

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL CALL BOARD GOAL & EVALUATION WORKSHOP
OCTOBER 20, 2008

The Board of the Davenport Community School District in the counties of Scott and Muscatine met in open session for a Special Call Board Goal and Evaluation Workshop on Monday, October 20, 2008, pursuant to law. The meeting was held in the General Manager's Conference Room at John Deere Davenport Works, Hwy. 61 and Mt. Joy Road. President Patt Zamora called the workshop evaluation session to order at 6:10 PM.

The following board members were present: President Patt Zamora; Directors Richard Clewell; Nikki DeFauw, Ralph Johanson, Ken Krumwiede, Larry Roberson, and Tim Tupper. Others in attendance were Superintendent Julio Almanza and Richard Wahlstrand, Facilitator.

Board members conducted their annual board goal and evaluation workshop as allowed by board policy. The agenda included an update on the vision process, examination of the board goals, review of the measurement for self-evaluation, consideration of topics for presentation during the school year, looking at ways to approach recognitions, how to work on the budget process, and ideas on how to prioritize potential SILO projects for the next ten year cycle.

Mr. Wahlstrand facilitated the meeting and kept board members on track as they talked about the processes they wanted to use for the areas listed. Director Clewell gave a brief progress report on gathering ideas for developing a new vision statement. On October 18 representatives from the vision groups got together at the AEA and addressed basic themes. Dr. Lloyd Kilmer helped to facilitate the workshop on Saturday and maybe when the Board convenes to look at creating a vision statement, they will want to use him to facilitate the process. The Vision Committee will come back to the Board with a summary on October 27 and then the Board can talk about the next steps and process they want to use to create the vision. Director Krumwiede talked about the time spent in meeting groups and how much they learned from this cross section of the community. The Board went over the groups of people represented at meeting and it was suggested the Latino community should have an opportunity for comments as a vision subgroup.

The next topic dealt with looking at the current goals and whether board members wanted to keep the goals or make changes. Each board member expressed thoughts about the goals and there was consensus the goals could remain the same. The Board goal, objectives, and priorities should be brought forward for an official vote at an upcoming board meeting.

What type of board evaluation instrument should be used was the next item for discussion. Board members shared thoughts about having a written measurement tool or making personal observations about their work progress. It was suggested Mr. Wahlstrand help prepare an instrument for the Board using a five-point scale. The evaluation sheet would be helpful for them to see any gaps or specific areas needed to be addressed. Mr. Wahlstrand emphasized board members bring various talents to the table and should not be too critical about individually completing all areas. Different board members have more involvement in one area than another. It was important to have all the goals, objectives and priorities covered by someone. Mr. Almanza added the Board could look at the objectives and ask what have we done; what do we need to know; and what don't we know to get to the next level? There was a conversation about whether the Board should meet again for the evaluation and what schedule would work.

There was a suggestion that the Board look at possible reports for data they wanted to have done during the year and a schedule set up. They talked about giving the administration some directives for reports and letting them know the expectations of the Board for information. There

was discussion about how data and reports feed into the budget process and enable the board members to then set priorities. There was general dialogue about topics such as technology, smaller class size, early childhood, how to use resources, fund balances, the effect of the State's finances on the local districts, boundary scenarios, and setting future priorities for spending. They also talked about the many areas where they have received reports such as high school curriculum and dual enrollment. Mr. Almanza asked board members to look at the objectives and priorities to see where we are, ask what we need to do, and question whether we should do something else. They talked about examples of reports on transportation, bullying in schools, equity at high schools, minority teachers, alternative curriculum offerings, and calendars. Many of these items are not areas that the Board can affect directly but they are reports given to assess progress is being made. Some people wanted the reports to be of a larger scope such as a discussion on middle schools, curriculum and budgets. There were comments about reports being too scripted and there needed to be more open dialogue stating good things and challenges.

Reports in the future should explain who is involved, what we can do to change, when we plan to do the work, where we are making the changes, and how it improves or impacts student achievement. It was suggested the reports have a qualitative analysis, observations made, and recommendations for how needs could be met in the future. They also talked about sharing success stories in reports and adopting what works at other buildings. They talked about presentations by staff but also wanting to hear from others at the buildings. It would help the board members with decisions if they could hear positive things but also know the challenges and reports should be more transparent. Other topics which could be covered might include world languages, trajectories with No Child Left Behind, the effectiveness of block schedules, impacts on test scores, and the Power of I.

The Board took a brief recess from 7:45 to 8:00 PM and then returned for additional evaluation. The topic next to be reviewed is how to handle recognitions at board meetings. Board members shared their impressions, concerns, and suggestions on recognitions. They talked about when these should be done, pros and cons, and the purpose of having recognitions. It was recommended the superintendent work at the details of recognitions and when to celebrate accomplishments of students. There won't be a planned sign up but it should depend on certain criteria whether it comes before the Board at a meeting.

The budget process and spending priorities was the next topic covered. They talked about expectations on how board members could participate in the budget process and what they needed to do the work. They talked about having enough information about the budget and knowing implications in order to make good decisions about programs or curriculum. They wanted more dialog on finances and understanding the implications of making choices. It would help to see a replacement cycle for technology mapped out for periods of time so they could see budget implications in the future. They would like information about class size so they would know if additional students were added to a class, what budgetary changes would happen and would it affect student learning. They wanted to know more about how allocations were made and who makes the decisions. Some people felt the administration knew numbers but it was not transparent enough for board members to see. They talked about special education resources and not understanding the financial impact staffing can have on the general fund. They needed to know more about funding streams, grants, title funding, and how funding was generated. Mr. Wahlstrand asked about the benefits of having coaching sessions on finance, but board members felt they had already had several sessions on general finance. They had concerns about making decisions on the budget in April without fully understanding ramifications of their decisions until it was too late. It was suggested the Board take time to identify priorities, find out what these would cost, and then they could provide the administration guidelines for their recommendations. Additional questions were raised about cutting teachers in some areas and then adding new positions at other buildings. Mr. Almanza explained formulas were used to

determine FTE teaching staff and student demands for courses at various buildings. He also talked briefly about how allowable growth and grants fund some staff positions. The area of budget and priorities was something that needed more work and the Board would like to have specific numbers when dealing with priorities.

Mr. Wahlstrand asked what process the Board would like to use in addressing future priorities using the one-cent sales tax. President Zamora talked about the process used for the first ten years and having the community participate. The buildings have been working at listing priorities and considering cost estimates. We are finishing up with projects from the first phase and looking at construction projects at Williams, Eisenhower, Jackson, and Harrison. We have set aside \$4 million to complete the projects. Now it was time to look forward to the next ten years and review current building needs. Director Tupper asked whether criteria were developed for buildings to use in making their recommendations. Mr. Almanza said the administration was using criteria to define the standard for a "normal school" and they are still working on this. President Zamora wanted to make sure we were open with the process and the community had input also. In the first recommendations safety was a big consideration and priorities were made based on security and safety matters. There were notes about relating priorities to student achievement, having flexibility, communicating with the public, using an outside consultant, the state of the economy, inflation, protection of funds, and having a comprehensive ten-year plan. Director De Fauw talked about exercising caution because of the current financial picture and we need to tie recommendations to the vision statement being developed. There was additional talk about equity among buildings and not having some buildings get more than others. Mr. Almanza also mentioned the Board needed to consider growth areas in the community and the impact on existing schools. This could have an effect how they look at additions, new buildings, or other construction projects. Mr. Wahlstrand summarized the process we used before seemed to work but to make sure it doesn't go too far out in the future, needs to be flexible, should be open to the public, and keep the public informed.

President Zamora complimented board members on their participation and helpful suggestions. She noted in visiting with other districts in the state, she has heard our district is noted for its strong board. Others look at us as a good role model and we work cooperatively as a team. She felt board members were very respectful of one another and didn't take things personally. They work at the goal and should be congratulated for their efforts. Vice President Roberson also brought up the possibility of a new partnership between Fillmore School and John Deere Davenport Works for tutoring students in reading, math, and science. Things are being reviewed and a potential business partnership is being discussed.

President Zamora adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Linda Smith Kortemeyer, Board Secretary