

**Jeremy Ranch Elementary School (JRES)
Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
Meeting Minutes - February 7, 2017 at 7 p.m.**



1. Call to Order – Bari Nan:
“Quick Plug – We need Book Fair help – the kids love it. Reading to the kids is really fun.”

2. Grade Realignment Discussion - JJ Ehlers and Julie Eihausen both members of the Park City School District Board of Education – There was a School Board meeting this morning that was 3 hours long – this info is “hot off the presses”. No decisions were made today. Here is where we - in April 2015, a decision was made to do pre-K/4, 5/6, 7/8 then 9/12 schools. In August 2015, they voted for a bond to support the realignment for a 2016/2017 implementation. They decided to push it a year so they’d have the facilities to support realignment in the 2017/2018 year. They thought the bond would pass. The board passed a resolution to move realignment to 2017/2018 regardless of whether the bond passed. The bond didn’t pass but they have been looking at realignment ever since. Specifically, they have been looking at 5-8 grade learning environments. They’ve had meetings with administrators and everyone supported the 5/6, 7/8, 9/12 alignment proposal with no dissent. The administration has always been behind it. Because of the resolution to move forward in the 2017/2018 school year, it is coming up – soon! The next board meeting will be on Feb 16. JJ Ehlers will be making a motion to rescind the 2017/2018 realignment date since many issues still need to be worked out. They need a simple majority to vote for that to be rescinded. The board can either amend the date, keep the date or rescind it. This gives the public more time for comment too. Additional comments:
 - a. The administrators are behind it. The teacher’s association sent a letter saying comments will be provided about eventual realignment – but they support realignment but think the timeline is too short for the 2017/2018 school year.
 - b. There is a great book that people can read concerning the 5/6 7/8 realignment called “This We Believe” found at: <https://www.amazon.com/This-We-Believe-Educating-Adolescents/dp/1560902329>
 - c. Thursday, Feb 16th at 6 p.m. at Ecker Hill Middle School (EH) - the full presentation which will explain why the curriculum committee wants to move forward – it explains their vision as well. The 5/6 will be an elementary school – which will include ½ day Dual Language Immersion (DLI) as well.
 - d. The 5/6 will not be on a bell schedule, it will be more project-based. We will have our 6th graders act more like elementary schoolers.
 - e. Maturation process is going on earlier now. Mostly for 5th graders, less so with 4th graders. The awkward time puts them in with their peers.
 - f. There is also an issue with outside enrollment because of Park City’s high level of education.
 - g. DLI – French at Jeremy Ranch Elementary School (JRES) and Trailside Elementary School (TS) plus Spanish at Parley’s Park Elementary School (PP) and McPolin Elementary School (McP). There are kids going into 9th who have been in these programs. This is better for DLI and allows for introduction of music back to our 5th graders (intro to instruments – band/choir).
 - h. The whole schedule is centered around this SPECIFIC age group of 5/6 and 7/8.
 - i. The block schedule is not working for a majority of our 6th graders.
 - j. Comments/Questions –
 - i. Timing is an issue. What can the PTO/parents do to support the decision to push it back at least a year? Send the board and representatives’ emails. They’ve been working on it since 2015.
 - ii. How do we set up the PTO, etc...for this? JJ and Julie’s daughters were at EH when the 6/7/8 to 6/7 8/9 change happened – they came together and the PTO worked itself out. They had about a year to prepare. They need to be flexible.
 - iii. Why can’t we do it 2017/2018 year? They have to figure out the better way to go. Because it was rolled out about 2 weeks ago, Park City High School (PCHS) is starting its registration for next year. The amount of time they need to turn around a schedule is pretty tremendous. Adding 400 students to PCHS is challenging. They’ve been working on the curriculum piece. Several of the principles have been working on it. That date has not been a focus until 2 weeks ago. There are so many pieces to this puzzle – the time change for schools is not the primary reason for the recommended push back.
 - iv. Where will the 5/6 school be? There has been discussion of sending them to Treasure Mountain Middle School (TM). Millions of \$ will be put into TM next year.
 - v. One parent said they did a 5/6 school realignment in New Jersey that was great however, when the realignment was done, they had a building plan in place. This parent was a huge pro-bond person here in Park City last year and was disappointed it didn’t go through. Construction takes longer than anticipated but numbers sometimes dictate what will be done. We need an approved plan in place and a construction timeline. They will be in trailers either way. Does TM still have a useful life?
 - vi. 5th graders and 6th graders are more appropriate together – what criteria is used to determine if 5th graders are ready for that? Read the “This We Believe” book – What about the kids on the margin? “This We Believe” should help answer those types of questions.

- vii. The Wasatch School District is going back to their old model after implementing the 5/6 realignment – does this mean it didn't work? No, they are going back because of space and growth. The worst reason to realign is a space reason. That was why the 9th graders went to TM. The board has discussed realignment and the Superintendent is thoroughly informed as well. They meet with Wasatch School Board quarterly and they have good communication with them. Their rapid growth issue predominated their decision. Their kids love the realignment and are sad that they are going back.
- viii. Most here are not in support of 5/6 going to TM. There is also concern that 5/6 will ride the buses with the 9/12 graders – will that happen? No, there will be different buses because of different start times. You can't bus the 5/6 kids with 9/12 graders.
- ix. DLI – access to all 3 languages at the 5/6 school (English, French and Spanish). They will have different pods.
- x. Why move 5/6 to TM vice EH – TM was originally built for 5/8 kids. They have smaller bodies and less kids. 7/8 at Ecker – least expensive building to be built – lab, music – it fits 7/8 better. Facilities issues – will be addressed after alignment.
- xi. Logistically, how do the teachers feel? They support it but not for 2017/2018. See the letter from their association referred to earlier.
- xii. The public would have time to reach out and have their voices heard. They should do so by going to the website and finding their representative, <http://www.pcschools.us/index.php?page=48>
- xiii. After everything was in place and the timeline was in place, it took 2 years for there to NOT be resistance from the staff. At some point, a trigger must be pulled. Julie is most passionate about it because she voted for this at her first board meeting, 2.5 years ago. If it doesn't happen now, it will be 2018/2019 years – regardless, there will be trailers at most of the elementary schools. They need to look at the timeline again and have a plan in place by March 2017. The missing piece is the building. Davis County built a 5/6 middle school that is built up to PC standards. We could use their plans and it could work for us (compared to the Whole Foods building that is taking forever). If we have a new building, people would buy in. McP is at capacity. PCHS is full.
- xiv. District has a lot going on, how confident are you that something will happen? There is always too much on everyone's plate. It doesn't matter when, they are all busy. Education is changing faster and more significantly at a rapid pace than what we are used to. Technology is a big pusher. Changing start times in accordance with the realignment is important but, we don't want to do it twice.
- xv. One other guest, Petra Butler, was present – she is a new school board member but was not allowed to comment due to school board rules.
- xvi. Thanks for coming and answering questions.
- xvii. Board members have been very responsive. There is a lot of info on the District Website. You can get their contact info on the site and you can email them. Next Thursday's morning is an important meeting so email before then.

Principal's Report (Shawn Kuennen):

Playworks update-most in the room are familiar with it. It is a non-profit organization that is nation-wide, especially in SLC. They are about 59 "Playworks" schools in Utah. They do this very well. Their mission is to put themselves out of business. They try to create a recess that is productive to all students, so well that they are not needed anymore. Our Playworks representative, Jake, said recess is your biggest classroom – if they are not good at playing on their own and don't know how to treat each other, it can make people's lives miserable, it takes time from teachers, and it can be unsafe. Playworks tries to create positive reinforcement, good transition to/from recess, with no losers, that is inclusive – if you get them all hyped up outside then bring them in for math, that doesn't work so well. They need more effective transition time. 28 hours of instruction time (on average) becomes available because of less disputes, less drama, better transitions. We are in a master teacher's office (the music room). The kids transition in and out of this classroom really well. At the first Playworks training, they learned how to play "roshambo" and 4 square – the way the kids currently play 4 square is incomprehensible to Mr. Kuennen. There are ALL the rules. If you don't know a rule, you are out. The way Playworks does it, there is a recycling line, and the ball bounces once in your square - if it hits the line, everyone gives a high five to you as you go into the recycling line. The server is in the A square vice the D square – no one is sad or bummed if they get recycled. There are less rules and no losers. JRES has had 1 day of training – they chose 2 games to start with last Monday – "switch" and "band aid tag". The idea is there are 400 games to choose from. Maggie is a big part of it as she helps Mrs. Cook teach the games in PE but they are also taught in the classroom. Everyone knows the rules. Like musical chairs on a court then you go to the recycle line and it is really fun. We could play it right now in here, during our meeting. You can make small changes like you have to hop like a bunny. High fives go to those who get recycled. The difference is if you want to play switch, you know how and you can play or you can choose not to play. Are parents complaining about "organized play"? It is a symptom of our time that our kids don't know how to play properly. No one is required to play these games, it is an option. Those who went to see it in "play" down in SLC were amazed. Kids can opt in or out. As it stands, when they supervise recess, they put out fires and are brought into the conversation to resolve disputes and give out ice and band aids. The idea of Playworks is that the recess team are emergency response members now, Playworks builds a system that controls the kids – less ice and band aids. This leads to better monitoring on the playground. They are freed up to see the kids that need help, encouragement to those who are alone or unsure. Recess implementation now is just our staff. In the future, we will have a

coach that will partner with all 4 of our PC elementary schools, one week at a time. At the school in SLC, Coach Rose would get kickball started, he'd run off and start another game, and in 10 min, he had like 3 games going and then would start something else. Parents can come and watch ANY day! Kids need to have playtime and not with instruction. We need to make sure the kids figure out how to play on their own as well. It is important for their imagination. Maybe there will be less conflict with Playworks but some parents want kids to learn to deal with conflict. Feels like the kids need more time. Some parents don't like structured play at all. Playworks is an option but they don't have to take part in it. Also, they don't have to ask to play because it is totally inclusive, they just join, they don't have to ask to participate. The nice thing is that it is optional. Some kids need more structure. Some kids like rules and don't like free for all. We are building a society where they need to work together, play together and have good relationships with each other. They can build nests of pinecones by themselves but they can also develop their social skills. JRES is an A+ school but the one area we literally fall down is on the playground. Kids are getting injured and parents have, to leave to pick up their kids. Hopefully, this opt-in program creates the opportunity for problem solving. Bari Nan said the Playworks folks saw two kids who were about to fight but then they did aggressive "roshambo" – they were heated and angry but had the ability to solve the program. They saw the example, were given direction, and were set free to do it. The referral rate at one school had been like 3 a day from the playground and it went down to next to none. They got into the situations and had tools to solve the problems. It is about collaborative and cooperative play. There is clearly a need for opt-in and social opportunities on the playground – can be helpful. Kids will learn these games and make it creative. They will figure out things to do to make it more fun. This is a base to start with and they will likely make changes. The kids can resolve the issue. What about a new playground? JRES has a well-used playground. We added a newest playground 10-11 years ago. There are features that could be updated. We may not have the space or the wherewithal. There will be more Playworks training on Monday, Feb 13th and we need recess volunteers from about 11:30am – 1pm: we really need parents to help. We had several volunteers who did it on Jan 26th and Mr. Kuennen appreciates it. Playworks is in its infancy yet we have had very positive feedback.

- a. We are not going to have trailers here next year, regardless of the 5/6 realignment issue! Unless we grow significantly, we can fit more kids and be creative with the space. McPolin is potentially scheduled to get an addition this summer. It is cheaper to add on than to add trailers. Parley's will get one or two trailers. TS already has a few. They had a smooth transition at TM during the last grade realignment. People aren't necessarily against it. The idea of TM is what is causing people to feel blindsided. This is where you'll find the resentment. As a parent of a 9th grader, squeezing the 9th graders into the HS is hard. The HS is already at capacity. One of the deals is with the block schedule and the teacher has the room, they teach 6 of 8 blocks – then the classrooms can be used all day, currently only 85% of the day.
- b. Read Across America
 1. Launched TODAY – the thought is that we can make reading more engaging. He wanted to do it early enough in the year as to carry on through the end of the year. It is yet another opportunity to read - the more they read, the better. He thinks it should be the only homework that our kids do. Our kids have a tracking sheet so they can move from National Park to National Park – every kind of reading counts! Hopefully, we do it annually. He'd love our feedback.
3. Book Fair Update
 - a. Thursday morning is our big push (Moms & Muffins/Dads & Donuts). We have a lot of people but may need more.
 - b. We need help tomorrow night and tomorrow morning.
4. Running with Ed (PC Education Foundation) – Julie Decker – Our community relay race to raise money for the Ed Foundation will be on Saturday, May 20th. You save \$5 by registering now. Julie is putting together a Sign-Up Genius if you are interested in joining a team, you can give her your name, age, ability and she'll link you up with a mixed team. She is also looking for people who are willing to plan, implement, and execute the JRES relay exchange station. She'd like to brainstorm ideas – birthday party, luau, etc...JRES will host a food station, there are lots of logistics, putting up signs on the route, coming up with costumes, etc...if you want to help, email Julie. It'll be "Super lots of fun!" Could we bring the station into the school? Mr. Kuennen says maybe!
5. Fall Fun Festival – It is already in the planning phase. Katie Blanford volunteered to take the lead for planning it. But, she'd like people to volunteer for sub-chair positions. If you'd like to participate, contact Katie! She is going to try to have a planning meeting in late Feb/early Mar. We are going to do it earlier so we (hopefully) have better weather.
6. PTO Board for 2017/2018 School Year – think about it if you'd like to be on the board – particularly looking for a PTO President/Co-President. Help create/enhance a legacy of this school. Playworks is enough of a legacy for Bari Nan. It grabbed her heart to see it. We are an A+ school and an A+ board to go along with it is great!
7. Other – JRES received its official "Blue Ribbon School" Invitation today and we are on track to apply for it!

Board was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.