To: Dickinson Public School Board Members
From: Kris Fehr, Board Member
Date: 4/20/2015
RE: Report on National School Boards Assn. (NSBA) Convention

Thank you for the opportunity to attend this continuing education experience, this year held March 20-24, 201 in Nashville, TN. Below is a brief summary of sessions I attended, by topic:

## District Conditions for Scaling Innovation: future trends for personalized learning.

(Presented by **Katherine Prince,** Senior Director for strategic oversight, and Matt Williams, Vice President for policy and advocacy, KnowledgeWorks, Cincinnati, OH)  The company's research revealed learner-centered ecosystems as the top emerging educational trend 10 years from now. Other concepts:

- Not limited to the digital revolution.
- Restructuring teaching and learning: hyper focused schools around very specific topics, changing and expanding the form of schools.
- New ways of supporting and credentialing learning: There's the potential for more personalized learning, need for services to help students, new educator roles: diversification, increasingly satisfying careers; competency education: showing what they know to do (demonstrate), credit for life experiences (but how widely will this method be accepted?).
- Community and empowerment context: The idea of the community as owners or shared owners of education and the collaboration that will result. This will include community-based experiences and working in new ways to support and help learners.
- The changing work world: Predicting a decline in fulltime employment to ad hoc or contract and continuous career readiness/continuous professional development.

Fast forwarding to the year 2025, the presenters imagined new technology for break through change and teacher residency programs. With a predicted declining suburb, it's expected that, national wide, we will see consortiums of school districts that share visions for learning that will include teacher exchanges, cross sharing of data and career diplomas.

We will see more personalized learning:

- Instruction that's aligned to rigorous college and career ready standards and the social and emotional skills that students needs to be successful
- Individualized instruction that allows students to design learning experiences that are aligned to his or her own interests.
- Varied instructional pace based on individual student needs.
- Educators' use of data to differentiate instruction and provide support and interventions so students stay on track to graduate.
- Student and parent access to they understand what's expected for mastery and advancement.

Read more (presentation handout):
    https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3337/1330_Prince_00393.pdf

## What's up at the Workplace Water cooler? Employee Challenges to Evaluation, Firing Decisions and Employee Bullying. (Presented by Amy Matthews and Andrew Manna, attorneys, Church, Hittle & Antrim, Noblesville, IN) Prior to 2013, bullying was seen almost exclusively as a student

conduct issue. But when the story of professional athletes (who were members of the Miami Dolphins) bullying teammates came to light, that changed.

The presenters defined bullying as a tactic to get your way. Anti-bullying is strong for up to age 18; however, employee bullying/adult bullying is a new concept. Bullying in the workplace is an outgrowth of anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies, particularly in connection with what constitutes a hostile work environment. A generally-accepted definition doesn't exist yet; however, schools are beginning to provide protections in their anti-harassment/discrimination policies that are broad and don't mention protected class or status. The presenters outlined emerging definitions for workplace bullying, including the words "persistent," "inappropriate," and "malicious," (mirroring the anti-harassment/discrimination language) and also provided workplace specific terms such constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description, ignoring or interrupting an individual at meetings, public reprimands, repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented, deliberately interfering with mail and other communications, encouraging others to disregard a supervisor's instructions, manipulating the ability of someone to do his or her work, inflicting menial tasks not in keeping with the normal responsibilities of the job, taking credit for another person's ideas, refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave, deliberately excluding an individual or isolating him or her from work-related activities, such as meetings, and several other examples.

They also pointed out that the levels of aggression are increasing in both school and societal bullying. Overall it's a public policy concern… or is it that we are more aware of it?

Student education suffers if a teacher is being bullied, the presenters said. They also pointed out that school bullying policies should cover student and adult bullying to include volunteers in the schools. The entire school community would be covered by the policy, they said.

The Healthy Workplace Campaign is an effort to create state anti-bullying laws and many states (including North Dakota) have adopted anti-bullying laws by defining bullying in terms of an abusive work environment.

More information:
https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3568/1545_Matthews_00566_0318_165114.pdf

Sample workplace bullying policy:
https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3568/1545_Matthews_00566_0318_165113.pdf

Information on adult bullying:
https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3350/1545_Weber_0403.pdf

**High Quality Before and After School Programs: What Every Board Member Should Know**. (presented by Gretchen Yeager, Director of Quality & Accreditation for Champions)

The top things board members should know, based on the national standards for quality school—age care: Warm, welcoming, engaged children, continuous improvement, qualified staff, evaluation, safe, consulting with superintendent and quality check list.

The presenter said that the main reasons for having before and after school programs are to increase student achievement and to improve students' social skills. The key components to program quality are Structure (the mission of the program: why we have it), Content (what and how we do it, positive youth development approach, 21st Century approach, engages students),

and Program Leadership (high quality staff, community to school, positive relationships, connection and involvement with parents).

Standards for School Age Programs: health, safety, learning environment, curriculum and school day alignment, relationships and administration (who's running the program, evaluation measures).

It is critical that these programs are dedicated to continuous improvement through assessing, planning and enhancing the work. There are many tools to assist with this.

Other factors to consider are student-teacher ratios, costs and the program's goal.

**Superintendent Evaluation: A New Model for the 21st Century.** (presented **by** Jay Harnack, Superintendent, and Mike Pape, board chairman**,** Sublette County School District #1, Pinedale, WY) The presenters talked about their district's shared governance model and free Google Apps for electronic evaluation of both the superintendent and the school board. They used a consultant to facilitate creation of the model and a Policy Manual. Each month school board evaluates itself and the superintendent on a portion of the policy manual, with a different board member assigned to report on the evaluation results. By using technology, the board provides constant feedback to itself and to the superintendent, thereby improving discussion among the board members. This evaluation process is written into board policy, with the board and superintendent evaluation processes paralleling each other. They said the process builds trust, increases communication, reduces micromanagement, defines authority, creates accountability, aligns with expectations, creates partnerships and reduces levels of conflict. The district has seen a greater focus on student achievement by both the board and superintendent. The district can demonstrate significant student achievement growth following the implementation of the Board Governance Policy Manual and evaluation model.

**High School Planning Strategies in a 21st Century Learning Environment.** (Presented by Darrell Pearson, PBK Architects, Inc., Austin, TX and Bill Clayton, Executive Director - Facilities & Support Services, Pflugerville Independent School District, Pflugerville, TX)

I attended this session to learn more about planning a school building for the 21st Century and I learned that strategies are based on how you want to deliver and manage curriculum. Most of what was presented is nearly the same as what we are learning as we work with DLR in designing the new middle school. Architects are designing new schools in:

1. Small learning communities. This includes clusters of teachers and groups of students, teaming for teaching and learning, students taking classes together for at least two years, college prep classes with a career theme and partnering with the community.
2. Career clusters: grouping occupations and broad industries within 16 core career clusters.

The presenters also talked about 21st Century learning and how buildings are designed to facilitate the learning. The concepts they presented included:

- Classrooms are not a box for teaching.
- Walls are adaptable.
- Classrooms are adaptable.
- Transparency for learning throughout the building.
- The library changes to a learning center; it's not just for books. It provides continual access to digital technology.
- Learning is happening all around you.
- Gathering spaces.

- More opportunity for impromptu learning.
- Technology is mobile and adaptable.
- Prepare students for the 21st Century workforce.
- Multiple devices are available for learning.

More information:
https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3274/1030_Pearson_00327.pdf
This school district's plan, including cost savings in several areas, floor plans, and most of the session presentation is available:
https://ww5.aievolution.com/nsb1501/files/content/events/3274/1030_Pearson_00327_0313_162404.pdf

**Additional Note:** One of the sessions presented, as an aside, information about holding summer preschool that eliminated the "summer slide" between preschool, Head Start and kindergarten, helping students to be ready for kindergarten and first grade. It was also presented as one way to acquire grant funds and to utilize buildings all year, while also assisting parents with day care issues.