Trust Advisory Committee

Draft Minutes

Monday, June 17, 2019

Committee Members Attending in Person: Nancy Kennedy, Carolyn White, Sarah Thomas, Jennifer Meyer-Glenn, Liz Mumford, Jay Blain, Steve Davis, Lark Reynolds.

Committee Members Participating by phone: Cade Douglas, Tyler Slack, Susan Edwards.

Excused: Shawn McLeod

Staff Present: Paula Plant, Karen Rupp, Natalie Gordon

Also in Attendance: Jennie Earl, Utah State Board of Education; Ben Rasmussen, USBE Policy, Law and Professional Practices; Kip Motta, Principal, North Rich Middle School; Justin Atwater, Director, Land Trust Protection and Advocacy Office; Jessie Stewart, LTPAO; Jodi Parker, USBE Health and Physical Education Specialist.

Chair Nancy Kennedy welcomed the committee and had attendees introduce themselves.

Carolyn White made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2019 meeting as presented. Steve Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Nancy reviewed the schedule of upcoming meetings. Meetings are scheduled to be held the third Monday of the month from 12-2 at the Utah State Board of Education office. There will be no meeting in July.

Paula Plant introduced Justin Atwater, the new director of the Land Trust Protection and Advocacy Office. She mentioned the concern of SITLA properly managing multi-beneficiary projects like Cross Hollow in Cedar City, and stated that Mr. Atwater had been influential in developing a procedure. She also stated that the committee should be thinking about ways individual education groups could work with Mr. Atwater.

Mr. Atwater stated that he saw his role to advocate for and protect the trust. Success can be measured by an increased fund balance and yearly distribution to beneficiaries. He asked how he could actively participate with and assist education groups. Carolyn White suggested meeting with the Five County Steering Committee to help educate policy makers on the trust and trust principles. ACTION ITEM: Carolyn will provide Justin with contact information for the chair of the steering committee.

Nancy would like Mr. Atwater to present at the USBA conference in January. Paula suggested committee members find a way to introduce Mr. Atwater to their individual groups. Steve would like him to present at a Charter School Directors meeting. Jay Blain suggested he present either to the UEA Board of Directors or the Council of Local Presidents.

Jennifer Meyer-Glenn reported on the work of ACEESS, the Advisory Committee on Equity of Educational Services for Students. She serves on ACEESS, and is working to improve representation of underserved communities on School Community Councils, so the decision makers on the council better represent the school community. ACTION ITEM: Jennifer will send Karen an article to distribute to the committee. Jennifer will be leaving her job as Director of Family/School Services in the Salt Lake School District to take a similar position as a Special Assistant for Campus/Community Partnerships at the University of Utah, and will continue her work with ACEESS and to support equity on SCCs.

Natalie Gordon briefly discussed the School LAND Trust program compliance review process. The reviews are completed and best practices have been identified and shared with TAC. These will be used to help focus training for the next year. The next step in this year’s process is for the findings/concerns to be reviewed and approved by the superintendency, and then presented to the Utah State Board of Education Audit Committee. Finding letters will be sent to LEAs after the approval by the superintendency.

Natalie noted that carryover has been reduced, and that the staff would provide additional training regarding school website requirements to LEAs over the summer and do an in-depth review in the fall.

Karen Rupp announced the Fall Statewide Training dates. One training will be livestreamed, and would be a good opportunity for districts and their councils to participate remotely. ACTION ITEM: Natalie will notify district contacts about this opportunity.

Kip Motta presented on the benefits of Physical Education, and asked the committee to consider suggesting that PE equipment be an allowable expense. PE is included in the required curriculum. Jay stated that research supports PE as part of improved academic performance. Carolyn asked how PR could be considered a school’s greatest academic need. Cade mentioned that while reading, writing, math and science may be a priority, we should return to the organizations we represent for input as we work toward consensus. Nancy asked if PE Equipment was supplanting current funding, and said that the perception could be detrimental to the program. Jodi Parker reminded the committee that PE core standards are USBE Board approved, and that racquet sports are part of the core. Tyler Slack asked if this is a council’s determined critical academic need after review of school wide assessment data. Cade suggested a monitored amount, like the $7,000 allowed for character education. Steve suggested monitoring how often a council budgeted to purchase PE Equipment. Jenny stated that while access to sports could be considered an equity issue, a greater concern is if schools are meeting the needs of English Language Learners. Sarah suggested we simplify the definition of academic. Nancy suggested the committee discuss this item again in August. Ben Rasmussen will provide SCT Staff with additional definitions to assist in the process. All TAC members should solicit input from their respective constituencies.

Nancy led a discussion on school fees and the School LAND Trust program. Additional issues to consider are if program funds are being used to supplant other funds, or if expenditures could be classified as a cost of doing business. Board Member Earl stated that this law was because of an injunction in 1994, and that the state is moving toward what they should have been doing. Cade stated that because the legislature has chosen not to fund public education, program funds may naturally fill in the need, but the real answer is to improve overall education funding. Jay discussed the need for an equitable experience for Utah students. Lark mentioned that more program funds will be spent for textbooks and lab fees as student fees are phased out. The discussion will continue in conjunction with the definition of academic/appropriate expenditures discussion.

Paula asked for volunteers to participate on a School Safety Training Materials working group. Jay, Liz, Susan and Paula will meet and present a draft in the August meeting.

Natalie asked committee members to review School Community Council/Charter Trust Land Council surveys for the August meeting, with an eye to how SCT Staff can improve training and internal procedures.

Nancy reminded members to reach out for input from their constituent groups during July, and that the next meeting will be August 19, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned.