

DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACHIEVEMENT SERVICE CENTER
JIM HESTER BOARD ROOM
1606 BRADY STREET
DAVENPORT, IOWA 52803
MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2018
SPECIAL 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 Monday, April 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, Hayes, Beck, Potts, and Mayfield. Gosa (participated by phone). DeSalvo was absent.

Johanson explained board policy 501.05 provides guidelines for the process for closing a school. The policy requires that six factors be considered: These factors are: 1) Quality of Education; 2) Safety of Students and Security; 3) Cost of Operation; 4) Cost of Necessary Capital Improvements; 5) Effect on Community; and 6) Miscellaneous Factors. Johanson asked board members to provide feedback on the 23 page document provided by Dr. Tate that outlines information for each of the evaluation factors under the five closure options. Hayes said her priority was safety of students, quality of education, costs of necessary capital improvements and effect on community. Potts said the three most important factors to him are the impact on curriculum and delivery since several of the options will result in lots of teacher movement. Another important factor is student welfare and effects on community. He said that whatever option is chosen it should be a long term solution or the longest term solution that is possible so the board doesn't have to do this all over again in three or four years.

Beck's main priority is the quality education and impact on curriculum which is difficult to separate from effect on community because in many of these schools part of the quality of education is based on the fact that the students don't have to travel far to their school. Cost of operations and capital improvements are a lower priority to Beck. Mayfield said quality of education and safety are most important. Neighborhood schools are very important and would like to hear more discussion about how to keep schools opens and alternatives to closing schools. Gosa said his main concern is direct effects to the classroom and students. Johanson said his main priorities are quality of education, safety and security and effect on community. Johanson read a portion of DeSalvo's statement below since she could not be in attendance at the meeting. "First, I would like to thank all of those from the community that came out to the two public forums... Thank you for the emails and calls. Your comments do matter and will help the board to make these very difficult decisions. Please also know that this is not a "done deal" and no final decisions have been made yet. Please review the timeline of this process outlined in Board policy 501.05. For those that have said that we are only looking at closing a school in our budget reduction plan, I invite you to read the Vision 2020 plan, there are many other cost saving measures that are occurring. Most in the general public do not understand the laws nor should they, however, if they chose to research it comments and suggestions are always welcome. I am a parent and have been through school budget reduction processes many times. I understand the passion and anger when it comes to changes that impact our children, our staff, our communities and our families. Being in this situation is beyond awful, having to make decisions that are literally life changing weighs on me and this board incredibly. There are no good answers yet but we will continue searching." Johanson said he would read the remaining portion of the statement at the appropriate time in the meeting.

Johanson noted the board has the authority to make decisions about what is discussed and board members can submit a board request for discussion and if there is any topic that board members feel are important and require discussion. Beck asked if a board request can be made outside of a regular meeting. Johanson said the board requests are intended to be public requests, but the chairman of the policy committee could consider bringing this up at a policy meeting. Mayfield asked if a member of the public can request information. Johanson said that FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) provides members of the public with the ability to request documents and there was a brief discussion concerning FOIA. Johanson said the next step is to take each option individually and board members discuss what information supports the premise that the option should not be the choice.

Option A: Description of the option: Implement prekindergarten or kindergarten through sixth grade districtwide. Move seventh and eighth grade students from Williams to Smart, Sudlow, Walcott and Wood. Adams K-6 students will move to William's facility. Adams facility will be repurposed or sold. Beck asked for clarification on how shifting to K-6 elementary model would affect finances if an attendance center was not closed. Rob Scott said the staffing ratio for 5th and 6th graders is the same, so there would be no additional cost but also not much savings. Gosa said he doesn't support closing a school and this applies to all five options. Hayes asked administration to explain the savings of 539 students vs. 702 students going to a building that can comfortably hold 959 students. Rob Scott the savings comes from the closure of Adams and Dr. Tate noted that when an attendance center is closed one portion of the savings is from staff. Hayes asked how it saves money if staff are not reduced. Tate responded that each year there is movement of principals, secretaries, teachers, custodians and other school staff that leave the district or retire. Beck asked what happens if there is not enough of movement or retirements of staff for the needed savings and Tate said we would have to fire people but this has not been necessary up to this point. Potts said the impact to curriculum causes the most disruption in terms of students moving and creates the need for new curriculum. Concerns he expressed with this option is that 6th graders may no longer have access to programs or certain instruction and the disruption of 500 of the William's and Wood's students to other schools. This would also involve more boundary changes. Potts said these comments are just as valid for the second option of the Monroe to Smart. He also questions increases in transportation costs. Mayfield asked if there would be additional costs for refurbishing the building since elementary students would be moved to a middle school building. Tate said that listed under the cost of necessary capital improvements for this option is \$6.15 million which would become available for re-purpose in the 10 year capital plan. Hayes asked if the funds to repurpose would be available prior to the sale of Adams and Tate said they would be available. Hayes asked if a hiring freeze is a possibility since we do not want to pink slip any employees or do not have enough retirements or movement. Tate said this could be considered. Rob Scott provided more specific details concerning the options of pre-K or K-6 saying the students would still get PE, Art, technology integration, music, band, orchestra and individual lessons. Bill Schneden mentioned there would probably be an increase in cost for curriculum materials.

Option B: Description of the option: Convert all elementary schools to a prekindergarten or kindergarten through 6th grade. All current intermediate schools will become seventh and eighth grade. Monroe school will be vacated and the current Smart building will contain grades Preschool through sixth grade. Seventh and eighth grade students will attend Williams, Sudlow and Walcott. Monroe school building will be repurposed or sold. Hayes said her main concern with this option is that successful programs such as School Within a School and AVID be transferred to the other schools. Beck expressed concerns about the effect on community and has heard much feedback from teachers and parents and prefers the least disruptions to students. Beck suggested an additional option of combining Smart and Monroe into a K-8 school since renovation must occur at Smart building to accommodate elementary students anyway. It is an advantage that the schools are so close to each other and walkability would remain. The Monroe building could still be sold. Beck emphasized she has heard a lot of feedback from staff, teachers, and

parents on how disruptive Option B would be and her proposal would retain the neighborhood. These are the families that need the most support and would be the most disrupted by moving to a new place. Beck explained the Smart building currently has room for 809 students. Monroe enrollment is 406 and Smart is 582. Total students is 988 students which is 179 students greater than capacity. Shifting to K-8 elementary would put Monroe in Smart building at 472, leaving room for 337 students. Adding several classrooms at middle school level would increase capacity by 50-75 students, bringing Smart building to 859-884 students. Dr. Tate said they would recalculate the personnel costs and consider this proposal. Potts said he likes Beck's proposal and maybe the same model could be implemented for Adams and Williams to make this a more long term solution. Mayfield said his main concern is retaining neighborhood schools and cautioned the board that closing so many school in the same area is eventually going to affect high school enrollment. Ralph relayed the information from DeSalvo's statement saying she was leaning toward one elementary closing and that she is not in favor of Option A or B.

Option C: Description of the option: Close Buffalo Elementary School and move students to Jackson, Blue Grass and Hayes. The Buffalo school building will be repurposed or sold. Board members expressed various concerns about this option not being viable. Hayes and Beck expressed concerns about the STEAM lab not being a simple task to relocate. Beck is leaning away from this option also due to the fact that this is a new building. Potts said it is the only school in the city and the travel time for students would be too long and doesn't like this option. Gosa, Johanson and Mayfield said they are not in favor of this option.

Option D: Description of the option: Close Washington Elementary School and move students to McKinley, Garfield and Madison. The Washington school building will be repurposed or sold. Hayes said she is concerned about displacing students from a Title school, but if it came to that she believes this building would probably sell quicker. Beck also expressed concerns about closing a Title school and this is an active part of the city being revitalized so she is leaning away from this option. Mayfield said he is always opposed to closing schools, but noted the only positive thing is that three elementary schools are within two or three miles of each other so students would not have to be bused.

Option E: Description of the option: Close Buchanan Elementary School and move students to Truman, Fillmore and Harrison. The Buchanan school building will be repurposed or sold. Hayes expressed concern about how traumatic this option would be for students. Potts said do not eliminate this from the list but expressed concerns about the necessary shift in boundaries this would require. Beck also expressed concern about the shift in boundaries and increasing travel times for students in a Title I school so she is leaning away from this option. Mayfield discussed previous proposals similar to this and the effect on students who would be going into an environment they are not used to which creates issues.

Additional comments or suggestions from the board included looking at changing the block vs. traditional schedule and Tate stated the current contract ends June 30, 2020 so this could be revisited at that time. Johanson read suggestions from DeSalvo stating the following: "I invite you to read the Vision 2020 plan, there are many other cost saving measures that are occurring and if the Board can think of other ways to save over a million dollars than we can avoid closing a school. Believe me this Board is trying to find other ways. I having been thinking a lot since the forum last week and below is something that I would like to have the Administration collect data for. Dr. Tate has always said no pink slips, he has been adamant about protecting his staff, I hope they realize how lucky they are for what he has fought for all of them. It has been made loud and clear from the many teachers that have shared their opinions with us that they do not want to close a school. Many have shared the wonderful things that occur in their schools that they are very proud of and should be.

After looking at some very rough numbers I would like to see data and savings if the District considered laying off staff. This would mean at all levels and positions. This must include administration. My very rough calculations were that if we reduced 32.5 FTE (full time equivalent) with an average salary of \$40,000 we would be at the \$1.3M number. This does not include loadings (costs that are not salary that are "paid" to every staff member i.e. health insurance etc.) If implemented this would be a sustainable savings. However, this is also a very difficult option to consider. I hate the thought of anyone losing their job and losing very good people. We must consider all possible savings and unfortunately I think we need to research this. I am asking that the Administration gather this data." Tate asked specifically what type of data is being requested and asked is this a suggestion to bring a list of names of employees to the board. Johanson said it was not and that he will talk about DeSalvo about the specifics of the data requested.

Potts emphasized the need to resolve the budget cuts by implementing long terms solutions and if this requires closing two schools then we should look at this. Gosa said he looks forward to receiving the information requested by DeSalvo. Mayfield emphasized how important it is to look at why the district is losing enrollment and how we can attract more students. Unless something is done then the district will continue to lose students. Tate said they have increased class sizes at the intermediate and high schools in the last couple of years. This next year we will be adding two students to K-1 and grades 2-3. If in school year 19-20 the board wants to add two students to every classroom in the district this would save \$1.4 million dollars and 25 teachers. Tate said he hasn't brought this up in the past because this is not something that keeps the impact away from the classroom. This is not something he would recommend but he wanted to make board aware. Board members thanked the administration and Dr. Tate for all the information and data.

ADJOURNMENT

President Johanson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:20PM.

Mary Correthers, Board Secretary/Treasurer