

April School Board Notes

IV-V-IV. We need to start with our 3 public hearings. The budget is the same as was presented last month as is the calendar. The hearing on the Daycare project is to provide an opportunity for anyone to provide feedback before we sign the final contract for construction. A reminder we are looking to approve that next Monday, April 24th. Also, a reminder that our maximum liability in that project is \$100,000.

VII. Nothing too major to note here. In financials we are down a little for the month compared to last year. Overall we're running ahead of last year, but that is expected.

7e. We have the following personnel items. Kris Ward is resigning her position as TLC Peer Coach. Mr. Manson recommends Steven Farrell as a High School Special Education Instructor and Lexie Farrell as a High School Business Education Teacher. Mr. Frerichs recommends Maddi Moorman as a volunteer track coach. I'm expecting one more resignation by board meeting time.

11a. Last month I presented an easement from the city for the trail to run adjacent to our soccer fields. I was asked to have it modified so that if the berm has to change, the city will be responsible for replacing/repairing the trail. That change has been made and is listed as #11.

11b. Last month policy 101.1 was pulled out because of the concern over the audit committee. Specifically, we've only used it once that I can recall since I've been here. There is no legal requirement for an audit committee as we make it available to all and you are free to review and ask any questions you may have. I would recommend we keep the policy but change the word "shall" to "may". That then gives the board the ability to convene one at any time.

12a. The National Honor society would like to do a fundraiser to help offset some of their costs. They are going to partner with Sweets by Keke to sell their individual size cheesecakes. I recommend we do this.

12b. We need to approve the contract with the New Hampton Education Association. We settled with them with an agreement through 26-27 with \$3,000 on each step of the salary schedule next year and a 3% increase the following year with some language about increased or decreased enrollment. We added \$2,000 to the supplemental schedule generator base. We also added additional positions of National Honor Society, Letterman/Letterette sponsors. The total cost of this is \$363,130 which is a 5.35% increase from this year. We also stipulated that we would be bringing in all first year staff at least at Step 3, \$42,317, and moved everyone below this step up to it for next year.

12c. For years, we have used Lifetouch as our school photographer. Prior to Covid they had been purchased by several companies and are now owned by Shutterfly. Unfortunately, with each change of ownership, we saw our service decline until it became so poor we decided to switch last year when we chose Jostens. A significant number of other school also decided to change to Jostens which put them in a tough spot of having to hire a lot of people and not be able to train them properly. To put it mildly, our picture days last year did not go well. After they

were done, the building secretaries emailed me to ask if we could go back to Lifetouch as Jostens was much worse. So, I began exploring other options. I found Best Impressions Photography out of Mason City. This is a small company that only does a few schools. My belief is that she is trying to earn our business so will make sure we're happy. This is a one year contract so if it doesn't work out we can change again. The parents will be able to view the photos online, change the backgrounds, and order the photos and/or packages they want. I recommend we do this.

12d. We're having quite a bug problem downtown. I'm not sure why it's worse right now, but it is. It's primarily the lower levels, but it's throughout the building. With that in mind, I recommend we work with a company to address this. I have a quote from Orkin. It's for \$200 for the first treatment and then \$80 per month after that. The quote includes sales tax, but we will have that removed. I recommend we do this.

12e. We are looking for ways to increase our bus driving pool and also ways to make our current drivers and substitute drivers (custodians) more comfortable. Our hope is to get to a point where we have all regular bus drivers and we don't have to have substitute drivers on a regular basis. Christy has been looking at some bus routing software. This software will operate on an iPad that is mounted in the bus. It will bring up a map and tell the driver exactly where to go and where the stops are. It will also tell the driver who should be getting on or off. This system also has the capability to allow the parents to log on to an app and see the estimated pick up or drop off time based on where the bus is at that moment. It's somewhat expensive, but we will use ESSER funds and pay for 3 years to start. I recommend we try it as we continue to work on recruiting/retaining bus drivers.

12f. We started the year with 23 1st graders in each classroom. That's really pushing it as they learn to read. Unfortunately, we didn't have any additional space at the time to talk about an additional class because students in 1st grade and below must be at ground level. We currently have 24 or 25 students in each classroom as we've picked up a few students and that grade has had some challenges this year as well. With that in mind, we would like to split this group into 4 sections for next year to work to improve their skills and get them well prepared to continue on. We would like to add a 4th section. This would be for one year and would be paid for out of our ESSER funds that we had set aside for an interventionist. Since they will be in second grade, they can be housed on the second floor where we have space for them.

12g. We need to approve our Special Education Facilitator contract with Keystone AEA. This is a shared position with the AEA and the person (Katie Fischer) is here three days per week to assist our special education teachers as needed. Next year she will be here three days per week and in Turkey Valley the other two days. This has worked well especially as our needs have increased.

12h. We need to approve our membership in the Iowa School Finance Information Services (ISFIS). This is the program ran by Larry Sigel that helps a lot with school finance and our annual budget. I recommend we continue with this.

12i. We need to approve our membership with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB). Their services are widely used by us including policies, training, etc. I recommend we renew that as well.

12j. We need to approve our membership in Rural School Advocates of Iowa. This has been a good organization for us as they information they provide and the advocacy they do is directed at schools like New Hampton. I continue to use their resources as I communicate with our legislators. I recommend we continue with this as well.

12k. We need to approve our 2023 graduates pending their completion of all graduation requirements.

12l. Allen College would like to send their students to us to work with our nurses to give them clinical experience in a school setting. This is similar to student teaching but for nurses. I recommend we do this.

12m. Currently our last day of school with students is Friday, May 26th with the teachers coming back on Tuesday, May 30th. We have enough extra hours that we could forgive one student day, which would make the last day with students on Thursday, May 25th and teachers would be done on Friday, May 26th. This would allow the teachers to be done before Memorial Day Weekend. Coming back for one day after Memorial is not effective for staff.

12n. We will finish up our book study starting with Chapter 10.