

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE CENTER
JIM HESTER BOARD ROOM
1606 BRADY STREET
DAVENPORT, IOWA 52803
MONDAY, MAY 18, 2015
SPECIAL CALL OPEN MEETING
5:00 PM

The Board of the Davenport Community School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met on Monday, May 18, 2015 for a Special Call Open Meeting. The meeting was held at the Achievement Service Center, 1606 Brady St., Davenport, Iowa, in said District . President Johanson called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. Present Directors: Johanson, Clewell, DeFauw, Dickmann, Snyder, Krumwiede and Hayes.

President Johanson welcomed the following: Mayor, Bill Gluba; City Manager, Craig Malin; and the following members of City Council: Ray Ambrose, Kerri Tompkins, Jason Gordon, Bill Boom, Bill Edmond, Rick Dunn, Jeff Justin, Mike Matson, and Gene Meeker. Mayor Gluba made the following opening remarks:

“Several weeks ago each Alderman was given the book entitled ‘Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis’ by award winning scholar and Harvard professor Robert D. Putnam. Hopefully by now you have all read it. One reviewer of this just released book is quoted as saying, “it captures the dynamic change in American society-the widening class-based opportunity gap among young people and how this gap is becoming more and more unfair to children across the county” Dr. Putnam’s work clearly documents that we are now living in a two-tier world where the affluent succeed through education and economic opportunity, and the poor struggle. We all know that life is unfair, but I believe as City fathers and school board members our job is to try to make life fairer for all children, especially when it comes to their education. Equality of opportunity must be our rallying cry. For as Horace Mann, the first great educational reformer in America, the father of the Common School movement, said and I quote “education, beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of the condition of men.” In my judgment, since about 1980, as a nation we have been failing to recognize this fact and the results have been a gradual erosion of the basic fabric of our country. Poverty and hopelessness is now at an all-time high. No major City is immune from this tragic fact. Davenport is no exception. One out of every four kids in Davenport now lives in poverty and 68% of the children in our public schools are eligible for free or reduced lunches. Enrollment in our public schools has been declining, even though since 2000, the U.S. Census reports that Davenport’s population has grown by 3,798. The good news is, today, we have excellent relations with our friends and partners at Davenport Schools. The City Council is packed with alums, current and former teachers, and current and former Davenport school parents. And I believe that we all have come to realize, the basic truth is... as our schools go, so goes our city. We have striven to be Davenport School’s strongest partner, and I can’t say enough about the faith we have in President Johanson and Superintendent Tate. You both

have been strong-even heroic-advocates for positive change and I will-and I'm sure the City Council will continue to support you in your efforts. We've partnered on the District's first phase of its District of Distinction effort and we are ready to roll up our sleeves on Phase Two. This is my hometown. I was born here. I grew up here. I'll be laid to rest here. I don't know when that will be but I do know that I will not rest until we secure our shared vision for our community's future. The point of our shared service as elected officials is to leave a better place than we found, and create a better future for our children. That is what we are honor bound to strive for, and achieve, as City Council and School Board Members. As we discuss our challenges and opportunities tonight, let's remember this room have the elected local representatives of the Davenport community in it. There isn't some other group of local elected officials focused on our community, in some other room in some other building. There isn't some federal or state savior that can or will achieve our dreams for us. Working in partnership with our community stakeholders, clearing the path for our children to achieve their dreams is for us to do. I don't know exactly how we will do it, and neither me nor anyone else from the City has every answer. We are here to listen, collaborate and help. Working together, there is no challenge we cannot overcome and no dream for our future too ambitious to achieve."

Mr. Malin Craig reported on the how the City and the District have partnered on many projects included in Phase One of the District of Distinction including transportation, facilities, and the Creative Arts Academy. He summarized the City's three strategic goals and the sixteen strategies to address those goals and noted that six of the sixteen have a strong connection to education. He said that we can either create the future by our leadership or live in a future that others create.

Dr. Tate outlined the District's priority challenges which include the following: achievement gap, graduation rates, discipline and suspension, student achievement, effects of poverty and finances. The District is working very hard on discipline and reducing the suspensions. Tate noted that out of all the urban districts in Iowa, Davenport is second best in increasing graduation rates and he discussed the efforts being made by the Poverty Committee and how the board conducted a book study on reducing the effects of poverty. He emphasized the issue of finances, inequity and how the District has lost 142 million dollars since 1980 due to this inequity in funding. He reviewed the District of Distinction Phase One projects and summarized the successes of each of the programs. Next year will be the third year for North's Dual Graduation with a total of 197 students in grades 9 through 11. West High's Career Institute of Technology & Innovation will have 100 students in grades 9 through 10 participating in 6 academies or academic majors and next year will be the 2nd year for the Creative Arts Academy and there will be 108 students in grades 6 & 7 and approximately 30 students in grades 11 and 12 participating in the program. Tate reviewed the Dream and Vision of Part Two of the District of Distinction which include the following goals: A) Have highly competitive athletic programs; B) Continue to expand the Creative Arts Academy; C) Continue to develop the STEM Academy concept; D) Guarantee post-graduation education scholarships for students enrolled in the District; E) Develop a separately-housed reading academy. President Johanson opened the floor for discussion. City Council members voiced their support and commitment to working on this collaboration with the District. Mr. Ambrose stated he is willing to do whatever is necessary to help the District but also added

that we shouldn't be obsessing about poverty or define the District in that way. Board members and City Council members emphasized that the District has a good story to tell especially concerning the success of the Phase One of District of Distinction programs that have been implemented. Mr. Gordon said his son wants to attend West High School specifically for the STEM program and emphasized that the Davenport is recreating itself and we are doing great stuff so we have a perception problem. There was discussion about improving the athletics program and several Council members recalled how competitive the athletic programs were when they were in high school and many agreed this depends on good feeder programs. Director DeFauw noted that a competitive athletic program probably won't happen with open enrollment at the high schools because students are recruited.

Mr. Boom mentioned several projects that the District and the City have already worked together on such as transportation and how we can work together on issues such as closing the digital divide as well. Mr. Meeker said specifically that the City can help the District financially and that this is not an impossible task. He suggested forming a committee to work on accomplishing A through E of Dr. Tate's list of goals. He mentioned how the Creative Arts Academy had more applicants than they could accept and that the City has financial resources to help make these goals a reality. Mayor Gluba said he would like specific proposals on how to address, implement and prioritize these goals. He also mentioned how the City can assist with helping pay school fees in order to provide opportunities to low income students that otherwise would not be available to them. He would like to discuss how the City can help pay these student fees.

Board members emphasized how excited they are about the City and the District working together to achieve these goals. There was additional discussion about how the District needs to continue to improve perceptions and get the word out about our successes and great programs. All agreed that everyone in the room are the perception shapers but there needs to be more effort convincing relators who steer potential home buyers to other locations. Both board members and City Council members emphasized that education is the key to overcoming poverty and there was discussion about the board's recent work in reducing the effects of poverty with the poverty committee and the board book study.

Dr. Tate thanked everyone for their comments and said he looks forward to working together. Mr. Malin said there is no challenge that we cannot meet and Mayor Gluba stated they can put their hired help to work to on accomplishing these specific goals outlined by Dr. Tate and mentioned again how the City can help with paying student fees. Gluba asked for consensus from City Council members on their commitment to collaborating with the District on achieving these goals and they were in agreement. President Johanson thanked the Mayor and all the Council members for their comments and commitment to moving forward with this collaboration and looks forward to future meetings.

President Johanson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:50PM.

Mary Correthers, Recording Secretary