

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BOARD MEETING** **REVISED MINUTES: OCTOBER 7, 2002**

The Board of Directors of the Davenport Community School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met as a Committee of the Whole on October 7, 2002, pursuant to law and the rules of said Board. The meeting was held at the Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street, in the Board Room. President Susan Low called the committee meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

On roll call the following board members were present: President Susan Low; Directors Richard Clewell, Alan Guard, Steve Hunter, Anne Losasso, and Dan Portes. Absent: President Jim Hester. Student board members present were Aaron Briggs (North High), Amanda Strittmater and Kim Koranda (West High).

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

#### **OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Dr. Blanche said the desegregation information was not completed and they were still looking at open enrollment out and in figures. We had more open enrollment in but the numbers going out are still greater. The data will be provided to board members, and they are still pulling together data from the surveys sent to parents who have children open enrolling to other districts. Dr. Blanche reviewed the visit we had from Jeske and Anderson in July when they shared experiences dealing with open enrollment issues. The question at this time was whether the Board wanted the administration to look into this further and what does this mean to our District? Should we explain how open enrollment has a negative effect on us and share the details further on the effects of open enrollment? Director Hunter felt there was information from the July meeting that should be shared with new board members, which was very helpful. If we are going to study this matter, there is a great deal of data the Board needs. Director Hunter wanted to know what neighborhoods students were leaving who are open enrolling out to see if there were any patterns by schools. We need to look at whether there is a obligation to have a desegregation plan, and we need to look at the total picture with options.

President Low talked about open enrollment impacts on our budget. If there was a way to keep over \$1 million in our District, we need to look at options that address this. She appreciated the article in the *Quad City Times* on open enrollment, but we need to grow our numbers. We need to expand to younger families and keep them in our schools. Director Hunter said the Board would need to look at the issue as an equity item, not financial. We have quality programs to access and initiatives we will continue, but we have to understand what we are dealing with when people leave our schools. President Low talked about a balance in the open enrollment policy and making sure we understand the reasons why children are leaving and what impacts their decisions. Director Portes was not familiar with all of the issues. He felt cautious about this because there could be community fallout. One of the major responsibilities of the Board was balancing the budget, but we don't want to win the battle and loose the war. When there are distractions and counter lawsuits, then those things become the business of the Board; we won't be able to focus on the academic achievement of students. We need to look at this from all angles and Director Portes encouraged the administration to bring more information before the Board to discuss.

Director Guard asked to be on the record that he opposed this matter. He said we should not be spending our valuable time on this issue. He felt if we deny people the opportunity to open enroll out of our District, then they will move, home school, or enroll in private schools instead. If people look at past history, desegregation orders and busing caused problems and cost people money. Director Guard didn't want a race-based policy and didn't believe such a policy would work but it would only cause a distraction. **He made the comment we need to be promoting positive things going on in the District and make full use of our marketing plan.** Director Guard said we want to create something people want in our District so they will stay, or they will continue to go to Bettendorf or North Scott. Director Portes said he understood Director Guard's position on this mater, but he felt it was the Board's responsibility to fully

investigate issues. At this point, the Board didn't have all the data available to discuss options. Director Guard responded that the individuals who reported from Des Moines didn't share all their data or provide the numbers for people who had moved, home schooled, or enrolled in private schools because of their policy. He felt the Board had received incomplete data and they were leading us into an area that we shouldn't go. President Low thought that at least three board members felt it was their responsibility to learn more about the matter. She encouraged people to stay open and listen to data that can be produced before making a decision that will be based on information everyone receives. It will be up to the Board to make the final decision but we must investigate it fully. We may decide the most positive thing is to emphasize our programs and work with our marketing plan, but it is the Board's duty to look at the whole picture. Director Hunter said he was cautious because the Board didn't have a picture showing house by house where people are open enrolling out. That might be instructive or maybe people are leaving because of access, day care, or transportation issues. Director Portes talked about the number of people leaving who never even attended our schools and he wondered what was going on. Why would someone buy a home in our area but plan to enroll in another district?

Director Hunter said there were a number of issues that needed to be addressed, and we need to understand the expectations of our population. What are our existing efforts or programs and what does the competition offer in their neighborhood schools? We need to understand what the students want from our schools. Director Losasso stated she also was guarded about the issues and hasn't had an opportunity to explore the open enrollment materials. She would like more information to review about open enrollment and desegregation before discussing this. We need to keep an open mind and we need research to help us do our jobs. Director Clewell felt the Board would be remiss not to look at this, but they should take a focused approach. Open enrollment is an issue for us and we can focus on the marketing plan and other information the administration provides telling us what areas are the most children leaving from. It will be worth the time and effort to at least discuss the matters. President Low concluded the Board would like to have as much information to review as possible on these topics.

## FACILITIES UPDATE

Bill Good updated the Board on construction projects, plans, and facility issues in the buildings. The Powerpoint presentation gave an overview on several matters: (1) Buchanan sidewalk and temporary easement; (2) Local Option Sales & Services Tax update on projects; (3) Upcoming events; and (4) Upcoming bids on projects. Mr. Good explained the Buchanan sidewalk issue and safety concerns for students walking from the Mobile Home Park to Buchanan. The temporary walk would be installed on the west side of Fairmont. The District and City of Davenport should share costs and obtain a temporary easement from the property owners. The Board saw pictures of this proposal for reference. Mr. Good showed pictures of projects being completed at Fillmore (main entrance); Central High (music area, sports lobby, gym, old driver education rooms, window/door replacement); West High Phase II (the softball/baseball complex, locker rooms, new auxiliary gym, and main entrance to the YMCA facility). They saw renovations being made at Smart and Sudlow on the new gyms, science rooms, and improvements in media centers. There were issues discussed about the North YMCA concerning some moisture tests in the fitness room that are holding up completion. Mr. Good said they were looking at alternative flooring with subcontractors. There were photos of the North/YMCA fitness room, main lobby area, and pool. There are upcoming events that include a groundbreaking at Monroe and five ribbon cuttings for North/YMCA (TBA); Wood (October 15 @ 11:30); Fillmore (November 5 at noon); Sudlow (November 11 at 12:30) and Smart (November 14 at 11:00). On October 14 there will be two bids coming for approval for ADA improvements at Buchanan and Sudlow parking lot paving. Board members asked questions for clarification during the presentation, which were answered by Mr. Good. Director Portes wondered about the possibility of a shuttle or car pooling for the students from the mobile home park to Buchanan School. They talked about safety, asphalt sidewalks, streets, and snow removal. There was a question about asbestos removal, and Mr. Good assured the Board we have appropriate and safe methods of dealing with this in our schools. The air is monitored and students are safe. There were some questions about the Brady Street Stadium sign and the exclusive rights of Coke in an agreement we have with them at the stadium. Mr. Good said this was not new to the District, and we have other agreements including Pepsi products in our schools. Director Clewell had concerns about advertising logos on school busses or Channel 1 television, which are issues he would like to stay on top of in the future.

## FINANCIALS

Marsha Tangen apologized for the delay in distribution of the August 31 report, but there was additional information received from the auditors on Friday about the June 30 fund balance that they wanted to include, so they held up the report until today. Mrs. Tangen talked about the general fund balance shown as a deficit of \$3,209,842 at the beginning of the fiscal year. This was very close to the projection made and was \$31,000 better than anticipated. With a \$120 million budget, this was considered good. Claudia Wood took time to carefully review the notes to the financial statements and helped to explain areas especially to the new board members. She went over the general fund cash balance, grants receivables, grant deferred revenues, accounts payable and the accrual estimates. There was information about the unreserved, undesignated fund balance, and the total fund balance. She reviewed the statement of revenue and expenditures highlighting the modified accrual basis used, contractual salaries, and purchased services. She also explained the comparative statement of revenue and expenditures that show both the revenues and expenditures are relatively close to budget. There was a complete outline of the investment portfolio that was reviewed and an explanation of the restrictions we have to follow. The Board had an opportunity for questions concerning the areas of self-insurance funding, sweep and interest accounts, and payments to Scott College for students enrolled in their programs. **Director Guard asked about the interest listed on page 3 and why the figure was only at 0.46% of the budget when we were already at 10% in the previous year? Since we had received such a small percentage, Director Guard wanted to make sure the line item was monitored closely.** Mrs. Wood spoke about the cash flow during the months of July and August, but this year the amount was down compared with last year. This might have to do with bond purchases and expenses. Director Guard asked about the purchased services and would like a list of programs approved to find out what grants were paying for these services during the summer in the amount of \$1.5 million.

## FINANCIALS: SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mrs. Tangen asked for time to explain the requests that should be made by the first of November to the School Budget Review Committee for three areas this year: (1) On-time funding, (2) Open Enrollment, and (3) ESL Programs. The Board learned about the opportunities available for our District to request additional spending authority and how the School Budget Review Committee worked. The recommendations will come to the Board on October 14 and will be made in three separate action items. Dr. Blanche said we are close to expending our spending authority and this will help especially in case of any emergency we might have this year for expenditures.

## BOARD POLICIES

President Low went over additional revisions being made in Board Policy 103.02 -- Complaints Against School Personnel or Contracted Service Provider. Director Clewell said the Board needed to be included in the process so we kept in Step 3 for appeals. We also added a sentence in the third paragraph: "The Board shall not engage in discussion of complaints if the above chain of appeal has not been followed." The recommendation for approval will come to the Board for October 14.

## OTHER ITEMS

Announcements: There were reminders about some upcoming dates on the calendar. West High will host their annual Haunted Hunger lunch at the Sports Center downtown on October 29 from 11:30 to 1:00 PM for \$8. This is run by the student senate at West High and Suzie Stark can be contacted about details. There are two events sponsored by United Neighbors in October, and if anyone is interested, they should contact United Neighbors about the event on October 18 at Jumer's from 6 to 9 PM, or the luncheon being planned.

John Bernatz sent a reminder about the annual band spectacular featuring over 800 band students from all of Davenport at the intermediate and high schools this Tuesday, October 8 at 7:00pm at Brady Street Stadium. The annual intermediate string festival featuring over 250 string students from Smart, Sudlow, Walcott, Williams, Wood and Young will present their concert on Saturday, October 12 at 7:00 PM at West High School. Tony Guzman, the conductor of the Luther College Orchestra, will be the guest conductor. Director Portes left the meeting at 6:58 PM due to a prior commitment.

#### Urban Education Network

Director Clewell talked about the district legislative issues that need to be reviewed for the Urban Education Network. Board members are supposed to rank the issues from 1 to 10 by answering the following question, "What are the real and substantive issues you are facing as a board member?" The items can be discussed further at the next board meeting on October 14 and have approval of the list at the October 28 meeting.

#### Other Items

Director Clewell asked if the Committee of the Whole meetings might be held at the various school buildings in the District so more people might attend the meetings and board members would have an opportunity to visit the buildings like they did last year? President Low said the agenda committee would discuss this idea further.

Director Guard said there were rumors about closing more schools and he asked if there were any high level discussions about closing other buildings at the end of this year? Dr. Blanche responded "no," and the Local School Improvement Committee will be looking at boundaries and facilities and reporting back to the Board in January. Director Guard talked about having more people given the opportunity to have input on this committee and suggested the information be put on the web. He felt that only 34 people were showing up at these meetings, and more people should be involved in the process. **He suggested the lists for consideration created at the meetings should be put on the web site in such a form as to allow people not sitting on the committee an opportunity to do some type of multi-voting or prioritizing. People should also be informed of the upcoming LSIAC meetings that are to be held at buildings where they have children attending. Dr. Blanche commented about the difficulties to get people to attend meetings.**

#### ADJOURNMENT

President Low adjourned the meeting at 7:05 PM.

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Linda M. Smith, Board Secretary