

## FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING NOTES

4B. Nothing too remarkable in financial reports. Expenditures remain within plans and we will end the year in a good spot. A reminder that ESSER funds will be fully expended this year, so next year will look a little different, though with 40 additional students, it won't be bad. We also have a very healthy Unspent Authorized Budget which will act as a buffer.

4D. We have resignations from Stephanie Nystel in Food Service and Rhonda Dreckman as an elementary paraeducator and Scott Frerichs from his Activity Director duties pending finding a suitable replacement. We have recommendations for Beirut Murillo as a Middle School paraeducator, Lanette Pint as a middle school special education instructor, Steve Farrell as 7<sup>th</sup> grade boys track coach, and Fayssal Talib as our girl's soccer coach. We also would like to approve Taylor Moser as a volunteer track coach.

8A. You will notice two options for a school calendar. Under current law, we can start as early as August 23<sup>rd</sup>, that is the first calendar. There are two proposals that are still alive in the Iowa Legislature that would impact the start date. The second calendar reflects what it could look like if one of the two proposals become law. They've both passed out of sub-committees so they are still alive after Friday's funnel deadline.

9A. During student achievement, you will hear from some of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade oratory students, who have been working with Mr. Rude and Mrs. TenHoeve. They have an opportunity to take their top 4 students and 1 instructor to Kansas City to participate in a regional oratory festival at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library. This event is in conjunction with the Ford's Theater National Oratory Fellowship, which Mr. Rude is a member. They are working to raise some money to attend this event and may be asking the board to help. They also need board approval to attend this event as it's out of state. I would compare this to what we used to do with Odyssey of the Mind which was discontinued several years ago.

9B. Mrs. Bercik and Mrs. Walz will be presenting an update on our FAST data. These are assessments given in the fall, winter, and spring that help guide the teacher's decision making in what they do with each student. They will be presenting data to show how the students are doing so far this year from fall to winter.

9C. This year we added another section of kindergarten, second grade, and 3 year old preschool because of our numbers. We currently have 75 kindergarten students who will be going to 1<sup>st</sup> grade next year and 79 second grade students going to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade next year. Since 1<sup>st</sup> grade is a critical year for learning to read, I recommend we add a 4<sup>th</sup> section next year to keep the class sizes manageable for beginning reading instruction. Third grade is a little unclear, but this class has been lower than expected so small groups would benefit that class for 1 more year. I would recommend adding a fourth section there as well. We will return back to 3 sections of second grade next year and 3 sections of kindergarten---though that could change if enrollment increases like it did this year. At the end of last year, we thought 3 sections of kindergarten would be adequate, but then we had a lot of new enrollments so we added a 4<sup>th</sup> section. That could definitely happen again. We will have to wait and see what registration shows us. One other thing to put on your radar. We have the largest 3 year old classes that we've ever had. If we see

a large influx of 4 year old students, we may need an additional 4 year old preschool classroom. Right now we only have 48 3 year olds, but that is quite a bit more than we normally have. Again, we will have to see what registration shows us. We are doing that earlier this year.

9D. We received an invitation to the Upper Iowa Conference beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. Cresco has already been accepted and Waukon also received an invitation similar to ours. They plan to act on their invitation at their board meeting Tuesday night. I expect Waukon to accept the invitation. I've looked into both the Upper Iowa and the North Iowa Cedar League. I've talked to many superintendent's in the North Iowa Cedar League and here are my takeaways for the NICL. 1. They are not looking for an additional school right now. They have 3 divisions of 5 teams in each and they like that. 2. Schools that are close to us, i.e. Sumner Fredericksburg, Denver, Wapsie Valley, and Oelwein would likely vote to accept us. As you get farther away, they are more likely to vote no. Some I talked to were very strong nos. 3. I didn't talk to everyone, but I did talk to enough to say it would be a very close vote and I believe it would most likely be a no vote. The Upper Iowa has sent us an invitation. During our community meeting on Tuesday night, the overall consensus I came away with was a pretty strong desire to accept the Upper Iowa Invitation. We have a sure place to go and with the divisions, we are playing schools our size and many schools we currently play. I recommend we accept their invitation and write a letter requesting membership in the UIC beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

9E. We've been looking at some school safety improvements. This would be above and beyond what we're doing with the school safety grant that we're working on. One of the items that is common in our safety assessment across all buildings is the amount of glass at all of our entrances. This makes our entrances somewhat vulnerable. To address this, I've asked for quotes for a bullet resistant film to go over the glass on the entrances and doors to each building. We would put them on the inside of the glass that is the last closed structure at each entrance. This film is 8 mm thick and will not stop a bullet; however, if you shoot through it, the film will maintain the integrity of the glass so it will not shatter and fall out. It will take an average person up to 5 minutes to break through the glass with the film on it after shooting through it with bullets. This additional time would allow the school to get warnings out to people inside and also notify law enforcement. In other words, it will buy time. The uploaded quotes are for 1 layer on each window. We could put on two layers (one on the inside and one on the outside for double the cost.) I've only found one area bidder for this.

9f. The playground at the elementary has a number of cracks and other issues that have come up. We asked for bids to seal the entire surface as part of our ongoing maintenance work with it. We received two quotes for this work. One from Heartland Asphalt for \$16,960 and the other from D & M Asphalt Service for \$14,631.87. I recommend we go with the low bid of \$14,631.87 from D & M Asphalt Service. When D & M were here, he also suggested a few cutout areas to be taken up and repaired. It comes to just under \$8,500. I've attached the pictures he took to show what he was thinking. It makes sense to go ahead and have him do it all.

9g. Iowa's Jobs for America's Graduates (IJAG). This is a non-profit program designed to place a full-time person in our district to work with our 9-12 students who need additional help and resources related to career planning and preparation. This will enhance many of the things we're

already doing such as our partnership with NICC, our work experience program, our MOC program, IBN, and our apprenticeship as well. This person will meet with students in a classroom setting to help them with career decisions and also help them with deficiencies that may cause issues as they seek the career of their choice. That person will also help by helping students find and supervise work experiences while in high school. You can see by the samples attached the students they can help, what they do, and how our involvement works. We get all of this for \$25,000 per year. The additional person would cost us much more than this. This is an area we are focused on right now and this would truly enhance what we do. I can revise our at-risk budget and take the \$25,000 from there.

9h. The business department is starting a Business Leaders Of America student organization for our business students. Our Middle School Business Achievement Club is no longer in operation. This was established by our high school business instructor to provide some opportunities at that level. Now that it is no longer used at the middle school, they are asking you to transfer those funds (\$1,009.31) to the new FBLA program.

9i. From time to time we send students to the LIED Center in Waverly. They can bill us for some of the administrative costs. Since it's special Ed, we can ask the SBRC for the spending authority back. Our request would be \$1,976.61. I recommend we do this to get what we can to support our Unspent Authorized Budget.

9j. We have three policies we need to approve. These come directly from IASB and these are new policies to address requirements for our safety grant. This is just the first reading.

9k. We need to approve our agreement with Morningside college. This allows them to place student teachers and observers in our classrooms. This is similar to what we do every year with colleges.

9l. We continue to send students to Crossroads Academy in Decorah. This is our agreement that allows us to do so. I recommend we continue this.

9m. The budget guarantee is primarily needed when we have declining enrollment and/or we have zero Supplemental State Aid. This year we won't need it, but I like to have it on the agenda every year so when I look back at the agenda next year, I will be reminded to check to see if we need it.

9n. We have a request from the soccer program to hire a shared assistant soccer coach. When we talk shared we are talking two things. 1. Shared between the boys (17 players) and girls (22 players) and 2. The cost would be shared between the soccer booster club and the district. This would be an agreement for one year only to see how it goes. Their hope would be to see enough benefit that we would want to continue into the future. A first year assistant soccer coach would start at \$2,664 plus approximately \$400 in benefits for a total of \$3,064 total cost. Would the board pay for part of this position if the soccer booster club paid for the rest?

9o. We need to approve our teaching staff for the 2024-2025 school year.

9p. I will do a presentation on the budget for this year. There are some changes to the process that I will be talking about as well. I have also uploaded a sample notice the taxpayers will receive on March 20<sup>th</sup> explaining our proposed budget.