



Monday, March 9, 2020
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Just So You Know

“Something there is that doesn’t love a wall that wants it down”

They are just buildings, bricks and mortar, nails and bolts. But... things fall apart. Things that once served singular needs but no longer can. Built as shiny objects, they lose their glow. They become too slow to keep up; too weak to hold up; too mundane to arouse interest; too old to be relevant. They die in a cloud of dust or in the yellowing pages of a newspaper. Preservation relies on faded photographs and written sentiments in yearbooks, and of course, what people hold onto in their “I remember when” files.

Is it odd that folks are drawn to the razing of a dying school? One they had attended or perhaps their children had passed through? Is it odd that those same people would want to collect a brick or a relic from the debris to put on a mantel in a basement somewhere? It has been said, “You can’t stop progress” although we try sometimes. More importantly, you can’t stop “the overflow of emotion” when it comes to remembering the relation *places* have in our lives, places like schools, classrooms, cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, locker rooms, libraries, athletic fields, playgrounds, the principal’s office, and even hallways and parking lots. Memories of events, people, conversations, sound and vision do not float in the muse disconnected. They are tied to specific settings, making memories whole.

Maybe that’s one reason why tearing down school buildings often has a great impact on older people. Maybe doing so is an assault on personal memories. Once these structures are gone, alumni can’t point and say to their grandchildren “That’s where I went to school.” That’s why that brick or other relic is so important. “You see that brick on the mantel over there? That brick came from my old high school.” Physically having it puts something concrete into an otherwise abstract conversation.

Such progress, whether it be out of greed or necessity, however, most certainly affects career educators the most and those leaving the system as their personal light is fading and their bricks and mortar decaying. Those who place their mementos in a box and exit knowing a shiny object will replace them, and those who perhaps are feeling that they are no longer relevant.

In taking the final walk down the dim hallway it is certain that memories walk as well. What’s left besides “progress”? It is true that buildings run their course and need to be replaced. But not everything is forever lost in the destruction of a hollowed out school. The bricks and relics of knowledge, creativity, inspiration, and hope surely remain, especially in the metaphorical vault of those who really care. And it is certain, at least for those whose muse is stirred by a meaningful past, that the future holds an unexpected meeting, an innocent hug of appreciation between a humble educator and former student and the gift of a brief conversation, “Thank you. You were my favorite teacher. I learned a lot in your class.”

Consider Emery County’s Swinging Bridge– the juxta positioning of old and new and the value of each.

Superintendent Davis

Vision Statement:

“Education is a collaborative effort of home, community, and school. Students experience success on a daily basis and excel in performance through applying knowledge to real life situations. Schools are student-centered, guided by educators who possess excellent leadership and educational skills. Education expands beyond the classroom walls through the use of technology, and the curriculum meets the highest standards of an ever-changing world. Graduates are prepared to enter the workforce or continue their formal education at an advanced technical institution or a college or university. The Emery County School District believes that learning today provides leadership for tomorrow.”

Why is Emery High an upgrade priority?

District Facility Priority Needs: No. 1- Emery High School

Although not the oldest structure in the Emery School District, Emery High School has been ranked by the Facilities Committee as its No. 1 priority for upgrade. The original structure was built in 1961 with additions in 1970, shop building; 1982, auditorium; 1989, Science Wing; and 1998, Spartan Center. Initially, the high school was built for 200-300 students, but by the mid-1990s the school reached its peak enrollment (10-12) at over 800 students.

After that peak, enrollment continued to decline until it settled into about 450 students in the first decade of the 21st Century. However, beginning with the 2017-18 school year, the district realigned schools by moving sixth graders to Canyon View and San Rafael Junior Highs, creating middle schools, and ninth graders from those junior high/middle schools to Emery High. The changes did not involve Green River High School or Book Cliff Elementary.

The impact, however, left five of the six district elementary schools as K-5, the two middle schools as 6-8, and Emery High as 9-12 with an additional 150 students, bumping the total enrollment at that school to over 600 students. The outcome of this student transition, although supported overwhelmingly by the high school and its stakeholders, was a critical need for space. Four mobile



classrooms were added to the school campus to meet the needs of the additional students as well as the need for more teachers.

At the same time that the student transition was taking place, the Emery School District began a campaign to add Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathways and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) classes to the secondary schedule. With the aging infrastructure at Emery High, the increase in student numbers, and the need for more “state-of-the-art” facilities to advance CTE and STEM programs, the school found itself in a “perfect storm” of critical needs.

In 2012, the Emery School Board commissioned a review of all schools and other district facilities to establish priority needs. The outcome of that study, relevant to Emery High School, was to fix or

tear down the original 1961 structure, the 1970 additions that include the media center and cafeteria, and the school’s shop facilities. The 2012 report also included serious upgrade by 2020 of the auditorium, the Science Wing, and the Spartan Center.

It is noteworthy to report that Emery High is functional and has progressed through these challenges. The school and grounds are well maintained and taken care of by custodians and maintenance workers. Emery High has undergone capital improvements annually that have contributed to the effectiveness of academic and non-academic programs. It certainly has remained on the surface the social and cultural icon of Emery County. What lies beyond the surface, however, is contributing to the problems

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District Facility Priority

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that need attention, including plumbing, electrical, climate control, and school safety.

Following are some of the maintenance department concerns regarding Emery High School. Please note that school safety will be detailed in a separate article.

The Heating system is getting old and has problems with the heating controls, and with the remodeling of the piping, it has become difficult to keep the system regulated which has become very inefficient. Correcting this would require a substantial cost to the district and have limited success especially in regards to improving overall efficiency.

Cooling for all but the newer part of the buildings involves individual evaporative coolers and a water chiller system with cooling tower and mechanical refrigerated cooling for the old gym, fitness room, band room, cafeteria, auditorium. It has begun to fail and will require a substantial investment to repair.

Electrical systems for a building built in 1962 are inadequate for today's electrical and technology needs. We only expect that demand to grow in the future. It has required several creative adaptations most of which have required surface-mounted molding for wires and cables as well as the installation of additional power panels and additional wiring. Most of the power in the building is at maximum capacity.

The Fire Alarm system has evolved over the years, including remodels into three separate systems that are interconnected. Some parts of the school have fire sprinklers, and some parts do not. Ideally we would prefer fire sprinklers throughout the entire school and a system that is addressable and all in one. The fire marshal is requesting this upgrade throughout the district which we have been doing two or three schools at a time. In order to stay up to code at Emery High School, a new system is required. This expense would cost less and be better utilized in a new building.

Water and Sewer systems

throughout the school, besides being older and of an older technology, there is a lot of the piping under the building and is inaccessible, so when we have had pipe failure, we have been required to reroute the water lines on the surface or around the outside of the building.

Roofing is an ongoing problem in every building. We are always trying to stay on top of it. Because of the uniqueness of Emery High School, roofing presents a challenge. We have to be vigilant to keep the roofing issues addressed as they arise, but in the near future it will require a substantial investment to correct roofing issues because of the age and condition of the structures.

Asbestos, being an older building, was commonly used in construction. Over the years we have done many abatement projects and have encapsulated any that is remaining. The only way to get to the remaining asbestos would be to remove the building. All areas that are remaining are maintained and inspected regularly. Maintenance documents are available upon request.



REGION SPELLING BEE: Above, Emery contestants, standing left to right, Landon Byars, Noah Taylor, and Breeanna Cruz. Left, Landon holds his second place trophy.

March 4 board meeting summary report

School Board Summary for March 4, 2020

The Emery School Board met on March 4, 2020 at Castle Dale Elementary for its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Following is a summary of the meeting:

Castle Solar Project: The Board is working with the Emery County Community Reinvestment Agency on tax incentives for a solar company seeking to establish a 40 megawatt solar farm west of Huntington. The Board is supporting the advancement of the project but with the expectation that local private property concerns are addressed.

Business Administrator Hiring Process: With the naming of Business Administrator Jared Black as the new superintendent, the Board is moving forward with filling the BA position and is working with the Utah School Boards Association in advertising for applicants. The USBA will prepare a brochure with information about the school district and requirements for those interested in applying. It is expected that the position will be open by the end of the month.

Hunter Solar Project Donation: Investors in the recently approved Hunter Solar Project, now under construction near Clawson, are making a \$50,000 donation to the Emery School District to be used toward STEM education. Board Member Jessy Johansen, working with Superintendent Davis and Business Administrator Black, recommended that the Board support using the funding for the district's robotics program. It was noted that doing so would include every district school since robotics is in place at all elementary, middle, and high schools. The Board expressed support. A final decision will come after approval from the donor.

Fee Schedule Public Hearing: Jared Black presented a draft policy regarding school fees. He noted that in modifying the policy, the district will eliminate all curricular fees currently in place. The focus of the new policy is on extracurricular fees related to non-academic programs. The proposal includes fee schedules for elementary, middle, and high school. The proposed policy sets a cap of \$3,500 per student per year on fees, including money earned through fundraisers. The draft proposal came after the business administrator met with school administrators. He will also be meeting with coaches and advisors to fine tune the policy before another public hearing in April. It is also expected that the Board will take action on the policy in April. The changes to current fee policy are being made as a result of new state law and Utah State Board of Education Rule. Several stakeholders were on hand to ask questions about the proposal while also giving input which was taken under advisement.

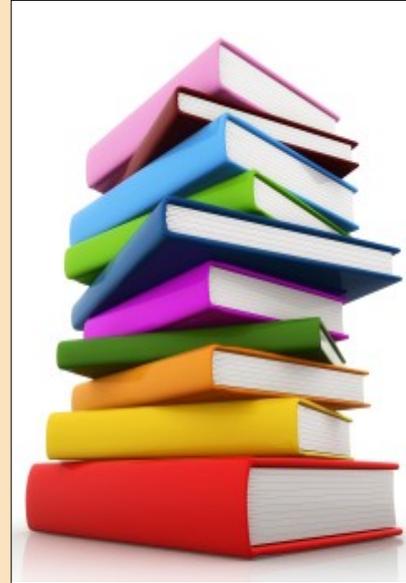
Names for Approval: The Board approved the following for positions in the Emery District: Ferd Allred, Emery High head volleyball coach; Maegan Butterfield, Emery High cheer advisor; and Brittny Hoffman, Kara Smith, and Collette McElprang, assistant cheer advisors. These positions are for the 2020-21 school year.

Principal's Report: Castle Dale Principal Melinda Durrant reported on several programs and good-news items from the school. Areas of emphasis included social/emotional learning, literacy, STEM education, school safety, Professional Learning Community and collaboration, professional development and student engagement in assemblies, competitions, and social events. She expressed concern about the size of the 5th grade class (38), but praised the teacher, faculty and staff, and maintenance for working together to mitigate issues related to such a large number of students. She also thanked the school's stakeholders for their support of the school.

March 4 board meeting summary report

Superintendent's Report:

- Superintendent Davis reported on the Regional Spelling Bee held at Green River High School on March 4. Ferron Elementary's Landon Byars finished in second place.
- The superintendent updated the Board on the Utah State Legislative Session and bills that would impact the Emery District. The session ends on Thursday, March 12.
- It was reported that the kindergarten registration for the district's six elementary schools for the 2020-21 school year has been finalized. Overall, the district will have three fewer students next year. Along with enrollment projections and the number of retirements/resignations, the district will utilize specific school numbers and anticipated funding to determine staffing for next year.
- The Emery District has been working with the Emery County Library System through a grant to add Chromebooks to county libraries. Once in place, libraries in county communities will have Chromebooks as well as the necessary software to support district students in completing after-school-hours homework assignments. The library system plans to adjust library hours to accommodate students and others.
- The District Administrative Team has issued a memo to school administrators regarding limitations on the types of drills that can take place in schools. Specifically, schools cannot include simulations of injury or death during school-time drills. However, high schools will be allowed to host scripted drills/programs that are nationally recognized but which may include simulated injury/death, such as the "Every 15 Minutes" program.
- In committee updates, the Board received a report on the recent Juvenile Justice Committee meeting where members received a presentation on the "Hope Squad" program which involves peer-to-peer support and intervention. Regarding the Technology Committee, work is underway in preparing a new 5-year Digital Teaching and Learning Grant which supports technology and technology-related programs throughout the district. Also, Board Members Jessy Johansen and Kenzi Guymon were reappointed to the District Sex Education Committee.
- An amendment to Board Policy CBA– *Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent* was approved by the Board. The change was made to comply with state law which now allows local boards to set the qualifications for applications for district superintendent openings. Previously, state law set those qualifications.
- The next Board meeting will be held Wednesday, April 1, at Emery High School beginning at 6:30 pm (work session) and at 7 pm (general session).



Emery School District
Mission Statement:

“The mission of the Emery County School District is to provide a comprehensive education that will prepare students to take a proactive and responsible role in an ever-changing world.”

District Calendar

March 10: Administrative Council Meeting, 8:30 am, DO... Association/Board/Superintendent Meeting, 3:30 pm, DO

March 12: Last day of the 2020 Utah State Legislature.

March 13: Last day of 3rd term– PLC Day for teachers and no school for students. Teachers will have Response to Intervention Training at Emery High School in the morning and Collaborative Team Meetings in the afternoon. The morning session will also include a report from the Utah Health Department on the Coronavirus.

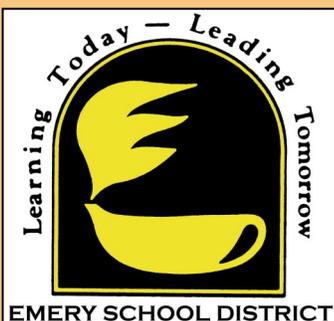


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STICKY NOTES:



NEW DISTRICT OFFICE HOURS: As of the first of the year, the Emery School District Office will be open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4 pm. Use of the office after regular business hours will be scheduled as needed.

SCHOOL WEB CALENDARS: To find out what is happening in each of the Emery District's 10 schools, go to the Emery Website at www.emeryschools.org, and click on the “schools” drop-down menu. Choose the school you are looking for, click on the name, and you will be taken to the school website where you can locate the school calendar.

School Lands Trust Budgets: Local School Community Councils are working on setting Lands Trust Budgets for the 2020-21 school year. The budgets need to be submitted to the superintendent by April 17. After a review of each school plan, the superintendent will submit the approved plans to the Emery Board of Education for action in the May 6, School Board Meeting at Ferron Elementary. School plans that do not meet specifications will be returned to school principals for compliance.