



District-Wide PAC Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday, October 8, 2024; 12:00 p.m.

Professional Learning Lab

Committee members present were Superintendent Dr. Marcus Lewton, Business Manager Stephanie Hunter, Mrs. Jessica Sherman (representing Heart River Elementary PAC), Mrs. Laura Fetting (representing Lincoln Elementary PAC and Dickinson Middle School PAC), Mrs. Stephanie Rogers (representing Roosevelt Elementary PAC), Mrs. Melissa Wells (representing Jefferson Elementary PAC), and Mrs. Stacy Kilwein (representing Partners in Parenting).

Call to Order –Superintendent Dr. Lewton called the meeting to order at 12:07.

Purpose of Committee – Dr. Lewton explained the purpose of this committee was to communicate to the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) representatives so they could take information back to their building PAC. It was also an opportunity for the building PAC representatives to share information from their building PAC with the superintendent.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda Items – Mrs. Sherman requested the topic of spirit wear be added for discussion.

Approval of the June 19, 2024, Meeting Minutes – The minutes from the June meeting had been emailed to the committee members and were available at the meeting. Mrs. Sherman moved to approve the June 19, 2024, meeting minutes. Mrs. Kilwein seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken on the motion. The motion carried.

Business Topics

October 7, 2024, School Board Meeting Agenda – Superintendent Dr. Lewton summarized the agenda from last night's Board meeting. Under his superintendent's report, Dr. Lewton explained the District fifth graders were recently at a career fair. There was an open house at the Southwest Area Career and Technical Education Academy (SWCTE) last week. Governor Burgum and Mayor Decker were presenters at the open house. The SWCTE is a State-of-the-Art Center. There is none other like it in North Dakota. Recently, the District seventh and eighth graders were invited to Manufacturing Day.

Dr. Lewton explained the Board reviewed data from third-grade reading and eighth-grade mathematics assessments. The data showed the fourth and fifth graders were progressing in oral fluency. There could be some improvements in fifth-grade mathematics.

The projects completed over the summer were reviewed. Some funds will carry over to 2025-2026 for Heart River Elementary's unfinished projects. Heart River is proposed to have roofing, siding, soffit, and fascia replacement during the summer of 2025.

A copy of the student inward and outward migration mobility reports were distributed. These reports track from the past 12 months where individuals enrolling into the District were moving from and where those unenrolling were moving to. Dr. Lewton noted there were 34 early graduates and 29 dropouts. He said the graduation rate has decreased. Sometimes students come into the District and have low credits which makes it harder for them to graduate. Student attendance is a concern of the District. Dr. Lewton identified chronic absenteeism as 10 percent absent; essentially a student was absent one out of 10 days. He listed the resources available for the students and families.

Committee members were provided with snapshots of the remodeling work being done at Roosevelt, Lincoln, and Heart River elementary schools.

Committee members were provided with schematic drawings and site maps of the rebuild at Dickinson High School. Dr. Lewton summarized the information shared by ICON Architectural Group at last night's Board meeting. Some of the areas improved with the high school rebuild include less traffic congestion with a new drop off and pick up area, a new bus loop, guests enter into the office area by the principal's office, a larger commons area with natural lighting, easier community access to the auditorium and gymnasiums, restrooms for guests attending events, classrooms with southern exposure and natural lighting, a new wing with approximately 35 new classrooms/resource rooms, and additional improvements.

Mrs. Wells inquired if the new attendance zones for Berg Elementary and Jefferson Elementary have assisted with the enrollment distribution at those schools. Dr. Lewton responded the enrollment at Berg Elementary was currently 231 students and Jefferson Elementary was 371 students. Without the redistricting, Jefferson could have potentially had 400 students.

Dr. Lewton noted the District has 295 English Learners (EL) students that are serviced by six teachers. There were 160 English Learners last year. The District is looking for additional EL teachers.

Other – Mrs. Sherman inquired regarding the choices for local companies to create spirit wear for the schools. Committee members indicated their schools have worked with Logo Magic and Custom Design.

Future Meeting Dates – The District-Wide PAC Meetings typically are scheduled the day after the school board meetings. The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 13 at noon at the Professional Learning Lab.

Rumors – Mrs. Wells inquired regarding conversations on social media concerning discipline around threats. Dr. Lewton responded that every threat is taken seriously. A threat assessment team will go through the assessment utilizing an evidence-based Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) developed by the University of Virginia researchers. The team has been trained and receive refresher training from CSTAG through the University of Virginia.

Dr. Lewton noted the threat from three weeks ago was determined from the threat assessment team testing that it was not a threat. It was determined to be transient, meaning it was a reaction in the heat of a moment.

Superintendent Lewton reported there could be multiple consequences for students when a threat is determined. These could include discipline, counseling, removal from school, contacting law enforcement, and other areas covered by Century Code. The communication regarding the threat assessment is only with the individuals directly affected. He is required to protect the individual rights of the student. He is bound by federal law not to disclose if any disciplinary action was taken regarding an alleged incident and/or threat. Dr. Lewton explained in the next few months, the administrators will be reviewing the communication and policies regarding a threat assessment.

Mrs. Wells referenced communication at Roosevelt Elementary regarding poor air quality in the surrounding communities due to smoke from fires and students not allowed to go outside and how that was communicated. She then added another incident with an active threat in the Roosevelt area. Dr. Lewton responded when the police department communicated there was an active threat in the Roosevelt Elementary area, it was communicated with all parents. There was an altered release of the Roosevelt students in a designated area. Mrs. Rogers commended Roosevelt Principal Patterson, the Roosevelt teachers and staff, and School Resource Officer Blain for doing an amazing job during the incident. She was out of town when it happened.

Dr. Lewton said there are threat assessments done all the time because each threat is taken seriously. He could not communicate with the public every time a threat is assessed. Mrs. Kilwein commended Superintendent Lewton for having a balance with the threat assessments.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.