

Board discusses prom and graduation locations

During Tuesday's work session, the school board continued their discussion on the location of the prom and issues associated with holding the commencement/graduation ceremony outside of Morgan. Board members shared opinions that they received from community members, listened to current class officers, and discussed concerns with Principal Ken Adams. When the discussion was over, the board indicated they wanted a report on the junior prom plans before they are finalized each year. Neil Carrigan expressed his desire to have the information to better able him to respond to questions and concerns. Ken Durrant expressed his concerns about the need to maintain traditions associated with the prom.

With regards to the district's ability to host the graduation/commencement ceremonies at Morgan High School, the consensus of the board was that the ceremonies needed to stay in Morgan. Ken Durrant suggested the possibility of building an auditorium that was large enough to house a commencement ceremony the next time the high school was remodeled.

The board passed a motion to eliminate one paragraph in the extended travel policy that allowed specific groups to take out-of-state trips on an annual basis when "the success of a specific program exceeds the level of competition readily available within the 350-mile radius". The only group that has used this provision in the policy is the high school's volleyball team for their trips to California. Later in the meeting, the volleyball team was approved to participate in a California tournament this fall but they will not be eligible for another major, out-of-state trip until the 2012-2013 school year. The eligibility for students in the school's FFA program to compete in the National FFA Conference is found in another section of the policy. Members of the FFA will continue to be eligible to participate at the national convention on a yearly basis. Those voting in favor of the policy change were Earl Ericksen, Joey Skinner, and Neil Carrigan. Bruce Galbraith voted in opposition to the change while Ken Durrant abstained.

The board approved several personnel resolutions including the resignations of Jessica Jorajuria (MMS science) and Jerusha Johnson (secondary music). Susan Russell (MMS – 6th grade) was given special thanks from the board upon formal approval of her retirement at the end of the year. Laraine Whitear (MES – principal) was placed on a leave of absence for the balance of the school year. Tyrel Mikesell (MMS-CTE) and Susanne Colvin (MMS – SPED) were changed from "temporary" employees to "regular" employees, and Lauralee Gines was hired as a seventh grade science teacher.

The board reviewed fifteen requests for extended student travel (more than 350 miles round trip and/or two or more consecutive nights away from home) including eight trips this summer and four out-of-state trips. One request, a trip to New York City by the high school drama department, was not approved during the meeting. It will appear on the agenda again in May.

The board did approve the recommendation from the Honoring Excellence Committee to recognize H.B. Fry, Albert Carrigan, Victor Bohman, Pete Evans, and Rosella Compton during the graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2010. Those individuals recognized in the "Honoring Excellence" program will have their names engraved in the marble base of the Trojan Warrior in the high school's commons area. There is also a plaque displayed at the high school that describes their contribution to education in the Morgan School District. Neil Carrigan abstained from voting on the resolution to recognize the five individuals due to his relationship with one of the recipients.

The board discussed the concept of creating a special service district for parks and recreation in the county. Further action is expected during the May meeting. The board also asked that a letter be sent to Senator Allen Christensen and Representative Mel Brown thanking them for their efforts during the 2010 legislative session.

The regular board meeting began with Trevor Messenger providing a pantomime. He was followed by a short play performed by Tarren Sowder, AJ Nelson, and Tim Peay. These four students are members of the high school's drama department that won the region championship in a recent drama contest and will soon represent the high school in the state drama competition. They were followed by Ruston Roberts, a teacher at MES, who presented to the board changes being implemented at Morgan Elementary School next fall in order to better serve the students. (See this week's Superintendent's Corner.)

Prior to the beginning of the regular meeting, the board held a work session that included a presentation by Jocelyn Taylor, the state speech specialist from the Utah State Office of Education. Ms. Taylor indicated the current model of speech services being provided in Morgan are appropriate and meet the expectations of the USOE.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be held on May 11. Members of the board will meet from 1:30 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21, to discuss special education issues with interested individuals. The meeting is open to the public.