

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION REGARDING THE
MEMORANDUM FROM IHSAA REGARDING CLASSIFICATIONS FOR 2012-2014 AND TO PROVIDE
DIRECTION ON A CLASSIFICATION CHANGE**

**Superintendent's Office at the Education Service Center
Wednesday September 7, 2011
12:00 p.m.**

BOARD MEMBERS AND SUPERINTENDENT PRESENT:

Frank Rash, Chair

John Sargent, Vice Chair (Excused)

Jackie Cranor, Clerk

Janie Gebhardt, Member

Nate Murphy, Member

Mary Vagner, Superintendent

Welcome, Call to Order and Statement of Purpose

Chair Rash welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. He said the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the reclassification petition for Highland High School from a 4A to a 5A classification for the 2012-2014 period.

Discuss the Memorandum from the IHSAA Regarding Classifications for 2012-2014

Ms. Vagner said included in the packet was an email from the Executive Director of the Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA) directing that a petition for Highland High School's reclassification be approved by the Board of Trustees. She said another email was received by the administration saying the numbers provided by the state were inaccurate. She said the IHSAA was in the process of getting new numbers from the state and would average the numbers and add 5% to get the final ADA. She said it was likely that Highland High School's numbers would not fall short of qualifying for a 5A classification but as the meeting was previously scheduled and public dialogue with the media had taken place it was better to make sure that the process was followed for Board action in case the numbers came back short of a 5A classification. She said this would cover the necessary protocol if Board action was needed. She said the IHSAA expected to have new information by September 23, 2011. She said it was not a surprise that the data from the state was bad as most data from the state had been inaccurate all year. She said Mr. Devine prepared a memo detailing the enrollment history for Highland High School. She said Highland's enrollment in 2010-11 was 1,311, 2011-12 was 1,339 and the administration projected Highland would have 1,381 students enrolled for the 2011-12 school year and the cutoff for 5A was 1,280. She said the numbers historically showed a greater enrollment for Highland High School than 1,280. She said a letter to the IHSAA Executive Director, John Billetz was included in the packet for Board consideration. She said the administration was prepared to send the letter petitioning for reclassification depending on the action of the Board. She said Mr. Sargent was unable to attend but communicated that he was interested in maintaining the 5A classification. Mr. Devine said the IHSAA used to use annual enrollment numbers to determine classification and now used average daily attendance numbers which changed the formula. Ms. Cranor said if the high school historically fell into a 5A classification it should stay there. She said one student for one school year shouldn't warrant moving to a lower classification. Ms. Gebhardt agreed it seemed arbitrary. Ms. Vagner said depending on the cutoff the difference could be anywhere from 1 to 1,000 students. Mr. Murphy asked if the cutoff number changed every year. Mr. Devine said it had been the same for years. Mr. Murphy said it appeared that the school would be right back to 5A classification the following year. He asked if the 5A Superintendents would have to vote on the petition. Ms. Vagner said yes. She said Board action prior to the original deadline was prudent to ensure the District had done its part. Mr. Rash said the vote only needed 50% +1 of the 5A Superintendents. Ms. Cranor asked if this was the first year the IHSAA had moved away from using enrollment for calculating classifications. Mr. Devine said yes. Ms. Gebhardt said there were a variety of concerns with changing classification one of them being the familiarity between coaches and teams that historically played one another. Mr. Murphy said it would be different if the school was constantly fighting to maintain the 5A classification but this appeared to be a temporary problem. Ms.

Vagner said there were a lot of pros and cons to consider. She said if the school was placed in a 4A classification there would be less travel and would have more teams to play, but would eliminate the possibility of two high schools competing at state. She said the competition between the local high schools was fierce but is good and engendered a sense of pride and community support which was healthy for the community. Mr. Devine said this was a unique situation as usually schools petitioned down, not up. Ms. Vagner noted that Highland High School historically held its own with high schools that had larger enrollment numbers. She said Highland High School could compete.

Public Comment

Board Protocols for Public Comment will be followed at all Board Meetings. Patrons wishing to address the Board will fill out Form AD 2 – Request to Appear before the Board and present it to the Board Chair or Board Secretary prior to the meeting.

Board Operating Principles No. 22 & 23:

22) The Board will follow the chain of command referring others to present their issues, problems, or proposals to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issues; **23)** Board members will refrain from communications which create conditions of bias should a problem or complaint become the subject matter of a hearing before the Board.

Tonya Jewell – 2462 Gooding Street, Pocatello, ID 83201

Ms. Jewell said Superintendent Vagner covered her concerns. She said her main concern was that if Highland was placed in a 4A classification it would limit the opportunity for other schools to compete in state competitions. She said students, parents and coaches all agreed it would be best to stay in a 5A classification and was a huge tradition for Highland High School.

Curtis Smith – 125 Chase Street, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Smith said he was a Pocatello High School graduate and noted that schools identified with their classification. He said Madison High School was constantly moving up and down in classification and lacked identity. He said the traditional competition was important to the community. He said there were two strong programs in the community and enabled students to play longer and gave both the opportunity to compete at state. He said Pocatello High School students felt good when Highland went to state and vice versa. He encouraged the Board to maintain the classification petition.

Bill Green – 2487 Satterfield Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201

Mr. Green said he was a Highland High School graduate and a former coach. He said he had four children graduate from Highland and recommended the Board maintain a classification petition. He said it was important to emphasize the healthy rivalry between Highland High School and Pocatello High School which could potentially change if both schools were 4A. He said years ago when both Highland and Pocatello High Schools were 4A the state changed the playoff format to make the schools play each other in the first round of the playoffs to eliminate the competition which limited how long one school got to play. He said it was critical for kids to compete for a championship and if Highland High School was classified as 4A only one team would get to compete. He said competing in a state championship was a great opportunity for kids, win or lose. He said he supported maintaining a 5A classification and hoped the Board agreed.

Rich Diehl – 802 Washburn Road, Chubbuck, ID 83202

Mr. Diehl said he supported the petition to maintain Highland High School in a 5A classification. He said not only was it a good opportunity for two schools to compete it was also a good economic driver. He said eliminating the possibility for one of the schools to compete limited the number of people that came to the community and spent money during competitions. He said the more schools that competed, the more people it brought into the community. He said he hoped the Board would support that outlook.

Eric D’Amico – 5120 Mahogany Drive, Pocatello, ID 83204

Mr. Rash said the Board received written comment from Mr. Eric D’Amico which was included in the packet. He read the written comment to the group which stated that he was requesting the Board not appeal any classification change and if the school warranted a classification change it should be upheld. He said a lower classification would reduce travel and would make it easier to find teams to play. He said if the school’s enrollment increased in the future it could be moved back to a 5A at that time.

Take Action to Provide Direction Relative to a Classification Change

A motion was made by Ms. Gebhardt and seconded by Ms. Cranor to approve the submission of the letter to the IHSAA petitioning for a classification change for Highland High School from a 4A to a 5A for the 2012-2014 period. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Ms. Cranor and seconded by Ms. Gebhardt to adjourn. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative. The Board adjourned its Special Meeting at 12:29 p.m.

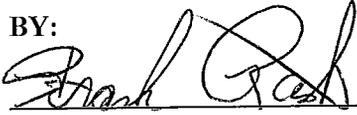
APPROVED ON:

OCTOBER 18, 2011

MINUTES PREPARED BY:


Secretary, Board of Trustees

BY:


Chair

ATTESTED BY:


Clerk