

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**  
**UHSAA Office**  
**Thursday, December 15, 2022**  
**10:00 AM**

Those in attendance: Marilyn Richards, Belinda Johnson, Jeffrey Nielsen, Dave Lund, Cory Anderson, Paul Sweat, Larry Bergeson, Jerre Holmes, Robert McDaniel, Darin Thomas, Jim Wood, Bryan Durst, Brent Strate, Rob Cuff, Jeff Cluff, Brenan Jackson, Jon Oglesby and Jan Whittaker. Excused: Gary Olson and Greg Miller. Minutes: Jeanne Widerburg.

**1. Welcome and Chair Business:** Chair Holmes welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He excused Gary Olson and Greg Miller. He thanked Craig Morris for being in attendance for Greg Miller. He welcomed school and district representatives to the meeting.

A. Outgoing Members of the BOT: Mr. Holmes recognized the following.

- Gary Olson: Mr Olson did not run for another school board term. He is leaving the BOT and the district will send a representative for the remainder of his term.
- Belinda Johnson: Mr. Holmes said Ms. Johnson has served for many years on the BOT and it is sad to see her go. She did not run for another school board term so the district will send a representative for the remainder of her term. Ms. Johnson said she has really enjoyed serving on the BOT. It has been fun to get to know principals, superintendents and coaches from across the state. She feels she has been rubbing shoulders with the people that make things happen for students in Utah schools. She feels the Board and the staff are always trying to do the right thing and to stay on track for the students. Mr. Holmes and Mr. Cuff thanked her for her service.
- Cory Anderson: Mr. Holmes thanked Mr. Anderson for his representation of smaller schools and the outstanding job he has done. Mr. Anderson said recently he had visited with a grandchild after a BOT meeting and was asked what he was doing at the meeting. The grandchild's questions gave him a chance to explain the UHSAA and its purpose. Then he asked if he had fun at the meetings. Mr. Anderson said yes and explained how we help kids to participate in high school activities. The grandchild then asked, "Did you do good?" Mr. Anderson thought, "Did we?" Mr. Anderson recognized we don't make everyone happy, but we hope we get it right. His grandpa always said, "We will settle for perfection." He then shared another quote, "Perfection only lives in little moments. It can't be sustained over hours, only in instances over whisps of time." Serving on the BOT has made an impact on him and it has been an honor. He cherishes the moments he has had in the conference room. Mr. Holmes and Mr. Cuff thanked him for his service.

Mr. Cuff said the nice thing about Ms. Johnson and Mr. Anderson is they will still be serving within the Association. Ms. Johnson serves on the Foundation Board and Mr. Anderson is a game official. Mr. Cuff looks forward to the continued relationship with them. He said he has enjoyed getting to know Mr. Olson and he will be missed.

Ms. Richards said that the people that serve on the BOT are the salt of the earth. She dearly loves both Ms. Johnson and Mr. Anderson. She said the members are easy to get along with and easy to love. She also appreciates serving on the Board.

B. Reverence/Thought: Mr. Wood had thoughts as he looked at the snow coming down today. Sometimes the snow brings frustration driving, but if we change our perspective we recognize the much needed moisture, the beautiful scenery and the calming feeling the snow can bring. It is a blanket over the earth and brings him peace and joy. Thinking of the season, often we get caught up in the busyness and forget to look for the good in others. Sometimes it is a challenge working with youth and they push boundaries. It can be problematic, but if we look from a different perspective we see the great opportunities for growth. We can help them overcome trials and struggles in their life and become who they are meant to be. It is a great blessing to work with members on behalf of the students of this great state of Utah. He read the lyrics to a song entitled, "I Can Do All Things." Mr. Wood said we have the opportunity to have a strong and meaningful impact on others. He hopes we will respect that opportunity. He then offered a prayer.

C. Pledge of Allegiance/Patriotic Thought: Mr. Anderson shared his experience visiting with a Korean War Veteran. The gentleman had served in the Marines for eight years. Mr. Anderson's father was also in the Marines. The vet shared a story when he was a gunman on a ship headed for Korea, but the ship was sent back home. Mr. Anderson said his father had told him the same story. As it turned out, his father and this gentleman were on the same ship. Each story has a meaning and is unique and important to the person. He expressed his appreciation to the veterans that gave us the opportunity to meet today and to be free to do what we want to do. We should not take stories for granted and understand what was given and sacrificed to make the story. He then led the members in the pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Anderson introduced his replacement, April Torgerson. She serves on the Wayne School Board and will be his replacement for the remainder of his term. Ms. Torgerson lives in Torrey. Mr. Holmes welcomed her to the meeting.

D. Approval of Board Agenda:

**MOTION:** Mr. Wood made the motion to approve the Board Agenda. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Realignment:** Mr. Cuff thanked everyone for attending the Public Hearing on Zoom last evening. He thanked Mr. Oglesby for facilitating the meeting. All written forms and emails have been sent to the Board. He thanked Mr. Cluff for setting up today's meeting on Zoom to include Mr. McDaniel, who is ill. Mr. Cuff wished him well and appreciated his willingness to participate.

Mr. Cuff reviewed the meeting materials. Today, the alignment will be established, but there is another procedure for schools to have the opportunity to petition to move up a classification by a specific sport or activity. Once placed in a higher classification, the school will remain there for the duration of the two-year alignment. These petitions will take place at the next BOT meeting on January 19. Schools will be sent the information. He referred members to procedures 8 and 9 that give the Executive Committee the responsibility to create classifications divisions if necessary and to determine how schools qualify for post season.

Mr. Cuff recognized there are decisions to be made and the Board could charge the Executive Committee to study those matters. The range in schools in a classification is a recommended range. He reminded them that only bubble schools can request a lower classification. Any school can request a higher classification in January. He pointed out that we are in a hybrid

because some schools have already petitioned to a higher classification in a specific sport mid alignment and the BOT granted their petition. We are in a hybrid between a success factor, voluntarily applying to go up, applying a modifier and regions. Where we go from today can certainly be discussed in the future.

Mr. Holmes thanked the staff for their time and effort to prepare the BOT for their responsibility. He hoped they feel the Board's support. Last night, the public hearing was held on Zoom and members heard positive approval of the first consideration and some proposals were made for changes.

Weber School District: Mr. Holmes said Weber District provided information of a new school to be completed in 2024 and shared the impact it will have on Fremont HS. They requested a mid-alignment request for consideration which could be granted if it effects the school enrollment by 40%. The district is also doing a major boundary change of all schools. Mr. Holmes said that consideration will be coming in the future.

Westlake requested to be placed in Region 2. Discussion of five schools in a region. It was felt there could be crossover games and it wouldn't be hard to find a schedule. There have been five school regions in the past. Mr. Sweat asked how long it has been since the staff proposed no regions? Mr. Cuff said 2.5 years ago. Mr. Sweat thinks we are trying to have our cake and eat it too. We can't sustain both regions and RPI. He feels it is time for a discussion and determine what we want moving forward. Mr. Holmes said that might be a motion at the end of the day. Every school needs to be guaranteed quality games. The UHSAA would do the scheduling. Mr. Cuff said some states have a sports commissioner and they work with the staff for scheduling.

Mr. Cuff reminded members if they haven't heard from a school then most likely they are happy with the first consideration placement. If changes are made today, schools will still have the option to appeal in January. Mr. Holmes feels each classification should be a separate decision.

Cedar Valley requested Region 7; Bountiful was good; Northridge was good; Skyline good, but requested 4A football; Orem requested football only move from Region 6 to Region 7; and Payson requested 4A, Region 8. Logan requested 3A, but with ratio and geography the request will not be met.

3A All Sports: Members were concerned about the ratio in 3A, but leaving Logan 4A has trimmed the ratio. Discussion on Region 14 regarding Juan Diego and Layton Christian moving up a classification in basketball and Layton Christian in soccer. If there is no change in that region there would need to be a charge to the Executive Committee to assure those three schools would have as many quality games as the other regions. Mr. Oglesby asked if we want to change everything for basketball and soccer or do we look for other solutions? Mr. Cuff said there could be crossover games. There would be a need to have one schedule between those nine teams to take care of Judge, Providence Hall and Summit Academy. There are many unknowns until January 19. Mr. Morris said he has been in a region of three schools for soccer and it has been very difficult. Mr. Holmes said there will need to be a charge to the EC and staff to make sure those small regions are taken care of.

Mr. Morris feels compelled, as a representative of private and charter schools, regarding the notion of separation between private/charter and district schools. Is that a healthy move? Among the private schools there is a real interest to not create the separation of private/charter and district schools. Waterford has appreciated playing schools all over the state in rural and

urban schools. He said we need to exercise caution of that separation. Mr. Holmes said that is one more argument for not having regions. You can't have one foot in RPI and one in regions.

Liahona is concerned they don't have enough students to participate in 3A Theatre. Ms. Whittaker said their school is 1A size, but they have been very competitive in 2A. 1A, 2A and 3A all have the exception that they can double entry so they don't need as many students. Mr. Wood said competitively they need to be in 3A and Liahona's argument was they don't have enough students, but with the exception of double entry, they do. It is the focus of the school.

South Summit made two proposals. They are leaning towards proposal two for consideration now and in the future. It proposed to balance out ratios in classifications. Mr. Holmes said the board pays attention to ratios and they have reduced it best they could. In 1A, it isn't possible to solve ratio issues.

2A: Regions are taking their turns for additional travel in 2A. Mr. Morris requested that labels for Region 16 and Region 17 be switched. Region 16 becomes Region 17 and Region 17 becomes Region 16. No school changes.

2A Football: ALA was moved from south division to the north division per their request.

1A: Mr. Wood said Tintic and Wendover requested to move to Region 22. He is proposing to move Mount Vernon and USDB to Region 21 and place Tintic and Wendover in Region 22. Schools in Region 21 would then be similar. If Telos has boys varsity basketball they may move to Region 22 if the Executive Committee determines the move. Mr. Holmes thanked Mr. Wood for his efforts communicating with 1A schools.

Mr. Anderson asked about 8-Player football if the teams are solid. Mr. Holmes said they are.

## LUNCH

Review All Activities except Football changes from first consideration:

- Westlake was placed in Region 2

- Payson was placed in 4A, Region 8

- Stansbury and Tooele were placed in Region 10

- Logan left in 4A, Region 11

3A: In boys' basketball and boys' soccer, if a region has less than five teams/schools in a particular sport, the staff will assist and EC assure that the region has quality games as other regions in their classification.

2A: Swapped Region #'s between Region 16 and 17.

1A: Wendover and Tintic were placed in Region 22. Mount Vernon and USDB were placed in Region 21. Any sport that has less than five teams/schools, the staff and EC will assure schedules.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bergeson made the motion to approve the second consideration for the 2023-2025 Alignment for all activities except football as discussed and reviewed above. Any region with less than five teams/schools, the Executive Committee and staff will be charged to assure them a viable schedule. Also, Region 16 and 17 swapped titles. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Football Only (114 schools):

Westlake was placed in Region 2

Orem was placed in 5A, Region 7

Park City, Stansbury and Tooele placed in Region 10

Uintah was placed in Region 8

3A – no change from first consideration

ALA was placed in 2A North

1A – no change from first consideration

**MOTION:** Ms. Johnson made the motion to approve the second consideration of the 2023-2025 football only alignment as discussed and reviewed above. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bergeson made the motion to commission/charge the Executive Committee and staff to thoroughly evaluate the current status of the impact of charter/district schools and rules of geography and how we hold schools accountable for their students to guarantee and provide equal and fair play. He would like the process discussed how it works in Utah and neighboring states for district/charter/private schools in post season tournaments. He would request a report and recommendation to the BOT this next year to consider how the findings are relative to future realignment discussions. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Mr. Morris hoped that this group study would be balanced and this group would establish the criteria that the group will use – data points or information to be considered. Looking at other states makes sense, but he thinks we should look at the state championship data across all the sports and all classifications. Mr. Bergeson agreed in fairness that all parties involved should have representation in the discussions. He stated it needs to be thorough and comprehensive. Mr. Cuff asked if a sub-committee from the Executive Committee would be possible. Mr. Morris thought it would be helpful to have a board member on the committee. Mr. Lund said it is a huge discussion and he would like to be included on the committee. Mr. Strate reminded them that there is current legislation (vouchers) that may change the dynamics for private schools. That legislation should be part of the conversation and the effect it may have. Mr. Durst feels this has affected 27 schools and more representatives on the sub-committee should come from that group of private/charter schools. Mr. Cuff said and beyond that, he envisions the EC members taking it to regions and having an ongoing conversation. Mr. Wood pointed out that realignment policy and procedures discussion begins in January. He feels a year is too long because the procedures need to be in place for the next realignment. It was suggested the discussion take place in the August BOT meeting. Mr. Bergeson amended his motion to have the report to the BOT in August. Motion carried unanimously.

**MOTION:** Mr. Sweat made the motion to add an agenda item for the March BOT meeting that specifically compels the board to begin a discussion on the RPI versus maintaining regions. For a time, it should stay with the BOT because it is a legislative not an administrative discussion. Mr. Strate seconded the motion. Mr. Wood felt there needed to be more information showing what it would look like to do away with regions. Where is representation, scheduling and governance? Education and information would be helpful for the discussion. Mr. Sweat said criteria could be set in the March meeting. Mr. Cluff asked if they are looking to expand the discussion to aligning by specific sport or activity as well. Mr. Sweat thought that could be part of the discussion. We have a good starting point. Mr. Cluff said it was a major point of the staff 2.5 years ago. Mr. Sweat said there is education to the process and being on the BOT has been an eye-opener examining the issues. He feels we need to honor the past, but we need to be progressive. There is an issue. More discussion is happening about the RPI and people are

becoming open to those discussions. Mr. Anderson feels the RPI discussion is complex. Mr. Holmes strongly encourages the motion because it is time to get in one boot or the other. Mr. Sweat said the whole process has been replete with those types of decisions and needs to be discussed. He feels we need to finish it out and do it right. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cuff thanked members for their effort, service and representation. He also thanked Chair Holmes for the help he has given to the staff and board members. He feels there has been great communication. Thank you!

**MOTION:** Mr. Strate made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Bergeson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 1:07.

\*\*\*\*\* Public Hearing, December 14 \*\*\*\*\*

Chair Holmes welcomed those listening and participating in the Public Hearing on Zoom.

Weber School District: Those present: Alicia Mitchell, Fremont Principal; Matt Williams, District Secondary Supervisor; Chris Earnest, Weber Principal; Mike Martini, Roy Principal; and Superintendent Gina Butters. Mr. Williams said that they are pleased Bonneville and Roy are in 5A, Region 5. Superintendent Butters said the district is going to have a major boundary realignment soon. They will be building a new school, West Field HS, and it should open in 2024. They hope it will bring enrollment levels in all the district schools so they could be considered to have all schools in one region. She is concerned for Fremont who will most likely lose 800-1200 students mid-alignment. The Superintendent is hopeful that will be a consideration at that time.

Westlake HS: Principal Christian Smith said he sent a letter to the Board. They would prefer not to be in Region 4. Their preference is a change because 6A regions are competitively unbalanced. They would like a new region for a better experience for their students.

Cedar Valley: Assistant Principal Bill Sivert thanked members for the assignment to 5A, Region 7. It will be a great stepping stone to 6A.

Bountiful: Clark Stringfellow, AD, said Bountiful is pleased with their placement in 5A, Region 5. He feels they can be competitive in 5A.

Northridge: Principal Jason Smith thanked the BOT for placement in 5A, Region 5.

Skyline: Principal Mitch Nerdin said they would request to move down a classification in football and take Orem's spot in their region. 50% of Skyline's student body live outside their boundary and most of those students don't participate.

Orem: Chad Wilson said Orem is pleased with the with 4A classification in everything but football. They would request to be assigned to Region 7 in football. This request to move to Region 7 saves travel and provides natural rivalries.

Provo: Principal Jarod Sites said he is pleased with their classification assignment to 4A, but is concerned with too few football teams in current region. They will need to schedule too many non-region games.

Payson: Principal Jesse Sorensen requested that Payson move to the 4A classification, Region 8. This would help them build programs and help with travel.

Salem Hills: Principal Ryan McGuire requested 4A for football only. They like Region 7 for all other sports, but need help with their football program. They likely won't have a sophomore team next year. Region 8 or 10 would balance the number of schools in classifications, but Region 8 makes the most sense. They will be a great host for schools that travel.

Spanish Fork: Matt Christensen is happy with Region 7 for all activities, but request 4A, Region 8 for football only. They have had success, but numbers are trending down. They likely will not have a sophomore team next year.

Cottonwood: Principal Mike Douglas is pleased with 4A but would ask to move Park City and Uintah to Region 8 and Tooele and Stansbury to Region 10. He feels regions should share the love of traveling to Uintah. This would decrease travel and time out of school for their region.

Logan: Superintendent Frank Schofield and Principal Darold Guymon requested Logan be placed in 3A, Region 13. Logan's demographics are much like Ogden and Ben Lomond. They have a minority rate of 42%, and poverty at 47% which is higher than the other five schools in Region 11. Logan is an outlier in Region 11. Logan has low tryout numbers leading to less competitive teams, especially in girls' sports. Ben Lomond and Ogden were granted 3A and they would ask for similar consideration.

Ridgeline: Principal Doug Snow is concerned because they would like six teams in the region – if not Logan, maybe Bonneville. Cache District has had the brunt of travel in the current realignment. It is really critical to have six schools in a region. Mike Hansen, AD, said five teams in region add non-conference games and it is difficult adding travel for long distances. He appreciates that the BOT agrees five teams/schools in a region are not ideal.

Uintah: Les Hamilton, AD said they are happy with 4A, Region 10. They understand they are three hours away from most schools.

Stansbury: Trevor Wilson, AD, said they would like to stay with Tooele, but not in Region 8. They prefer not to travel to Utah County. They like being with Cottonwood and Murray. He said they can't take the back roads to Utah County. After hearing Ridgeline's request, Mr. Wilson said Stansbury would consider being in Region 11 for football only with Cache County Schools. He is looking for competitive balance. He was not speaking for Tooele to move football to Cache County.

Union: Matt Labrum said he was happy with placement in 3A and thanked members.

South Summit: Shad Stevens, AD, said the current 3A is not fair competition. They believe schools three times bigger than the smallest school have a negative effect, especially on girls' programs. 3:1 ration was not given much consideration and they would like more consideration. That imbalance needs to be addressed. They have made a proposal that provides a better ratio. He hopes the proposal will still be considered.

Providence Hall: Principal Nate Marshall was concerned with his assigned region because if Layton Christian and Juan Diego play up, that will leave only five teams and two don't participate leaving only three teams in basketball and soccer. This is unsustainable. He sent a letter of proposal for equal distribution, breaking away from private/charter and public. He would request ALA be brought back up to 3A. Schools need to be rearranged for equal distribution to have competitive opportunity.

Judge Memorial: Eric Wood, AD, said he is concerned with intention to separate schools between district and private/charter. Judge Memorial has a history of working well with public schools. He is asking for balance between the three regions in 3A. If Juan Diego and Layton Christian move up in basketball, they will have less games in region. A small region not fair to students.

Liahona: Principal Jordan Long said Liahona is an activities only school. Currently they only have theatre, but hope to add debate. When they joined the UHSAA, they were a 1A school. They are a very small school with a total enrollment, 10-12<sup>th</sup> grade, of 34 students. In 1A and 2A you must have 24 to field a full team. In 3A you must have 28 to field a full team. They don't have enough students for 3A. They would like to remain in 2A, Region 16 or 17.

ALA: Laura Nichols, AD, is happy with 2A for all sports except football. They would like to be in the south division for football. If there is a classification division with district, private/charter schools, it should also be for football. ALA would like to be in the region with Providence Hall.

Tintic: Sara Swalberg, AD, requested to move from Reg 21 to Reg 22. They have big hurdles in Region 21. Because all schools don't participate, girls only have two region games and boys have six. They would like to be in Region 22 because this would help them build their programs for boys and girls. It would increase games, consistency and rivalries.

Wendover: Principal Heather Castagno said they have been in Region 21 for a long time. It is hard to have so few region games depending on what schools will participate. Keeping kids in school is increased with participation in activities. If there are not teams to compete, they don't want to participate. They would request to move from 21 to Region 22. It would give them more opportunities to compete and schedule more girls' games. It will help with travel because they can schedule overnight events. It would help with golf, too.

Mr. Cuff asked if anyone else would like to speak to the BOT. The BOT will meet at 10:00 the following day.

Mr. Bill Sivert said he heard lots of requests for Region 7 – potentially losing Salem, Spanish Fork and gaining Orem. He feels the competition will be too much for Cedar Valley with Springville and Timpview. For football only, he would request that Cedar Valley be placed in Region 4, with the contingency if those other changes are made.

Mr Holmes said many requests were heard. Based on other requests made, are there any other requests from anyone?

Mr. Ryan McGuire from Salem Hills was asking why overall there wasn't more balance in all classifications. If there was more equal distribution everyone would have playoff opportunity. Mr. Cuff said it was never proposed there would be 24 teams in 6A. Because of the spreadsheet listing classifications and bubble/tied schools, there was a misunderstanding the way schools



were presented. It has been proposed for the future that bubble/tied schools will have their own column, ex: 6A, 5A/6A bubble tied schools, 5A, 4A/5A bubble schools, etc. 6A did not go from 24 to 18 schools.

In answer to the second question, Mr. Cuff said the Executive Committee makes the determination of who qualifies for state tournaments. A 24-team bracket is an easier tournament bracket. Balancing classifications is not easy. There are natural breaks, balance and ratio, but that doesn't always work. He said other states have 80-90 schools in a classification. We can continue to have those discussions for future alignments.

Mr. Cuff said he appreciated everyone for their interest and participation in the Zoom meeting. The BOT has a tough assignment to establish the alignment for 2023-2025. We are already looking at format and procedures for 2025-2027.

Mr. Holmes reminded board members to review their notes and take into consideration the requests made at tonight's public hearing.

Mr. Cuff said after the second consideration of the established alignment was made, there is still another procedure that has been added for this alignment. On January 19, schools will be allowed to petition to go to a higher classification by specific sport or activity. Regions might need to develop divisions so all schools have schedules. Schools that have previously petitioned to move up, will need to re-petition to move up during this process. Again, please do not plan calendars until after January 19, because regions could change.

Mr. Holmes thanked everyone and said good night.

Next meeting: Tomorrow, December 15, at 10:00 am. It is an open meeting to be held at the UHSAA Office.