President Voorhies presided and conducted. The Board of Education met in a study session with legislators representing Jordan School District and discussed the following:

A. Welcome

President Voorhies welcomed senators and representatives and expressed appreciation for their willingness to meet with Board members. She invited Ms. Lynda Peterson, teacher of the ProStart program to introduce the students who prepared and served the breakfast. Ms. Peterson stated that this class is designed to teach students the culinary arts and prepare them for employment in the restaurant industry. Students are involved with running a faculty restaurant which teaches them to create a professional atmosphere and teamwork. They also participate in FCCLA competitions.

President Voorhies invited the West Jordan High Madrigal group led by Mr. Kelly DeHaan to perform for the legislators. Following the performance she invited legislators and Board members to introduce themselves. President Voorhies expressed appreciation to legislators for the depth of commitment they have to the legislative process and for the outstanding contribution to Jordan District during last year’s legislative session.

B. District Highlights

President Voorhies said some may worry that the money given to school districts doesn’t go where it is intended. She invited legislators to view a presentation prepared by the Communications Department that highlighted the District’s effective use of funding in the areas of transportation, school lunch,
technology, capital projects, etc. Legislators were also provided with data showing student achievement increases at Joel P. Jensen and West Jordan Middle Schools, resulting from the Board’s financial commitment to these schools and directions to the school administrations to develop and implement a plan to assist struggling students.

C. Discussion in Preparation for the 2018 Legislative Session

Board Legislative Priorities. Board members participated in outlining the District’s legislative priorities for the 2018 legislative session. These priorities include the following:

- Board members expressed that student learning is their highest priority and that teachers are the primary influence in this area. The Board made it a priority to increase teacher compensation in order to attract the best teachers which has now been accomplished through raising the starting salary to $40,000 and insuring that all teachers received a pay increase. The second part of this commitment will be to further develop a system to reward quality teachers. Board members explained the priority for a WPU increase beyond enrollment growth to provide additional educator salary increases, create innovative ways to reward quality teachers, and increase teacher effectiveness through Professional Learning Communities and other professional development opportunities.

- Board members expressed the need to support the use of technology as a valuable tool in student learning by providing teachers with appropriate training in its use, providing sufficient infrastructure and IT support, and providing up-to-date devices. They requested increased funding to improve the District’s digital learning environment.

- Board members expressed a desire to get funding to the classroom where it can best impact student learning and suggested ways in which to decrease administrative costs and promote local control by reducing exhaustive reporting.

- Board members expressed that mental health concerns are an obstacle to student learning and suggested that funding for counselors at the elementary level are needed to provide intervention to struggling students. They noted that Jordan District’s ratio for psychologists is about 1:1,200, which is double the national recommendation of 1:500-700. They requested support for mental health initiatives for students which includes additional psychologists and counselors in elementary schools.

- Board members stated their belief that every child in the state deserves access to a quality education and requested support for legislation that creates property tax equity.

- Board members expressed support, as members of the Utah School Boards Association, for the USBA legislative priorities.

Legislators participated in the discussion about the Board’s legislative priorities by asking questions and requesting additional information.

MOTION: At 9:18 a.m., it was moved by Darrell Robinson and seconded by Jen Atwood to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed with a unanimous vote.

JL/jc