

# League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Pullman School District Date: 27 March 2024  
Observer Reporting: Ndambuki Length of Meeting: 2 hours and 16 minutes  
Members Present: Nathan Roberts, Arron Carter, Craig Nelson, Lisa Waananen Jones, Amanda Tanner

Other District Personnel Present: Joe Thornton, Diane Hodge, Roberta Kramer, Stephanie Bray (FES Principal), Chris Lippay (4<sup>th</sup> Grade), Brooke Payne (4<sup>th</sup> Grade), Rob Matthews (FFA Advisor), Tammy Sewell (Assistant Principal, LMS)

Others Present: \_

Members Absent:

**Business pertaining to League Positions or topics of interest:** *Include in this section 1) issues discussed that relate to League priorities or positions. Do you recommend local league action? If so, please refer to the League position that supports your suggestion.*

## **Quality of Instruction:**

- Looking at revamping website
  - Current contract expires in about 18 months
  - Looking for a better product that is more seamless and easier
  - School secretaries are responsible for updates which require knowledge of html or CSS programming languages
  - The parent square product has many features that make updates easier so that may be the way to go
- In-coming juniors in high school will be able to start Running Start classes in the summertime before their junior year
- Monday late starts and Professional Learning Community (PLC) time for job alike teacher groups has had a huge impact on both student outcomes and teacher professional practice
  - The presenting teachers thank the Board for their support (e.g. maintaining the Monday late start time, supporting teacher leaders in their attendance of advanced PLC training)
  - Future Farmers of America (FFA) Team statewide competition on Agricultural Issues Team
    - Team got first in district in January and qualified for state
      - This year's topic is "Is fast food negatively affecting our community?"
- Standards-Based Superintendent evaluation
  - Board looking at changing current process to a standards-based system
  - Will work on it at the May work session
    - Based upon law, WACs, job description, Board policy, responsibilities, negotiated contract between the superintendent and the Board
    - Board Policy
      - Working relationship based upon trust, goodwill, and candor
      - Based upon mutually agreed upon standards or goals
    - June evaluation held in executive session, mid-year check-in (January)
      - Superintendent provides evidence up until that point and then continues providing evidence through the end of the school year
        - The acceptable evidence is determined beforehand
  - According to the WASDA (Washington Association of School District Administrators), there are two effective models of superintendent evaluation: Standards-based and outcomes-based (2013)
  - To be clear, PSD is NOT using either of these models at the moment

### **Responsible Use of Public Funds:**

- District has qualified for both an EPA electric bus and a Washington State Ecology electric bus
  - The grants pay the difference in cost from a regular diesel bus and the electric bus
  - The difference is significant
  - Currently deciding whether or not to take them both at the same time or one this year and one next year
  - The amortization of the electric buses will be made on the actual cost of the electric buses so that also helps in terms of accounting
- K-12 increase in the State's biennial budget is \$2.9 billion
- State increased per student funds dedicated to Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC) by \$21/student
  - This is in direct response to the increase in insurance costs for buildings, one of the reasons the district increased its levy ask at the local level
- The state expects school buildings to be replaced on a 30-year cycle
  - But there are districts where the school buildings are 100 years old
    - This is an issue of local funds, supplemented by state funds (School Construction Assistance Program), if the local district is a "property poor" district, it is difficult or impossible to pass a bond
    - Every six years all schools have to be assessed by an independent third party approved by OSPI
- LMS proposal to increase ASB from \$25 to \$30 so that they can continue using Final Forms program for tracking student information and participation in sports and clubs
  - Program is piloted this year with building funds and want to continue using it but it is more expensive than the current In Touch program that is not user-friendly

### **Your additional comments/opinions:**

- Individuals from the community will attend the work session on April 3rd to discuss the Board Policy outlining the procedures for establishing a Citizen's Task Force
- Multicultural Night April 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8:00 PM, PHS Commons
- I am very encouraged that the Board is moving to create a superintendent evaluation system that is standards-based, all certificated teaching staff and principals have standards-based evaluations so having the person at the helm be evaluated similarly is critical for transparency and accountability