

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE & SPECIAL CALL MEETING

April 4, 2011

The Board of the Davenport Community School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met for the Committee of the Whole Meeting and a Special Call Meeting on Monday, April 4, 2011, pursuant to law. The meeting was held in the Jim Hester Board Room, Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street Davenport, Iowa, in said District. President Johanson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

On roll call the following board members were present: Directors: Ralph Johanson, Patt Zamora, Ken Krumwiede, Nikki De Fauw, Rich Clewell, Tim Tupper and Larry Roberson. Superintendent Julio Almanza and other administrators were present.

Committee of the Whole Meeting

Special Education Audit Report Update

Several members of the Systems Improvement Steering Committee, which was initiated by the July 2010 Special Education Audit, presented information on committee work that has been done up to this point. The goal of this committee is to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of the Execution Plan for Systems Improvement related to the audit recommendations for the purpose of increased student achievement and more efficient use of DCSD and AEA resources. Two long term goals are student achievement and classrooms for all students.

Responses to intervention implementation plan:

1. Develop an awareness of RTI (Response to Intervention)
2. Prepare for the implementation of RTI
3. Provide professional development for data teams
4. Provide professional development on response to intervention for building leadership teams
5. Utilize identified forms/procedures for students in intensive interventions
6. Integrate response to intervention and positive behavior supports: Implementation of positive interventions and effective strategies for behavioral change at core, supplemental and intensive levels

Continuum of Literacy:

1. Universal screening
2. Diagnostic assessment
3. Formative assessment
4. Progress monitoring
5. Identification of core, supplemental and intensive instruction
6. Develop a continuum of literacy reference guide

Organizational Structures:

1. Provide professional development in the area of reading instruction
2. Study of specialized transportation and busing to ensure fiscally responsible implementation
3. Develop a structure to support implementation of RTI, specially designed instruction for special education students in reading and continuum of literacy
4. Review procedures for transition of students between attendance centers

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5. Implement the AEA Enhanced Service Delivery System for support of district personnel

The committee will continue meeting once a month. Director Zamora asked why we are spending so much time and effort in training teachers that are supposed to already be qualified to teach special education. Ms. Reynolds answered that training, especially in reading, is not necessarily sufficient to meet the realities of the classroom needs. Our district wants to ensure our teachers have the best training they can have.

Director Krumwiede thanked the committee for their hard work. He asked how the planning teams work together and use data. Juli Staszewski noted that data teams are integral in building structures, monitoring, and improving in these special instructional areas. Patti Pace-Tracy explained that LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) is not a reading program, but a training program for teachers to learn the skills in teaching and evaluating reading. She also noted that the transportation costs would be from categorical funds, not general funds.

Director Roberson hopes to hear back from this group in the future to show that what they are doing is being successful. He wonders where the teacher relationship piece is using this strategy.

Director Clewell wonders how the general education teachers fit into this model. Patti noted that we are starting training with special education teachers because we are using ARRA dollars, but that many of those teachers move into the general education arena and then bring this training to that area as well. They also hope to branch out to the general education teachers after special education teachers are trained and that teachers will work together.

Director Tupper asked how much classrooms have been impacted today with this. Jodi Tupper noted that it is beginning in the elementary level, but will move to the intermediate and secondary levels. The teachers are just now going through the training and next school year is when it will begin to have some affect in the classrooms. He wonders why it has taken a year to implement this strategy and if it will be effective. He also noted concern about tiered steps and wondered if it could delay receiving services. He wonders if the teachers will really have collaboration time which will help make this successful. The committee commented that these are all areas of concern that they have also considered in structuring the program and will continue to work on until they have been resolved.

The Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned at 6:55PM and the Special Call meeting was called to order at 7:03PM.

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Budget

The board discussed proposed budget issues. The administration has provided the board with \$1.5 million in reductions. The administration predicts a potential to see some possible savings in additional teachers resigning between April and August. The legislature has still made no final decisions in allowable growth. Mr. Almanza noted it is his understanding that the preschool funding bill changes did not make it through the funnel so there is some hope that it may remain intact. Current law stands if there is no new bill approved. This would mean 0% allowable growth and a .6 weighted funding for early childhood. Head Start, Title and Shared Visions funding are still unknown.

Director Krumwiede asked for clarification on the reduction of high school and intermediate 260 day secretarial positions to 215 or 220 days. Dr. O'Melia said that the intermediate schools full time secretaries would be reduced to 10.5 months.

Director Roberson asked about the 30 employees estimated to retire. Ms. Tangen stated we currently have 27 employees who have said they will retire and the other 3 are estimated to retire over the next few months based on historical data.

Director De Fauw asked about additional savings we would have from the 19 days the buildings would not be in operation due to a traditional calendar schedule. She wonders if these would provide additional savings not mentioned. Ms. Tangen said there would be some operational savings.

Director Tupper appreciated the information from the administration showing FTE's from the Administration Service Center where salaries were broken down by department into categorical and non-categorical funding sources. He asked for the same information for Operations and other buildings. He also asked about any contingency funds. Ms. Tangen noted that with the exception of the \$1 million that will be designated as fund balance, there are no other contingency funds budgeted. Director Tupper asked about anticipated travel expenses. Ms. Tangen stated there is not a specific line item for travel. Each department has their own travel expenses as part of their budget. He also asked about the Edison contract expense. Ms. Tangen noted that the expense is not any more than if we were running the building ourselves, we are just contracting with them to provide those services. Their contract is adjusted every year as our allowable growth changes and as enrollment may change.

Director Clewell asked whether our recruitment budget is focused primarily on recruitment of minorities. Ms. Tangen stated it is and that it will continue, but some expenses such as extensive travel will be limited. Ms. Weipert noted that the current recruiting plan we have now is defined and we are targeting past successful locations.

Director De Fauw reiterated what Ms. Reynolds noted last week in that these are cuts for just one year and that we may be in this same situation next year as well. Thinking in those terms, it would be in our interest to look at systemic cuts that can be sustained.

Other Items

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Director Zamora noted that Director Clewell was honored with an Award of Achievement by the Iowa Association of School Boards and the board congratulated him.

The meeting was adjourned by President Johanson at 7:40PM.

Lynnette Carver, Board Secretary