
[Board Copy] Re: Highland

1 message

Deanna Judy <judyde@sd25.us>

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 10:01 AM

To: Melissa Humpherys

Cc: oliveran@sd25.us, clarkhe@sd25.us, knoffra@sd25.us, facerji@sd25.us

Thank you Melissa. I appreciate you sharing your thoughts. I agree that mistakes have been made. I hope we can have a renewed effort to put Highland as a number one priority until our students have a home. Thank you again for your concern.

On Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 9:53 AM Melissa Humpherys

wrote:

Dear school board member,

Why hasn't the school board focused more on highland? The school that actually burned. I feel like there is this lack of effort for anything highland. You have students that are barely getting by and kids missing out on classes because you've had to cut class sizes down, and yet you think all is well. It's not. Stop blaming the fire on your lack of effort to put highland first. Gain the trust of the community and stop trying to add extras into the rebuild of HIGHLAND. Focus on the school that's not functioning at even 60%. I'm embarrassed by the lack of actual care for highland. Have you been to other 6A high schools and looked at what they provide for their children? Highland is not ok the way that is was or even is. You can blame the voters, but it starts with you. The lack of effort/care put in by the district and school board members for highland. Who is fighting for these kids? Who is fighting for a better place. Century and Pocatello didn't burn, Highland did. We can put millions, MILLIONS, into poky and not think twice....but you have too many school district employees and school board members actively fighting against highland. Shame on you. You are elected for ALL the children. In ALL the schools, yet you can't focus on the one that should be top priority. How long did your concern last for highland? 1 month before you started trying to throw extras in for other projects when the focus should still be on highland. Voters noticed and the votes showed. All the "extras" you keep trying to add in for the rebuild of highland are only hurting your trust with the community. The focus should be highland. It's time. Enough is enough.....I shouldn't have to worry if highland will be finished by the time my 1st grader gets to high school. This isn't just a voters issue....take some responsibility and refocus on doing what's right for highland. Go look at other schools and see how amazing their facilities are. Again, you can't keep blaming lack of effort to fix highland on how the bond didn't pass. It didn't pass because it starts from within.

Concerned parent

Melissa Humpherys

[Board Copy] Highland High School

1 message

Kirsten Spitzer

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 7:00 PM

To: judyde@sd25.us, oliveran@sd25.us, clarkhe@sd25.us, knoffra@sd25.us, facerji@sd25.us

Dear Pocatello School Board Members,

As parents of a daughter who graduated from Highland High School last year and of 2 children who will attend Highland High School in the future, we are very concerned about the future of the school and its facilities. We have had opportunities to attend drama competitions and sports events in many other high schools and middle schools throughout the state-Coeur D'Alene, Boise, Rigby, Rexburg, and even Snake River and Aberdeen and we are always astounded at how much nicer their facilities are than Highland. How is it possible that even schools in small, rural communities are nicer than our 6A ranked school? Highland represents the largest number of students in any facility in this District and it feels as though we are an afterthought of this school board.

Our younger two children are in elementary school and we noticed during the Bond vote in November that we did not receive any information about the proposed bond until shortly before the vote. We are now aware there were meetings held and that information was texted or sent out prior, but since we did not have a child attending Highland High School, word did not get to us until much later. It's the entire community who votes on this Bond, and recognizing that inflation has hurt the bank accounts of most of our community, we're certain it's an uphill battle to get approval. The more education we can provide regarding the state of our largest school facility the more support we can muster.

How are you as a school board planning to get the word to the community? How are you as a school board planning to get the community to rally behind us? This isn't a Highland vs Pocatello vs Century issue-this is a community problem that needs support from the school board first. We need more money spent on advertising and educating the public. We urge you to get the community behind the much needed money for our future. And if the community will not rally behind us-we urge you to find a way to fund Highland High School in a way that will not only fix the fire damage but create a learning environment and provide facilities for our children that we can be proud of.

Thank you,
Kirsten and Michael Spitzer

[Board Copy] Re: Highland concerns

1 message

Raymond Knoff <knoffra@sd25.us>
To: Rebecca Clawson

Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 12:02 AM

Rebecca,

Thank you for expressing your concern. The School Board of Trustees is currently considering all the options available to restore and improve Highland High School as soon as possible.

Raymond Knoff

On Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 9:35 PM Rebecca Clawson

wrote:

Dear Raymond,

Good evening (or morning depending on when you read this)! I am a very concerned Highland parent, and really I would be a concerned parent regardless of what school my kids went to and there was a fire in another local school. I believe that the school district is that a district looking after the goodness of all schools. However, I am quite disappointed in the lack of work towards coming up with a solution even after the bond did not pass. The bond did not pass in my opinion due to 2 things, which I have voiced before 1. It was too much for most people... sticker shock... people couldn't figure out what the yearly cost it would be for them but they saw the \$42K or more. 2. It was combined with Century High School... bad idea... get someone to donate money and let it be named after them.

However, that is not what I am here to discuss. I am here to discuss the here and now. As we all know, Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow... which means an early spring. Sure hope so because last year winter was way too long. Because of that I believe there is an easy solution to help alleviate the congestion... make the commons area more appealing to kids to go sit outside and get some sun. I know of 2-3 landscapers in the Highland boundaries and I'm sure there are more within the district boundaries that could easily make it more of a seating area and more appealing to students.

Having a more forward thinking, I would highly suggest you go tour the facilities of Rigby and Madison. I can tell you having been there for sporting competitions that their facilities show what a 6A school should look like and have. Please take the time to go do this. It will help with your decision making and I'm sure that they would be more than welcome to have you.

Thank you for your time,
Rebecca Clawson

[Board Copy] Highland

1 message

Meagan Pierson

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 8:22 PM

To: judyde@sd25.us

Hi Deanna,

I am sending you what I have sent to the other board members individually with a special note to you to say thank you for all you are doing. I watch you speak up in board meetings and push for action for our kids and I'm so grateful for you. The silence that often comes from the other board members is disheartening. Thank you for continuing to ask questions and proposing ideas about how we can improve this situation. I'm proud that you are our board member.

Meagan Pierson

Dear Ms. Judy,

As a mother of one, soon to be two, student(s) at Highland I wanted to reach out to you in regard to the current and future situation of our school. The current situation is not great. The school is crowded, as you know. There is no common space, no cafeteria. Everything feels make shift. While I am grateful for all the efforts that have gone into "making it work" after the fire, please remember that this "phase" will be the entire high school experience for all of the current students. I urge you to be aware of that and take every possible opportunity to improve the current situation. I also encourage you to look to at major improvements for the future. I urge you to look at the other 6A schools in the area and see what constitutes a "comparable" school. I don't want our students to spend all these years in a make shift school only to eventually return to a school that is potentially smaller (due to ADA updates) and not much improved from its pre-fire state. Our kids deserve better. The fire was outside of our control, and our kids are dealing with the aftermath daily. What we offer them going forward is in our control. A major update to Highland was overdue and is now dire. I urge you to do your best to offer them a school that is in line with other 6A schools in the area.

Thank you,
Meagan Pierson

[Board Copy] Re: Highland

1 message

Raymond Knoff <knoffra@sd25.us>
To: Meagan Pierson

Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 12:04 AM

Meagan,

Thank you for expressing your concern. The School Board of Trustees is currently considering all the options available to restore and improve Highland High School as soon as possible.

Raymond Knoff

On Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 8:16 PM Meagan Pierson

wrote:

Dear Mr. Knoff,

As a mother of one, soon to be two, student(s) at Highland I wanted to reach out to you in regard to the current and future situation of our school. The current situation is not great. The school is crowded, as you know. There is no common space, no cafeteria. Everything feels make shift. While I am grateful for all the efforts that have gone into "making it work" after the fire, please remember that this "phase" will be the entire high school experience for all of the current students. I urge you to be aware of that and take every possible opportunity to improve the current situation. I also encourage you to look to at major improvements for the future. I urge you to look at the other 6A schools in the area and see what constitutes a "comparable" school. I don't want our students to spend all these years in a make shift school only to eventually return to a school that is potentially smaller (due to ADA updates) and not much improved from its pre-fire state. Our kids deserve better. The fire was outside of our control, and our kids are dealing with the aftermath daily. What we offer them going forward is in our control. A major update to Highland was overdue and is now dire. I urge you to do your best to offer them a school that is in line with other 6A schools in the area.

Thank you,
Meagan Pierson

[Board Copy] Re: Concerned parent of students from Highland

1 message

Raymond Knoff <knoffra@sd25.us>
To: Alisha Bailey

Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 12:03 AM

Alisha,

Thank you for expressing your concern. The School Board of Trustees is currently considering all the options available to restore and improve Highland High School as soon as possible.

Raymond Knoff

On Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 8:46 PM Alisha Bailey wrote:

First I want to say thank you for being willing to serve and volunteer in our community, I recognize this is a hard job, especially at a time like this.

I wanted to take a chance to reach out to the school board as a parent of students who are attending Highland. I have a freshman and a junior at Highland this year. I have two more students left who will be coming in the next few years. Since the bond didn't pass in November I have heard very little about what the school board is planning to do to help pass a bond. At the rat we are moving the current freshmen are now set to experience all 4 years of high school with no assemblies, no home games, no lunch room, no music rooms, and sadly a lessened high school experience. We truly need to find some solutions as a community to speed up this process, keeping in mind that we need to do what is right for the kids in the future, recognizing that the current students will sadly miss out on a lot of high school experiences.

I spoke with my students about challenges the fire has caused in their experience at school this year. Here is a list they gave me:

1. One assembly - They have to meet outside this year because there is nowhere to meet as a student body during most of the school year. It's sad to not be able to recognize accomplishments of students throughout the year and doesn't give the students a chance to focus on school unity.
2. The Halls are very cramped - students can barely can get to class on time. This isn't helped by the fact that the lunch tables have to line the hallways blocking them even more.
3. Extremely long lines for lunch - some students give up on getting lunch because the lines are too long and by the time they get their food it's time to go back to class.
4. No Home games for basketball or volleyball - students have to find their own rides to get to practice after school, which is especially challenging for freshman who can't drive, low income families who can't afford a car for their students, and working parents who can't get there to drive their students to practices.
5. Choir and band - it's taking a long time to get to class - missing out on instruction time.
6. Sunlight - After attending Century the students realized that Highland has very little sunlight. Of course this isn't something that can be fixed with the current bond that is being passed but it's something my students wish they had more of at school.
7. Century has lunch tables outside - one solution to the lunch problem would be to set up tables outside so that on nice days students can eat outside more easily and maybe get a bit of Vitamin D to help them before going back to class.

As a parent I would love to be able to help but don't know what I can do to help with this process. I would love to have more communication from the the school board about what we can do. I have time during the day to work on things that will help the bond pass. I would be willing to have group meetings with other parents, to

share information about the bond, and educate the community about it. I sadly cannot attend all the school board meetings because of other duties on Tuesday evenings. I would love to see concrete ideas sent out to parents of Highland about what we can do to help improve the current condition of the school.

Thank you for all you.
Alisha Bailey

[Board Copy] Policy Changes

1 message

Adam Gribas <gribasad@sd25.us>

Tue, Feb 6, 2024 at 10:02 AM

To: Jim Facer <facerji@sd25.us>

Greetings members of the Board for SD25,

My name is Adam Gribas. I've been teaching in this district for 7 years and went to highschool here too. Let me first start off by thanking you for dedication to your community by upholding the duties of your position. In our current social and political climate, I'm sure it's not always easy to do your job. There are a lot of voices both angrily and respectfully begging and/or demanding opposing things constantly. Thank you for being willing to navigate those waters on behalf of students, teachers, and parents alike.

I'd like to share my professional opinion on just one of the changes being made to the policies regarding "Parent/Guardian Notification and Written Permission". Specifically in this paragraph:

"Except as otherwise provided by law, a health care practitioner, or an individual employed by such health care practitioner, may not solicit, provide, or arrange to provide any health care services, including counseling or therapy services, either on or off school property, or prescribe any medication to a minor-age child without first obtaining written consent from that child's parent/legal guardian."

I welcome parents wanting to be informed and involved in their learner's education in most any case you can think of, but I feel like there are a couple of major and potentially dangerous downsides to requiring that our counseling center needs written permission from a parent or guardian to counsel a student. I teach at Irving Middle School and dozens of students regularly talk to school counselors every day.

--- At its simplest level, a change like this would slow up that process so that many of those students would never be able to see the counselor.

--- At its deeper level, many of these students are "in crisis" i.e. - at the brink of violence to others or themselves. These situations are the reason we have school counselors and need attention immediately for the safety of the students and others. Adding an extra step to this process could cause real damage.

--- At an even deeper level, there are many instances where the student is seeking counseling because of the actions of parents/guardians. Schools are regularly the first step in reporting domestic situations like this, and if the school is required to get the consent of the parents/guardians first, a student in crisis might have nowhere to turn.

I strongly urge you to reevaluate these changes. I hope that my experience has given some insight to how the district's teachers feel about some of these changes. I know we are both dedicated to the safety and growth of our learners in district 25.

Thank you again for your time,

--

Adam Gribas
Irving Middle School
Geography/Social Studies
911 N Grant Ave, Pocatello
(208) 232-3039