A Work Session of the Governing Board of the Apache Junction Unified School District #43 was called to order at 6:01 p.m. at the Apache Junction Unified School District #43 Board Room, 1575 W. Southern Avenue, Apache Junction, AZ. President Ehrlich led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board members in attendance were Jodi Ehrlich, Dena Kimble, Cami Garcia, and Christa Rizzi. Michael Weaver was not present.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kimble and seconded by Mrs. Rizzi to approve the agenda. Motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kimble and seconded by Mrs. Garcia to approve the September 12 and 13, 2017, Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.

Public Comment: None

- Consent Agenda: (documents are available during office hours)
  - A motion was made by Mrs. Kimble and seconded by Mrs. Rizzi to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion was approved with a vote of 4-0.
    - Personnel Action – attached
    - AJHS Students out-of-state travel

Information and Discussion items:
Bill Maas, Financial Report: Mr. Bill Maas has spent the last couple of months looking at our financial records and he is going to share a couple of recommendations to see where we want to go in the future.

Mr. Maas was on Board of Valley Schools Management Group. He interviewed Dr. Anderson and Ms. Reichert and looked at numerous 2016 reports. There are a couple of different items. He looked at the District adoptive budget, annual financial report, and the ADM reports from the state. The ADE puts out a report called Budget 25 where they compare what Ms. Reichert does with the way they would do it. He said Ms. Reichert’s report was almost perfect. He also looked at the annual report. Mr. Maas compared how the district is spending money to how other districts appropriate funds. He determined the average amount spent in five categories. The most important is salaries and benefits. The average amount being spent is 82.71% of their budget is spent on salaries and benefits. AJUSD is spending 84.34% which is good as the district trying to appropriate funding for the teachers salaries. However, this amount totals an additional $350,000 that the district spends on salaries and benefits than other comparable districts.

Then he looked at how much money is spent in the classroom, how much is spent in Special Ed, and how much is spent in Maintenance and Transportation. He found that we are spending above the average in the classroom at 64.53%, but that includes support staff to students and to the teachers. The SPED average of other districts is 16.73% and our average spent on SPED is 22.25% which is over 5.5%, more of the district’s $22 million. That adds up to be $1,215,000 more that the District spent on SPED than other districts like us.
He looked at the Superintendent of Public Educations Annual Report which compares student to teacher ratio. AJUSD has one teacher for every 18.93 students. If all the comparable schools were the same ADM as ours, we employ nine more staff ahead than they are if they had the same enrollment as the District. By looking at classified, we would have 30 more staff. In general, we have 39 more staff members than the average school district with comparable enrollment and demographics.

Based on Mr. Maas observations, the District is spending more money than the other districts by 1.5% but we are spending it on more people. So the key is when we do our budget and spend 85% on salaries and benefits do we want to have more money or do we want to have more people? In reviewing the salary schedules, they are about as low as any salary schedule he has seen. If he has to make a recommendation, he would say that we need to attract and retain more qualified and top-notch teachers. We can have more people or we can have more money. We have more people which end up costing $1.6 million more for those 30 additional staff members. The amount spent for salaries and benefits is a little above average. Special Education is an area that jumps out. The State doesn’t give the District enough money for Special Needs and we are spending $1,250,000 above average just on that one category. To him that is an area we need to look at. We are above the state average on the amount spent in the classroom however; we are spending it in the wrong way. Instead of giving it to teachers, we are spending it on SPED. In staffing, we have nine more certified and 30 more classified and are spending $1.6 million more than other districts out of $22 million.

Recommendations:
1. Evaluate the SPED placement process.
2. Take a look at where the money is going as far as work hours. For example, the bus drivers are getting paid for 10 hour days. Look at a 30-hour work week for part-time people.
3. Develop staffing standards for certified and classified. They should not change unless it comes back to the Board for approval.
4. Develop an extra duty pay schedule and follow it. All pay has to be on an approved salary schedule and it is against the law to deviate from it. The District needs to have job descriptions that include extra duties.

Volunteer Plan Presentation: Dr. Anderson talked about the volunteer plan. We want to see how we can bring in more volunteers into our district. Our objectives are:
- Provide a system for teachers to request additional assistance in their classroom.
- Increase the number of volunteer opportunities for parents and community members.
- Increase the number of volunteer hours in AJUSD.

Part of our requirement is when volunteers come into our schools they have to sign in and we have to capture those numbers of hours and we turn that in. We want to take whatever our base was last year and see how we can increase it. I have created a survey link that the principals can share with their teachers. It will have about seven questions such as:
- What days are you looking for volunteers?
- What time of day do you need them?
- Describe what that volunteer opportunity looks like.
We need to get this information to the people from the community. Whenever I go to community events I will go with the volunteer list to try to get people excited about it. We will also include this on our website, local media, governing board and principals with a link. There are also seven questions for the volunteers to complete. I need someone who can connect the two surveys and start matching volunteers with opportunities. The important piece is the background check. Level one is for people to attend activities like field trips. The level two background check is for coaches and overnight activities etc it costs $70.00 and lasts for six years. We are looking for businesses to sponsor these volunteers’ background checks. Volunteer incentives – We want to provide gifts for volunteers like concert tickets, Athletic passes, VIP parking at events. We want to show volunteers that we appreciate their efforts and encourage them to volunteer. Possible next steps include a volunteer orientation program, and professional development opportunities based on identified needs such as reading strategies. We also want to have a district wide volunteer appreciation and volunteer of the year recognition program or event.

Daycare Plan: Mrs. Wallace showed a power point presentation. We met in August and talked about concerns for the early learning center in relation to the budget. Some of the ideas we came up with to increase income is to add signs on the building as many people don’t even realize it is there. We could put advertisements in the newspaper and in the community newsletters. We will share e-mails with the entire e-mail group to make sure the staff is aware of childcare and have a big push to get all the parent e-mails. We created a brochure to be available in the front office and at establishments around town. In the past the center was just used for staff and we limited the publicity, but now we can expand and let the community know we are there and therefore increase the enrollment. The preschool and kindergarten staff offered to attend building meetings to inform our staff of the opportunities. We are keeping track of the money that it costs to staff and run the program and stay in the black and make a profit.

Follow-up on online data: According to Mrs. Wallace, when we look at online instruction, the teacher salaries are up there and then there is the teacher of record cost. If we pay the company the teacher of record it will cost us about $345.00 per session. We currently pay our own teachers to be the teacher of record and they grade the assignments and they push students on to take a quiz or a test. For summer school the director’s salary and 16 teacher-of-record salaries cost the district $15,490.00.

At the high school 127 students took online classes last year and 40 were seniors that needed to earn one or more recovered credit. Four seniors graduated early based on their online classes. There were a total 192 student who took classes for recovery throughout the school year, 55 of the passed their online class and 37 did not pass the online class. At the current state it is more of a credit recovery program rather than a program to advance. Most of the students who don’t pass classes at the high school are 9th and 10th graders. Some of the things we talked about looking at next are:

- What are the needs of the students who are not passing the core classes?
- What support should we give to those students coming to the high school? Where the data indicates they students struggle in specific classes, do we eliminate their elective and give them an additional support class before they fail?

Policy Regulations: Dr. Anderson suggested discussing the policy regulation at the October 17 Board meeting.
October 17 Board meeting date: The Board suggested moving the October 17 to 5:00 p.m. due to a scheduling conflict. There is only one meeting in October because of Fall Break, we could start at 5:00 p.m. and push the student of the month to 6:00 pm and adjust the timing of the rest of the meeting.

Board Self-evaluation and goals priorities discussion: The following list of items pertaining to the operation of the Governing Board is the basis for an annual self-evaluation. (S=satisfactory, N=Needs Improvement, U=Unsatisfactory)

The Governing Board agreed on their self-evaluation as follows:

A. Board Relationship with the Superintendent:

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1) The Board imparts information on issues, needs, and complaints in a manner allowing the Superintendent the opportunity to solve related problems in a professional manner.

2) The Board clearly interprets its position on controversial matters pertaining to the District, thereby enabling the Superintendent to properly carry out the wishes of the Board.

3) The Board disregards personalities and considers the recommendations of the Superintendent in an unbiased and objective manner.

4) The Board communicates views of personnel effectiveness, including views related to the Superintendent, in a confidential and professional manner.

Comments:

- Board members should not interfere with district operations and fully delegate and respect the delegations and operational decisions to the Superintendent and administrative staff.
- Understanding the role and establishing working relationships with our Superintendent is the key. If a mutual understanding of our roles is understood, than any issues, needs, and complaints can be expedited at the "earliest possible stage" for a faster resolution by the Superintendent.

B. Board Relationship with the Community:

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1) The Board recognizes that the citizens have entrusted them with the educational development of the children and youth of this community.

2) The Board recognizes that the community expects their first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each and every one of the young people without distinction as to who they are or their background may be.

3) The Board enacts policies supporting the efforts of the administration in helping the people of this community to have the facts about their schools, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff, and school facilities.

Comments:

- The board should view community engagement as a strategic, proactive opportunity to strengthen the school system. Community engagements in education, conveying to the community, identify and solve problems and involving the parents are all a must for a successful district.
C. Board Relationships between Members during Meetings:

1) Individual members of the Board treat other members of the Board and professional staff with respect during Board meetings.

2) Differences of opinion influencing Board member votes are based on the issues at hand and not on a personality basis.

3) All members of the Board conduct themselves in such a manner as to emphasize that individual Board members have authority only when convened in a legally conducted Board meeting with at least a quorum present.

Comments:
- We need to do a better job of respectfully policing ourselves when we step outside of the agreements that we have established.
- Building those relationships have to be based on visions, accountability, policy, community leadership, student achievement and respect. Basing the issues always on factual information and not a personal level. As a board member we need to set the standards that we will always listen, respect others opinions, recognize the integrity and merit of our work.

D. Board Relationships with Staff and Personnel:

1) The Board requires the Superintendent to recommend personnel for their consideration and consistently adhere to this procedure.

2) The Board members make every effort to become acquainted with the personnel of the District.

3) The Board members' personal friendships with District personnel are maintained without allowing them to affect overall Board decisions and/or policies.

Comments:
- We need to make more of an effort to become better acquainted with District personnel outside of our natural involvement. When we attend various events etc. it should be recognized publicly, solely to enhance those relationships with the staff and community.
- Board members do have personal friendships with personnel and the chain of command needs to be respected and handled appropriately.

E. Board Relationship to the Instructional Program:

1) The Board makes an effort to keep informed about the instructional program by providing for periodic reports as deemed necessary and by periodic visitation in the schools.

2) The Board attempts to gain information from the community pertaining to instructional program needs.

3) The Board maintains policies necessary to enable the educational staff to develop the educational program required to meet the needs of the community.

Comment:
- As part of our review of student achievement, we need to find instructional programs that will help define instructional goals and set our teaching procedures. We need to develop the goals, set performance indicators, and design a strategic plan that will focus our agenda and improve
achievement for all students. Once we have done this, we can then communicate our plan to the public.

F. Board Relationship to the Financial Management of the Schools:

1) The Board establishes the policies and provides the necessary resources to properly manage the finances of the District.

2) The Board requires the proper accountability for the expenditure of funds in the District.

3) The Board provides justified funding to maintain a high quality educational program in this District.

4) The Board keeps the community informed about the financial needs of the District.

Comment:
- Keeping the community informed and building a culture of transparency in place is the way to build our community trust.

G. General Statements:

(1) List in order of priority four (4) challenges the Board faces:
   1) Funding
   2) Student Achievement to include programs and competitiveness
   3) Communication
   4) Calendar

(2) List any weaknesses you have observed in the operation of the school system:
   1) Relationships and Communication
   2) Develop an overall culture of “Student First”

(3) List any significant accomplishments made by the school system during the past year:
   1) New leadership
   2) Goals
   3) Board visibility and engagement
   4) Strategic planning process

Governing Board Goals for 2017-2018:

1) Adopt a District Strategic Plan which will include a District Vision, Mission, Goals and Key Performance Indicators.
2) Review Calendar Committee’s recommendation and make a long-term decision regarding four-day/five-day school calendar.
3) Adopt a long-term plan to increase teacher salaries and competitive benefits.

At 8:50 p.m., Mrs. Kimble moved to adjourn the meeting; Mrs. Garcia seconded the motion. Motion was approved with a vote of 4–0.
Respectfully submitted by:
Edna Goff, Board Secretary
October 17, 2017

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:

[Signatures]
President
Vice-President
Member
Member
Member