

SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

Monday, November 27, 2017 5:45 PM

Delano Public Schools

Independent School District #879, Delano Minnesota

1. Call to order

A. Record of members present or absent

Members Present: A. Johnson, C. Milano, L. Seguin, A. Briesemeister, R. Depa, C. Black and M. Larson

Members Absent: None

2. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Upon motion by L. Seguin, seconded by A. Briesemeister, the Board of Education approved the meeting agenda after adding item 14B, approval of the Facility Use Procedures Manual. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Work Session

Delano Middle School Principal Barry Voight presented information about the Long Lake Conservation Center field trip, scheduled for mid-May. Delano fifth-graders have made the overnight trip annually for many years, and board action is required to approve the trip, per policy. B. Voight said this would be an unusual year because a large class means the group will be at capacity for what LLCC can provide. That may mean that fewer chaperones can accompany the students. B. Voight said logistics have been reviewed with staff, and a behavior contract will be used to emphasize that the trip is a privilege. Students do many fun activities at the camp, including bog walks, orienteering, studying animals, and even kitchen patrol, which students take pride in. B. Voight said staff members at the facility have activities scheduled from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., and that the activities address a number of academic items. A. Johnson asked if the district has ever considered going to a different camp for this trip. B. Voight said no, because LLCC makes every accommodation needed for Delano, and there is a longstanding relationship there. B. Voight added that fifth-grade staff members coordinate plans for the trip. The cost to attend the trip has remained relatively flat, and is about \$135 this year. B. Voight said efforts are made to ensure the trip is feasible for all students, including a candy bar fundraiser. He added that last year several families paid extra to help cover the cost for other families who may have struggled with the expense. B. Voight said he was confident that no students had missed the trip because of cost since he has been principal. C. Milano asked if the school identifies students on the free and reduced lunch program to make sure they are covered. B. Voight said the fundraising opportunity is available to every student, and those who might need assistance are identified. It is made clear that any student needing assistance can come to the office. L. Seguin said she was glad to hear the class would be able to go since size had been a concern.

L. Seguin provided a Project Oversight Committee update. She said the new high school entrance is open and preparations were being made to break ground on the diving well. Contractors will wait until spring to fully excavate the diving well for safety reasons, but will do soil boring before then so any potential problems can be identified. Waiting until spring will not adversely impact the project schedule. L. Seguin said the project was the last major component before a decision could be made on what type of flooring will be used in the high school commons. Superintendent M. Schoen added that helical piers will be installed before spring and preliminary excavations would be made for informational purposes. M. Schoen added that the public open house for the high school entrance and other project areas went well. He said he gave about six tours, and the largest group included about 30

people. He estimated total turnout at 150 to 200. Visitors asked good questions, he said, and were very positive in the feedback they provided. Storage arrangements for the cafeteria tables were discussed. M. Schoen said the overall project is still on target budget-wise, and that contingency dollars are still available if issues arise. He said the intermediate school is mostly buttoned up for winter, and he did not anticipate any major problems there.

Business Manager Mary Reeder said that every year the district needs to pass a resolution designating polling places. Board elections will be held in the fall of 2018. M. Reeder said all of the regular polling places have been designated for 2018; however, the middle school can't be a polling place in an odd-year election if it is designated in 2018. In addition, all precincts will have to designate the middle school as a polling place. M. Schoen said it is not cheap to open and staff 10 polling places, and the district would have to pay to run them in off-year elections. The Legislature has put the new requirements in place to discourage off-year elections. The matter will come back to the board in December as a resolution.

Board members discussed two draft documents outlining protocol for board members during meetings and outside of meetings. The consensus of the group was to form a temporary subcommittee to work on condensing the guidelines into a single document that would be easier to remember. The matter will be discussed again after the subcommittee has an opportunity to meet and do its work. Board members intended to bring a revised document to the work session meeting in December, then look at approving it during the organizational meeting in January. R. Depa, C. Milano and L. Seguin volunteered to be a part of the committee, with A. Johnson providing additional input if needed. A committee meeting was set for Thursday, Nov. 30.

Board members discussed the school district's representation on the Spirit of Community Commission, organized by the city of Delano. Board members felt it would be best to have a representative from the district who is involved with the day-to-day operations of the schools, but said they would be willing to have one of them serve on the commission as one of the at-large members. A. Briesemeister and A. Johnson agreed to explore whether or not they could share one of the positions on the commission.

Board members briefly discussed having a social event after the December school board meeting. Members agreed to hold a social, which would be open to the school cabinet of administrators as well. A location was not determined, but a few area establishments would be contacted to see if they might be available to host.

Board members also discussed the Facility Use Procedures Manual that had been presented by Chris Runke and Kim Finn of Community Education at a previous meeting. A task force will be formed from advisory council members, the activities administrator and Community Education staff to map out the matter in detail before warm weather returns next spring. The task force will have representation from the board to the user level. After determining best practices, the task force will make a recommendation on the best course of action. The board will be able to make adjustments before taking final action. A. Briesemeister said that so many questions arose when the manual was presented to the Community Ed. council that it became apparent more study was needed. C. Milano asked if approval of the manual, scheduled for the main board meeting the same evening, could be tabled until the task force had completed its work. A. Johnson said it could not because groups are currently using the facilities and the manual was needed to provide direction. Clarification was given that the manual scheduled for approval that evening was a revision of an existing document and was an improvement. C. Milano asked if the manual included higher fees, and M. Schoen said the revised fees were already approved in August. A. Johnson said the revised manual provides enough structure to conduct business over the winter, and while some gray areas might remain she was confident the staff could navigate those waters in the coming months.

Upon motion by R. Depa, seconded by C. Milano, the Board of Education called the meeting to recess at

6:45 p.m. Motion passed 7-0.

Board Chair A. Johnson called the meeting out of recess and to order at 7 p.m.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Program Review - BerganKDV Auditor's Report & World's Best Workforce Report - Director of Teaching & Learning

Auditor Janel Bitzan of BerganKDV presented the district's audit report. Bitzan opened the presentation by saying the district was issued an unmodified opinion, the best it could receive, and added that was the same opinion it had received in the past few years as well. One finding, common to school districts of Delano's size, was lack of segregation of accounting duties. She added that it was a mid-level finding for Delano rather than a high-level finding as in the cast of many districts, because the Delano does have some compensating controls in place. J. Bitzan said Average Daily Membership numbers have been increasing, and that there was a 3.4-percent increase for 2017. She also noted an overall increase in the pupil units served in 2017, and said there has continued to be a gain in open enrollment. Increased enrollment means increased revenue. J. Bitzan said that 2017 was the first year that the voter-approved referendum dollars started coming in, and state revenues increased as well. She noted that property taxes, state aid and other sources were below the state average in revenue per average daily membership, and also were consistently below districts of similar size. J. Bitzan said the general fund expenditures reflect consistent budgeting and spending from 2016 to 2017 and that money allocated to classrooms was proportionately higher than in typical districts. J. Bitzan noted that revenues were up more than expected due in part to increased enrollment, and that the fund balance has increased four out of the last five years. She said that as the district enrollment grows, a higher fund balance is needed and planners should keep this in mind when considering future growth. J. Bitzan said the food service fund has grown, but some community service funds, including ECFE, are in or are nearing deficits. A. Johnson thanked the auditor and M. Reeder for their diligence and said there were no surprises in terms of the deficiencies noted.

Director of Teacher and Learning Joe Vieau presented his World's Best Workforce report for 2016-17. Goals were set in five areas. First, the kindergarten readiness goal was met. This involved lowering the percentage of students needing remedial services in kindergarten from 16.6 percent in 2016 to 13.6 percent in 2017. Second, the goal for third-grade literacy was not met, which involved increasing the MCA Reading test proficiency from 79.9 percent in 2016 to 80.9 percent in 2017. The actual proficiency rate was 78.5. Third, a goal to close the achievement gap at each school was not met. Fourth, career and college readiness goals were met at the middle school and the high school. In the middle school, the percentage of students meeting standards on the MCA Reading test rose from 79.8 percent in the spring of 2017 to 80.4 in 2017, and in the high school 100 percent of students on campus participated in a Career Interest Inventory. The fifth and final goal was that 100 percent of high school seniors who attend classes on campus would graduate. This goal was not met, as 201 out of 204 students graduated. J. Vieau noted that while only two of the five goals were met, some of the objectives were fairly aggressive.

J. Vieau continued his presentation with information on other assessments. He noted that MCA proficiency in math was 82.2 percent compared to 59.9 percent statewide, that proficiency was 78.7 percent in MCA Reading compared to 61.1 percent statewide, and that Delano had 68.2 percent proficiency on the MCA Science test compared to 55 percent statewide. More specific information on scores from each building was also presented, as well as comparisons to other districts. J. Vieau also reported that 79 percent of Delano students earned passing grades of 3 or higher on AP exams. Implications of the Every Student Succeeds Act were also discussed. J. Vieau said MCA testing will continue, but use of the data is changing. There were no MMR and FR calculations this year. Accountability indicators used under ESSA include academic achievement, academic progress, graduation rates, progress toward English language proficiency and school quality/student success.

C. Black asked why opt-out students are included in the statistics, and R. Depa asked how many are opting. J. Vieau explained that there are about nine or 10 students who opt out at the high school, and fewer at the lower levels. M. Schoen said that if a district educates a student for their whole career and that student does not graduate, that should go against the district's graduation rate. But if a student decides to drop out with a parent's permission, that still gets marked against a school's graduation rate even though the school does not control that decision. C. Black said if a certain measure grades a school district on a matter that is completely outside its control, that is not a good measurement to use. J. Vieau said the numbers are low, but any negative impact is one that the district does not want.

J. Vieau then presented goals established by ESSA at the state level, as well as the Delano district's goals for World's Best Workforce in 2017-18. Delano has five WBWF goals for that time period. The first is that preschool students meeting proficiency on the kindergarten entry profile will increase from 71.8 percent in 2017 to 73.8 percent in 2018. The second is that the elementary school will increase reading proficiency on the MCA from 78.5 percent in 2017 to 79.7 percent in 2018. The third goal is that the district will decrease the proficiency achievement gap between SPED and Non-SPED students on the Reading MCA from 35.2 in 2017 to 30 in 2018. The fourth is that the district will increase the percent of students achieving CCR on the Reading MCA from 59.8 percent in 2017 to 61 percent in 2018. The fifth and final goal is that 100 percent of high school seniors who are enrolled full time on the Delano Public Schools will graduate. C. Black asked how the goals are determined. J. Vieau said the district looks at data and information, then looks at how it can improve.

6. Consent Agenda

Upon motion by M. Larson, seconded by A. Briesemeister, the Board of Education approved the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 7-0.

A. School Board Minutes

1. Oct. 23, 2017
2. Nov. 13, 2017

B. Financial Affairs

1. Current Budget Status with Year-to-Date Adjustments
2. Investment Transactions
3. Construction Bond Investment Transactions
4. Wire Transfers
5. Minnesota Liquid Asset Fund
6. Cash Report
7. Revenue Report by Fund
8. Expense Report by Fund
9. Expense Report by Program
10. Expense Report by Object
11. List of Bills Presented for Payment

7. Resolution for Acceptance of Gifts

Upon motion by R. Depa, seconded by A. Briesemeister, the Board of Education approved the Resolution for Acceptance of Gifts. Motion passed 7-0.

8. Personnel Matters:

Upon motion by L. Seguin, seconded by M. Larson, the Board of Education approved the consent portion of the Personnel Matters. Motion passed 7-0.

9. Public Comment: School patrons are given the opportunity to address the school board regarding items that are not on the agenda. All patrons will be asked to state their name and address for the record. No comments.

10. Administrative Reports

A. Superintendent

M. Schoen reported that the open house for the new high school entrance held on Nov. 20 was a great success, with 150-200 people visiting the school. Included among the visitors were a former superintendent, a former high school principal, and the board chair who was in office during the last building project. M. Schoen thanked members of the high school administration who gave tours, and said the responses he received during the evening were very positive. He said it was nice to give people a look at the inside of the entrance, and that the new commons is an impressive space. He also thanked ICS Consulting and Wold for planning services. A second matter M. Schoen addressed is progress on the 2018-19 school year calendar. He said an agreement was made with teachers to start this process sooner. Two versions of a calendar for next year have been developed; one is a “lean and mean” version with few breaks but an earlier end date, and the second is a longer school year with more breaks that ends the first week in June. The calendar will come back to the school board in January, at the earliest.

B. Principals:

1. Mr. Voight

B. Voight reported on the relocation of the middle school office. Any visitor can access the middle school staff in the main office. The next big step, he said, will occur over winter break. During that time the schedule calls for the construction of large temporary walls in the commons, so students will encounter a different building layout when they return from winter break. B. Voight said accommodations would be made, but it was unclear at the time exactly what all the ramifications would be. B. Voight also reported on an upcoming Tiger Pride assembly, which would honor and thank students in a variety of ways for demonstrating core values. In addition, B. Voight said he would be conducting an open public information meeting to discuss plans and progress for the intermediate school on Nov. 29. He added that work on the Delano Intermediate School handbook would begin in December.

2. Dr. Heil

S. Heil reported that 98 students took the PSAT in October, which is the only way to qualify for the national merit scholarship during junior year. Some who took the test were younger students who were preparing themselves to try for the national merit scholarship. There are only 1,500 such scholarships given in the world each year. S. Heil also said a letter would soon be going out regarding the ACT test. Last year it was optional and a little over 90 percent of students took it; the year before that the test was mandatory and almost everyone took it. This year there is less funding from the state, so only students on free and reduced lunch can take it for free. S. Heil said juniors will take the test on Feb. 27, and a little over 200 students will take the test on Dec. 9, which is one of the largest groups of students that have taken it. S. Heil said that Gifted and Talented instructor Gwen Briesemeister challenges students to take the test beginning in seventh grade, and that a total of 30 students in grades seven and eight will take it to begin getting comfortable with the test and to see if they can improve their scores over the years. S. Heil also reported on students taking Advanced Placement tests in biology, geography, government and history. In AP biology, 36 students took the test and 24 of them scored well enough to be eligible for college credit with a 3 or above, or 67 percent, while the national average was 64.1 percent. One student earned a perfect 5. Ms. Bahe teaches the class. In AP Geography, 30 took the test and 24 were eligible for college credit. There were five perfect scores. Delano had a 71-percent passing rate, compared to 49 percent nationally. This was Mr. Paulson's second year teaching the class. In AP U.S. Government and Politics 32 total students took the test. In Delano ninth-graders take that test, while almost every other school has advanced juniors or seniors take that test. Out of 32 students that took it, 24 had a passing score of 3 or above, and there were nine perfect scores, good for a 75-percent passing rate. The national average is 49.3 percent. It was Mr. Peterson's first year teaching the class. In AP U.S. History, 33 students took the test and 27 qualified for college credit, or 81.8 percent. The national average is 50.8 percent. There were four perfect scores. Mr. Wallace taught the class. S. Heil said Delano students rise to the occasion and work hard, and the staff works extremely hard to help the students prepare. He added that high scores in these areas also indicate that students are reading at a high level, writing at a high level, and reading charts and graphs at a high level, which means the scores are a credit to all the teachers, from pre-kindergarten to 12th grade.

3. Mr. Schuler

For his report, D. Schuler introduced elementary physical education instructors Tim Lyngen and Derek Picha to give an overview of some of the unique things that are happening in their courses, and said the philosophy at DES is “movement for life.” The teachers shared about the Let’s Move! Active Schools National Award that the school earned this fall, making Delano Elementary one of only four schools in Minnesota that received the award. They said the criteria included physical education, activities before and after school, family and community engagement, staff involvement and physical activity during the day. Because the criteria were so wide ranging, they said the award was truly one that the whole school earned, not just the physical education department. T. Lyngen also reported on Parents in PE Week, which attracted about 150 parents to participate in classes. T. Lyngen and D. Picha also explained the use of wristwatch heart rate monitors in their classes and some of the benefits that have resulted, such as a high level of motivation among the students. The monitors are a tool to help explain how the body responds to different types of activity, and also help teachers plan lessons to make sure students reach their goal for activity minutes. The monitors also help students understand what they feel like when their bodies are in the different stages of exertion, and whether they need to slow down or work harder. The physical education department will also be taking over the Tiger Dash event in the spring, which will be used as a fundraiser to support and expand the program. If funding is available, future areas of instruction could include rock climbing, cross country skiing or snowshoeing, roller skating or even biking.

C. Business Manager

M. Reeder reminded community members that the truth and taxation meeting is Monday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. at the DHS media center.

D. Community Education Director

Diane Johnson reported that the ninth year of the Old Fashioned Christmas was coming up. Festivities included a boutique and Christmas event at the Community Education building, and bands would be performing at the heritage center, city hall and other sites. The newly formed Delano Community Band was scheduled to perform, along with a middle school wind ensemble and the high school choral group Sound Revolution. D. Johnson also said brochure planning was underway for the winter-spring season. She added that ECFE and Tiger Preschool have done benchmark testing, have reviewed data and have set goals for winter assessments. ECFE winter classes start first week in January. D. Johnson said Tiger Kids Club is putting its holiday event on pause this year because it is seeking parents who want to serve on the TKC advisory council. She said the gymnastics fall session had 99 student in November, and the next session includes has 104 students. Robotics begins in early January. Swimming lessons will take place in January before the pool shuts down. D. Johnson said the Tiger Activity Center desk staff are very happy to now be in their permanent home after all of the previous moves and challenges that customers have faced, and D. Johnson said there have been a lot of positive comments from the public. She said more cameras are also now available to help staff monitor the area.

11. Student Board Representatives Report

A. Alex Moe and Lydia Ramstad

L. Ramstad reported on the Veterans Day event at the elementary school, and said students have been excited about the Apex fundraiser. Lessons done during the fundraiser, she said, were a highlight of the students’ day. She added that Dec. 7 is the Christmas program, and students were excited and nervous for that event. At the middle school, L. Ramstad said students enjoyed the Veterans Day ceremony, and that a number of concerts were coming up. She added that students were looking forward to the Tiger Pride assembly and that they are enjoying the new lunchroom. She said students appreciate the various places they can go to study and do homework. A. Moe reported on the high

school. He said the Veterans Day program went well and was enjoyed by teachers as well as students. The opening of the high school front entrance went well, with the jazz band playing for the opening and during lunch the first day. He also said students were excited to have new areas to eat lunch, and that they are enjoying the digital commons space. As for the new office, he said that has taken some getting used to for students, with some going to the wrong places when looking for staff. A. Moe said the question of the week asked students if they preferred to be assigned to groups or to choose their partners. Students mostly preferred to choose their own groups, but also acknowledged that they might not get as distracted and might work more efficiently with people they don't know as well.

12. Board Reports

A. MAWSECO (Board minutes 10.24.17)

A. Johnson reported on the Wings alternative program in Litchfield. She explained that Wings is a residential chemical dependency treatment facility that is not just for the seven member districts. It is co-ed, with separated residential arrangements. A. Johnson said the tendency might be to think of individuals in a facility like that as having addictions to opiates or stronger drugs, but the majority of students are actually there as a result of alcohol or marijuana use. The average stay is 60 to 120 days, and there are varying degrees of treatment success.

B. Wright Technical Center (Board minutes 11.06.17)

A. Briesemeister said the WTC board received an auditor's report, which showed consistent and appropriate management. The significant weakness was that due to the size of the institution there is limited segregation of accounting duties, which is not unusual. The principal reported that final registration numbers were disappointing when comparing pre-registration numbers to actual registrations. A. Briesemeister said there were 637 students initially, but that only 604 actually registered. He said there are hopes that better planning will reduce that discrepancy. Facilities were also a focus of discussion. A. Briesemeister said there have been a lot of facility upgrades in recent years, and this year the focus is on the welding room. While the welding program is strong at WTC, he said there is a need to upgrade the physical facility. Additional projects might include upgrading the independent living classroom to allow instruction in more skills. Discussion is also continuing on restarting the greenhouse. A. Briesemeister said there was positive feedback from a preliminary survey given to member schools, and that WTC is in good health and is focused on providing an excellent experience for all students. A. Briesemeister said he is very encouraged by the work being done there and that changes have been made in a positive direction.

C. District Advisory Committee (11-16-17 Minutes)

M. Larson reported and referred the board to J. Vieau's WBWF report, which covered the goals that the committee had discussed.

D. Professional Development

C. Milano reported that discussion centered on the benefits of coordinating committees, and that there was discussion of working hand-in-hand with strategic plan that is in place. For the 2018-19 professional development day, the consensus was to define a purpose and reason for adding any additional day.

13. Old Business

None.

14. New Business

A. First Read of Policy 534 Unpaid Meal Charges

Upon motion by A. Briesemeister, seconded by M. Larson, the Board of Education approved the first read of Policy 534. Motion passed 7-0.

B. Facility Use Procedures Manual

Upon motion by C. Black, seconded by L. Seguin, the Board of Education approved the Facility Use Procedures Manual. Motion passed 7-0.

15. Adjournment

Upon motion by A. Briesemeister, seconded by C. Milano, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Motion passed

7-0.