

**DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
JULY 7, 2008**

The Board of the Davenport Community School District met in open session for the Committee of the Whole meeting on Monday, July 7, 2008, pursuant to law. The meeting was held in the Jim Hester Board Room at the Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa, in said District. President Zamora called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

On roll call the following board members were present: President Patt Zamora; Directors Richard Clewell, Ralph Johanson, Ken Krumwiede, Larry Roberson, and Tim Tupper. Absent: Director Nikki De Fauw. Others attending the meeting were Superintendent Julio Almanza; and administrators Ethel Reynolds, Leslie O'Melia, Marsha Tangen, Claudia Wood, and Scott Martin.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

MONTHLY FINANCIALS FOR MAY: Mrs. Claudia Wood talked about the balance sheets, Title 1, State 4-year-old and 21st Century grants, lower receivable for special education, Title II funding, accounts payable and other revenue and expenses areas. CFO Marsha Tangen explained areas of the report dealing with budget to actual figures, transportation, special education financial statements and projecting a \$500,000 fund balance at the end of the fiscal year. Mrs. Wood continue talking about self insurance, reinsurance, Wellmark, and graphs for the Board to reference. Mrs. Tangen discussed food and nutrition cash deficits amounting to \$308,000 and explained the state and federal resources come. They are working to reduce costs in this area. Board members asked some questions about purchased services, tuition for open enrollment, revenues and expenditures. Director Johanson asked about getting the numbers of students in special education since it accounts for about 17% of the overall budget. He also had questions about the summer meal program and learned it was funded through the state and federal government. (A copy of the report will be included with the minutes of record.)

403B PLAN UPDATE: Board members had received information earlier about the 403B Plan update because of changes at the state and federal levels. Mrs. Tangen talked about the responsibility for oversight, maintenance, and monitoring of 403B accounts. After looking over options, it was her recommendation to go with the state plan for 403B accounts. She discussed details of the plan with the DEA union representatives who are in agreement with the State plan. She was in contact with the AFSCME representatives also and is waiting to hear back from them. The state plan will handle all of the responsibilities for us and will keep up with all the legal issues. If we would keep the plan in-house, we would have to hire additional staff. The Board will need to take action on this 403B Plan change prior to August 15. There were no questions from the Board on this matter.

OPERATIONS REPORT

NORTH HIGH CONSTRUCTION: Scott Martin presented an update on facilities and operational matters. He said North High was the target of an informational picket from the Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters. Cardinal Construction sent the union contractors a notice on June 23 to return to work and an additional gate was installed on June 24 to allow work to continue. We met with Len Saunders for the carpenters union to hear their concerns about having responsive bidders and specifications relate to the education of the employees and not just be the lowest bid. Mr. Martin didn't believe this would have a major impact on the overall schedule of the project and 85% of the workers are union members. We have worked with the union to provide information about bids under the Freedom of Information act.

KIMBERLY CENTER BIDS: Mr. Martin informed board members that Swanson Construction would be recommended for the bid on work at the Kimberly Center for renovation. We are good to go for this and after approved at the board table on July 14, they could start work the next day.

WEST KIMBERLY PROPERTY: Regarding the National Guard interest in our property on West Kimberly Road, there will be a cultural resources study occurring where they look for artifacts that may impact their development of the property. This will occur the week of July 7. President Zamora wondered if they were concerned about finding something on the property. Mr. Martin said it was just a government protocol.

BRADY STREET TURF FLOOD DAMAGE: Board members asked for an update on the turf replacement at Brady Street Stadium due to the flooding and rain in June. Mr. Martin said the turf management people came out and determined they would look at any type of contamination on the field. Shive Hattery was contracted to come out and do the work on contamination. They did not find any problems in their area; however, there will be associated costs with loss of rubber and fill which is estimated around \$20,000. The manufacturer will have to come back and last week we aerated the field and blew off the sand. It looks good now and is all clear for the upcoming football season. They are performing a test to make sure it will meet all standards for a playable field. Director Johanson asked if the aerating is done periodically and what about the dust from the field. Mr. Martin addressed these questions and said the work was remediation because the silt on the lower one-third of the field needed work. Mr. Martin reviewed the maintenance process for the turf and explained the field grooming procedures for this type of field. The design is correct for this field however they might consider constructing a berm to keep the creek in its banks. We would need to work with the city and watershed people on this so we don't impact other places along the creek. Mr. Almanza added that the drainage from the K-Mart parking lot also came down and that added to the water in our field.

Mr. Martin reported there was minimal water through foundation walls at four other buildings but nothing significant. The crews cleaned up the water and things were good. We did have some equipment loss at the field which was damaged by the water. We are waiting for some estimates on a snow blower and some lawn mowers.

KIMBERLY CENTER STATUS

Superintendent Almanza talked about handout materials the Board received on the Kimberly Center including the vision, mission statement, and belief statements. There was also a Report Card 2007-2008 flier which showed student achievement data; a letter to the Kimberly Staff which was included in their handbooks for 2008-09 and two other documents with a draft vision for the future and initial discussion on whether Kimberly Center was a school or program. Mr. Almanza said the 2005 superintendent asked for a vision statement for the future from the Kimberly Center. They stated the Kimberly Center should be a small, comprehensive high school with one focus. There were discussions about how this could be done and how to maintain the school.

Dr. O'Melia explained Cathy Bosco was scheduled for another commitment tonight but she would address questions from the Board. She went over some of the history of the building and said in 2005 the state asked whether Kimberly Center was a school or a program – we said it was a school. The recent facilities discussion has caused us to revisit whether this is a school or a program and how we take care of the future needs of the students. One question to address is whether a school has more requirements which need to be met and where the Kimberly Center people desire to be a school? Dr. O'Melia talked about SINA status, ownership of the building, size of the programs, and services offered.

President Zamora asked if the administration was asking the Board to declare the Kimberly Center as a school or program. The superintendent said if this is a high school, there will be impacts and challenges. They want to remain a school and be held accountable but have control of the students. Director Clewell talked about ownership and values and asked if the "Skills for Life" program was a district-wide effort. Mrs. Reynolds said that was a site decision for use of the Skills for Life materials. He asked about having some clarification about the "school" vs. "program" view since this really came up with the Policy Committee as they reviewed a recent policy on alternative programs. Director Tupper had questions about the number of dropouts at the Kimberly Center and if we should have a more comprehensive approach to make a change.

Dr. O'Melia talked about how Kimberly Center West was considered a program and test scores are

returned to the students' home school. Kimberly Center East is what we are talking about and it has a separate report card for students. Kimberly Center East is not only a school of choice but students are also placed there as a disciplinary measure or some other student assignment. We need to examine whether this matches the objectives we want and consider the eclectic groups of people who attend. Mr. Almanza also talked about students attending Kimberly Center East because they have not been successful in other schools. There are students in transition stages of their lives.

Director Tupper asked if we were trying to focus on programs internally or an alternative program in other places. Mr. Almanza said at one time the Kimberly Center had an extended day and there were adult education programs in the building. They also looked at whether vocational training was something that all the students wanted or did some just want the regular school curriculum? We don't have a good way to transport students at Kimberly Center to other buildings where vocational training is conducted. There was more discussion about transportation needs and requests. Vice President Roberson said he has heard students say if there wasn't a place like the Kimberly Center, they would not get an education. We know that "one size doesn't fit all." We need to ask if the community is better because we are lowering the dropout rate and kids are going to college. He talked about the financial responsibility we have to the students attending the Kimberly Center and how we need to watch the older students coming back for school. Dr. O'Melia stated if the school designation made students feel better, so be it; but it was what was happening inside the building that was more important. The designation shouldn't impact what the students are learning inside the building. There is a revolving door at the Kimberly Center that is always open to our students.

Director Krumwiede said he was confused about this since the discussion seemed to be different than what was talked about at the Policy Committee. We had been discussing whether the Kimberly Center was a program or a school and he thought the committee agreed it was a program. However, the bigger picture was that the students felt they were treated differently than others. Dr. O'Melia explained that an alternative high school provided some latitude for certification. Director Johanson agreed that he was confused about this discussion on school versus program status. Mr. Almanza talked about how the government was moving away from requirements dealing with special education services in buildings and that affects the Kimberly Center. Director Johanson was concerned that the board policies were not correct now and there were matters to be reviewed. Mr. Almanza said he can't have a "high school" of 250 kids and call it on par with North, Center, and West High. The Kimberly Center has two parts to the school – West and East. Kimberly Center West deals with a different group of students than Kimberly Center East. The staff wants to maintain these programs but maintain their identity as a school status. How can we define this as an alternative high school but not have it on the same pace as the other regular high schools?

Director Tupper said a school of 250 students doesn't need all the options as the larger scales schools. We need to have a different focus for the alternative programs and designed around student needs. We need to look around at other states to see what is working there and how can we incorporate new ideas into what we currently have in the district. Mr. Almanza reminded the Board that not all the students at the Kimberly Center wanted to be in vocational education but they did want a variety of courses. Director Tupper said the Board wanted to understand what was in the best interest of the students to make sure they were successful. Director Krumwiede again mentioned this discussion started in the Policy Committee and we felt a need to look at whether the Kimberly Center was a school or program. We have different policies which we need to clean up but we should wait until we understand what the Board wants to call the Kimberly Center. President Zamora felt it was clear that we wanted this to be an alternative high school for our students. Director Krumwiede said we have identified it was a program but not a high school according to the policies.

Director Clewell felt this was a good initial discussion for the Board and the Policy Committee shouldn't be directed to figure this out. The Board has to talk about whether the Kimberly Center is a program or a school. He talked about expectations for students when we say the Kimberly Center is a school and we need to have a comprehensive understanding of what this means due to limited money available. The administration and Board need to define this better. Director Clewell also asked about special education students and if we are mainstreaming students now or offering alternative services. Dr. O'Melia said

Cathy Bosco has done a lot of research on this topic and she will be able to help us with these questions. Next year the students will be starting later in the day and there will be a more alternative education day than ever. Not everyone fits the mold of a seven-period or four-block day. We are seeing more need for alternative education programs and additional levels of service to our students. Director Clewell wondered if we should be considering this for all our high schools and not just the alternative school. Mr. Almanza said at one time the Kimberly Center went only four days and students didn't come on Friday. But now it is back to a five-day week and the students are getting through their classes faster. We want to make sure the Kimberly Center maintains a comprehensive, smaller learning community.

VISION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Director Clewell did a quick recap on a meeting with the Early Childhood Advocacy Group at Children's Village West. He also has been working with DavenportOne and they are trying to help with getting a meeting together with people to have input on our district vision. The *Quad City Times* is interested in doing an article on our vision and this process.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Roberson thanked the superintendent for the update on the Davenport Promise. He mentioned that while the superintendent was away, he had asked staff members to put together an annual report for the July 14 meeting. This was just meant to be a brief recap of one-two pages at the most on some highlights during the last year. Superintendent Almanza said the staff was working on the report and he gave them a pass on getting the "Readiness for Schools Report" as they worked on the annual report.

President Zamora adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM.

Linda Smith Kortemeyer, Board Secretary