

## Unapproved School Board Meeting Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools  
Regular Meeting

February 9, 2015; 5:00 p.m.  
Central Office Board Room

The Dickinson Public School Board held a regular meeting on February 9, 2015, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Kris Fehr, Vice-president Jason Hanson, Mrs. Tanya Rude, Mrs. Sarah Ricks, and Mrs. Leslie Ross. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Mr. Thomas Barr, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Mr. Guy Fridley, Mr. Ron Dockter, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, and Mrs. Melanie Kathrein. Others present were: Ms. Brenda Kostelecky, Ms. Wanda Anderson, Ms. Patricia Kilwein, Ms. Heidi Schostek, Ms. Leann Mehrer, Mr. Lyle J. Smith, Ms. Naomi Thorson, Ms. JoAnn Coates, Mrs. Twila Petersen, and Ms. Nadya Faulx from the Dickinson Press.

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

**Public Participation** – Ms. Heidi Schostek requested public participation on agenda item “j” 2015-2016 Classified Salary and Benefit Package. President Fehr invited Ms. Schostek to address the Board. Ms. Schostek indicated she works at Dickinson High School as an in-school suspension paraprofessional. She inquired what the base salary difference was in comparison to last year and the percentage increase. Assistant Superintendent Reep responded that classified salaries do not have a base salary. He added the proposal increases the beginning wage by \$1.10 per hour and those employees currently working for the District (and receiving a satisfactory performance evaluation) will receive a \$2.00 per hour increase across the board. Ms. Schostek stated there is a high turnover rate with paraprofessionals. If they live on their own they oftentimes have to have a second job. Mr. Reep explained the proposal provides an increase between 7.53%–17.54%. The average increase is approximately 11.89%. Last year the increase was 8%. Ms. Schostek asked what the insurance increase would be. Mr. Reep said that would not be determined until July and noted there are two classified staff representatives on the Health Insurance Committee that she could consult with and give input. President Fehr thanked Ms. Schostek for her comments.

**Additional Agenda Items/Removal of Items from Consent Agenda** – Mrs. Rude moved to add to item ‘k.’ under Business Topics-Early Resignation Incentive Application, the resignation of Thomas Barr, assistant principal at Dickinson High School and further moved to add to the consent agenda under the Personnel Report the resignation of Thomas Barr, assistant principal at Dickinson High School. Mrs. Ricks seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**Consent Agenda** - Ms. Ross moved to approve the revised agenda including the revised consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the January 12 regular board meeting, the minutes from the January 30 special board meeting; the bills for February 2015; the financial reports for February 2015; the pledged assets report for February 2015; the personnel reports; the student/staff recognitions; and the RACTC report, as presented. There were no tuition waiver requests. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

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

**Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences** – Superintendent Sullivan noted there were elementary conferences tonight therefore explaining the absence of the elementary principals.

**Teacher Evaluation Instrument Meeting** - This committee will be meeting Wednesday, February 11 at 4:00 p.m.

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

**Legislative Update** – Senator Wardner has been working very hard on the Senate Bill pertaining to the land acquisition. He was able to get the Bill moved to the House Appropriations. Dr. Sullivan will testify before the House Appropriations on Wednesday.

**Measles** – Dr. Sullivan said that the Board may have heard there have been measles cases reported in South Dakota and now also one in Minnesota. So far there have been no outbreaks in North Dakota. The Cabinet members are aware of some students in their buildings who have not been immunized and the principals are compiling a list of those children. Dr. Sullivan met today with a representative from the Southwest District Health Unit to discuss the process if there should be a measles case in the community. If there should be a measles case in Dickinson, for their own safety, children that have not been immunized will not be able to come to the school. Superintendent Sullivan plans to mail a letter to parents providing them with some information and frequently asked questions. President Fehr inquired if there was an estimate of how many students were not immunized. Dr. Sullivan responded there were some students in all buildings; at Dickinson High School there are approximately 47. Century Code provides direction to school districts on how they should proceed. How the students not attending school would keep up with their school work is yet to be determined.

**Kindergarten Preregistration** - Last week the District had kindergarten preregistration. There were 177 that registered. Assistant Superintendent Reep projects the kindergarten enrollment to be around 288 students. This is a smaller number than anticipated and therefore the District is taking a slower approach to filling kindergarten positions. At 288 students, those students could be served by the current 15 kindergarten teachers.

**Petition for Recognition** – Superintendent Sullivan noted that a Petition for Recognition was received on February 4. It will be necessary for him to post a Notice of Intent to Consider. The Board will need to establish a date for a special board meeting to review the petition. Superintendent Sullivan suggested a board workshop in conjunction with the special school board meeting.

**VFW Teacher of the Year** – Last week, Mr. Obrigewitch from Hagen Junior High was recognized as the VFW North Dakota Teacher of the Year. At the ceremony Hagen Junior High received a plaque which Superintendent Sullivan displayed for the board members. There is a live stream link of the ceremony on the Hagen FaceBook page. Ms. Fehr congratulated Mr. Obrigewitch and thanked him for his service to our country. She also thanked board members for attending the ceremony recognizing Mr. Obrigewitch for this great honor.

**Business Topics**

**Prairie Rose Elementary Expansion Update** - Assistant Superintendent Reep updated the Board members on the progress of the expansion of the new wing at Prairie Rose Elementary. Under Supporting Documents is a copy of the January 15 construction report which includes pictures. Plans are to use heating blankets to heat the ground to remove the frost so that the floor may be poured the first part of March. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Budget Development and Input Committee Report** – This committee met on January 30. Committee Chair Leslie Ross said the topics discussed included classified salaries. It has always been the District's position to be competitive with classified salaries. She appreciated the input from Ms. Schostek. The Budget Committee was presented with several models and the best model was chosen to provide an average increase of 11%. Right now this is the best the District can do at this point but will continue to be conscientious. This is a bold move and the Budget Committee encourages the Board to approve the classified salary proposal. Superintendent Sullivan distributed copies of the budget funding priority list. Ms. Ross reminded board members a request had been made to Superintendent Sullivan and Cabinet

**Extra-Curricular Committee Update (cont.)**

members to provide a standard procedure to draft a rubric to prioritize funding. The process that is being used does allow the highest needs to be brought forth using an objective process. The scoring numbers were very close which indicates they are all top priorities. Cabinet members had a list of 25 priorities. The Central Office Administrators ranked the list and reduced it down to 13 priorities. The top four priorities included a school psychologist, activities supervisor, elementary day treatment, and counselor/social worker. Ms. Ross said the committee would like to pursue the school psychologist. Dr. Sullivan explained the elementary day treatment does not mean it will look like the program at Hagen. It could be similar but would not be called a day treatment, this is just a descriptor. The program would provide assistance needed by students in K-6. It is not something that could be operational for next year. Further research would need to be done. Ms. Ross noted that the needs within the District are constantly changing. President Fehr requested more information regarding the activities supervisor. Superintendent Sullivan responded there is no supervision at the junior high school when there are activities taking place, there are only coaches. Mrs. Rude inquired how the priority list would affect the special education program. Dr. Sullivan responded that circumstances dictate what the District will do in terms of prioritization. He used an example of adding English Language Learners teachers as a top priority a few years ago. President Fehr inquired if the District had a school psychologist. Dr. Sullivan responded the District did have a school psychologist, however the District has added approximately 960 students in the last few years. The school psychologist needs to attend all IEP meetings which does not provide time for her to accomplish other duties. Research on this service shows DPS is low in service compared to other Districts with similar size enrollment. President Fehr said the administrators should move forward with advertising for the position. She asked what the Budget Committee was requesting permission. Dr. Sullivan responded they would like permission to move forward with the top four priorities with the remainder of the priorities to be reviewed again next school year. Discussion will continue in the future on the other three priorities.

**Middle School Update** – Hagen Principal Marcus Lewton, Berg Principal Shawn Leiss, and Director of Instruction Melanie Kathrein addressed the Board providing updated information on the progress of the transition from a junior high school/6<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school to a middle school. They also updated on the progress of the Middle School Leadership Team's discussions, deliberations, and work on the middle school facility. Mrs. Kathrein explained there have been frequent conversations with Mr. Chris Gibbs from the DLR Group. Last week there were three meetings regarding the design and doing what is best. Dr. Lewton explained the middle school students are very diverse with different heights, different academic abilities, different emotional and social advances, and additionally individual concerns about themselves, their peers and moving towards independence. Principal Leiss explained the complexity of scheduling in a middle school setting. It will be important for the student to feel like one of 100 instead of one of 500. Teacher-to-teacher relationships and student-to-student relationships will help mold the foundation for the new school and create opportunities for professional growth. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Strategic Plan**- Available on the website under Supporting Documents is the most current District Strategic Plan. This is a working document receiving input for revisions from stakeholders. Superintendent Sullivan addressed the Board explaining the District's School Improvement Team has been working on the District's strategic plan and will continue at its next meeting in March. Mrs. Rude made a recommendation to put a date of accomplishment on the document. Ms. Ross concurred noting it would provide credit for accomplishments. President Fehr suggested if there were items that the Board needs to review or if there are questions, to bring those forward for attention. Ms. Ross commended Superintendent Sullivan for the workable document that has interwoven the district-wide strategic plan

**Strategic Plan (cont.)**

with the technology strategic plan. President Fehr also complimented Superintendent Sullivan on the working document noting that she knew he had worked hard and thought about the document for a long time. She thanked him for all his efforts and all those involved in the drafting of the document. Superintendent Sullivan said the School Improvement Team drafted the document and is a great team to work with. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Superintendent's Evaluation** – The superintendent's evaluation must be completed prior to March 15. The second evaluation is different from the December 15 evaluation. Board members will rate the superintendent on the areas identified without prior comment by the superintendent. The four areas to be evaluated were identified as: effective records management (including all records required by law); identification and implementation of school board policy needs; supervision of building and grounds, transportation, and student safety; and supervision of licensed and non-licensed staff. Board President Fehr will forward a MS Word document to Board members. Board members should complete the evaluation forms and return them to her before March 2. Board President Fehr will compile the information and present it to the Board at the March Board meeting. Mrs. Rude suggested checking into using Survey Monkey to combine the evaluation information and help eliminate some of the work. President Fehr thanked her for the suggestion. The idea will be researched. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested

**Superintendent's Contract Negotiations** - Board President Kris Fehr met with Superintendent Sullivan on February 5 to discuss his contract. His current three year contract will expire this summer. President Fehr reported Superintendent Sullivan has agreed to extend his contract three more years. President Fehr distributed a spreadsheet that had data compiled by Assistant Superintendent Reep. It listed many different school districts in the state, its student enrollment, and the salary paid to its superintendent. President Fehr noted DPS falls in alignment with other comparable school districts with similar salaries to its superintendents. DPS is competitive and right where it needs to be. The proposed contract to Superintendent Sullivan has a 4% increase for the first year, a 3.5% increase the second year, and a 3.5% increase the third year. Two personal days were added to the contract to be in alignment with the administrator contracts. President Fehr noted that Dr. Sullivan is a very experienced superintendent. Other board members were also pleased Dr. Sullivan has negotiated another three year contract. They shared that Dr. Sullivan's performance has been exemplary in many levels. Ms. Ross moved to extend a three year contract to Dr. Douglas W. Sullivan for the position of superintendent of the Dickinson Public Schools with a salary of \$184,411 the first year, \$190,865 the second year and \$197,545 the third year, plus fringe benefits, as specified in the 2015-2018 Superintendent's Contract. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: yeas-Hanson, Ricks, Ross, Rude, Fehr; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously. Superintendent Sullivan thanked the Board for the offer and he thanked the employees across the District for helping make his job easier.

**Extra-Curricular Committee Update** – At the recommendation of the Budget Committee the Extra-Curricular Committee met on February 4 to discuss the salaries for the swimming coaches. Assistant Superintendent Reep has provided under Supporting Documents the minutes from this meeting. Mr. Reep addressed the Board and stated the Extra-Curricular Committee meets every other year. A notice was sent to all coaches and advisors requesting topics for discussion and the only request received was a discussion regarding a swim team coach. The Extra-Curricular Committee accepted the recommendation from Activities Director Guy Fridley. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**Girls' and Boys' Swim Team** – The Dickinson High School Dolphin Swim Team has been competing through a cooperative agreement with Williston Public Schools. This coop agreement requires the Dolphin Swim Team to travel long distances, sometimes in inclement weather and poor roads, for swim meets. For the safety of the students, Activities Director Guy Fridley has requested the school board consider dissolving the cooperative agreement with Williston and form a local swim team. Posted under Supporting Documents is information regarding the history of the swim team. Activities Director Guy Fridley addressed the board. He noted the cooperative agreement with Williston has brought about some concerns with school time missed when students are gone for swim meets and parents taking their children to Williston. Having the team be local could possibly encourage other students to sign up for the team, or area community schools requesting to coop with DPS. President Fehr asked if it would be difficult to find a coach. Mr. Fridley said it would be similar to any other activity. He did ask that question when he attended the Dolphin meeting and they felt there would be members in the community interested in coaching. President Fehr asked what kind of budgetary items would need to be considered, other than coaching. The swim team would be similar to the baseball program, there would be a five year period of review with the District absorbing the cost for transportation, hotels, and coaching. Mr. Fridley noted the reason he has requested the board consider dissolving the Williston cooperative agreement was because of a concern for the safety and security of the students. Most of the Williston Coyote swim team is made up of Dickinson students. Dissolving the coop would affect the Williston team. There was discussion regarding the ramifications to the Williston swim team and options. Mrs. Rude moved to dissolve the cooperative agreement between Williston Public Schools and Dickinson Public Schools on behalf of the Dickinson Dolphin Swim Team for girls' and boys' swimming for the 2015-2016 school year, as presented. Mrs. Ricks seconded the motion. Discussion: A memorandum of understanding between Dickinson Public Schools and the Dickinson Dolphins Swim team will be presented to the School Board in the near future. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**Bid for Two Buses** – The school district advertised for and provided specification sheets (bus chassis and bus body) for bids for a 71-passenger route school bus and a 48-passenger activity school bus. Only one company, Harlow's Bus Sales, submitted bids which were opened Wednesday, January 28. Harlow's bids are posted under Supporting Documents. These buses will be ordered now but paid for after July 1, 2015, so they are available for fall 2015. Following is a summary of the bids:

1. 2016 International IC CE, 71 passenger school bus with a CUM ISB 240 HP turbo diesel engine with an Allison 2500 automatic transmission. To meet or exceed all local, state, and federal standards and specifications. F.O.B. Dickinson, ND -\$89,450.
2. 2016 International IC RE MFSAB, 48 passenger activity bus, Freeman family activity seats, a Maxxforce DT 285 HP torque turbo diesel engine with an Allison 3000 PTS 6-speed automatic transmission. To meet or exceed all local, state, and federal standards and specifications. F.O.B. Dickinson, ND -\$153,925.

At 6:28 Mrs. Rude exited the meeting. President Fehr inquired if the buses were replacements or additional buses. Mr. Reep responded these would be two additional buses. Bus #4 would be used as a spare. With the expansion of in-city shuttle busing spare buses would be needed. At 6:31 Mrs. Rude returned to the meeting. Administrative recommendation was to accept the bid from Harlow's Bus Sales, Inc. to purchase buses #1 and #2 above for a total price of \$243,375. Action was requested. Ms. Ross moved to accept the bid submitted by Harlow's Bus Sales, Inc. and purchase the 71 passenger school bus and the 48 passenger school bus for a combined total of \$243,375. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**2015-2016 Classified Salary and Benefit Package** – Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep has posted under Supporting Documents the proposed 2015-2016 Classified Employee Salary and Benefit Package. The Budget Committee has met and discussed the salaries for the classified staff. Mr. Reep summarized the classified package was a recommendation from the Budget Committee and provides an increase of \$1.10 per hour to beginning salaries and an increase of \$2.00 per hour to all current classified staff, receiving a favorable evaluation, beginning July 1. He noted the salary increase the last two years has been 8% per year and this increase would be the most aggressive and most expensive one. It will increase the salary line, including benefits, by approximately \$562,000. The Budget Committee knows it is aggressive and also understands the aggressive work force and do not want to lose these dedicated staff. Mrs. Rude commented that she thought it was well deserved and really necessary and wishes it could be more. Ms. Ross noted that as aggressive as the increase is, the lowest paid is \$13.40 and \$13.90 per hour; the pay in some areas is still low. There was discussion regarding staff pay raises going above the cap and pay for previous experience for new hires. Mr. Reep said he contacted other school districts, such as Mandan and Jamestown, and this is an aggressive plan in comparison. The administrative recommendation was to approve the classified staff salaries proposal. Action was requested. Mrs. Ricks moved to approve the Classified Salary and Benefit package with an effective date of July 1, 2015, and to authorize an increase for 2015-2016 of \$1.10 per hour for starting wages of classified staff in categories I through X and a salary increase of \$2.00 per hour for all currently employed classified staff receiving a satisfactory performance evaluation, as presented. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: yeas-Hanson, Ross, Ricks, Rude, Fehr; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**Early Resignation Incentive Applications** – The deadline for certified staff early resignation incentive is March 1 and for classified staff is April 1. The following individuals submitted their resignations before the deadline to receive the early resignation incentive: Joy Fisher, library media specialist at Hagen Junior High and Berg Elementary (24 years of service); Cynthia Koppinger, language arts instructor at Dickinson High School (26 years of service); Kendra Kudrna, grade five instructor at Prairie Rose Elementary (3 years of service); and the agenda revision to include Thomas Barr, assistant principal at Dickinson High School (one year of service). Assistant Superintendent Reep has verified their eligibility. The administration will evaluate the vacancies these positions may create and will post any openings at a later date. The administrative recommendation was to approve the early retirement incentive applications. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to approve the early resignation incentive applications from Joy Fisher, library media specialist at Hagen and Berg; Cynthia Koppinger, language arts instructor at DHS; Kendra Kudrna, grade five instructor at Prairie Rose Elementary; with an effective date of June 5, 2015; and Thomas Barr, assistant principal for Dickinson High School with an effective date of June 30, 2015. Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. President Fehr noted these individuals had over 50 years of cumulative service and expressed, on behalf of the Board, an appreciation for what they have done for the students in the school district. The motion carried unanimously.

**Open Enrollment Applications** – Mr. Kelly Davenport applied for open enrollment for his foster child to be admitted to the Dickinson Public School District from the South Heart School District. Jessica Mills applied for open enrollment for her children to be admitted to Dickinson Public School District from Hebron Public. All of these children have been attending Dickinson Public Schools. The administrative recommendation was to approve the application. Action was required. Mr. Hanson moved to approve the request for a child of Kelly Davenport and two children of Jessica Mills to be admitted to the Dickinson Public School District under the open enrollment policy. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

**School Board Policy Revisions, First Reading** – NDSBA recommended revisions to board policy HBCC-Student Fundraising and policy AAC-Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy. Copies of the revisions to the policies are posted under Supporting Documents. Areas that have been removed are noted as a ~~strike-out~~. Areas on the policy that are new recommendations are noted in red text (this is new information to the policy). The administrative recommendation was to revise policies HBCC-Student Fundraising and AAC-Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to complete the first reading of policy HBCC-Student Fundraising and policy AAC-Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy, as presented. Mrs. Ricks seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: yeas-Ricks, Ross, Hanson, Rude, Fehr; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**School Board Policy Additions, Second Reading and Final Adoption** – NDSBA recommended adding policies BDAB-Savings Clause and FDD-Education of Pregnant and Parenting Student. A copy of these policies are posted on the website under Supporting Documents. Administrative recommendation was to add the policies. Action was requested. Ms. Ross moved to complete the second reading of the addition of policies BDAB-Savings Clause and policy FDD-Education of Pregnant and Parenting Students, as presented. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: yeas-Ross, Rude, Hanson, Ricks, Fehr; nays-none. The motion carried unanimously.

**Other** - Ms. Ross suggested inviting the DPS Foundation President to present information and educate the school Board on what the Foundation is doing to support DPS. Mrs. Rude congratulated the teachers who received awards from the Foundation.

**Adjournment** – At 6:42 p.m., Mrs. Rude moved to adjourn. Ms. Ross seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

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Kris Fehr, Board President

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Vince Reep, Business Manager

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Twila Petersen, Secretary