



Classified Leadership Minutes

Tuesday, January 10, 2023; 1:30 p.m.

Central Administration Offices, Board Room

Present - Superintendent Dr. Marcus Lewton, Business Manager Stephanie Hunter, Kayla Kennedy (Berg Elementary), Jennifer Wyckoff (Jefferson Elementary), Heidi Smith (Lincoln Elementary), Jeffrey Whitehead (Hagen Building), Jo Erickson (Roosevelt Elementary), Jeanette Wyckoff (Heart River Elementary), Nancy Muffley (Central Administration Offices), Kristi Eckes (Dickinson Middle School), Kristi Burbank (Dickinson High School),

Absent – Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris and Tracy Lauf (Prairie Rose Elementary)

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Lewton at 1:31 p.m.

Review and Approval of November 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Jo Erickson moved to approve the November 10, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Kayla Kennedy seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken on the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business – There was no old business.

New Business

Review the January 9, 2023 School Board Meeting Agenda

We are up 50 students from last year at this time. Each month there are many entering and exiting students. But we are up at this time and next years budget is budgeted for 50 additional students. A survey was sent out to teachers and families regarding, virtual days, make-up days, and grace days. A report showing the data will be sent to everyone soon. Building C at the North Campus (CTE Center) is on hold due to waiting on 3.3 Million dollar funding. Once we have access to that, work will continue. There was an assessment of Board Goals. The Board is committed to their goals – one of them is to improve 3rd Grade NDSA Reading and 8th Grade NDSA Math as well as being Choice ready when graduating from High School. Another item mentioned was that the District did adopt the 1st reading of the policy on the prohibition of critical race theory taught in schools based on the ND Century Code. Which means, we do not teach critical race theory.

2023-2024 Proposed School Calendar

Two drafts were presented. Draft A: Is similar to this year’s calendar.

Draft B: There are more notable changes to this draft. Changes propose making August 23 a work day for staff so it goes from 3 PD days to 2. Then that Aug 23rd PD days would get moved to September 25. Feb 20th would be changed to a day long PD day, but then remove the early out that was in September, January, and February. Student teacher contact days were a question. It was commented that these are not final copies, there will be a recommendation to the board based on committee recommendations. Jeffery Whitehead mentioned there was interest in having early out days on Wednesday instead of Fridays and moving graduation to Saturday instead of Sunday. A question was proposed asking if Classified could do a PD day on those days so they don’t lose hours. Dr. Lewton said that is up to the building principal to manage.

Classified Pay for Virtual Learning Days

The question was proposed, if virtual learning day are built into the school year why can't classified staff be paid for those days without taking paid time off from their bank if they are willing to work, do PD, or come in on a Saturday. A question was asked if DPS can look at what other districts are doing. Bismarck and Mandan do pay their employees on virtual days regardless of employees physically coming to work. There was a discussion suggesting to promote potential virtual trainings for staff, whether it was recorded in Frontline or planned through building administration. Dr. Lewton said those were considerations but may be difficult to track. Staff affected by day deducts which affected their benefits, those individuals are working individually with the business office. There was a question that was raised regarding being able to do trainings now to make up for days lost. According to Business Manager Stephanie Hunter, to go back and "adjust" would be very difficult and time consuming at this point due to workman's comp, audit documentation, insurance, district liability, tax payer accountability considerations, etc. We are looking forward at this point. Right now, DPS is practicing the policy that is in place. Any amendment to the policy would need to be board approved.

Paraprofessional Professional Development

Question: Are Wednesday PD going to happen again next year:

Yes, Dr. Lewton responded that in April there will be a survey that will provide an opportunity for feedback regarding training. One item that is considered to change is the time – changing from 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Question: A question on Training and redundancy of required trainings was brought up. It is thought that some trainings are redundant for those Para's who have been in the profession for an extended amount of time. Sometimes the same required trainings are twice a year. Some trainings are also later in the year when a Para has already worked many months, those trainings that would have been beneficial far before mid-year.

Through these conversations, observations were made for improved para trainings:

- Consider Topics of Trainings
- Identify required trainings and how often do they need to be attended
- Offering bigger venue for trainings (gyms) to accommodate more people
- Timings of Trainings - offer more options
- Redundancy of Trainings
- Offering specialized trainings (based on specific student diagnosis)
- Offering specialized trainings (based on the kind of Para Group... example Library Para's and learning how to repair books and how to select books)

Dr. Lewton agreed that these were all good ideas and asked Jen Wyckoff to write these ideas down so they can be shared with Sheri and Chelsee to be considered for the survey. Dr. Lewton mentioned that this is the first year we've offered these trainings to Paraprofessionals and it will only get better.

Wrap up

To address the last two agenda items, Dr. Lewton stated that the 2023-2024 calendar does apply to the Para Professionals.

Dr. Lewton remarked he enjoyed being part of a group that have such diverse positions in the district and thanked everyone for coming.

Adjournment: Dr. Lewton adjourned the meeting at 2:27 pm