

## Regular Meeting Agenda

5/12/2023

At 1:00 pm

### Topock Elementary School

5083 Tule Drive Golden Shores, AZ 86436

Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the Topock Elementary School District # 12 Governing Board and to the general public that the above-mentioned Governing School Board will hold a meeting open to the public on 5/12/2023 at 1:00 pm at Topock Elementary School, 5083 Tule Drive, Topock, Arizona. The Governing Board may vote to enter into executive session, which will not be open to the public, with regard to any item on this agenda pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03.A.1 relating to personnel decisions, Section 38-431.03.A.2 relating to discussion of records exempt by law from public inspection (such as student records), Section 38-431.03.A.3 for legal advice from the District's legal counsel, and/or Section 38-431.03.A.4 to consider the District's position in any pending or contemplated litigation.

### Type of Meeting: Governing School Board

- Call to order with the Pledge of Allegiance @ 1:09 pm
- Call to the Public Card must be turned into the Superintendent before meeting starts. There will be a three (3) minutes time limit. At this time, the Board President will call for comments from members of the public **on agenda items only**. Because of restrictions imposed by A.R.S. § 38-431.01, discussion and action on items brought before the Board during this time will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or rescheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.

### AGENDA

#### Consent Agenda- Routine Orders of Business

**1. Approval of minutes from 4/28/2023**

**T. Daugherty- In the minutes we had that you were going to talk to the lawyer about John's contract.**

**J. Gardner- I was, I haven't talked to her yet.**

**T. Daugherty- Okay. So, we will just table it again. Okay, because it was tabled and I noticed it was not on the agenda. Do you plan to talk to her soon?**

**J. Gardner- Trying to, yeah.**

**T. Daugherty- Have you tried to call her?**

**J. Gardner- I haven't, because she's kind of in the middle of some stuff. Okay. Anything else Tom?**

**T. Daugherty- I think I got to explain a little background on that. The reason we/I asked for his contract to be vacated was because we have a disagreement that it**

can be voted on 15 months ahead or in May. And we voted on it in what was it? March. So that's the disagreement.

J. Gardner- Let me talk to Tosca, the lawyer. I will do so as soon as I can.

2. AP# 1037, 1049

Payroll# 2327

- D. Spiegel makes a motion to approve the consent agenda. Second by T. Daugherty. All in favor.

The Topock Elementary School District #12 will hold an executive session pursuant to the A.R.S. 38-431.03 in the vicinity of the Governing Board Room at Topock Elementary School, 5083 Tule Drive, Topock, AZ 86436 on 5/12/2023.

1. The Board may move into Executive Session for the purposes of discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the Board, pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes 38-431.03 (A)(3). The board will be discussing personnel matters

#### School Business/New Business

1. Discussion possible action to approve budget revision for SY23/24

T. Daugherty- Ed what is the most we can raise the taxes in one year?

E. Marquez- Talking to our auditors, I believe there is an actual 10% cap.

T. Daugherty- Over the previous year?

E. Marquez- No. just 10%. In general, I can't go higher the 10%. Now as far as buying from one year to another, that's just all based on what we do. But as far as I understand, there's no limit to how far it can go up in just one year. But as far as it capping out, I do believe there's a 10% cap.

T. Daugherty- Well, we can go to three and a quarter Correct?

E. Marquez- Yes, sir.

T. Daugherty- What's the 10%? I don't get the 10%.

E. Marquez- So we actually do have school districts out there. There are small schools that are sitting at like 11% for their tax rate. So, in talking to our auditors that actually they cannot go higher than a 10% tax rate.

T. Daugherty- Well were at 12 right now, right?

Superintendent- No, 2.04.

T. Daugherty- I'm thinking that the total is 12% of my tax bill. Okay. So, we go above 260 with no problem.

Superintendent- The only thing is going to have a truth in taxation hearing. But the public good. I mean, that's 10 minutes prior to the tax rate being set.

D. Spiegel- I thought it had to be a certain amount before you had it.

Superintendent- It does. And the two six was a significant jump. I don't know what that would do. We'd have to do a calculation and see I don't know if that's a random arbitrary number. Why but we'd have to do a calculation.

T. Daugherty- Do a two five to two six.

E. Marquez- I think Mr. Warren is talking about like one or 2% increase in the tax rate. But it'll usually hovers within a tenth.

T. Daugherty- I've spoken to a lot of the teachers in this past week. And one thing that they're very adamant on is they would like the counselor to be rehired. And I don't know what we were paying them. We got the money from COVID on that right?

Superintendent- No, no, it was a grant. That was a school safety grant that I wrote.

T. Daugherty- How much does she cost?

Superintendent- It was 190 grand for two years, roughly.

E. Marquez- I believe that the final amount between benefits and everything came down to like 95,000 each year.

Superintendent- we'd love we'd love to keep her she was awesome. She won't work for us again. She has a private practice in Kingman. She said it was costing her money working in schools.

E. Marquez- That position was strictly funded by the grant.

T. Daugherty- Let's fund it with taxes. I mean all the teachers want one.

Superintendent- You know how hard it was to find a school counselor. I'd like said I'd love to keep on I'd be totally down with that. We had one applicant who was being fired from the high school district. And then we found her strictly by pure luck. She happened to be a former teacher of the hackberry school district. And when I wrote the grant, I wrote it in conjunction that it would she would service Yucca school hackberry school and Cedar Hill School as well. And it just happened to be that the superintendent and hackberry said Hey, I know a guy that's got a private practice.

T. Daugherty- I am surprised we can't find someone for 95 grand.

Superintendent- Well, 95 grand is not the base salary. That is all benefits, everything included. So, take 30% of that. She makes it's a good hell of a good gig. You can get it it's a good gig I think of salary after benefits and what happened was about 75.

T. Daugherty- Can't we advertise for it?

Superintendent- We could.

J. Gardner- What's special do they need special training?

Superintendent- So, you know, we're not necessarily comparing apples and oranges here at the school safety grant versus raising the taxes. The school safety Grant was strictly for police officers, counselors and social workers, I wrote it for a counselor. If we would have raised the tax, then it would just be at our behest on whatever we wanted to do with the money. You want a full-time art teacher, a certified PE teacher, a Spanish teacher, whatever you want. So, raising the taxes would not have the legal strings attached, that we could hire somebody as a board that may not have to have

the qualifications that she had to have she had to be an Arizona school certified counselor to qualify for the grant.

T. Daugherty- How much would 100,000 raise our taxes? A percent and a half?

Superintendent- I think that's a question that needs to, you know, that staff should, you know, have an opportunity to investigate. But what we're doing is we're looking at the budget revision right now, not the proposed budget. So, this is the budget revision of preferred this year, for the previous year.

T. Daugherty- Okay. So that's something we want to bring up. I just wanted to bring it up, because every teacher I talked to so that we need to have one.

D. Spiegel- I don't know why we are discussing it. It is not on the agenda.

T. Daugherty- Thank you, I know that.

J. Gardner- Any questions on the revision?

Superintendent- Okay. So that's something we want to bring up. I just wanted to bring it up, because every teacher I talked to so that we need to have been

E. Marquez- just real quick are we actually had a budget limit increase, and they'll say \$2,000, our capital went up by 60 grand, and our MnO budget went up by over 100, grand 179 grand. So that was just to the fact that how the spending was done last year. And now that you can do the revision, that's where we captured all of the carrying forward from the year prior. So, we're sitting at about a \$200,000 surplus.

T. Daugherty- Where did all the COVID money go into?

E. Marquez- all the COVID money is going towards whatever the COVID, one and the COVID, two and towards staff. So, what we did is, we pretty much paid our employees to some of this, which in turn helps keeps our tax rate substantially low.

Superintendent- So essentially, we took much of the COVID money and put it into MnO. And then some of the upgrades that you see, like you mentioned, this library, this is all being paid out of the you were part of that committee when we came in here and talk about acoustic panels and that kind of thing. And so, some of that money is being spent there as well. We have one, two, and three. So, the first SRO amount was like \$50,000. And essentially, that covered the increased cost of employees, cleaning and disinfecting the building and supplies. Then the second round was 200 grand that every small district in the state got whether you were 150 kids or 19 kids. everybody got 200 grand. That's why we quit taking them. Backpacks, they get plenty of money. And then we got 350,000 on the on the third go around.

T. Daugherty- Have we spent the other 500 grand.

Superintendent- No.

E. Marquez- We actually wiped out the 200 grand last year. Now we are into the 350,000.

Superintendent- One of the things that we did was extend the school day, start at 730. In the morning, all the classified staff increase their rate by a half hour a day. And then all the certified teachers. When I calculated theirs, it was at \$40 an hour, and that turned into 3400 bucks per teacher. So that came out of out of out of that funding.

And then again, the upgrades things that that we've made it we've done if we can't haven't been able to procure a grant through the SRP.

T. Daugherty- So the noncertified were paid at 40 bucks an hour?

Superintendent- No, they were paid their rate. Everybody's different. The non cert teachers all have varying levels of experience and educational attainment. So, whatever their hourly rate was, when we increase the day, the length of the day by 30 minutes, we paid them half of that hourly rate.

T. Daugherty- And then the certified teachers?

Superintendent- Yes, \$40 an hour on certified.

T. Daugherty- So that wiped out our 200 grand?

Superintendent- I don't know, I don't think so because we didn't use, we planned on using some of that money for summer school. And then we I got the governor's Grant. So, my typical summer school budget is 15,000 with a little leeway when we got the summer school grant through the governor's office, which we don't have that same Governor anymore. So unfortunately, we don't have that funding supply anymore. So now when we run our summer school this year, June 6 through the 23rd, all of that will come out of our SRO money.

T. Daugherty- Where is the money here, MnO? It is not on the summary page.

E. Marquez- It's not on this because this is just a federal district grant money there, your summary page just strictly has to do with your MLM capital budget. It's all a shell game is all about taking money from a grant freeing it up in MnO.

Superintendent- The ESSER money was restricted. And so, some of the smarter people, he rotated that into moving it into MnO. So, it's got less restrictions on it. So, we can utilize it for a multitude of things, versus just what the federal government.

T. Daugherty- So, you can't put it into MnO, you're telling me?

E. Marquez- You can but you can't. It's a shell game, I would have to sit down and honestly challenge you.

Superintendent- Let me let me give you an example. If we wanted to convert our well into potable water for the school, the extra money wouldn't allow us to do that, moving it into MnO and or into salaries freeing up him and then we could use M and O to do that. So, when Ed saying shell game, that's, that's a pretty good example.

T. Daugherty- It can go to salaries, but not MnO?

Superintendent- Correct. Is that right? It goes to salaries and you just take it out.

E. Marquez- carry over then we're going to that we have every year. I mean, we've run the AFR, everything for that \$280,000. carryover, and technically speaking, that is ours.

T. Daugherty- I'm going to ask about the counselor again, with regards to the budget. Okay, because I want to see if we can spend this 500 grand, could we hire that person out of that money?

E. Marquez- That would have to be discussed amongst those stakeholders, the extra three grand that's that question. They said, Yeah, that is a possibility. That would have to be discussed with Mr. Warren and the stakeholders Committee for that.

T. Daugherty- You're talking about the ones that I was on the committee about? Yes. Oh, now we're getting down to simple okay. I feel good about it now.

Superintendent- One of the things that I would share with the board is when I look at how we spend that extra money, I'd like to see sustainability. And then keep in mind too is that everybody in this room receive either a pay raise or retention stipend, etc. And all of that came out of the extra money as well. But my thing is, I'd like to see sustainability, and that's why that getting off the city water system would be, in my opinion, beneficial. But is it worth it when we look at the construction cost and the maintenance of our own water system, versus the savings of not having the water company and when Ed crunch numbers for me for our water bill that was like, kind of like, maybe we ought to look at something more akin to student success?

J. Gardner- Just tell me are we in good shape? Perfect. Any other questions?

- D. Spiegel makes a motion to approve the budget revision. Second T. Daugherty. All in favor

## 2. Discussion possible action to approve school calendar SY23/24

T. Daugherty- Let me start, go. Okay. I've talked to almost all the teachers, I think. Okay, here's some of the items that have come up the start date of the 10th. You know, I always wondered, you know, when I went to school, we went to school from Labor Day, until June 1. I thought maybe that was an old-time deal. But it isn't. I mean, all the teachers would like to see us do that. And that would give us the month of May, where we're going, where we have the best weather in Topock, and we're going to school. I mean, this is the greatest time of the year here. So that was one that was brought up. As far as starting maybe an hour later. It seems like everybody's okay with that. One thing we discussed was, instead of cutting the Friday short, we would just at have them have a meeting at an hour earlier in the day before the kids go. And then that way they can coordinate for the day what they need to do. You know, like if they have to do some shifting around with AIDS and that kind of thing.

J. Gardner- 'd like to hear from some of the teachers, what do you think.

K. Lee- So I think most of the teachers are saying because this is something that I've talked about as well. Well most of us either come in between seven and 730. Right now, contracts start at 730. And students are also here at 730. And we have minimal prep time. And the more prep time we give teachers and educators, the better we can do in our classrooms for our students. So, I threw out that if we started at seven teachers to three, which is a full day, and students come in at eight o'clock that gives us an hour in the morning and also 30 minutes in the afternoon, so that we're not running around and we can get prep in. I make it work, but I have to either do it on my lunch or my breaks, or things like that. But I do participate in all the activities with my

kids. So, but we are only given that two times a week. So just a little more time, that's what they're looking for just so we can be the best educators we can for our students.

J. Gardner- Will 30 minutes in the morning make that huge difference?

K. Lee- Absolutely. Anytime we get as educators, I mean, we have one copy machine, and we have to share it, which is fine, but 30 minutes, and everybody has to make their copies, so it's not a matter of you know, trying to make this difficult. It's just trying to be the best educators we can be for our students. And I'm just throwing out ideas.

T. Daugherty- And the one thing that we came up with when I was talking to y'all was, we're going to screw up the bus schedule. And where we take the junior high students up, I think we just don't, we can't do it anymore. If we change the schedule.

D. Spiegel- If you have the kids coming in at eight, so they're eating breakfast, then at eight to what 830?

K. Lee- or 815 whatever, maybe we used to come in and not even offer it when the school started. You had to be here prior. So, it was like 730. And then school started to eight so they had to be here to get breakfast kind of thing. I'm not saying we can't work out a breakfast schedule, but any more time we can get better for us as educators. Share your opinions on what you may like or don't like.

K. Gunsalus- The bus thing because that's how my son gets to school.

J. Flick- I have a suggestion on the bus that's Can't we bring junior high students back to where they meet at the school? If they're here at the school at eight o'clock, they'll get to school on time, junior high.

C. Sahlstrom- what was what was the agreement when we first sent our kids over there? Because didn't we agree that we would have to provide?

Superintendent- they're still our students, the fact that we can't track like many people, Junior High certified Junior High teachers, that they're relatively nonexistent. If you have, I don't know if that's a politically correct statement made. But if you have a child at the junior high, how many foreign teachers are working over there? Our state is recruiting teachers from China, India and the Philippines, to fill positions. So that was one of the bigger concerns we weren't able to find certified teachers. And then when some of our more functional parents come and say, we love this school K five, but I want my kid to have a certified Spanish teachers certified honor but teachers certified language arts teacher etc. And so, they started on their own taking those children up to the junior high. So originally it you know, our deal is they're still our kids. Right? They're still our kids. So, I think we bear the burden of responsibility to get them to school.

C. Sahlstrom- I'm just curious but can they provide a bus now that all three of the grades are going?

Superintendent- I'd have to defer to our bus drivers and look at how many people were transporting. During sports. I know we have a relatively empty bus coming back with 10 students but in the mornings, I'm thinking low 20s is what we're doing. But

Mojave Valley is in much worse shape than we are. We have bus drivers. They don't. When Paul Hearn was their Director of Transportation Director, Director of School Facilities. He also drove a bus and he's their head mechanic. So, you know if you can, if you remember, a year or two ago, they were paying their bus drivers like \$15 an hour. We'd start ours at 20 got to do what you got to do to be competitive. The fact that Robert and Liz walk in off the street with bus drivers' certifications tripped and fell over rock I found \$100 bill on the other side of it to win bought some lottery tickets. T. Daugherty- So we're an elementary school district, which I've read is one through five correct? No K-5.

Superintendent- The elementary district in our legal definition of us is k-8 is our district, were an elementary district.

T. Daugherty- Were an elementary district.

Superintendent- Your welcome to look it up.

R. Massey- originally, we had K-eight here. Yeah. And that's the way it used to be. They came in bus drop off at 745. They have that 15 minutes eat breakfast, and we were class at eight o'clock, right. And then I slept at eight o'clock. Yeah, and then went back to that I would say propagandized, like, the one thing I just wanted to comment on, I don't worry too much about prep time, I don't have children. I don't mind staying here all weekend, and do my prepping and taking all this stuff out. However, when I have kids, like most of us do, it was very difficult. But the thing that I think that we would benefit from the most as the staff is having more time to actually connect with each other, and discuss what's going on. You're talking about different problems or issues that we're having and getting information from each other. We are our greatest resource sitting right here in this room. And then 90% of the time, I never see the people on that side of the building during the day, at the end of the day, I was poor here today, because I don't know, because I didn't get a chance to see her at all. So, I think that having a little bit of time in the morning, where we can all collaborate together would be a big benefit to absolutely.

T. Daugherty- All I want them to do is sleep an extra hour. They're going to do better. But I still don't understand like, we're the High School District. Do they bus from down here? Because we're not a high school. But we're a junior high. Different district.

Superintendent- f you look at your tax bill, if you look at your tax bill, were two districts here. So, we pay into the elementary district, and we pay into the high school district. So, when you see the override for the Fieldhouse here and golden shores, we pay for that. So, there's two actually two districts.

K. Brockmeyer- We're not K through eight anymore. Why are we still considered a K through eight school or district? If we're only K through five.

Superintendent- that was established in 1922? Not by me. Well, what would the benefit be?

K. Brockmeyer- Are we having to provide buses for the junior high? Because we're still saying our junior high is what I'm asking.



Superintendent- because it's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do those kids live in our community. And it's the right thing to do. And if the high school district asked me, would you transport our kids to the high school? We could do it. I'm not a fan of mixing elementary students and high school students on the same bus. But we could do it if we put an eight on there. We had one I was coaching football, all girls' cheerleaders, etc. Managers said on one side of the bus, all the guy said on another side of the bus, there's ways to do it things are, are doable, but it's the right thing to do.

E. Marquez- But we do get paid. Though the route miles for London are bizarre. They collect the ADM on the students, which means they get that whatever it is 3530 100 on the Collect route mile rather than the bus up there. That is part of my transportation report that I ignore that so we do get funded for second thing, that extended day is going to get phased out once the grant is done. That 30 minute of the extra day is part of the 20% that we're required to spend that extra three due to learning loss. So once that, once that grant runs out on fiscal year 25, when we close it out, then it'll be up to Mr. Warren and his staff to determine if they're going to continue that 30 minutes or whatever. But right now, we're governed by that grant to make sure that we have that extra 30 minutes to the learning loss that we have.

Superintendent- So from an administrator's perspective, we used to go as teachers used to go to 330 here, and I shortened the day and said, you don't have to be here till 330 Because you have children and literally you have children that go into soccer, etc. So, we continue to we didn't cut salaries, we just shorten that day, 30 minutes. In my opinion, if you wanted to stay that 30 minutes and collaborate, that's an option. But I shorten that day specifically being on a familiar making that familiar decision to benefit children. And again, from another from an administrator's perspective, when I think of the heat in August, September, October, and then again in March, April in May, this year has been an anomaly with the moisture and the cool weather we've received. But those six months when our children frequently can't go outside, after the morning recess, and they're stuck in the cafeteria is another reason why I like the early morning start. Again, just don't mind me just man, just my perspective. Another way to look at it is Mojave Valley is not part of our district. They're their own district. They're doing us a favor by educating our children. So, it's contingent upon us to get those kids there. So, I don't know if that helps clear that a little bit. They're there. We're not part of the Mojave Valley district, Topock is not part of them. We are part of the High School District, and we are our own elementary district. But our kids are going to school in another district. So, it just seems like again, the right thing to do is for us to get them there to make sure that they're safely arrived. And you know, if we relied on the parents, or Mojave valley to get them there, they may not get here Mojave Valley could say sorry, we're not going to run a bus out there for 22 students or something of that nature. And then to the governing board. The route miles basically it's a wash the wages and the fuel that we spend to transport our children is

a wash, don't factor in the cost of the bus because then that skews the numbers. Okay, those buses are junk, they all cost 150k starting and if you upgrade the AC get 117 If you want the handicap ramp that 190 to 210 and they're junk. So, it is what it is but on a day-to-day basis. So, we essentially breakeven.

T. Daugherty- So basically, all the teachers agree that we should start an hour later to allow for the sleep. I know you've got a problem with the bus. But that's what we came up with some problem with the bus. But I guess you guys could figure that out.

J. Flick- It shouldn't be a problem with the junior high students can come here to the school like they used to.

T. Daugherty- I am going to make a motion but I would like to split it up between the hours and the days.

Superintendent- If we do a full day on Friday that will increase our hours. We would be significantly over in hours. Taylor made a good point that Fridays are high absenteeism rate.

- T. Daugherty makes a motion that SY 23/24 students daily schedule will start at 8 am and teachers start at 7 am. The ending times for students will be 2:30 pm and teachers will be 3 pm. On Fridays we will continue the half day schedule ending at 12:45 pm. Second by D. Spiegel. All in favor.
- D. Spiegel makes a motion to start SY 23/24 for students on August 24<sup>th</sup> and end school May 24<sup>th</sup>. Second by J. Gardner. All in favor.

### Items for the next meeting

### Adjournment

**D. Spiegel makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second by J. Gardner. All in favor.**

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Topock Elementary School District #12 endeavors to ensure the accessibility of all its programs, facilities, and services to all persons with disabilities. If you need an accommodation for this meeting, please contact the Superintendent's office at (928)768-3344.

Posted by K. Lee on 5/19/23