

SHOSHONE JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT #312  
STATE OF THE DISTRICT-BOARD/ SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION  
Tuesday, March 11, 2025  
Tuesday, April 08, 2025  
Regular Monthly Board Meetings

In attendance:

**March 11, 2025**

- Board:** Chair Oscar Rodriguez, Vice-Chair Margarita Juarez, and Trustee Lorie Race. Meeting was held in the Shoshone School Art Room (#309), located at 61 East Highway 24, Shoshone, Idaho.
- Staff:** Dr. Rob Waite- Superintendent. Principal Kelly Wilkins, S.E.A. Representative Denice Christiansen and Clerk Heather Wallace.
- Absent:** Trustee Jose Regalado due to illness. Excused by the Board of Trustees.  
Trustee Nick Wallace due to work related travel. Excused by the Board of Trustees.  
Principal Kelly Chapman. Overseeing the Basketball All-Star Games being held in the school building. Excused by the Board of Trustees.
- Guest:** Student-Taylor Christiansen as an observer.

**April 08, 2025**

- Board:** Vice-Chair Margarita Juarez. Trustees Jose Regalado and Nick Wallace. Meeting was held in the Shoshone School Art Room (#309), located at 61 East Highway 24, Shoshone, Idaho.
- Staff:** Dr. Rob Waite- Superintendent, Principals Kelly Chapman and Kelly Wilkins. Shoshone Education Association (SEA) Representative Denice Christiansen and Clerk Heather Wallace.
- Absent:** Chair Oscar Rodriguez due to prior commitment. Excused by the Board of Trustees.  
Trustee Lorie Race due to prior commitment. Excused by the Board of Trustees.
- Guest:** None

**Annual State of the District Discussion:** The Annual State of the District-Board / Superintendent Evaluation discussion took place with the Board of Trustees during the March 11, 2025 and April 08, 2025 regular monthly board meetings. This document will be presented for Board review during the May 2025 board meeting, with possible adoption at the May 2025 board meeting.

**Areas of Review- The Five Key Components of Superintendent-Board Alignment:**

- Leadership
- Organizational Management
- Human Resources and Labor Relations
- Policy and Governance
- Execution of Goals (Strategic Management)

These components serve as a framework for assessing the district's progress and identifying areas for improvement

Dr. Waite explained the State of the District- Board / Superintendent Evaluation is typically discussed over a series of meetings and he emphasized the growing importance of the review, especially with the upcoming superintendent search expected within the next 1-3 years. He encouraged the Board to provide input at any time as the discussion progresses.

Dr. Waite added that change is survivable if the focus remains on the big picture and the Board is in agreement with those ideals.

Dr. Waite continued the "superintendent search" discussion by mentioning the best practice is to start early and develop a district profile based on the district values. A clear profile directs the process, keeps the guidelines honest, and helps find candidates who match the district's values. In response to Trustee Wallace's questions on a timeline, Dr. Waite stated it depends on the method chosen. Options are:

- Hire the Idaho School Boards Association: Requires district-led prep work.
- Hire a national recruiting agency: Specializing in educational hiring, assists with developing a profile, will meet with staff and the hiring committee, will help direct the search.
- Self-Managed Search: Riskier if resources are not properly utilized.

Dr. Waite added that research shows strong candidates seek districts with manageable challenges; not impossible challenges.

### **Get Better Quickly:**

To begin the discussion related to goals, Dr. Waite, shared that he was introduced to a system called "Get Better Quickly". This approach grants school districts, schools, and individuals to analyze areas for improvement and focus on one specific goal at a time.

The core idea is to focus on a single priority, rather than a long list, leading to faster and more effective improvements. Once progress is made in one area, the next area of focus is selected, creating a continuous cycle of improvement. Dr. Waite stated he was inspired by the system and has chosen facilities as the district's, as well as his own, primary focus for improvement.

### **Execution of Goals- Strategic Management:**

Dr. Waite stated the District should be proud of this area and the accomplishments.

FACILITIES: Dr. Waite continued the discussion by emphasizing that facilities remain his primary focus. His goal is to address the issues identified ten years ago by the Facilities Committee as part of the district's long-term 20-year facilities plan. The key priorities outlined by the committee included:

- Vo-Tech shop
- Entrance Ways
- Multi-purpose Room
- HDHS (Alternative School) relocation

Initially, Dr. Waite aimed to complete these projects and enjoy the results for at least a year before his retirement. However, his revised goal is to ensure most of the needs are met while keeping the district in a stable financial position.

### **Goal 1. Construction of the multipurpose building/Updates:**

- 90% of the construction documents have been submitted to the State for approval.
- Construction bid packages are in progress.
- The timeline still allows for construction to begin June 2025.
- The modernization funding has been a major focus this year, particularly in funding the multipurpose building.

- Over \$2 million dollars has been received from the Modernization Fund. When the funds aren't being expended, the account is earning interest, the current monthly interest rate is 4.397%. Funds are starting to be used for preliminary construction costs.
- No roadblocks have been encountered; estimations still remain within the budget.
- Future planning: The Board will need to begin discussions on the funding for the remodel of the two main entrances; potential bond or alternative revenue sources.

Regarding HDHS relocation, the district had considered purchasing / renting the vacant Wells Fargo Bank building as a potential site. However, the property was recently acquired by a credit union, eliminating that option. Dr. Waite noted that other possibilities exist within the community, such as renting a downtown building or purchasing a modular building.

While the relocation of HDHS remains a consideration, it will not be included in a future bond request due to survey results indicating only 50% community interest in the project. The district is not in a critical situation regarding HDHS, but Dr. Waite stressed the important of formulating a backup plan should any building issues arise.

Dr. Waite invited further questions or comments, but none were received. Dr. Waite stated that the District continues to make progress in achieving these goals.

#### STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Goal 2. Student Opportunities: Dr. Waite spoke of how important and rare opportunities for students' in schools are. Dr. Waite went into further discussion addressing:

- Continued expansion of student opportunities. These are opportunities students wouldn't have if they attended school elsewhere. Opportunities include increased college trips and college exposure, summer camps, career exposure, with all being integrated into the senior project criteria. Dr. Waite reported there are expenses involved but student opportunities are a good use of the District's money. Dr. Waite said other outside entities are taking notice of the program and are recognizing the value of the program.
- Friday enrichments are unique to Shoshone Schools, offering students exposure to activities they normally wouldn't do, have the means to do, or that other schools don't do. Many enrichments start as student ideas and morph into something bigger, even into groups or clubs.
- There are ongoing evaluations and innovation in student opportunities, always looking at ways to improve the program.

#### Human Resources Management:

Dr. Waite addressed the challenges currently facing education, referring to them as "boom and bust cycles." Many local district are reporting staff layoffs for the next budget year due to the expiration of federal COVID-19 Relief Funds that had previously allowed schools to hire additional teachers and staff.

Dr. Waite emphasized his commitment to avoiding extreme financial decisions by remaining objective and focusing on the district's actual needs rather than simply spending available funds. His approach is to smooth out these cycles, ensuring discussions about staffing are always tied to the actual budget and district needs.

Dr. Waite reported the district is financially well-positioned to withstand an economic downturn if one occurs. However, over the next 3 to 8 years, the district will undergo a phase of change as several staff members approach retirement age. Dr. Waite stressed the important of having a transition plan in place for key positions and strategically managing staff assignments rather than filling vacancies simply because a position opens.

The district follows a zero-based budgeting approach, meaning budgets are created from the ground up based on needs and priorities, rather than automatically increasing expenditures each year. This ensures a thorough review of expenses rather than relying on a "rollover budget" that simply increases by a set percentage annually. The district remains proactive in analyzing and adjusting its budget to ensure long-term financial stability.

No further comments or questions from the Board was received.

**Policy and Governance:**

Dr. Waite touched on the budgeting process as part of the **Human Resources and Labor Relations** and now continued the discussion by stating how the budget process is also tied into the **Policy and Governance** component.

Dr. Waite is proud of where the district stands on:

- Zero based budget concept and avoiding the rolling over from year to year practice, the budget is a spending plan for the year.
- The budget is aligned to district needs and reflect the goals of the school.
- Open Budget Committee: It's not required by law to have a budget committee; but a practice the Shoshone School District does. With the committee comes transparency and with public participation encouraged.
- When the Board approves the budget, it's the official spending plan for the year; which is why the budgeting process is critical to fiscal year planning.

Dr. Waite said the District does well with governance by maintaining focus on meaningful issues; not wasting time and resources on small issues. Research shows strong school boards and strong superintendents do well when there is a laser like focus, which Shoshone does well. The District tends not to have debates within the organization or school board about decisions that have been made. The focus is clearly what is best for the students

Chair Rodriguez stated his team-oriented leadership philosophy by emphasizing the important of an "I am here to help" approach in the work place. He noted that when employees feel supported, they are happier and more motivated. Chair Rodriguez added that one positive word from a leader can make a significant impact, helping others succeed. Dr. Waite agreed, stating that effective leadership starts with the Board and extends throughout the district.

Dr. Waite also commended the school board's ability to focus on the bigger picture rather than getting lost in minor details. There are designated people to handle the specific tasks. In addition, Dr. Waite credited the school board and staff for ensuring that time is spent on meaningful discussion and goals that directly benefits students, rather than getting caught up in unimportant matters.

Mrs. Christiansen reinforced that the team approach extends beyond staff, it extends to even the youngest of students.

Trustee Race agreed, stating that when leadership fosters a team mentality, the focus remains on what truly matters- the students- rather than being distracted by minor issues. She also highlighted that negativity trickles down to the students, whereas a positive culture creates a better learning environment. She praised the Shoshone District's positive atmosphere, emphasizing that students remain the central focus.

Dr. Waite concurred, stating that while there is always room for improvement, this year has been better than previous years, which were already strong.

**Leadership:**

Dr. Waite emphasized that the District's leadership approach is focused on developing leadership skills rather than creating a micromanaging system that could hinder staff or district progress. A strong evaluation system is essential for recognizing both high-performing employees and those who may not be a good fit or are incompetent in their area. Dr. Waite continued by saying **Leadership** is a key element of the District's strategic plan, emphasizing that leadership is most effective when leaders are found throughout the school and not tied to titles. Dr. Waite continued by saying, *"It's not luck to have leadership in the organization, it's creating leaders and creating an environment to have leaders"*.

Good leadership, according to Dr. Waite, avoids:

- A "them vs. us" mentality.
- A crisis-to crisis approach.
- Second-guessing management.

Dr. Waite opened the floor for comments. None were received.

**Organization Management:**

Dr. Waite stated the Trustees and staff have a strong adherence to the Chain of Command Policy and the flow of information within the organization. By having a structure in place it builds confidence and creates a process for all to follow.

Dr. Waite concluded the review and discussion by asking if the Trustees had any further questions or comments. None were brought forth.

This document concludes the 2025 Annual State of the District- Board/Superintendent Evaluation.

Approved this 13<sup>th</sup> day of May 2025.

 Chair Oscar Rodriguez

 Vice-Chair Margarita Juarez

 Trustee Lorie Race

 Trustee Jose Regalado

 Trustee Nick Wallace

 Dr. Rob Waite

Attest:   
Heather Wallace, District Clerk

