



**Classified Leadership Agenda**  
**Tuesday, November 14, 2023; 1:30 p.m.**  
**Professional Learning Lab**

**Present:** Superintendent Marcus Lewton, Julie Henderson (Berg), Beth Schmitt (Heart River), Sheila Schilling (Jefferson), Heidi Smith (Lincoln), Meg Gion (Prairie Rose), Kristi Eckes (Dickinson Middle), Jeffrey Whitehead (Hagen), and Christy Hicks (Central Administration Offices).

**Absent:** Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris, Business Manager Stephanie Hunter, Debra Wilson (Dickinson High).

- I. **Call to Order-** The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Lewton at 1:30.
- II. **Approval of the October 11, 2023, Classified Leadership Meeting Minutes-** Julie motioned to accept the minutes from the October 11, 2023, meeting. Jeffrey seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.
- III. **Old Business**
- IV. **New Business**
  - 1) Review the November 13, 2023, School Board Meeting Agenda- Enrollment continues to increase by 120 students when compared to the same time last year. Heidi asked where they were coming from. Superintendent Lewton reported families are coming from everywhere, not one place specifically.

Bond Referendum Update- Superintendent Lewton reported that Mrs. Melanie Kathrein and Mr. Jeff Brandt are touring 5 other high schools in the state to look at how the space is laid out to start to get ideas for the new high school addition. Mr. Harris and Mrs. Hunter are working on the construction and finance piece of the bond referendum. The Request for Qualifications for a Construction Manager at Risk will be opened at Central Administration on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Interviews will be conducted later in December. A committee, including several community members, will conduct the interviews. Sheila commented it might be a good idea to have the high school head custodian on the committee to give input. Superintendent Lewton said he thought there was discussion about putting the head custodian on a different committee. It would be beneficial for Mr. Peryer to give input about some of the systems and design in the new addition.

This week Superintendent Lewton is meeting with each of the principals to start discussing their needs for next school year, such as staffing.

Superintendent Lewton has reached out to RSP & Associates to look at the District's current attendance boundaries and ask for suggestions to rebalance the zones. Some of the elementary schools are up to 4 sections of a particular grade. Christy asked if it was certain the boundaries would change. Nothing is certain at this point.

The Hagen Field will be up for sale later this year or early next year. There is a lot of interest in the property from the community. Currently, it costs more to maintain it and the district does not really use it. This will be the third property sold this year by the district.

Para to Teacher grant- There are currently have 10 paraprofessionals going through the program at DSU and two through the University of Mary. DPS has scholarship money budgeted for those paraprofessionals this year and is using that money to help buy their books.

Board Goals- The reading proficiency scores show an increase. Dibels is used by the District which tests fluency. NWEA scores, which test comprehension, are up some but it is normal to have a lag in the comprehension scores.

CTE Center- We currently have 500 students at the North Campus. It has been a tremendous help to have the extra room. DPS has accessed \$21.3 million in grants and private donations to remodel the building into the CTE center.

Superintendent Evaluation- Superintendent Lewton received a satisfactory evaluation from the School Board. His goals for this year are to get a better handle on the purchasing. He feels like we still sometimes purchase as a small district and we are no longer a small district, for North Dakota. He would also like to continue to balance class sizes and work on the School Board's goals.

2) Other

Kristi Eckes asked how we could support the Superintendent and District now that the Bond Referendum has passed. Dr. Lewton did not have a specific way we could support him. He mentioned people will be asked to contribute to the different projects at their schools.

Superintendent Lewton noted that Sarah Trustem is working on the magazine sent out to everyone last year. This is paid for by a grant. Dr. Lewton asked for input on what individuals would like to see in that magazine. He gave an example of transparency grant monies that pay for some Professional Development travel. That was something the community was talking about during the Bond Referendum vote, and he would like to speak some truth into some of the misconceptions with the district's finances. Heidi mentioned giving an update on the North Campus and showing that it was not only Dickinson High School students utilizing the North Campus facilities. Kristi mentioned giving a timeline for the money from the bond referendum and how much each school is slated to receive.

Kristi asked if there had been any pushback on the increase in health insurance premiums. Superintendent Lewton noted he had not heard anything directly. He briefly spoke about the complexity of self-funded insurance.

Meg asked if anything in the meeting was private information as her principal asks her to send out an email after each meeting. Superintendent Lewton noted everything he spoke about was in the School Board meeting minutes and therefore not private information.

Superintendent Lewton asked if the group thought it would be beneficial to send out a communication to all staff regarding the private group who is wanting to change the Midget mascot. It was agreed that it could be beneficial for staff to know that neither the Board nor Superintendent are looking to change the mascot at this time. He noted that if the private group, or students, wanted to talk about it, the Board would listen to their thoughts on the matter.

Sheila clarified if a paraprofessional from her school had a question, should she email that to Twila Petersen before the meeting. Superintendent Lewton said it can be helpful for him to know the questions beforehand should he need to do research but if anyone forgot to email Twila, they should still ask their question at the meeting, and he would do his best to answer or gather information and report back at the next meeting.

V. **Adjournment-** The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 pm.

Tentatively the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 1:30 at the Professional Learning Lab.