



District-Wide PAC Meeting
Central Administration Offices, Board Room

Minutes

Tuesday, May 14, 2019; 12:00 p.m.

Members present: Mr. Keith Harris (Assistant Superintendent), Mrs. Kari Sayler (representing Jefferson Elementary PAC), Mrs. Nicole Wald (representing Berg Elementary PAC), Mrs. Alicia Saienga (representing Heart River Elementary PAC), Mrs. Jessica Cron (representing Prairie Rose Elementary PAC), Mrs. Julie Heidecker (representing Roosevelt Elementary PAC), Ms. Nikki Wolla (representing Lincoln Elementary), Mrs. Rachel Melvin (representing Dickinson Middle School), and Mrs. Laurie Strommen (representing Lincoln Elementary).

Call to Order – Assistant Superintendent Keith Harris called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

Bond Referendum – The committee members requested a discussion regarding the next step after the bond referendum failed. Some of the input from the committee members included the following.

- The increase in property taxes was a concern for retirees.
- The focus should have been to list the problems and then what was needed to fix the problems.
- Try to find out why people voted no.
- Thought the mailer was a great idea. It presented information that people may not have been aware.
- List ways a school may be funded and why the district can and cannot utilize those types of funding.
- Utilize another avenue for questions to be asked during an open forum. Such as FaceBook and someone making sure the FaceBook questions are also answered.
- Because the taxpayer was being asked to pay more money, show the details of the return on the increase in taxes.
- People not on social media were not aware there was a vote. They also may not have received the mailer.
- Booth at Walmart and grocery stores with information.
- Put kids on the radio spots. This also could receive negative criticism.
- Explain how Bismarck can build schools with less money. There are many more high schools in Bismarck and more taxpayers.
 - There is a CTE Center at BSC.
 - Legacy High does not include a CTE Center.
- When posting responses to questions on FaceBook, put it as another post so that people do not have to thread through to find the questions and answers.
 - So many questions were repeat questions.
- Who paid for the signs?
- How the no vote will affect the community. Large corporations will have families going to the communities that have a new high school, such as Watford City, instead of moving to Dickinson.
- More involvement with the local businesses.
 - Steffes Corporation did not have any information at their meetings.
- Be transparent. There was a lot of money being requested from an increase in property taxes from the community.

- People were stuck on the 51.67 listed on the ballot.
- Why so many gymnasiums? There is a misconception with the number of gymnasiums in the new high school.
- Some members of the community felt they did not have a voice.
- Dealing with money and emotions.

There was a discussion what will be done since the reasons for the referendum still exist. A solution still needs to be found. Mrs. Wald inquired what the District was going to do next year. Mr. Harris responded the high school will be all right next school year. One of the reasons for the bond referendum now was to start working on building the new high school. The negative impact will be in a couple of years. By the bond referendum not passing, in a couple of years, the high school will be in crisis mode.

Mr. Harris shared some ideas and tentative plans being discussed by administration. The high school may have school starting at 7:00 a.m. and be done at 2:00 with an alternate schedule starting later in the day and ending later.

Mr. Harris explained there could be the option of bringing in temporary, portable classrooms. This is not a good solution as there will be a lot of money used for a temporary solution. It costs money to bring in a modular and they are expensive. There is nothing that can be done with the modular when it is no longer utilized. Students will still have to go outside to get to the modular. This creates additional safety concerns.

A possible solution at the elementary level is to have half-day kindergarten. The one elementary school where there is room for an addition to be built is Heart River Elementary. Unfortunately, that is not one area of the city that is seeing growth. Building onto Heart River Elementary would also change the attendance zones.

There was a discussion regarding the Hagen building and having elementary classes located there. Mr. Harris said the administration has had that discussion. He added that the Hagen building is going to require some updating.

Ms. Wolla suggested not losing the momentum. Keep the educational pieces active and in the newspaper, including letters to the editor. There was discussion regarding bringing the same bond referendum back for a vote and a timeline and also making substantial changes to the bond referendum and a timeline.

Mrs. Cron thought there were two different types of no voters. There were some that were not going to vote yes no matter what. Another group was voting no because they did not want to spend the additional property tax money. The second group was against the cost of what they considered a state-of-the-art building and wanted something scaled back. Those individuals think because the referendum failed, they will now see the actual cost or scaled back version of building the new high school.

Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week – Mr. Harris thanked the committee for all their hard work for the thank you cards and gifts. The cards and gifts were well received and very appreciated.

Approval of the April 9, 2019, Meeting Minutes – The April 9 meeting minutes were distributed to the committee. Mrs. Strommen moved to approve the meeting minutes, as presented. Mrs. Cron seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Other – Mrs. Saienga asked if RASP employees receive training. She said that if a child has a behavioral matter during the summer months at RASP, the child could be sent home from RASP. Mr. Harris responded every child has a fundamental right to a free and appropriate education, regardless of need or disability. However, outside of the school day, the student no longer has the fundamental right. Programs outside of the school day do not have the same support resources as there is during the school day. There is no staff with the expertise necessary for students with certain disabilities and needs. Mrs. Melvin commended the RASP staff for their willingness to do their best to try to help a student with additional needs. She has seen this first hand.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m. Mr. Harris wished everyone a great summer.