



Calendar Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 3, 2015; 4:00 p.m.

Central Administration Office

Members present: Douglas Sullivan, Nikki Forsness, Lyle Smith, Brenda Loney, Lee Mehrer, Damian Sobolik, Kandace King, Tammy Meschke, Mandy Lubken, Jane Cornell, and Melanie Kathrein.
Others present: Mrs. Twila Petersen.

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Sullivan at 4:00 p.m.

Superintendent Sullivan explained after the last meeting there seemed to be some confusion regarding proposed calendars for distribution. Dr. Sullivan said it would be best to start at the beginning. He distributed the same draft 2016-2017 school calendars (draft A and draft B) to the committee members that had been handed out at the November 18 meeting. He noted calendar A had two snow days and calendar B had three snow days.

Mrs. Kathrein shared information from the recent Professional Development Leadership Team (PDLT) meeting. That team typically makes a recommendation to this committee and the board about placement of the professional development days. The PDLT may consider moving the January 16 professional development day to an alternate date. This will depend on where the beginning and ending dates fall in the draft calendar and where the semester break might fall.

Dr. Sullivan opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Mehrer said that during a discussion at Hagen regarding the calendar the faculty asked the reasoning for the third snow day and felt it was not necessary. All the Hagen faculty preferred two snow days rather than three. Dr. Sullivan asked what the harm was in having three snow days; if the calendar was reorganized to put the third snow day in April, even if the day isn't used then it becomes a day off from school. Mrs. Forsness agreed and said the district has needed additional snow days in the past. Dr. Sullivan added that he was not trying to set up a precedence for three snow days every year; for the next school year it would fit into the calendar. One of the snow days could be put on March 9 and a student contact day placed somewhere else. More students could be gone on March 9 due to the WDA tournaments. Mrs. Meschke said that the Roosevelt faculty also questioned the three snow days and they wanted to put December 22 as a student contact day and have no school on February 17, therefore making it a four-day weekend in February. Mrs. King inquired when the district last used both storm days. In the winter of 2014 there was a storm day used in January and also in March. There was discussion regarding a storm in October one year that took two storm days. There was additional discussion regarding late spring storms. Mrs. Meschke said that Roosevelt faculty were not in favor of a May 5 storm day. Dr. Sullivan proposed one of the storm days on March 9 and move the May 5 storm day to April 13. Ms. Mehrer and Mrs. Lubken inquired when the parent/teacher conferences were scheduled. It was determined that the parent/teacher conferences are scheduled all over the calendar. Mrs. Kathrein said it was hard to set the parent/teacher conferences until the calendar is set. She added she thought the conferences would be similar to this year's conference dates. Mrs. Kathrein referenced the numerous three-day weekends proposed on the calendar. She said she has served on the calendar committee for many years and has heard many times that the elementary teachers do not want a lot of breaks, a lot of three-day weekends. It is better for the students to have the instruction in a bigger chunk of time instead of many breaks. Mrs. Meschke said in following that guideline there should not be a break on

the 9th of March because that would create a three-day week. Mrs. Kathrein suggested attaching the snow day to an event or holiday. There was discussion regarding the March WDA tournament and the number of students absent for the event. Mrs. Loney said the faculty from the high school questioned the three storm days; there has never been three storm days before. She agreed it does fit into the schedule but noted that even if the other small surrounding schools call off school DPS will probably still have school. Mrs. Kathrein said that if there is a storm day and it isn't used it becomes a day off. It is not adding another day to the contract. Mrs. Loney noted that draft calendars A and B have the same beginning and ending days. It appeared there were differences of opinion regarding the placement of the storm days. She added that most staff members didn't have a problem with going to school on December 22. Calendar A reflects December 22 has a day off from school. Placing December 22 as a school day would be fine with the faculty. Mrs. Forsness inquired where the two storm days would be placed. Mrs. Loney suggested a four-day weekend in February with February 17 and February 20 set as non-instructional days. This would be attached to President's Day. She then suggested leaving the May 25 storm day as is and move the remaining storm day to Easter weekend (April 13) and make it a five-day weekend. Mrs. Lubken was in favor of a storm day on April 13. Ms. Mehrer asked if Dr. Sullivan was proposing three calendars: both calendar A1 and A2 and one with a third storm day. The third storm day would possibly be February 17. Other options were proposed by committee members. Dr. Sullivan asked if there was to be a three-day weekend in February (February 18, 19th and 20th) why couldn't there be a four-day weekend in March (March 9, 10th, 11th, and 12th). Mrs. Forsness felt looking at the calendar academically it would make more sense to have the storm day when people will possibly be gone anyway. Ms. Mehrer felt that a storm day in February is early in the year. Mrs. Forsness agreed. Dr. Sullivan suggested on calendar A a four-day weekend and then later on a three-day weekend. It still provides seven days off. Ms. Mehrer asked for clarification: using calendar A there would be no school on December 22, school on the February 17, no school on March 9, and no school on April 13. Dr. Sullivan concurred. There was additional discussion regarding the tournament dates in March. Mrs. Kathrein explained many years back the Calendar Committee voted to have school the Friday of the WDA tournaments. That year many of the students were absent from school. The next year when it was proposed to the School Board to have school on the Friday of the tournaments the School Board voted to not have school on that Friday. It has been practice since then to have the Friday of the WDA tournaments a non-instructional day since many students will be gone. Dr. Sullivan added that there will be faculty that are also parents that will want to attend the tournaments and if there is no school it will not be necessary to find substitute teachers. Mrs. Kathrein recapped; using calendar A as a guide there will be school on December 22. Committee members concurred. She added, still using calendar A, the May 5 storm day would be moved to April 13 and the May 25 storm day will remain and there will be no school on April 17. There will be one option to have no school on March 9 (A1) and another option to have no school on February 17 (A2). Dr. Sullivan said that in the two versions the day off from school could be a third storm day. DEA committee members were opposed to this idea. Dr. Sullivan said that there could be two versions of calendar A sent out but noted that if an additional storm day was needed it would be used on the day that there was no school. Mrs. Kathrein said that if at the end of April all three storm days were used there would need to be school on Saturdays. Committee members recalled a similar situation years back and agreed with Mrs. Kathrein. Mrs. Lubken inquired if there were going to be any versions of calendar B. Dr. Sullivan responded that calendar A would be used and instead of the third storm day being called a storm day it will be a day off of school.

Dr. Sullivan said he would send out two versions of calendar A. Committee members were asked to share the calendar with staff in the building and find out which they prefer. The building preference is then to be submitted to Mrs. Petersen before December 9.

Superintendent Sullivan thanked those attending the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.