

Unapproved School Board Meeting Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Regular Meeting

April 14, 2014; 5:00 p.m.
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a regular meeting on April 14, 2014, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Kris Fehr, Vice President Jason Hanson, Mrs. Tanya Rude, Dr. Morton Krieg, and Ms. Leslie Ross (via telephone). Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mr. Ron Dockter, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Dr. Becky Pitkin, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Mrs. Susan Cook, Mr. Guy Fridley, Ms. Tammy Praus, Mr. Calvin Dean, and Mr. Henry Mack. Others present were: Mrs. Naomi Thorson, Mrs. Deb Conlon, Ms. Kathy Tait, Mr. Tony Sjolander, Mr. Chris Gibbs, Mrs. Sarah Ricks, Mrs. Twila Petersen, and Ms. April Baumgarten from the Dickinson Press.

Call to Order - Board President Fehr 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 the Consent Agenda – There were no additions or deletions to the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda – Mrs. Rude moved to approve the agenda including the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the March 10 regular board meeting; the March 20 special board meeting; the bills for April 2014; the financial reports for April 2014; the pledged assets report for April 2014; the personnel reports; the student/staff recognitions; the RACTC report; and to dissolve the open enrollment for a child of Chad Mathiason; as presented. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

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

- a. **Staff Recognition and Retirement Program**- The teacher/staff recognition and retirement program is scheduled for Wednesday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the DHS auditorium.
- b. **Graduations** –The Adult Learning Center graduation is Saturday, May 10 at 1:00 p.m.; the Southwest Community High Schools graduation is Wednesday, May 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Dickinson High School (DHS) auditorium; and the DHS graduation is on Sunday May 25 at 1:00 p.m.
- c. **Kindergarten Enrollment** –Kindergarten projections for next fall are estimated at 308 students. There will be 15 kindergarten teachers. Some classrooms may be over 20 students.
- d. **AdvancED Accreditation Certificate** – The District and each building received a certificate from AdvancED acknowledging the accreditation for the next five years. President Fehr thanked and congratulated the superintendent, Central Office administrators, building principals and administrators, the teachers and staff and others involved in the accreditation process.

Business Topics

Facility Master Planning Report – Mr. Christopher Gibbs, Consultant from the DLR Group, addressed the board. The information he provided to the board was summarized in a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Gibbs explained the DLR Group would make recommendations but it was the school board that needed to make the final decision.

Facility Master Planning Report (cont.)

The planning process began in September 2013. There has been a series of three community meetings. The DLR Group has also met several times with the leadership teams in the buildings. Mr. Gibbs said it was apparent in the school district that the staff expressed a desire to provide quality education. The community is very engaged in the school system and what is happening in the school district. There continues to be growth here and that is reflected in the kindergarten numbers. Engaged learning is important in this community and it is important for the community to realize this is a long range plan.

The recommendation from the DLR Group took into consideration input from secondary and elementary administrators, input from staff, regional standards, national standards, and benchmarking. Mr. Gibbs provided some examples of new schools in the area or nearby states with the estimated square footage per student. The recommendation from the DLR Group for Dickinson Public Schools was to build a new middle school that would serve grades 6-8, build additional classrooms onto Prairie Rose Elementary, repurpose Hagen Junior High School, convert Berg Elementary to serve grades K-5, and continue upgrading the security at all the buildings.

The new middle school (grades 6-8) would have a 1,200 student core capacity in a building with approximately 212,000 square feet. The location is not defined but could be part of the process. The community has suggested an area in the northwest. The total cost for the new middle school is approximately \$64 million. The addition at Prairie Rose Elementary would provide four sections or six additional classrooms. This along with converting Berg Elementary to K-5 and continuing the security design would be approximately \$2 million; totaling this with the new middle school the cost would be approximately \$67 million. The information is based on a community group base on tax tolerance and what DLR Group believes is meeting the most immediate needs of DPS. He added there are additional needs within the District. Additional needs could be addressed with an addition at Heart River Elementary, purchase land for a future elementary school, deferred maintenance, safety site improvements to improve traffic flow, and high school wayfinding to make the pods easier to navigate. In addition to this, Mr. Gibbs suggested a new career and technical education center in the future. This center would require regional partner organizations.

Mr. Gibbs said the \$67 million package would provide services for 300-450 more elementary students. The \$67 million is a starting point for the long range facility planning process. He noted there are needs at the high school.

Board Member Rude inquired the time frame for the Prairie Rose Elementary addition. Mr. Gibbs responded the information presented at the last meeting regarding enrollment growth recommended the completion should be no later than fall of 2016. Mrs. Rude asked if this would be simultaneous with the construction of the junior high school if the bond election were to pass and Mr. Gibbs responded it would be simultaneous. Mr. Gibbs reminded board members there could easily be a 10% cost escalation per year. The longer the District waits the higher the cost will go. Mrs. Rude inquired what the perceived issues would be to switch Berg Elementary back to K-5. Mr. Gibbs responded there were no issues, it should be a smooth transition. Any small modifications could be included in the bond or small things paid out of the capital improvements.

Board President Fehr asked Mr. Gibbs to walk the Board members through the process and what the Board needs to do. Mr. Gibbs began by explaining the middle school will take a great deal of time. Construction would take approximately two years depending on when construction begins. The design

Facility Master Planning Report (cont.)

time would take approximately 9-12 months. This would involve the community and staff. It would take approximately three years of the total time from starting the design to project completion. President Fehr inquired when there would need to be a bond election. Mr. Gibbs responded that the enrollment numbers show that Berg Elementary will be at or over capacity by 2017. If there was a bond referendum fall of 2015 then the construction could be done in fall 2017. A bond referendum in spring of 2015 would push back the construction to spring of 2018. There is ability to shorten or lengthen the construction. Having the community input on the design will take some time.

Board Member Krieg inquired regarding the community's perception of accepting the bond referendum. Mr. Gibbs responded that at the last open forum there were three options presented. They ranged from about \$55 million, \$77 million, and \$100 million. The majority selected the middle school. The tax impact came out to be about \$55-\$60 million. The community has been very engaged, the groups that didn't pick the \$65 million picked the \$100 million. There are significant needs in the community with the aging school facilities and the enormous amount of growth all hitting at the same time. There are significantly more needs than \$65 million. The DLR Group feels these recommendations would be a good and effective start. Additional tax capacities could be in the future, that would depend on the growth.

Mrs. Rude said the biggest concern she has is the turnaround in five years where a new high school would need to be built. She felt the money should be spent upfront instead of doing it again in five years. Mr. Gibbs explained there are issues with the existing high school, especially the pod system, those will be prevalent with the middle school as with the high school based on the information he has heard from the staff and leadership teams. He added there is an enormous number of changes at the high school and what a high school may look like in 5-7 years needs to be taken into consideration. If a new high school were to be built there would need to be a number of things done to the existing high school to make it an effective middle school. Even if the District did that it may need to come back for a second bond referendum in the future. One of the reasons the career and technical center program was conceived was for work force in the community and a potential for overcrowding in 3-5 years and to maybe have some of those students doing other programs.

President Fehr inquired regarding the bonding capabilities. Assistant Superintendent Reep explained the District can bond up to 5% for debt. Currently the District owes \$5 million in debt. That is being paid from existing mills. Mr. Gibbs suggested a two question ballot, one to allow the District to double to 10% of bond capacity and secondly to allow the District to issue bonds of \$55 million.

President Fehr requested information regarding the bond issue, what information is needed and how would the process begin. Mr. Gibbs responded the process would need to be promoted in the community. This would take approximately 6-8 months. There would be a campaign with a significant amount of sharing of information. Timing is not necessarily in the District's favor. There is a sense of urgency since the enrollment numbers don't seem to be slowing down. If the school board would wait three months it could potentially add costs to the final solution. The needs of the District are not going away; it is safe to say that time is money because the cost is escalating rather quickly at approximately a percentage per month. Superintendent Sullivan said the comments are important to contemplate since they have all seen the projections. Enrollment from March 1 to April 1 increased by 37 students. Families are continuing to arrive; there is a very real level of urgency.

Facility Master Planning Report (cont.)

President Fehr inquired about some options for Hagen Junior High. Some possible options for repurposing Hagen Junior High would be moving the alternative school to Hagen and therefore opening it up to more students, moving the Adult Learning Center and Partners in Parenting, moving the Central Administration Offices which would also be in alignment with a recommendation from the AdvancED accreditation to increase the staffing, or utilizing the building for students with disabilities since the needs are beyond the space available at the Head Start building. Mr. Gibbs said the Hagen Junior High building is a valuable asset to the school district but does have some challenges with supporting 500 students.

President Fehr asked if a special school board meeting could be scheduled between now and the May meeting to discuss the DLR Groups recommendation. Consensus of the board members was to schedule a special school board meeting. Mrs. Petersen will email some possible dates. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

President Fehr recognized that school board member candidate, Mrs. Sarah Ricks, was in the audience.

Major Summer Building Projects - Assistant Superintendent Reep explained every year starting in the spring he takes requests from building principals for requested repairs and improvements. Posted under Supporting Documents is a summary list of proposed projects for the summer. Some projects are due to growth within the District, some are due to deferred maintenance. A few projects mentioned were new lockers at Hagen, replacing the lockers in the DHS boys locker room, recarpeting the DHS 500 pod, recarpeting the gymnasium at Heart River, replacing several cabinets and sinks in the Lincoln east wing, creating additional storage at Lincoln and Jefferson, mill and overlay at DHS, and replacing a gymnasium door at Berg. Within the next week there should be a traffic gate installed on 4th street in front of Hagen. Every attempt is being made to complete the moderate to high priority items on the list. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

Personnel Report Update - Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep explained the administration has 41 teacher positions and one administrator position to fill for next fall. Some of these positions were newly created. There are 28 positions that have been filled to date. Administration continues to conduct interviews. This agenda item was informational only. No action was required.

Report on National School Board Association Convention – Board Members Kris Fehr, Tanya Rude and Jason Hanson along with Superintendent Sullivan gave highlights on the National School Board Association Convention they recently attended in New Orleans. Their reports are posted under Supporting Documents on the school board website. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

Wellness End of the Year Summary – Superintendent Sullivan addressed the board. The District’s Wellness Committee met last week and reviewed the report. Available under Supporting Documents is a copy of the summary report. Items in red text represent changes to the summary from the beginning of the school year. President Fehr recognized the significant progress individual schools and the school district as a whole has made. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

Reschedule June School Board Meeting – Superintendent Sullivan addressed the Board. North Dakota Century Code requires the school districts to meet to canvass the election on the sixth day after the election. This necessitates a board meeting on Monday, June 16. Administrative recommendation was to move the June 9 school board meeting to June 16. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to reschedule the June school board meeting for June 16 at 5:00 p.m. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Breakfast and Lunch Meal Prices – Assistant Superintendent Reep addressed the Board explaining the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act requires that schools provide the same level of financial support for lunches served to students who pay for their meals as those students eligible for free meals. To be in compliance, Mr. Reep recommended increasing all full price lunches by \$.10 and breakfast prices by \$.05. The reduced meal prices would remain the same. Available under Supporting Documents is the proposed pricing for meals. Action was requested. Mr. Hanson moved to approve a fee of \$1.30 for student breakfast, \$1.45 for adult breakfast, \$2.05 for lunch for students in grades K-6, \$2.35 for lunch for grades 7-8, \$3.10 for lunch for grades 9-12, and \$3.60 for lunch for adults, effective fall of 2014. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Bids for DHS Main Gymnasium Flooring Replacement – The District advertised for bids for replacing the flooring in the DHS main gymnasium. Assistant Superintendent Reep explained the flooring was replaced approximately ten years ago. Derksen Flooring had provided the District with a verbal quote of \$125,000 but did not submit a sealed bid. The administrative recommendation was to accept the low bid of \$117,000 from Jwood Sports Flooring for replacement of the flooring in the DHS main gymnasium. Administration is working with the DHS Booster Club to consider selling pieces of the floor as a fundraiser. Action was requested. Mr. Hanson moved to accept the low bid of \$117,000 from Jwood Sports Flooring for the replacement of the flooring in the Dickinson High School main gymnasium. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Early Resignation Incentive Notifications – The classified staff have a deadline of April 1 to submit their resignation notification. The following individuals have submitted their early resignation incentive notification by the deadline and Assistant Superintendent Reep has verified their eligibility: Kristie Barney, general custodian at DHS (11 years of service); Marlene Binstock, assistant cook at Prairie Rose Elementary (25 years of service); Barbara Herauf, assistant cook at Jefferson Elementary (four years of service); and Carol Kuntz, special needs paraprofessional at Dickinson High School (39 years of service). The combined total years of service for these four individuals are 79 years with an average of 20 years of service. The administrative recommendation was to approve their early resignation incentive. Action was requested. Mr. Hanson moved to approve the early resignation incentive for Carol Kuntz with an effective date of May 22, 2014, the early resignation incentive for Barbara Herauf and Marlene Binstock with an effective date of May 23, 2014, and the early resignation incentive for Kristie Barney with an effective date of June 30, 2014. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. President Fehr thanked the classified staff for providing the great service to the school district and the students and thanked them for their dedication.

Board Policy Revisions–First Reading – Policy DEAA-Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace and Policy FFA-Student Alcohol and Other Drug Use/Abuse have minor revisions recommended by the North Dakota School Board Association (NDSBA). Changes are noted in red text in the copies available for review posted on the website under Supporting Documents. Policy FFI-Student Use of Electronic Devices currently prohibits the use of personal communication devices. There are teachers

Board Policy Revisions–First Reading (cont.)

that are being supportive of more expansive use of technology devices and allowing students to use their electronic devices for learning. The District-wide Technology Committee and District administration recommend the policy be revised to provide more flexibility for students with restrictions in areas of expected privacy. The policy does provide the building principals with discretion. Available on the website under Supporting Documents is a copy of the revised policy with changes noted in red text. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to accept the first reading approval for revised school board policies DEAA-Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace, FFA-Student Alcohol and Other Drug Use/Abuse, and policy FFI-Student Use of Electronic Devices, as presented. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Regulation Revision-First Reading and Final Adoption – The NDSBA has recommended minor revisions to school board regulation AAC-BR Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedure. Changes are noted in red text in the copy posted on the website under Supporting Documents. Administrative recommendation was to revise the regulation. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to accept the first reading and final adoption of revised school board regulation AAC-BR Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedure, as presented. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Other – There were no other topics for discussion.

Adjournment – At 6:28 p.m. Mrs. Rude moved to adjourn. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. At 6:28 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Kris Fehr, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Twila Petersen, Secretary