



Thursday, February 13, 2020; 12:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Keith Harris (Assistant Superintendent), Mrs. Stacy Kilwein (representing Partners in Parenting), Mrs. Tavia Kuntz (representing Jefferson Elementary PAC), Mrs. Alicia Saienga (representing Heart River Elementary PAC), Mrs. Jessica Cron (representing Lincoln Elementary PAC), Mrs. Nicole Wald (representing Berg Elementary PAC), Mrs. Julie Heidecker (representing Roosevelt Elementary PAC), and Mrs. Erika Daniels (representing Prairie Rose Elementary PAC).

Call to Order –Assistant Superintendent Harris called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Approval of the January 14, 2020, Meeting Minutes –The January 14 meeting minutes were distributed to the committee. Mrs. Kilwein moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mrs. Kuntz seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Business Topics

February 10 School Board Meeting Agenda – Assistant Superintendent Harris explained the Board approved the purchase of four school buses. These are 77-passenger buses. Two will be replacing aging buses and the other two will be added to the fleet to compensate for growth.

Mr. Harris said the 2020-2021 DPS school calendar was also approved by the Board. A copy of the approved calendar was distributed to committee members. Mr. Harris explained the process of building a calendar. The last day of school will reflect when the first day of school will fall. Taking the last day and placing the Christmas break in the calendar, adding other breaks and counting backward 185 days will indicate the first day of school.

Mrs. Kuntz inquired why the early release dates are placed on Wednesdays instead of Fridays. Mr. Harris responded extracurricular activities tend to be scheduled on Fridays and the early release trainings would not be available for those coaches gone for the extracurricular activities. There was a discussion regarding no storm days in the calendar. The state legislation changed the required student contact days to required student contact hours. Due to this change, Mr. Harris said there were approximately eight or nine extra days that would be a cushion if storm days were needed.

The Board approved the high school moving to an A/B schedule beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Harris provided examples of what the A/B block schedule would look like in comparison to the current block schedule.

Mr. Harris said, at this time, the school board will not be moving forward with a decision regarding the high school mascot. A survey had been done by the students, staff, and community. Many individuals are passionate about their opinion regarding the mascot. The Board will be focusing on capacity issues.

There was a discussion on speech pathologist vacancies in the District. Mr. Harris shared there is a nationwide shortage of speech pathologists. Another field where there are shortages is school psychologists.

Other – Mrs. Wald inquired what was the District’s plan to address capacity. Mr. Harris explained the District was in a pyramid-type situation adding this was a good problem. There are twice as many kindergarteners coming in as seniors graduating.

Mrs. Kuntz referenced a newspaper article regarding the decision to move ahead with building a new elementary school without increasing taxes. Mr. Harris said the business manager and the superintendent have discussed a plan to use funding from a building levy that taxpayers are currently paying 10 mills for facilities. If the District uses those funds it would have to decide how to maintain the buildings without using those funds. A plan needs to be drafted and presented to the school board for approval. If the Board would approve it, it is possible the elementary school could be open fall of 2022.

Mr. Harris said a bond referendum would be necessary to address the capacity issues at the high school. Administrators have had frequent meetings with Senator Wardner and Representative Lefor. They have been lobbying the Legacy Fund Earnings Committee trying to get as much state funding as possible to lower the bond for the high school. There have been additional discussions with Dickinson State University regarding a joint venture for a CTE center.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.