



District-Wide PAC Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, February 9, 2021; 12:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting

Members present via the Zoom Meeting: Dr. Shon Hocker (Superintendent), Mr. Keith Harris (Assistant Superintendent), Mrs. Jennifer Braun (representing Heart River Elementary PAC), Mrs. Barbara Shockey (representing Prairie Rose Elementary PAC), Mrs. Crystal Jahner (representing Roosevelt Elementary PAC), Mrs. Krissy Kilwein (representing Berg Elementary PAC), and Mrs. Melissa Wolf (representing Lincoln Elementary PAC).

Call to Order – Superintendent Hocker called the meeting to order at noon.

Approval of the January 12, 2021, Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Jennifer Braun moved to approve the January 12, 2021, meeting minutes as presented. Mrs. Barbara Shockey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Business Topics

February 8, 2021, School Board Meeting Agenda – Dr. Hocker summarized topics from last night's School Board Meeting. The RASP coordinator and assistant coordinator provided an update to the Board regarding the program. This was the first year that the RASP leaders had students in the program all day to assist parents with childcare needs during the hybrid learning. Dr. Hocker shared his appreciation and commended the RASP staff for stepping up and taking on the additional responsibilities.

Dr. Hocker explained the District budget was amended by the Board last night. The District had received approximately \$1,050,000 in federal COVID restricted funds. The amended budget was to increase the general fund expenditure budget.

The Board approved the first steps in offering online learning opportunities for students pending legislative action. The plans are for two online schools; one would be K-5 and the other 6-12. The District's online school is currently operating under Governor Burgum's executive order. Some students do better with online learning than with face-to-face learning.

The remainder of the Board meeting, Superintendent Hocker said, was for the Board to consider a grievance from some of the high school teachers.

Mrs. Braun inquired if the Department of Public Instruction would still provide state funding for the online students. Superintendent Hocker responded the state would provide funding through an innovation waiver. Dr. Hocker added the District's vision is for the online program to have students engaged, connected, and creative. Mrs. Braun asked if the online students would be able to participate in after-school activities. Dr. Hocker responded they should be. The North Dakota High School Activities Association does have some guidelines that need to be followed.

Mrs. Kilwein referenced the technology devices that were issued to the students. She inquired if the devices would continue to be sent home with the students, even when the students are attending face-to-face. Dr. Hocker responded when the District implemented the 1-to-1 device initiative, every student was to be provided with a device within three years. The District fast-tracked the initiative and fortunately had the devices in the hands of the students within two years which was prior to the pandemic. Providing the devices for the students to utilize is part of the District's strategic plan for a personalized learning system. Utilizing the COVID dollars, some technology was added to the classroom to enhance learning. Examples he shared were the Promethean Boards in the classroom and the Apple Swivel product that will follow the teacher in the classroom and broadcast remotely for students that are learning from home.

Mrs. Jahner said she saw in the news where there has been some discussion regarding extending the school year. She wondered if Dickinson Public was having this conversation. Superintendent Hocker responded some state committees were analyzing the student learning. Those conversations are still happening. Some of the challenges to this idea are that the teachers are under a contract for a set amount of days. The state would have to come up with avenues to fund the additional extended school year.

Mrs. Braun inquired if there have been a lot of students and staff out since the District has transitioned to full-time, face-to-face learning. Dr. Hocker responded the District was doing very well. As of the date of the meeting, there was zero staff out and only five students out. Those students that are out may not necessarily have tested positive but might be close contacts. He added he feels the District's approach to hybrid last fall has provided positive results and kept the education going. Along with the mask mandate, it has helped students and teachers to stay in the classroom.

For Dickinson Public Schools, Dr. Hocker said the District recognizes the students would have been further along if COVID had not happened. Because many of the teachers that were teaching hybrid were able to work one-on-one with the students when they were face-to-face, the students may have progressed along faster. Some teachers have shared that they are on track after the first quarter. Dr. Hocker explained that students may not be as advanced in a particular subject matter.

Some students do very well in summer school. The classes are smaller, the students can be more engaged, and there are other opportunities. The parents on the committee shared their input. They like having summer set aside for their children to be with family and do family activities.

Mrs. Kilwein referenced the gift the District-wide PAC chooses for the District employees to be distributed during Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week in May. She said this has been discussed with the Berg Elementary PAC and the Berg employees shared their appreciation for the coffee gift certificate from last year. They suggested doing something similar but utilizing local companies and not a franchise. It was explained the reason for utilizing the Starbucks franchise last year was due to them being the only company that could provide a touchless e-gift certificate. The budget for the gift will be researched and information will be emailed to the District-wide PAC regarding the budget and a link for other gift options from local companies.

Adjournment - At 12:31 p.m., the meeting adjourned.