

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE CENTER
JIM HESTER BOARD ROOM
1606 BRADY STREET
DAVENPORT, IOWA 52803
TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2018
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

The Board of the Davenport Community School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met on Tuesday, January 2, 2018 for the Committee of the Whole 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 5:30PM. Present: Director's Johanson, DeSalvo, Hayes, Beck, Potts, Mayfield and Gosa.

1. District Land Parcels

Mr. Mike Maloney reviewed the status of currently vacant, unused or potential surplus real estate properties owned by the district. Recommended for disposal was .39 acres adjacent to the railroad tracks parallel with 4th and 5th streets between Howell and Wilkes; .08 acres on Harrison Street across from Central High School; and 07 acre at the corner of 12th alley between Harrison and Ripley. These are being recommended for disposal either because they are a nuisance property or no longer useful. Dr. Tate asked attorney, Dick Davidson, to explain the options used for disposal of property. He said these include either giving the property to the city, donating to Habitat for Humanity, listing the property with a real estate agent to sell, or there can be bidding of surplus property according to market value and ask the public to submit written bids. The properties recommended by staff to retain include 15.93 acres on the corner of 46th and Eastern Avenue, 3.86 acres adjacent to north end of the 15.93 acre parcel, 3 parcels on 36th street and also land on West Kimberly at Wisconsin adjacent to West High School Athletics. There was some discussion concerning these parcels of land and Mr. Maloney assured the board that any movement forward on disposal or future plans for property will be brought to the board for their approval. Director Mayfield requested information concerning the cost of the properties when they were acquired and Mr. Maloney said the board will receive all this information to review before board approval.

2. District Anti-Bullying Program

Dr. Tate said the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program has been implemented in the district since 2008 and that the district takes bullying very seriously but he did caution that everyone needs to be careful when they use the word bullying because someone being mean doesn't necessarily indicate the same thing as bullying. Ms. Ellen Reilly expressed this idea by emphasizing that "all bullying is bad behavior but not all bad behavior is bullying." She indicated that both behaviors need to be addressed but it is important to be able to differentiate between the two. The Olweus definition of bullying is "A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and they have difficulty defending themselves. Bullying is unwanted, usually repeated and aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power." The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is endorsed by the Iowa Department of Education and supports training efforts through AEA (Area Education Agency) trainers and a statewide network of trainers.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program implemented in the district is a long term, system-wide program for change involving program components at four levels and aligns with the district's PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) and is also a component of the Davenport Way which refers to the district wide multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) which integrates a continuum of system wide resources, strategies, structures, and practices. Mr. TJ Schneckloth, former principal and current Director of Federal Programs, also discussed the program. He provided real life examples of using one of the tools of the program called the "bullying circle" when he was a principal to create awareness and educate students and staff about preventing and responding to bullying behavior. They emphasized that when bullying behavior is observed by or reported to an adult at school, it is the responsibility of adults to intervene, stop the bullying, and ensure that appropriate consequences are put in place according to the Davenport School District's progressive discipline plan. Each situation is individually reviewed

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by building leadership to determine the level of discipline appropriate for the situation. If bullying involves any of the 17 identified protected classes by Iowa law, the incident is reported to the district's Equity Department who then determines if further investigation is appropriate. Board members asked questions concerning imbalance of power, the role of diversion coaches, updates on training and timelines for reporting incidents. Director Mayfield asked if the program has been successful since there has been an increase in expulsions. Ms. Reilly and Mr. Schneckloth stated that is a hard question to answer because there are many different factors involved in whether a student is expelled. Mayfield asked additional questions concerning effectiveness of the Boys Town Model and PBIS that is implemented in the district and mentioned the number of police calls to JB Young in the past and emphasized how important it is to make sure programs that are being implemented are effective. Mayfield asked if they considered five kids jumping on one kid a bullying situation and Ms. Reilly said she would consider that an assault and there was a brief discussion concerning how parents sometimes misinterpret what bullying is exactly. Director Potts also noted that when evaluating bullying behavior you have to consider the frequency, duration and intensity.

3. Athletics in the District

Dr. Tate began the discussion by commenting that this topic is being brought forward in response to a board request asking if athletics is a priority in the district. He added that this is something the board will have to determine but this does make a big difference in open enrollment but athletics is certainly important because this can be a motivating factor for many students. Does athletics have a priority? He said yes it does along with health, safety and security; academics; District of Distinction; open enrollment; the budget and other priorities so striking a balance is important. He said Davenport is a district with falling enrollment and next year budget cuts of 6 million are required so we can't have everything we want. This discussion will provide an opportunity for the board to provide feedback to administration. Dr. Tate mentioned that Mr. Brad Oates was the District Athletic Director when they formed an Athletic Competitiveness Committee in 2013 that looked at this issue and arrived at some solutions they determined would increase athletic competitiveness in the district. Dr. Tate reviewed the results of that report again with the board and emphasized the number one recommendation of this committee was establishing firm attendance boundaries for the high schools and at that time the board decided not to do that.

Mr. Rob Scott continued the discussion and mentioned several items discussed in meetings with the high school athletic directors. First, he pointed out that the wrestling program has been very successful this year after merging into a high school feeder. He pointed out that when he says "feeder" he doesn't mean the youth programs, he mean the junior high programs. For example there are now junior high wrestling teams at North, West, and Central. The feedback he has been getting from the coaches and parents says this approach has been very successful. He suggested that maybe this model could be duplicated for other sports, but this would involve an additional cost for busing. Another topic that has been discussed is how the high school athletic budgets have to support the middle school athletics and this impacts high school budgets. The student to coach ratio at the middle school level is also an issue and sometimes it can be as high as 26 kids per coach which reduces the amount of personal time a coach can give students, so the district could hire a second coach or cut middle school kids which is something the district is not doing right now. He mentioned the challenge of having enough gym space and having money in the budget to make upgrades to weight rooms and discussed ongoing meetings with Athletic Directors in trying to create a balance.

They have also been discussing middle school eligibility and exploring the idea of study tables so if a student isn't eligible to play they wouldn't miss a game but would have to attend a study table. Mr. Scott mentioned the option of students getting free attendance at home games which may increase attendance and enthusiasm as many of the students can't afford to attend games. He also noted that it has been an adjustment moving from a full-time District Athletic Director to a part-time person and how 12-14 hours per week goes very quickly so he is getting more involved. Director Gosa liked the idea using the wrestling model for other sports and thinks one solution to the coaches is using volunteer coaches. Director DeSalvo recommended forming another committee to review these ideas and emphasized how important it is to support the Booster Clubs and get their input and how some serious additional funding would be required for most of the ideas, but believes the weight rooms are critical. She really looks forward to the new North Athletic Facility. Director Mayfield was pleased to hear the wrestling program is successful and commented that many times the issue for students is not having transportation and agrees there is a shortage of gym space so something needs to be done to address that. President Johanson said he

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likes all the ideas discussed but most would cost a lot of money. Johanson also stated that if we provided transportation for athletic activities would we also provide it for other extracurricular activities? President Johanson challenged the board to think about how they want to prioritize athletics. Dr. Tate said the top three suggestions he hears all the time from the community is closing one of the high schools would make a big difference to athletics, having strict high school boundaries, as mentioned in the committee report, and hiring a full time Athletic Director again. Mr. Scott agreed that he hears from the community all the time the district needs a strict feeder system to improve athletics. Several board members expressed they do not like the idea of closing a high school and Director Mayfield emphasized that point. Dr. Tate clarified that he was not suggesting or advocating to close a high school he was only repeating the feedback he has received. Mayfield said he receives just the opposite type of feedback regarding closing a school and emphasized he hears from the community on the importance of not closing another school.

Mr. Brandon Krusey, head football coach at North High School, said he agrees that having strict boundaries for the high schools would make a huge difference to athletics and that is how the surrounding districts maintain an advantage over Davenport. Mayfield said he understands how this would make a difference to athletics but he doesn't believe that would be beneficial since each of the high schools offer different opportunities so that would limit student's choices. Director Potts said the idea of having three teams would only be effective in low participating sports and would caution using that approach for high participation sports. Dr. Tate emphasized the additional priorities of student achievement, achievement gap, graduation rates, violence, chronic absenteeism, opportunity gap and balancing the budget. President Johanson said there may be a hybrid approach that could be created and keeping an open mind is important and he likes the ideas of exploring boundaries, the feeder program, and a full time Athletic Director if the district can afford it.

ADJOURNMENT

By consensus President Johanson declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.

Mary Correthers, Board Secretary/Treasurer