

## Notes from School Board Meeting

Dickinson Public Schools  
Regular Meeting

January 11, 2016; 5:00 p.m.  
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a regular meeting on January 11, 2016, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Sarah Ricks, Vice President Kris Fehr, Mrs. Leslie Ross, and Mrs. Tanya Rude. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mrs. Melanie Kathrein, Mrs. Kristy Goodall, Mr. Ron Dockter, Mr. Henry Mack, Mrs. Susan Cook, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, and Ms. Sherry Libis. Others present were: Mr. Darin Knapp, Mr. Colby Robinson, Mrs. Margaret Olheiser, Mr. Keith Fernsler, Mr. Lyle Smith, Mrs. Danita Rummel, Ms. Jarris Bergherr, Mrs. Fern Pokorny, Mrs. Twila Petersen and Mr. Andrew Haffner from the Dickinson Press.

**Call to Order** - Board President Ricks called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Public Participation** – There were no requests for public participation.

**Additional Agenda Items/Removal of Items from Consent Agenda** – There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

**Consent Agenda** – Mrs. Fehr moved to approve the agenda including the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the December 14 regular board meeting; the bills for January 2016; the financial reports for January 2016; the pledged assets report for January 2016; the personnel reports; the student/staff recognitions; a tuition waiver request for a child of JoAnn Haverluk from Dickinson to South Heart, a waiver request for two children of Jessica Cruz from Dickinson to Belfield; and the RACTC report, as presented. Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Sullivan reported on the following topics.

- a. **Student Immunizations** – Superintendent Sullivan stated that a letter was sent out to approximately 150 parents regarding the immunization status of their children. The letter indicated that if the immunizations are not up to date, in the process of being updated, or if a waiver form has not been completed, effective February 8 the child will be asked to remain at home. Dr. Sullivan visited with Cabinet members today and there has been some progress in parents updating the immunizations; however, there are still a significant number that need to take action. Administrators and staff will continue to try to communicate with parents the urgency of this being remedied.
- b. **Harlow's Bus Contract** – Superintendent Sullivan said there was a meeting last week to negotiate a busing contract with Harlow's which is in its final year of a five year agreement. This topic will be discussed with the Budget Committee in the near future.
- c. **NDSBA Negotiations Seminar** – Dr. Sullivan encouraged Board members to consider attending the negotiations seminar held February 11-12<sup>th</sup> in Bismarck and notify Mrs. Petersen as soon as possible if they plan to attend.
- d. **U.S. Citizenship Test** – Superintendent Sullivan requested DHS Principal Ron Dockter to address the Board and provide information regarding a requirement for students to take and pass the U.S. citizenship test. Students in North Dakota must pass this test as part of new legislation regarding graduation requirements. Mr. Dockter stated the citizenship test has been administered to 230 juniors during their U.S. History course, which is a required course for juniors. Students must obtain a score of 60% or better to pass the exam. Teachers at DHS have a goal of 70% to pass.

**Superintendent's Report (cont.)**

Approximately 90-100 students have passed at 60% or better. Students that have not passed the test have unlimited opportunities to retake the test. Test retakes only focus on the areas the students did not provide a correct answer. The DHS social studies department uses Mastery Manager which reveals the areas most of the students gave incorrect answers to identify areas that need additional studying. Principal Dockter explained a challenge occurs when new students start at semester time and sometimes they are transferring from a foreign country. Mrs. Fehr inquired if the same test is given all over the state. Mr. Dockter responded that the same test is given but it could be in a different format. Board members thanked Mr. Dockter for the information he shared.

**Business Topics**

**New Middle School Construction Update** – Mr. Colby Robinson and Mr. Darin Knapp, representatives from Mortenson Construction, were in attendance at the meeting. They presented a PowerPoint and addressed the Board providing updated information regarding the construction of the new middle school. The PowerPoint provided a timeline for areas completed. In October 2015 the concrete work was done, November 2015 the foundation walls were completed, December 2015 the mockup of the prefabricated wall was provided, January 2016 the steel will be set with some of the bays completed, the beginning of February the first precast will arrive so that it can begin being set the middle of March through the end of May. The interior rough in will start in April, the roof will start the beginning of May and continue throughout most of the summer. Windows will be installed beginning in June through September. The target date to have the new middle school water tight and enclosed is September 2016. Work on the interior will begin once the exterior is water tight and continue until the completion of the project. Site paving will also be done in 2016. The goal is to have the site paved before it freezes fall of 2016. Outside work will resume in 2017 when the landscaping and striping will be completed. Board members thanked the Mortenson Construction representatives for the updated information. Dr. Sullivan noted that these representatives will be making periodic updates to the Board so that the Board is aware of the progress on the project. There was discussion regarding the 20 acre tract purchased by the city. The city's plan is for the 29<sup>th</sup> avenue project to provide a second access to the site. Kadrmas, Lee, and Jackson will coordinate with Mortenson Construction for that project. It is possible all the striping and signage may not be completed before July 1, 2017, which is the target date for DPS to take possession. Dr. Sullivan noted that 29<sup>th</sup> avenue will provide the school with two access points, from the west and from the east. This is crucial for smoother traffic flow. Dr. Sullivan thanked the city administrators and staff for all the help and cooperation on this project. The school district sincerely appreciates everything they have done. There have been numerous meetings with city administrators and it has been a great working relationship. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Resolution Providing for Sale of \$20,135,000 General Obligation Building Fund Bonds** – The administration requested the Board members consider a resolution authorizing the District to sell fund bonds in the amount of \$20,135,000. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to approve the resolution providing for the sale of \$20,135,000 in general obligation building fund bonds, series 2016. Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. Discussion: Mrs. Rude asked Assistant Superintendent Reep to explain the resolution. Mr. Reep responded \$20,135,000 would be the final amount voters authorized to provide \$65 million in bonds. The reason for the odd amount was because the first sale completed in December was for \$9,865,000. Mr. Reep noted that the school district has applied for a school construction loan. The school construction loan would guarantee a 2% interest rate which would be a savings of over \$1 million in interest if the district would have received the funds in bonds instead of the construction loan. Mr.

**Resolution Providing for Sale of \$20,135,000 General Obligation Building Fund Bonds (cont.)**

Reep estimated this bond sale to be at 2.89%. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-Ross, Fehr, Rude, Ricks; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution Authorizing the Participation in the School District Bonds Credit Enhancement**

**Program** – Posted on the website under Supporting Documents is a Resolution Providing for Participation in the School Bond Credit Enhancement Program. Assistant Superintendent Reep addressed the Board. He said the resolution is similar to what the board did in June 2015. The credit enhancement program provides some backing that if the district would default on its payment, the state would take foundation aid away from the school district. This provides some reassurance to those buying the bonds that there is some backing from the State of North Dakota. Administrative recommendation was to participate in the school bond credit enhancement program. Action was required. Mrs. Ross moved to approve the resolution providing for participation in the School Bond Credit Enhancement Program, as presented. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-Fehr, Rude, Ross, Ricks; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**School Board Vacancy** – Recently Mr. Jason Hanson submitted his resignation from the Dickinson Public Schools Board. Board policy BBC-Method of Filling a Board Vacancy, Board regulation BBC-BR Procedure for Selecting Appointee, Application for Board Position, and Administrative Regulation BEA-Board Member Responsibilities and Expectations are posted on the website under Supporting Documents. Action was requested to declare the board vacancy. Mrs. Fehr asked for clarification regarding the term of filling the vacancy. President Ricks responded the individual filling the position would be seated until the election in June 2016. Due to the resignation of Mr. Jason Hanson, Mrs. Fehr moved to declare there was a vacancy on the School Board. She further moved all applications for the Board vacancy must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on February 4. Mrs. Ross seconded the motion. Discussion: Mrs. Fehr asked what was required if an individual is interested in applying for the board vacancy. Mrs. Ricks responded there are application packets available at the Central Office. The packets include an application and information about what it means to be a board member. The application needs to be signed and returned to Mr. Reep. All applications will be considered at the February Board meeting. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-Rude, Fehr, Ross, Ricks; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**Committee Assignments** – Due to the departure of Mr. Hanson action was requested by the Board to reappoint representatives on Teacher Negotiations and the Stark County Job Authority. Mrs. Fehr moved to designate Sarah Ricks as a primary school board representative on the Teacher Negotiations and also moved to appoint Leslie Ross to represent the School Board on the Stark County Job Authority. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-Ross, Fehr, Rude, Ricks; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**Early Resignation Incentive Application** – Mrs. Susan Miller has submitted her resignation before the deadline to receive the early resignation incentive. She has four years of service with the District as a mathematics instructor at Hagen Junior High. Assistant Superintendent Reep has verified her eligibility. The administration will evaluate the vacancy this position may create and will post an opening at a later date. The administrative recommendation was to approve the early resignation incentive application. Action was requested. Mrs. Ross moved to approve the early resignation incentive application from Susan Miller with an effective date of May 27, 2016. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**Open Enrollment Applications** – Alysia Bechtold applied for open enrollment for her child to be admitted from the Richardton-Taylor Public School District to Dickinson Public. Brian Woehl applied for open enrollment for his step-child to be admitted from Richardton-Taylor Public to Dickinson Public. Administrative recommendation was to approve the two open enrollment applications. Mrs. Ross moved to approve the request for a child of Alysia Bechtold and the request for a step-child of Brian Woehl to be admitted to the Dickinson Public Schools as per the open enrollment requests. Mrs. Fehr seconded the motion. Discussion: Mrs. Fehr inquired if open enrollment is still closed for some grades. Superintendent Sullivan responded that at this point there is no change; open enrollment is closed for kindergarten and grades 1, 2, 4, and 11. The enrollment still fluctuates on a daily basis. He assured the Board that he and Assistant Superintendent Reep continually monitor the student enrollment. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**Other** – Mrs. Ross noted the DPS Foundation is reviewing \$72,000 in grant applications. A decision will be made at the Foundation’s January 21 meeting to award the grant funds. The DPS Foundation Mystery Dinner Theater will be held February 4, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Tickets go on sale January 22 and the performances usually sell out very quickly.

**Adjournment** – At 5:37 p.m. Mrs. Ross moved to adjourn. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

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Sarah Ricks, Board President

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Vince Reep, Business Manager

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Twila Petersen, Secretary