

## Unapproved School Board Meeting Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools  
Special Meeting

February 23, 2017; 5:00 p.m.  
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a special meeting on February 23, 2017, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Sarah Ricks, Vice President Brent Seaks, Mrs. Tanya Rude, Mrs. Kim Schwartz, and Mr. David Wilkie. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mrs. Melanie Kathrein, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Mrs. Susan Cook, Mr. Ron Dockter, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Mr. Henry Mack, Ms. Sherry Libis, and Mr. Shawn Leiss. Also present was Mrs. Michelle Kovash, Mrs. Amy Kuehl, Mrs. Shary Smith, Mr. Lyle Smith, Mrs. Fern Pokorny, and Mrs. Twila Petersen.

**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.

**Central Administration Office Reorganization** – Due to the recent change in the enrollment projections for the School District, specifically needing additional kindergarten teachers and possibly additional assistance at the Early Childhood Center, it was necessary to address the decision that was made on December 12, 2016, regarding the Central Administration Office reorganization. Dr. Sullivan addressed the Board and explained at the December 12 Board meeting the Board accepted the recommendation of splitting the assistant superintendent position into two positions (business manager and human resources director) and adding a curriculum director. The Board also included the addition of a position for a technology director. In December, Assistant Superintendent Reep estimated the kindergarten class to be approximately 340 students. His newest projections indicate the kindergarten class to be approximately 369 students, excluding inward migration. Because of the higher enrollment, it will be necessary for the District to consider hiring additional kindergarten teachers. DPS may also need to provide additional assistance to ECC. These topics will be brought back to the Budget Committee for discussion and consideration. Dr. Sullivan said he was asking the Board to reconsider its decision and before discussion there needs to a motion from the Board to reconsider. Mr. Seaks moved to reconsider the Central Administration Office organizational chart adopted by the School Board on December 12, 2016. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Assuming a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent Sullivan explained there are two charts posted on the website under Supporting Documents. These charts were the same charts that were posted on December 12. They had not been modified. Dr. Sullivan said the estimated cost of changing the title of assistant superintendent to director of instruction could potentially, depending on experience and education if Mrs. Kathrein applies for the position, a savings between \$50,000-\$70,000 by making that modification. Because of the changing finances, administrative recommendation was to revise the title of Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning to the title of Director of Instruction. He further explained phase I would be the positions of curriculum coordinator, business manager, and human resources director. The technology director and special education coordinator would be in phase II. Dr. Sullivan requested the implementation of the positions be at his discretion based upon assessment of the District's needs and finances. President Ricks thanked Dr. Sullivan for his explanation of the rationale. She felt that if the assistant superintendent position would be changed and established as the director of instruction, it would be hard to go back and change it since the district needs an assistant superintendent. Dr. Sullivan responded and said the best example he could give is the situation in 2009 when the assistant superintendent position was created. Prior to that time, Mr. Reep's title was the business manager. This title can be modified by the board as

**Central Administration Office Reorganization (cont.)**

per board policy. Dr. Sullivan felt that it could be a decision the board could consider, whether by this board or a future board. Mr. Seaks inquired, with the shifting of the title, how much of the responsibility also would shift. Dr. Sullivan responded it was only a change in the title and not a change in the job responsibility and would be a cost savings for the District. He added the District is facing a need for additional teachers that were not recommended two months ago. Mrs. Rude inquired if with this position there would be a curriculum coordinator to assist with the director of instruction and how this would fall into the hierarchy. Dr. Sullivan responded that there currently is a director of instruction and it would remain as the current structure of the Central Administration Office. He added he established a hierarchy when he started in 2009 and it drills down ten positions as to who is in charge. As the District adds a business manager, that hierarchy may be different. Dr. Sullivan referenced the second chart and noted that chart would not change, only the title would change, with the curriculum coordinator underneath the director of instruction. Superintendent Sullivan felt the curriculum coordinator would be a priority. The special education coordinator is part of phase II. Mrs. Schwartz inquired if there was a job description for the curriculum coordinator. Dr. Sullivan responded there was a job description. The board approved the broad description of the position at its February meeting. Mrs. Rude inquired if the Board were to consider revising its prior motion and change the assistant superintendent title to director of instruction could there be a potential to automatically put that back into the assistant superintendent title. Dr. Sullivan responded that in the near future this would not be changed to an assistant superintendent title. He noted that superintendents change and school boards change and it is possible it could be recommended at some point in time in the future, but not at this juncture. Mrs. Schwartz clarified that the Board would need to vote on the title change. Dr. Sullivan responded that was his perception of the board policy. Mr. Seaks moved to revise the title of Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning in the Central Administration Office Administration Organizational chart to the title of Director of Instruction. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-5 (Seaks, Wilkie, Rude, Schwartz, Ricks); nays-0; absent-0. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Ricks recognized it would be in order for another motion to provide leeway for Superintendent Sullivan to proceed as he deems necessary recognizing the status of the school district's finances. Mrs. Schwartz inquired how the Board would be notified regarding the implementation of positions. Dr. Sullivan responded that the business manager and the curriculum coordinator positions are/or will be advertised. The only one that has not been advertised is the technology director. Due to the budget, administration has decided not to advertise for that position, at this time. Dr. Sullivan added that the administration will do everything they can to implement phase I. Mr. Seaks moved to proceed with the previous action of the Board, taken on December 12, 2016, to implement phase I and phase II of the Central Administration Office reorganization and authorize the superintendent to proceed with or cease implementation process as he deems appropriate based upon assessment of the District's needs and finances. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion: Mr. Wilkie asked for clarification on how this would be done and how it would change. Superintendent Sullivan responded that he and the assistant superintendent have visited and it appears the District will have to deficit spend in the next biennium. The District is very well positioned to handle that, at this time. There are a lot of moving parts and at some point the deficit will be at a level that the superintendent would not recommend. It will ultimately depend on the legislative action and changes to the District's revenue. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-5 (Schwartz, Rude, Wilkie, Seaks, Ricks); nays-0; absent-0. The motion carried unanimously.

**K-5 Mathematics Curriculum Adoption** – The mathematics curriculum review which began in 2013 was recently completed. At the December 12, 2016, School Board meeting, Director of Instruction Melanie Kathrein presented material regarding the mathematics curriculum pilot in grades K-5 called Eureka Math. Extensive research has been done with Eureka Math and those teachers in the pilot program are continuously sharing the positives and challenges regarding Eureka. Superintendent Sullivan invited Director of Instruction Melanie Kathrein, Lincoln Elementary Instructor Amy Kuehl, and Prairie Rose Instructor Michelle Kovash to address the Board and provide information regarding the recommendation and justification to adopt Eureka Math. Mrs. Kathrein thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide updated information regarding the Eureka Math pilot program. She said the committee is excited about the work that has been done in the pilot program.

Mrs. Kathrein explained the history behind the math curriculum committee and the research that was done to look at resources that fit the standards. There were three options reviewed in 2015-2016. Information was gathered from other school districts that were using Every Day Math, Investigations, and Eureka Math. A rubric was used for analyzing the math curriculum. Mrs. Kathrein provided copies to the Board members of the lengthy rubric. There was a great deal of work that went into ensuring the District was selecting the best resource to benefit the students. The reviewers eliminated Investigations based on the analysis. The group then visited Devils Lake, which was using Eureka Math, and Fargo, which was using Every Day Math. Mrs. Kovash, a third grade teacher from Prairie Rose, explained the Devils Lake students using Eureka Math in the kindergarten center were extremely impressive. The students in the kindergarten center were using number bonds. They went to another elementary school and in all the classes it was amazing the math skills the students had. She explained what she liked about it was that Eureka Math challenged the students and got them engaged in deeper thinking. The next day the group went to Fargo where they were using Every Day Math. The group had high expectations but were not that impressed. Mrs. Kovash said she likes Eureka Math and what it was doing for the students. When they were in Devils Lake, at the end of the visit, the math coach pulled out the assessment data and shared the remarkable scores. When the team went to Fargo and asked them what their assessment data looked like, they said they were doing okay. The visitation team shared information with the curriculum committee and the committee was excited.

The curriculum committee was ready to do a trial run with a pilot but were nervous about maybe having two different pilots and decided not to force something that wasn't the best for the students and decided to only pilot Eureka Math. They knew it was going to be hard. Kindergarten had the biggest struggle due to the large amount of material. In all, there were 24 classrooms that piloted the Eureka Math in different grade levels with representation from all schools. There was a lot of communication with Devils Lake and some adjustments that were made. The pilot teachers told the committee they had not seen students perform like this before and that it was amazing. Even some of the students in various grades who really struggle were doing well with Eureka Math.

Mrs. Kathrein said the committee and the principals were ready to endorse Eureka Math. The cost to set up the classrooms is estimated about \$110,000 for the teacher resources, not including the training. Mrs. Kuehl, who is a first grade teacher at Lincoln Elementary, said she is amazed at what her first graders are doing. Recently her first graders were adding to 40 and having no problems using two digit numbers and learning how to break it down. She noted it would take some reorganization to fit the 60 minutes or more of math into the school day but she said they liked the Eureka Math and hopefully the testing scores will reflect what the students are accomplishing. Mrs. Rude inquired how the teacher counterparts were dealing with the change. Mrs. Kovash responded that her team loves the Eureka Math and they were

**K-5 Mathematics Curriculum Adoption (cont.)**

all on board. They have seen the gains the students are making. Last year they used Investigations and didn't teach multiplication until January. This year they started on day one with teaching multiplication. Mrs. Kuehl also said her team embraced the Eureka Math and they feel it has gone well. Mrs. Rude explained that she had heard one of the drawbacks was that the teachers were having to make copies for the students. She inquired if there was a way around making so many photocopies. Mrs. Kovash responded that her class has done a lot on personal white boards. The third graders had workbooks. Mrs. Kuehl said her team chose not to have workbooks and really regretted it and would request workbooks in the future. Because there is only one copy machine at Lincoln and 26 teachers, sometimes the Eureka Math documents had to be copied on weekends when the machines were available. The workbook does not have everything but it would eliminate part of the copying. There was discussion regarding photocopying and purchasing the workbooks and what resources were available.

Mrs. Rude inquired what will happen if the Eureka Math is adopted, which goes through grade 8. How will this affect the upper grade levels? Mrs. Kathrein responded the math curriculum had already adopted Connecting Math for the upper levels and have invested in that. She felt it would be discussed the next time that curriculum was on the review cycle. The Devils Lake teachers were commended for being generous with their time and sharing of information. They have a math coach and Mrs. Rude inquired if that would be something DPS would be implementing. Mrs. Kathrein responded she would like to have a math coach but that would not be something that she would be able to implement. A curriculum coordinator could assist with that aspect.

President Ricks expressed her appreciation for all the hard work done by the committee in making the decision and analyzing and presenting to the board. Administrative recommendation was to adopt the K-5 Eureka Math curriculum with an implementation date of fall 2017. Mr. Seaks moved to approve adoption of the K-5 Eureka Math curriculum to be implemented the 2017-2018 school year. Mrs. Rude seconded the motion. Discussion: Mrs. Rude inquired if the cost for the implementation would fit in the budget. Mr. Reep responded he had looked that up during the discussion and said the book budget has a satisfactory balance to support the Eureka Math implementation. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-5 (Wilkie, Schwartz, Seaks, Rude, Ricks); nays-0; absent-0. The motion carried unanimously.

**Strategic Plan** – The Dickinson Public Schools Strategic Plan is a working document drafted by the School Improvement Leadership Team and receiving input for revisions from stakeholders. The Strategic Plan is reviewed, discussed, and updated by the School Improvement Leadership Team on an annual basis. Available under Supporting Documents is the most current Strategic Plan for the District. Superintendent Sullivan addressed the Board explaining the strategic plan was developed as part of the accreditation process for AdvancED. He felt it would be instructional and helpful to the School Board if he would provide details about the strategic plan, the action plans, and the status and progress of each action plan.

- I. **Positive Behavioral Support Model** – The positive behavioral intervention and support has been adopted in the school district and professional development has been provided. Additionally, the school buildings have CHAMPS and zones of regulation. These two programs provide an opportunity for the students to self-regulate and stop outbursts. In the buildings, they are starting to see the students have a greater understanding about self-control as the building personnel continue to emphasize those regulations. This is a proactive approach to prevent problems that seems to be successful and is reviewed on a regular basis.

**Strategic Plan (cont.)**

- II. Physical Environment of District Property will be Safe – Additional school resource officer services is reviewed on an annual basis through the needs assessment process in the school district. It sometimes moves closer to the top but with other pressing needs it is moved down on the list. In regards to the facilities being properly maintained, the long range facility plan that was developed by DLR addresses this topic. Additionally, the major projects list is drafted on an annual basis by the assistant superintendent. There have been improved security measures at all the buildings by the installation of locking doors and added security procedures and assessments. Additionally, a District-wide Safety and Security committee is in place to look at concerns and issues. The faculty and staff will have a training in the fall on a different method to approach the possibility of an active shooter situation in the building. Alternative education or a day treatment program continues to be reviewed and discussed. The board has approved a centered-based, emotionally disturbed program for grades K-5, unfortunately the district has not been successful in finding a candidate for that position.
- III. All Learners will Effectively Utilize 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills for Learning – Dr. Sullivan noted this title may need to be changed since Superintendent Baesler is moving away from the Common Core Based Standards. These standards were utilized and discussed during curriculum adoption and implementation. Instructional strategies that are research based and designed to increase student achievement are reviewed regularly. An example of this is at the Dickinson Middle School. It is regularly emphasized to use the 4 C's of learning (collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation, and critical thinking) and incorporate them into the curriculum when it is appropriate. Project-based learning is evolving and the superintendent feels it continues to increase in the school district. The DHS science department is looking at taking two courses and turning them into an exclusively project-based learning. Additionally, DHS is also doing a project on Ellis Island that is cross curricular. The DMS is designed around project-based learning. Professional development has been provided, particularly with the new middle school coming on line.
- IV. Implement Effective Instructional Practices – The District adopted the Danielson model as the teacher evaluation tool. The District also adopted the state template model as the principal evaluation tool. Professional development was provided to principals and teachers for the Danielson model. Superintendent Sullivan acknowledged the District is continually reviewing the staffing patterns. This is reported to the Board on a monthly basis. The District is looking at reviewing collapsing some classrooms as a cost saving measure. Superintendent Sullivan and Assistant Superintendent Reep have reported to the Budget Committee the need for additional kindergarten teachers due to the anticipated enrollment for the fall. There is continuous discussion between the superintendent and assistant superintendent regarding staffing for not only certified personnel but also classified personnel.
- V. Technology for Learning – The technology infrastructure has been improved over the past few years. Professional development is provided to the faculty in the use of technology for learning through EduTech training. Additionally, EduTech provided training on utilizing the 1-to-1 approach in the DHS history department and science department. There was professional development provided to the DMS teachers. K-5 received training in responsible digital citizenship provided through the librarians and the library curriculum. There is a technology plan which is attached to the strategic plan.
- VI. Environmentally Friendly Construction – Dr. Sullivan noted the District has built two new schools in the past four years and added onto three schools. The new construction has some very environmentally friendly aspects to those facilities. A project at the DMS for recycling is being considered. Additional counseling services is a component of the annual needs assessment.

**Strategic Plan (cont.)**

VII. Community Stakeholder Involvement – Superintendent Sullivan noted some improvements have been made to community involvement at the building level and District level by using FaceBook and other social media. The new alert system provides voice, email, and texting messages. Some of the buildings are additionally utilizing the alert system for reminders and various notifications. Online learning opportunities are available at DHS through Jefferson County Public Schools and also through the state’s Distance Learning Center. Curriculum literacy nights have been conducted. The outreach stakeholder groups could continue to grow. The passing of the bond election is a good representation of the positive community partnership with the school district. The ongoing discussion regarding the CTE Center also emphasizes positive community partnership. There is ongoing collaboration between DPS and Dickinson Catholic Schools with identified community partnership after the Trinity fire. Assistant Superintendent Reep and Superintendent Sullivan sit on the Manufacturers Roundtable which is an active group of leaders. This group has provided some positive input regarding the new middle school.

Vice President Seaks thanked Superintendent Sullivan for going through the strategic plan and reviewing each action plan. Mr. Seaks inquired if there was any specific breakdowns that exist to address test scores. Dr. Sullivan responded those goals are largely established at the building level. It is discussed at the School Improvement Leadership Team camp that occurs right after the end of the school year. Dr. Sullivan added he will be working with the principals prior to their departure for the summer to present information to the school board regarding this topic. Mrs. Rude added that it would be nice to have that information and also the goals that the buildings have at the beginning of the year and any concerns at the end of the year. President Ricks appreciated Dr. Sullivan going through the strategic plan and enjoyed hearing the great things going on the District. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

**RSP & Associates Consulting Proposal–Attendance Areas** - Available under Supporting Documents is a cost proposal from RSP & Associates Consulting for the Board’s consideration which had also been emailed previously to the Board members. The proposal would assist the District by providing an enrollment analysis, boundary analysis, and/or public facilitation option. Superintendent Sullivan addressed the Board. His recommendation for consideration is the boundary analysis at a cost of \$15,000. Dr. Sullivan noted that Bismarck Public Schools and Mandan Public Schools utilized RSP & Associates. The Bismarck Public Schools business manager was very complimentary and added they are good at facilitating public meetings, if desired by the Board. With the student inward and outward migration, the possibility of opening Berg Elementary as a K-5 for 2018-2019, and the bigger picture of moving students around and class sizes, the administration feels it would be beneficial to the District and students to have some guidance. One of the primary reasons for not opening Berg at this time is so there can be an opportunity for input and ideas regarding Berg Elementary. It will be an exciting time for the Board with good conversation, possibly at a Board workshop. Mr. Reep added that it is a good idea to get an outside viewpoint when looking at the boundary analysis. Administrative recommendation was to approve the services for boundary analysis from RSP & Associates Consulting. President Ricks inquired if the company was going to provide a solution or data to guide the District with a decision. Mr. Reep felt they would give information and movable parts so that as a District a decision can be made that benefits the District. Mrs. Rude moved to direct the administration to proceed with the hiring of RSP & Associates Consulting for the services of the District’s boundary analysis. Mrs. Schwartz seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion: Vice President Seaks inquired if this was a one-year consulting contract and a new contract could be requested if additional assistance was needed. Dr. Sullivan responded that was

**RSP & Associates Consulting Proposal – Attendance Areas (cont.)**

accurate. A roll call vote was taken on the motion: ayes-5 (Schwartz, Seaks, Rude, Wilkie, Ricks); nays-0; absent-0. The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment** - Chair Ricks declared the meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 6:17 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