

Unapproved School Board Meeting Minutes

Dickinson Public Schools
Regular Meeting

March 10, 2014; 5:00 p.m.
Board Room, Central Office

The Dickinson Public School Board held a regular meeting on March 10, 2014, at the Central Administration Office. Board members present were: President Kris Fehr, Vice President Jason Hanson, Ms. Leslie Ross, Dr. Morton Krieg, and Mrs. Tanya Rude. Administrators present were: Superintendent Douglas Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent Vince Reep, Mr. Ron Dockter, Mr. Shawn Leiss, Mrs. Dorothy Martinson, Dr. Becky Pitkin, Mrs. Susan Cook, Mr. Jay Hepperle, Dr. Marcus Lewton, Mr. Henry Mack, and Ms. Sherry Libis. Others present were: Ms. Kandy Jazwa, Miss Heidi Jazwa, Mrs. Amanda DeMorrett, Mrs. Twila Petersen, and Ms. Katherine Grandstrand from the Dickinson Press.

Call to Order - Board President Fehr called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. She thanked the audience for the delay while she gathered information for public participation at the board meeting.

Public Participation – There were two requests for public participation; one from Miss Heidi Jazwa and another from Heidi's mother, Ms. Kandy Jazwa. Ms. Kandy Jazwa has relayed she does not wish to address the school board.

Miss Heidi Jazwa was invited to address the board. Miss Jazwa explained she is an eighth grade student at Hope Christian Academy applying for open enrollment into Dickinson Public Schools in the fall. Her resident school district is South Heart Public Schools. Miss Jazwa explained she had been harassed and bullied by other students for about two years when she attended South Heart Public Schools. Ms. Jazwa enrolled her daughter at Hope Christian Academy where Heidi made friends. These friends will be transferring to Dickinson High School in the fall when they will be freshmen. Miss Jazwa asked for consideration due to her particular circumstances.

Board President Fehr thanked Miss Jazwa for her public participation. President Fehr inquired if Miss Jazwa had checked into other schools. Miss Jazwa responded she had not because she has friends at Hope Christian that will be going to DHS in the fall. Ms. Ross commended Miss Jazwa on speaking before the board. President Fehr informed Ms. Jazwa that someone would be contacting her this week.

Additional Agenda Items/Removal of Items from the Consent Agenda – Mr. Hanson moved to add under item e. Personnel Reports of the consent agenda the new hire of Elizabeth Schreier, family and consumer science instructor at Hagen Junior High, effective for the 2014-2015 school year. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda - Ms. Ross moved to approve the agenda including the revised consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the February 10 regular board meeting; the bills for March 2014; the financial reports for March 2014; the pledged assets report for March 2014; the personnel reports including the new hire of Elizabeth Schreier, family and consumer science instructor at Hagen Junior High; the student/staff recognition; a tuition waiver request for three children of Suzannah Anderson, a tuition waiver request for children of Krista Berg from South Heart to Dickinson, a waiver request for a child of Christina Araiza from Richardton-Taylor to Dickinson, and a waiver request for a child of Brandi Esterman from Dickinson to Richardton-Taylor; the RACTC report; and to dissolve the open enrollments for two children of Nicole Forsness; as presented. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. President Fehr noted that Board Member Rude would be attending the meeting later as she was traveling back from Bismarck.

Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Sullivan reported on the following topics.

- a. **Kindergarten Fall Projections** – Superintendent Sullivan reported the fall kindergarten class looks to be the largest of record based on pre-enrollment numbers. Projections are the class will be about 308 students. President Fehr inquired how many sections of kindergarten this district has now. Assistant Superintendent Reep responded there are 13 sections now and two more will be added for the fall. Kindergarten classroom sizes should be under 20 students.
- b. **Upcoming Meetings** - There is a District-wide Technology meeting on Thursday, March 13 at 4:00 p.m. The last DLR Group community input forum is scheduled for Thursday, March 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Hagen Junior High.

Business Topics

AASA National Conference on Education – Superintendent Sullivan and Assistant Superintendent Reep recently attended the conference in Nashville and addressed the board. Available on the website under Supporting Documents are summary reports from the conference. Superintendent Sullivan and Assistant Superintendent Reep extended appreciation for the opportunity to attend the conference. Both briefly summarized some sessions they attended. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

Budget Committee Meeting Update – A DPS Budget Committee Meeting was held on March 5. Superintendent Sullivan addressed the board. He explained the topics discussed at the meeting were enrollment, enrollment projections for 2014-2015, state funding, and prioritizing district programs to enhance and improve the district. As of March 1 the student enrollment was 3,199 students. The enrollment projection for next fall is 3,436 students, this is an increase of 237 students. Students continue to enroll almost daily from various places in the country and the world. There will be teaching positions added for the next school year. Hagen will have three additional teachers and DHS will have two additional teachers. Assistant Superintendent Reep addressed the board explaining he recently received information from the Department of Public Instruction regarding the additional state funding. The state funding is subject to 60 mills at the local level. Mr. Reep did not have exact numbers available but the additional funds will help to support some of the growth issues that the district needs to address. Superintendent Sullivan explained a system used to establish a list for funding priorities. Dr. Sullivan and Mr. Reep recently met with administrators from West Fargo who provided them with a rubric to utilize. Cabinet members listed their priority items which were then tallied and brought forth to the Central Office administrators for them to prioritize using the rubric. The prioritization process, which took two full days, reviewed the list objectively. Some items that may remain as priorities are: additional special education teachers, resident teacher program, Hagen assistant principal, ELL paraprofessionals and coaches, and an elementary behavioral treatment program. Administrators asked for flexibility from the Budget Committee regarding ELL and preschool special education due to the influx of students into the district requiring these services. Ms. Ross commended the administrators in the utilization of the rubric. This process sought out the root of the concerns without adding emotions. President Fehr thanked Dr. Sullivan and Mr. Reep for going out of their way to find a process and create a better priority list. This agenda item was informational only. No action was requested.

Board member Rude joined the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Open Enrollment Applications (Possible Executive Session) – Open enrollment applications are completed by non-residency parents that wish their children to attend DPS. The application deadline for the next school year was March 1. The Board reviewed the list of applicants that are currently attending DPS. The administrative recommendation was to approve the applications for those students already attending DPS or that have siblings attending DPS. Action was requested. Ms. Ross moved to approve the requests for a child of Corey Reeder from Richardton-Taylor to Dickinson, two children of Mariah Kistler from New England to Dickinson, a child of Darcie Dennis from Belfield to Dickinson, a child of Lacey Olheiser from South Heart to Dickinson, three children of Suzannah Anderson from South Heart to Dickinson, two children of Mary Jane Olheiser from South Heart to Dickinson, two children of Krista Berg from South Heart to Dickinson, and a child of Christina Araiza from Richardton-Taylor to Dickinson; to be admitted to the Dickinson Public Schools under the open enrollment policy. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board then reviewed the list of applications for open enrollment which were received before the deadline; however, they were not currently attending DPS or did not have siblings attending DPS. The administrative recommendation was to disapprove those applications for open enrollment. Action was requested. President Fehr noted the board meeting would not be going into executive session. She also noted the board had heard information provided by Miss Jazwa. Mrs. Rude requested clarification, she understood the situation with kindergarten students and requested an explanation for the recommended disapproval of the potential DHS student application. Superintendent Sullivan responded the district is currently conducting a long range facility planning process noting that there are buildings that within the next two years could reach enrollment beyond capacity. The Central Office administrators discussed the consequences of allowing students to continue to open enroll. Vice president Hanson inquired if there would be exceptions for special cases. Mr. Reep responded with the Jazwa student there are two different instances; the student is currently attending a private school in Dickinson and has established friends there and also there are some clauses within the open enrollment policy regarding exceptions for instances of violence. Mr. Reep suggested the Board remove the Jazwa request and table it and disapprove the remaining three applications. President Fehr distributed to Board members a letter received from South Heart Principal Jung. Superintendent Sullivan concurred with Mr. Reep and noted he spent two hours with legal counsel last week Friday discussing the application. If the Board would table the decision there would need to be a special school board meeting as the Board must act on the application before April 1. Ms. Ross noted DPS is here to ensure students are in a safe environment. If the rule of law allows the district to make an exception for a special case then it should consider it since there will not be a second opportunity. A Board member suggested acting on the Jazwa application at a special board meeting the night of the board workshop. Dr. Krieg felt this would give enough time for the administration to review the rules and regulations. Ms. Ross concurred this would give the district the opportunity to do what it could. Mr. Hanson moved to disapprove the open enrollment requests for a child of Elizabeth Bernhardt from Richardton-Taylor to Dickinson, a child of Tina Praus from Richardton-Taylor to Dickinson, and the request for a child of Jennifer Wyman from South Heart to Dickinson to be admitted to the Dickinson Public Schools under the open enrollment policy. Mr. Hanson further moved to table the open enrollment application for a child of Ms. Kandy Jazwa from South Heart to Dickinson and to add that application to the agenda for the special school board meeting. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent's Evaluation – Board members had completed the superintendent's evaluation form. On March 6, Board President Fehr reviewed the evaluations with Superintendent Sullivan. Available on the website is a copy of the evaluation summary prepared by President Fehr compiling the evaluation responses received from board members. President Fehr distributed copies of the summary to the board members.

President Fehr explained that when Trinity High School became unusable approximately one week ago, by the time most of the community found out about it, Dickinson Public Schools and Dickinson Catholic Schools had already started holding meetings. This would turn out to be a series of meetings and daily telephone calls. Superintendent Sullivan, the Central Office administrators, the building administrators, and others pulled together as a team with amazing resources that were offered to the Dickinson Catholic Schools administration. This was an exceptional proactive response by a school district that would not have been possible without the teamwork under a great leader. President Fehr noted plans were set aside for a week to extend a helping hand to our neighbors and to offer space and resources to assist students to get back to school. President Fehr thanked the administrators, teachers, staff, students and Superintendent Sullivan for what they do best and that is helping children learn.

President Fehr noted that all five board members had completed the evaluation and the superintendent received a satisfactory in all categories from all five board members. The evaluation options are satisfactory or unsatisfactory. President Fehr read several comments from the summary and asked for additional comments from Board members. Mrs. Rude expressed how she thought it was remarkable how the administration pulled together in a short amount of time to help Trinity. If this tragedy had happened over the summer or next fall, DPS would not have been able to provide assistance. President Fehr added she had received numerous emails at her work thanking the principals who really make a difference. There had been a radio segment also commending the District. All Board members expressed the generous outpouring of emails and community members approaching them and thanking the District for the support to Trinity. Superintendent Sullivan thanked President Fehr, Board members and the audience for the kind words. He said the main focus has been on one word, students. After the Central Office administrators reviewed the situation and alternatives from the school district to provide assistance to the students they approached the building administrators. It immediately became clear that all four principals were on board, even the high school principal who happened to be out of town on Monday. They all knew they needed an answer before 11:00 a.m. on Monday because there was a noon meeting with the Dickinson Catholic Schools board. The response from the faculty when presentations were made at the four buildings was that we, as a district, needed to do something to assist Trinity; there had to be assistance from this school district to the students in the catholic school district. Superintendent Sullivan said he didn't have enough complimentary words to express his appreciation to the faculty, administrators, staff, students and the school board. It has been an affirmation of what we believe about the school district in terms of the quality of the people that work in the school district. President Fehr said this is what this school district does best. She thanked all for what they had done to assist. Action was requested. Mrs. Rude moved to acknowledge that the school board members did evaluate Superintendent Sullivan, as required by North Dakota Century Code, and that the evaluations were satisfactory. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. President Fehr noted the complete evaluations and summary would be placed in the superintendent's permanent file. The motion carried unanimously.

Schedule Board Workshop, March 20 – The DLR Group has requested an opportunity to meet with the school board on Thursday, March 20 at 5:00 p.m. This workshop is scheduled prior to the public input forum. Ms. Ross moved to schedule a Dickinson Public Schools board workshop on Thursday, March 20 at 5:00 p.m. at the Central Administration Office. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Early Resignation Incentive Notifications – Policy DKBC Early Resignation Notification was approved by the Board in 2007 and 2011. The deadline for submission of notifications for certified staff is March 1 and the deadline for submission for classified staff is April 1. The following staff have submitted their early resignation incentive applications before the deadline: Kathie Carlson, administrative assistant at Lincoln Elementary (31 years of service); Barbara Danks, guidance counselor at Heart River Elementary (7 years of service); Sharon Dockter, school resource administrative assistant at Hagen Junior High (12 years of service); JoAnn Gordon, learning disabilities instructor at Roosevelt Elementary (33 years of service); Carla Mortensen, special education instructor at Prairie Rose Elementary (17 years of service); Beth Selle, music specialist at Jefferson Elementary (24 years of service); and JoLyn Tessier, grade three instructor at Jefferson Elementary (19 years of service). These seven certified and classified staff members have an average of 20 years of service and a combined 143 years of service. Assistant Superintendent Reep has verified their eligibility. The administration will evaluate the vacancies these positions may or may not create and will post any openings at a later date. The administrative recommendation was to approve their early resignation incentives. Action was requested. Ms. Ross moved to approve the early resignation incentives for Barbara Danks, guidance counselor at Heart River Elementary; JoAnn Gordon, learning disabilities instructor at Roosevelt Elementary; Carla Mortensen, special education instructor at Prairie Rose Elementary; Beth Selle, music specialist at Jefferson Elementary; and JoLyn Tessier, grade three instructor at Jefferson Elementary all with an effective date of May 23, 2014. Ms. Ross also moved to approve the early resignation incentives for Sharon Dockter, school resource administrative assistant at Hagen Junior High with an effective date of May 22, 2014; and Kathie Carlson, administrative assistant at Lincoln Elementary with an effective date of June 15, 2014. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. On behalf of the school board, President Fehr extended a heart-felt thanks to the individuals for their dedication and time to Dickinson Public Schools and for the education provided to the students in the community. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Policy Additions or Revisions–Second Reading and Final Adoption – The North Dakota School Board Association (NDSBA) recommends the school district add policy FC-Student Safety and Supervision and revise policy FDA-Education of Home Schooled Students. Copies of the proposed policies are available on the school board website under Supporting Documents. The administrative recommendation was to add policy FC-Student Safety and Supervision and revise policy FDA-Education of Home Schooled Students. Action was requested. Ms. Ross moved to add policy FC-Student Safety and Supervision and revise policy FDA-Education of Home Schooled Students for second reading and final adoption, as presented. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Other – President Fehr informed the Board she recently attended a negotiations seminar. There were several speakers that provided a variety of situations and how they were handled by the school districts. Approximately 200 individuals attended the seminar.

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Adjournment – At 6:22 p.m. Mrs. Rude moved to adjourn. Dr. Krieg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Kris Fehr, Board President

Vince Reep, Business Manager

Twila Petersen, Secretary