



District-Wide PAC Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, November 10, 2020; 1:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting

Members present via the Zoom Meeting: Dr. Shon Hocker (Superintendent), Mr. Keith Harris (Assistant Superintendent), Mrs. Stacy Kilwein (representing Partners in Parenting), Mrs. Jennifer Braun (representing Heart River Elementary PAC), Mrs. Melissa Wolf (representing Lincoln Elementary PAC), and Mrs. Barb Shockey (representing Prairie Rose Elementary PAC).

Call to Order – Superintendent Hocker called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Introduction of Committee Members – Superintendent Hocker welcomed committee members and recognized the building they represent.

Purpose of Committee – Dr. Hocker reported that some buildings did not have representation at this meeting. He said each building has a different advisory group and some are still forming their building PACs.

Superintendent Hocker explained last school year the District spent a good deal of time laying the groundwork to become a High Reliable School District. Level I of the High Reliability Schools is to lay a foundation of collaboration. The District-wide PAC meetings are an important way to keep collaboration channels open.

Dr. Hocker added the District-wide PAC meetings are an avenue for direct communication with the Central Office. If a committee member should hear a rumor and would like to get an answer, he explained his door is always open for communication. He welcomed members to reach out to him.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda Items – There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

Approval of the May 12, 2020, Meeting Minutes – Mrs. Kilwein moved to approve the May 12, 2020, meeting minutes as presented. Mrs. Shockey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Business Topics

November 9, 2020, School Board Meeting Agenda – Superintendent Hocker noted the school board normally meets the second Monday of each month. The District-wide PAC typically meets the day after the Board meeting. One topic he will discuss at the meetings is a summary of the Board meeting. He highlighted some of the topics covered at last night's Board meeting.

The administration has received a lot of inquiries on the District's plans for its method of instruction and when will the students go back to full-time, face-to-face instruction. Dr. Hocker explained that when there is an unknown it is very challenging for teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community.

At last night's meeting, the school board approved partnering with Trial Runners. Trial Runners will be doing some voluntary research to gather data and analyze the data. This organization will take a look at some other variables and data under different criteria. The school board will receive some recommendations from the data collected. This will assist the Board with its decisions regarding the mode of instructional delivery. The school board scheduled a special meeting on Monday, November 23 to review the data.

There was a time in October when it appeared some of the COVID markers were appearing better and if they continued the District could consider returning to face-to-face instruction. Recent COVID numbers have shown a spike in numbers in Dickinson and Stark County. The number of cases doubled and with that, the number of challenges also doubled.

Assistant Superintendent Harris is the District's COVID coordinator. He is in communication daily with the local county health officials. There have been times when there are no available beds at the Dickinson hospital for patients needing significant care such as when they were on ventilators. Those patients are being flown to another hospital and more likely a hospital in another state. That creates a lot of concern for the school board if the District were to have all students back to school face-to-face. Dr. Hocker stated the ultimate goal of the school board and the superintendent is to have students back in school full-time, face-to-face instruction.

There are approximately 500 students that have opted to attend school online or virtual 100%. That is more than 10% of the District student population. Dr. Hocker has received positive reports from some teachers that work with the hybrid students. They are reporting because the classroom size is half as big, there is less classroom discipline, and the teachers can move through instruction more quickly during the face-to-face instruction days. Every day of every week teachers are getting better and parents are getting better.

Future Meeting Dates – The District-wide PAC meetings will typically be held the day after the school board meeting.

Rumors/Other – Mrs. Kilwein inquired what type of data will Trial Runners be collecting. Superintendent Hocker responded that some of the administrators would be meeting with Jill from Trial Runners soon to receive more information on the data collection. There will be some risk factor comparisons and hospital capacity in the initial conversation. Trial Runner's research will be non-emotional, research-based analysis by experts. Dr. Hocker added because Dickinson Public Schools is the largest employer in town, it needs to be safe. There needs to be teachers and staff in the buildings if the students are to be in the schools.

Mrs. Schockey shared that she is not a huge fan of hybrid learning but has recently seen the benefits. She knows of kids that go to Trinity and have had a disruption because of being quarantined due to being in close contact. Mrs. Braun added that the hybrid learning has worked well for her family.

Dr. Hocker explained the District is down approximately 280 students compared to a year ago. The vast majority are the younger students with possibly over 100 that would have been kindergartners. He is hopeful the numbers will return next year. Some of the remaining students are now being home schooled instead of attending Dickinson Public.

Having a decrease in students will impact the District. The decrease of 280 students generates approximately \$2.8 million loss of revenue. The District probably will not receive \$500,000 in rapid enrollment hub funds this school year. He is hopeful this is a one year set back and will return next year.

Mrs. Kilwein inquired regarding the District moving forward with purchasing the Halliburton complex for repurposing into a CTE Center. She was curious about how it was progressing. Superintendent Hocker responded there is a CTE task force that has been working on the project for about a year. The task force was not initially targeting the Halliburton property. There has been great support from local legislators on the project. They are prepared and ready to petition to the state during the upcoming legislative session for \$45 million to cover three career teaching education programs in the state. One would be here in Dickinson. Dickinson State University is partnering with DPS on this project.

Closing on the property will be in approximately one month. There would need to be some commitments before starting on renovations. Dr. Hocker anticipated a year of construction before the center is ready to serve the students in the program.

Mrs. Wolf inquired if the administration had thought about sharing with parents how it would look if the students were back to face-to-face instruction. The difference in the classroom sizes could be back to 30 students instead of maybe 10. Students would not be able to be six feet apart. The lunchroom would be different or students could be eating in the classroom. She has also heard the mental health of the students is depressed when they are not in school. Dr. Hocker agreed with her and said that mental health is a huge concern and always will be. The little things and connections with the teachers are very important for the student's mental health. Teachers can tell when a student is struggling or acting differently. Teachers might notice it as a first sign. Students feel more connected in school clubs or extracurricular activities. That is why the school board has been supportive of the hybrid model. Dr. Hocker also noted concerns with the stress placed on teachers and staff.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 15 at noon. The mode of delivery will be determined.