **Agenda and Time of Next Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM by SOT member Jill Stackel. It was seconded by Ana Pisano.

Minutes were submitted by Ryoko Ball-Aguilar

Minutes to be approved by the SOT Committee