

Unapproved Board Workshop Meeting Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Board Workshop

September 8, 2008; Following the Board Meeting
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a Board workshop on September 8, 2008, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: Dean Rummel, Kris Fehr, Leslie Ross and Mitzi Swenson. Morty Krieg was absent. Administrators present were: Superintendent Stremick, Vince Reep, Perry Braunagel, Dorothy Martinson, Melanie Kathrein, Becky Meduna, Sherry Libis, Calvin Dean, Ron Dockter, Del Quigley, Tammy Praus, Shawn Leiss and Henry Mack. Others present were: Karen Heidt.

President Rummel called the meeting to order.

No action will be taken. Topics may become agenda items at future Board meetings.

Topics for discussion included:

Student Achievement: Math & Reading-Superintendent Stremick distributed a handout with math and reading test scores for Class A schools.

Math-Math scores were reviewed and discussed. The elementary math test scores are rising. The District is working on their Math Action Plan and hope to see results in the future. Mr. Dockter and Mrs. Kathrein have been working with the Dickinson High School math teachers to make changes to improve math scores at DHS. Several changes have been made at the freshman math level which should make a difference in one to two years. Mr. Dockter reported that the high school has reviewed last spring's NWEA scores in order to help this year's juniors. Teachers will be spending one block a week working with students on our weakest areas. They are also looking at primary times to test, the best places to test, etc. to help students be successful on the tests.

Reading-Reading scores were reviewed and discussed. Superintendent Stremick stated that the reading scores vary. The scores go up and down. They are in the process of developing an Action Plan for reading. They will be breaking down test scores and looking at them closer to see where we need to improve. Discussion followed. Superintendent Stremick stated that they had talked about math coaches but they may want to think about reading coaches also. He reminded Board members that the bar rises in three years to make Adequate Yearly Progress so our students need to be making incremental gains every year.

District's Grant Funded Programs

Adult Learning Center-Dot Martinson reviewed the Adult Learning Center budget information. A handout was distributed. They did an extensive computer purchase this year which caused them to overspend their budget. They received \$24,000 more than last year's grant which they are using to purchase the computers. The inside of the Adult Learning Center was painted and the roof was shingled this summer. New gutters will be added, the fascia replaced and the exterior of the building will be painted this fall. The repairs were paid out of the general fund.

Superintendent Stremick distributed a budget sheet for all the grant programs. The District pays for the Adult Learning Center's heat, lights, water and custodial as an in kind donation. We do not charge them a fiscal agent fee. The ALC has a \$94,000 contingency fund.

District's Grant Funded Programs cont.

Rummel suggested that the administration find out what other Adult Learning Center's in the state do regarding salaries, etc. and that the superintendent check with the North Dakota School Study Council also.

Adult Farm Management Program-Ron Dockter, Adult Farm Management Program's immediate supervisor, distributed a handout with budget information. Mr. Tuhy meets with farm families on a regular basis regarding what they are doing with their cows, livestock management, financial planning, etc. Thirty-three families are enrolled in the program with only one family from Dickinson. Last year's projected budget was revenues of \$74,188 and expenditures of \$78,206.63. They overspent their budget by \$16,775.13. The Adult Farm Management Program has lost money the past five years which the school district general fund has subsidized. Discussion followed. It was suggested that the program be under the Roughrider Area Career & Technology Center and that school districts that have families being served by the program should contribute to the cost. The consensus was to have Mr. Dockter and Superintendent Stremick have a conversation with Mr. Tuhy and that they bring a recommendation to the Board at a future meeting when the timing is appropriate.

21st Century Grant-Del Quigley reviewed 21st Century grant information. Heart River and Roosevelt are the only Dickinson schools that qualify this year under the free and reduced guidelines for the grant. Beach and Hebron also have after school programs covered by the grant. We do have after school programs also at Jefferson, Lincoln and Berg but they are not funded by the 21st Century grant. The fees collected from parents are used to fund their programs. Our District receives 5% of the budget as a fiscal agent fee. Quigley reported that they have 283 students enrolled in the after school programs. RASP hours are 3:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Parents pay \$2.25 per hour. Parents pay the same fee at all the schools (including the schools that are covered by the 21st Century grant).

Partners in Parenting-Del Quigley distributed a handout with information on Partners in Parenting/West Dakota Parent & Family Resource Center. He reviewed budget and contingency fund information. Mr. Quigley reported that Title IV funds were used to fund a lot of different programs over the years including professional development and a counselor. Title IV dollars have been dropping so the District is paying more of the counselor's salary and we are not having Partners in Parenting do the professional development training in the summer. Partners in Parenting have several partnerships throughout the state to help with funding and parent/student education. Funding sources include United Way, Project Northland Program, the Governor's office, Community Action, the Department of Human Services, Title I dollars (FEET), 21st Century grant, etc. Quigley reviewed the Year End Report which shows the number of parents they serve. West Dakota is recognized statewide as a model program. West Dakota has a \$51,000 contingency fund. They always over expend their budget. Their revenue was more than the budgeted expenditures last year so they gained money in their contingency fund. Superintendent Stremick meets with Mr. Quigley and Mrs. Kilwein and they are working towards a balanced budget. It was suggested that Mrs. Kilwein submit the budget amendments to Mr. Reep. Superintendent Stremick recommended that they do the budget amendments in May or June. West Dakota recently asked for additional dollars from the general fund but additional money wasn't budgeted since they have a contingency fund.

Initiated Measures

Superintendent Stremick stated that there are two initiated measures on the November ballot. He stated that some school districts are taking stances on the measures. The NDSBA, NDEA, NDCEL and AARP are opposed to both measures.

Permanent Oil Trust Fund-The Permanent Oil Trust Fund initiated measure was initiated by the legislature. The measure would require oil production and extraction tax revenue in excess of \$100 million to be placed in a permanent oil tax trust fund. The principal of that fund could be accessed by a three-fourths vote of each house of the legislative assembly. Superintendent Stremick stated that the measure does not have a percentage number; it has a dollar amount. The legislature currently has authority to put aside as much oil revenue as it deems necessary. Schools receive funding from the oil production and extraction tax revenue. The money could be used for adequate state funding for K-12 education. The adequacy funding formula is in place but we need money for the formula. Superintendent Stremick stated that oil money is tied to tax relief. If this measure doesn't pass, our mill levy will drop and property owners will see property tax relief. If it does pass, our mill levy won't drop.

Income Tax Reduction for Corporate and Personal Income Tax-Superintendent Stremick stated that the Income Tax Reduction measure would reduce corporate income tax by 15 percent and personal income tax by 50 percent. The lost revenue to the state is estimated to be at least \$400 million each biennium and there is no provision in the measure for replacement of the lost revenue. Property owners are asking for property tax relief. If income taxes are reduced you will not see property tax relief. Education gets funding from the general fund. If the general fund goes down we will lose funding and need to levy more mills. The income tax reduction initiative would eliminate "adequacy" for education.

Discussion followed. The impact on education and what the initiated measures would mean to the Dickinson Public Schools is important. School board members did not feel that they want to take an official stance on the initiated measures. They feel that the North Dakota School Board Association and the North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders are taking a position on behalf of all of the school district. The main complaint of the elderly is that property taxes are too high. Income tax reduction won't make much of a difference for them. The high earning people will get the greatest break from a 50% tax deduction.

At 8 p.m., Ross moved to adjourn. Swenson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

Dean Rummel, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Karen Heidt, Secretary

