

**DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE CENTER
JIM HESTER BOARD ROOM
1606 BRADY STREET
DAVENPORT, IOWA**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
November 5, 2012**

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 on Monday, November 5, 2012 pursuant to law. The meeting was held in the Jim Hester Board Room, Achievement 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, Ken Krumwiede, Rich Clewell, Bill Sherwood, Larry Roberson, Nikki De Fauw and Patt Zamora. Superintendent Art Tate and other administrators were present.

1. Boundary Discussion

Dr. Tate clarified that for this discussion on boundaries he is presenting concepts only and emphasized that what he is presenting this evening are not recommendations. He said the assumption is that boundaries need to be adjusted. He stated the rationale for changing boundaries include the following:

- 1) Equity of treatment and opportunity
- 2) Balance school building utilization
- 3) Save funding by having a much more efficient transportation program
- 4) Promote identification with the neighborhood school
- 5) Encourage athletic excellence
- 6) Allow students to attend the school closest to their home
- 7) Promote a more predictable need for using Local Option Sales Tax for maintaining infrastructure
- 8) Address confusing, contradictory and sometime illogical patterns of school assignments.

Dr. Tate then presented the following concepts for boundary adjustments. He reminded everyone again that these are not recommendations, but concepts only.

- 1) Except for extraordinary circumstances, student will attend the school nearest their home of record
- 2) Boundaries will be drawn so that each building in the district will have the same percent of the facility used for student learning.
- 3) Transfer of students for disciplinary reasons to schools outside their homeschool boundary will be severely limited.
- 4) Transportation for child care (if the Board continues to support the service) will be approved for providers within the new homeschool boundaries only.
- 5) Assignments to homeschools based on boundary changes will be accomplished in phases:

- a. Students attending schools outside newly established boundaries for the 2012-2013 school year will be grandfathered, so that they can continue attending the current school until they finish the highest grade at that facility.
- b. Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, no new siblings will be permitted to attend school outside their attendance area even if they have a sibling who was grandfathered into a school.
- c. Beginning with school year 2013-2014, no transfer requests will be approved to attend a school outside of the new boundaries.
- d. Beginning in 2013-2014 school year, elementary students moving to intermediate school will attend the school designated by the new boundaries.
- e. During school year 2013-2014 student moving from intermediate to high school may elect to attend the high school of their choice under the same criteria currently in place, and be grandfathered into that school.
- f. Beginning with school year 2014-2015 all students moving from intermediate to high school will attend the school designated by the new boundaries.

Director Zamora asked about the timeline and Dr. Tate explained the board decision is scheduled for March 2013 so they have plenty of time for discussions. Director Sherwood expressed concern about students who are transient and move often and to keep this issue in mind. Director Krumwiede inquired about data on enrollment and capacity and when this will be available. He also expressed concern about space and district-wide programs and how will this be handled. Dr. Tate said they will start out by asking if it is the right place for the program and if it is they will fill around it. Director Sherwood mentioned the K-8 schools again and stated he would like to know how serious we are about expanding this option before doing lots of work on boundaries. Dr. Tate responded they need to do some preliminary work and they can review the pros and cons within the boundary discussion. Director De Fauw asked when they would be revisiting this topic and Dr. Tate responded at the end of this month. Director Clewell mentioned how discussing boundaries every 5 to 7 years is indicated in the policies and the last time this was done last there was board consensus to create boundaries around the high schools to optimize space in buildings. However, before this was done the board gathered public input and based on that feedback the board voted for open enrollment for the high schools. He emphasized it will be important to gather public feedback again throughout this process. Clewell stated he agrees with phased approach, but expressed concern about implementing phasing out the open enrollment without getting public feedback. Dr. Tate timeline indicates he will come up with his recommendations and then the board will discuss and then develop a tentative plan and at that time provide opportunities for public input. Clewell agreed that it made sense for the board to develop a tentative plan and then ask for public feedback on that plan. Dr. Tate stated he agrees that the public needs to provide their input.

Director Roberson agrees the public should be given the opportunity to provide input, but also emphasized that Dr. Tate is doing the right thing in looking at boundaries in light of the fact that the board has to find 3 million in budget cuts. He emphasized that we have to look at what is the best use of funds and that all students are treated equally and suggested attaching monetary values to items as they are discussed. Director Krumwiede clarified that Dr. Tate would be submitting his recommendations to the board on November 13th and then asked about the next step. Dr. Tate said he thinks the board needs a direction before going to the public and the

11-5-12 Minutes

board could spend several meetings creating a tentative plan and then ask for public input. President Johanson stated it is important for the board to address boundaries even if there are going to be other issues that impact it whether it be K8, transportation, or whatever the case may be and emphasized how important it is not to postpone the discussion. He asked Dr. Tate if the areas that receive preferential treatment now would no longer be receiving that in his concepts and he said that was correct. Sherwood mentioned the choice option at high school level and referred to a memo about transportation cuts that fewer than 15 total students ride the routes between North and Central. He asked if we could maintain choice but eliminate the busing to save money. Dr. Tate said that was possibility, but this would not accomplish balancing the use of the facilities.

2. Real World Externships

Jami Killian, Steve Kuttler and Tony Taylor, all teachers at Central high school participated in the STEM Teacher Externships at John Deere over the summer. They provided an overview of the program and how it gives teachers real world experience. They talked about their internship responsibilities and shared that teachers gain content knowledge, increase motivation and confidence in content area which allows them to provide higher quality classroom instruction. Business partners also have the ability to connect with the community and promote their professions. They discussed how what they learned will help them incorporate and emphasize to students the importance of having the ability to write, interpret, and relay scientific information and having the skills necessary to engage in collaborative group work. Jami shared how she had the opportunity to work with an electron microscope and is looking into having access to this remotely for use in her classroom. Board members shared and commented on the importance of real world application, but to also be careful not to narrow instruction to a particular employer. Director Roberson mentioned that they always need to take advantage of John Deere's willingness to be volunteers in the school. There was some discussion about how the project is related to and enhances the Iowa Core.

3. Earth Project (Environmental Activities and Resources for Teacher Enhancement)

Kim Gasaway, the STEM Education Specialist, Kelly Drumm-Janoski, science teacher at Sudlow Intermediate and Theresa Rock, 3rd grade teacher at Harrison provided an overview of the program. They received almost \$500,000 in grant funds to conduct the program. The goal of the program was to address the low performance and improve science education of students in grades 3-8. The program provided opportunities and funding for elementary and middle school teachers to experience professional development and community-based hands on environmental activities that promote inquiry and investigation into science questions. They spent 2 years studying in Nahant Marsh, studied prairies, water quality, and geological field expeditions. They distributed a brochure that documented their work over the 2 year period. They also had showcases at the Putnam in May where students highlighted the problems they had focused on in their projects. Teresa and Kelly discussed their individual projects and the skills students learned. Hanna Williamson, a student, explained her project to the board and how she researched water quality. Even though funding is now gone the teaching continues and the teachers are becoming mentors to other teachers.

Individual board members shared their excitement with the program, the importance of a project such as this and the value of hands on learning and congratulated the teachers and Hanna on

their success. Director Krumwiede asked about the selection process and Kim explained the grant was written for 56 teachers but only 15 participated since it was completely voluntary. She said she was hoping the excitement from this group may draw more people in if we have the opportunity again in the future.

3. Durham Contract

Ms. Tangen explained the district is in the 3rd year of a three year contract with Durham and written into that contract was an option for an additional 3 year extension. An internal team of people reviewed whether to extend the contract or go out for proposals. The team members decided to extend the contract. Overall, the team was pleased with Durham and Ms. Tangen highlighted the cost savings and how they have new buses equipped with digital cameras. They will be looking at the cost for field trips and come up with a rubric and standard mileage and some other minor adjustments that need to be made. Director Zamora asked about how the treatment of staff and mentioned dozens of complaints she has received from drivers about restroom facilities, not being able to warm up buses, being locked out when it is cold outside, and noted we should have some responsibility on how the drivers are treated. Tangen said they can speak to them about this. Director Sherwood asked if the wages are competitive and also asked for clarification on the 2011-12 costs and noted the large decrease in the number of field trips and would like to know what they have declined so much. Director De Fauw stated that in her experience the number of field trips have declined due to site based budgets, but would like to have more information about the field trips represented in 2011 and 2012. Director Krumwiede said that organizations such as PTA's help with costs, and would like to know who is picking up costs other than the district. Director Roberson noted that when the district contracted out the bus service the district no longer had employees that are driving the buses and asked if we have anything in the contract that mentions monitoring how the employees are treated. Ms. Tangen said this is not written in the contract. Director Zamora asked if we can still express our concerns. Tangen said we can express our concerns and Director Sherwood stated this may be a reason to shop this. President Johanson read a question from Director Clewell asking "have we considered the potential cost/benefit and/or legality of consolidating our transportation contract with the North Scott School District. Between our 100 square mile transportation area and North Scott's large bussing program the potential economy of scale using one contractor for busing would appear to be significant."

President Johanson asked about the issue of wages coming up concerning Durham, which is a private company, and asked if this the board's responsibility and if it should be a board discussion. Tangen said we can always ask, but whether to contract out is was previously based on the financial advantage to the district. Johanson asked about the use of different funds and Tangen explained that the funds for the leases comes out of PPEL and the rest from the general fund. Director Zamora noted the reason the service was outsourced back then was due to not having the funds and we needed new buses. She shared how disappointed she was with the drivers losing the ability to participate in IPERS and the treatment of the drivers has declined, but we do have new buses. Director Roberson asked about the insurance savings, and Tangen stated the biggest source of savings from contracting out has come from workers compensation. Dr. Tate pointed out that the board has asked us to look at outsourcing across the board in the district and pointed out that this does mean losing control and everyone needs to keep this mind.

11-5-12 Minutes

4. Progress Report for Action Plans

Erica Goldstone provided highlights of the dropout plan first quarter update. She indicated she had 5 particular areas in the Drop Out Prevention Plan, but stated she will only highlight two particular areas. The first was the ninth grade first-45 days initiative which was very successful and provided more specifics about this effort. The second area she explained was district diversity and discussed internal recruiting efforts and some of the efforts of the equity committee. Brad Oates reviewed the nine areas in the action plan for athletic competitiveness and discussed each briefly. Director Zamora said everything on the list should have been done long ago, except for one that we did do, which was a disaster, and this was increasing the number of teaching positions that can be tied to coaching positions. She said we ended up getting stuck with coaches who were not getting the job done but we couldn't get rid of them without getting rid of their teaching contract. She thinks it is a bad idea to do more of this. Oates explained the rationale behind this approach and said the contracts would be separate. Zamora asked again if they are tied together as in the past and Oates said it would take the teaching position out of the bidding process. Zamora asked about the BFS positions and how they are being utilized and there was a discussion about this. Zamora also commented on the weight rooms and the feeder programs and how the weight rooms are not adequate and how feeder programs have been discussed for years but she doesn't see any progress and hopes it gets better real quick. Director Sherwood said there are some good teachers who are coaches, but his experience is that the priority does become coaching. Sherwood asked about the funding for the strength coaches and Oates said funding will be district funds. Director DeFauw asked about integration of volunteers into his action plan. Oates said this did not come up with the task force. De Fauw stated that North has had the benefit of volunteers and the how much is gained by using volunteers and how they can help defray costs and give students athletes more opportunity and provided some examples of effective volunteers efforts.

Bill Schneden reported on the Achievement Matrix-Non-negotiable actions. He reviewed the specific non-negotiable actions and the specifics and priorities for the Green, Yellow, and Red Tiered schools. Director Zamora asked if he will data that reflect improvements made available for his UEN presentation and he stated it is too soon for data but explained it is more of a show and tell presentation. Director Krumwiede expressed how much he appreciates these action plans and asked if the plan has been explained to elementary teachers and Schneden responded that the principals laid out the literacy plan last week. Director Zamora asked what is being reduced in order to increase the reading time. Schneden explained what areas would be affected and some of the approaches that are being used to accommodate this non-negotiable. Director De Fauw cautioned about not truncating lunch or recess and to make sure to preserve time for these areas. Director Sherwood said he agrees with everything in the plan, but also commented that many teachers are stressed out and something should be taken out before too much is added to the teacher's plates. He also noted there is a deficit of substitutes. Sherwood said there is a morale crisis in the district and we should have a communication pathway with teachers directly. He stated he has heard how some teachers are refusing to follow some of the things we are talking about and from what he understands there are other teachers who are creating data rather than reporting actual material and they are just putting stuff in that they think will get them off the hook. Dr. Tate said he is not sure who Director Sherwood is talking to but he is in the district every day and teachers have the opportunity to talk to him and many do speak to him about various things. He commented that we have good principals that try to keep in contact with the teachers and he asks them every time he is

with them how this is going. Tate asked Sherwood what should be left out and Sherwood said he is asking Dr. Tate what he has taken out. Tate said he has not removed anything and that we owe it to the students to do better and that this has to be done. Sherwood said that how it is done is just as important as getting it done and it is hard for teachers to see the objectives when they feel like they are downing. Director Krumwiede said he also talks to many teachers and he knows there are some concerns but he also thinks that many times when changes are made in systems we bound to get reactions. He has spoken with many teachers who say they are getting more support than what they have had in the past. Krumwiede also remarked that this plan helps ensure there will be lesson plans for substitute teachers and he has talked with a lot of really good teachers who think we are on the right path and that this will make a difference. Sherwood emphasized the importance of pacing and Dr. Tate said our students can't wait for pacing.

Dr. Tate highlighted the major areas of the Drop Out Prevention Plan. He said they were looking at an out of school suspension facility and have since changed to looking at a school within a school. He is hoping they have some pilots out by January in intermediate and high schools. They are putting a more stringent drop out process in place with the Superintendent signing off on all of them to make sure that process has been completed. Other areas include attendance officials, reviewing and monitoring drop-out prevention information and working with the faith based community. The agenda item on finance update was postponed until a later meeting.

President Johanson asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting and there was none. The meeting was adjourned by President Johanson at 7:38 p.m.

Mary Correthers, Recording Secretary