

March Board Meeting Notes

4.

c. Expenses for the month are down some. For the year, we are down approximately \$70,000. Revenue continues to run ahead. Notice we have improved our cash position. This is largely due to receiving a second payment in the Instructional Support Levy Account. I have been visiting with Jodi H. on the lunch fund and will continue to monitor as we continue to be below last year's balance. Some of this is related to the experimenting that was done in response to the new food guidelines. Local Option Fund continues to be healthy in spite of the \$400,000 in technology expenditures. We may need to start preserving if we decide on some type of building project. But right now we look fine. The Instructional Support Levy fund is back in the black. It will likely not end the year that way as we are paying for the Technology conference with part of it and also we will purchase some supplies from there as well.

e. I have received a resignation from Danielle Wolfe from her 8th grade teaching position and Jade Fye from JJV Softball coaching. I have heard I may be receiving one more resignation before the board meeting. Kelly O'Donnell recommends Jamie Quass as the head Boy's and Girl's Cross Country Coach. She replaces the position vacated by Gene Morgan. She has served as the assistant in the past. Kelly also recommends Cody Iverson as an intern from Wartburg College. He is in their Internship Learning Program and has a required field experience. His field experience is in strength and conditioning, so he will assist with the weightlifting sessions during track season.

8.

a. Nothing to note in Second reading of these policies. I recommend we approve these.

9.

a. Nothing to note with these policies. I recommend we approve the first reading.

b. I will present the 2013-2014 budget for the first time. We will need to certify it at the April meeting. At this time, I am anticipating an increase in the levy rate of 26 cents; however, a couple of things to note. First, If the legislature doesn't set allowable growth at this time, we will have to assume the worst case scenario of 0% allowable growth which would mean an increase in the levy rate of 60 cents. I don't believe it will be 0% and we can lower the rate if the allowable growth rate is set higher, but we cannot raise it if it comes in lower. Second, this will amount to an increase in the total tax asking of 7.8% compared to 2013. This increase is a reflection of our special education excessive costs and the spending of the excess cash that the district has been doing over the past several years. It's okay to spend down the cash, but we need to work on getting back to comfortable levels. This doesn't do that. We are not asking enough at this time to get us back where we need to be. We will be okay next year, but will be

looking at a similar or possibly higher increase next year. Do we want to go a little higher this year or go with this amount and know we will be doing the same next year.

c. I will present the 2013-2014 school calendar. I have attached the results of the feedback from the staff. Clearly they prefer the earlier start date. I didn't have a lot of community people at my meeting but did hear from some community members that they prefer the later start date. The staff concerns relate to the concerns of having school beyond Memorial Day when students are not focused and trying to equalize the semesters. The later start day extends summer for our students and puts less stress on the office staff.

The other item of note is the Professional Development. In the past, the district has used a two hour late start roughly once a month to conduct PD. The feedback from the staff has been overwhelming that they would like to move to an early out schedule. In addition, after meeting with the District Professional Development committee-it has been discussed that it would be more beneficial to have a weekly 1 hour early out on Wednesday afternoons. This will be in addition to a weekly CLT that will be built into the teacher's schedules. We will have three areas of focus for next year. Technology integration, Iowa Core Curriculum Implementation, and continue our work on improving literacy. We would devote one of the weekly sessions to technology integration and one to Iowa Core Curriculum and Literacy Improvement. Currently we meet roughly once a month. With the time between the trainings, focus is lost and progress is slower.

d. We need to amend the current budget. We have spent some extra funds in technology that were not built into the budget. This is not a big deal, more a formality than anything else.

e. I would like to approve the certified staff members for next year. This will provide certainty for our teaching staff for next year.

f. We need to approve a resolution to participate in the budget guarantee for next year. When a district has declining enrollment, they may use the budget guarantee if their funding with allowable growth is less than the previous year's funding level. If allowable growth is set at 4% we won't need this. If it is less than 4%, then we will. I recommend we approve this at this time as we need to send it to the state by April 15 whether we know allowable growth or not.

g. We complete an agreement with Wartburg every year to host their students in our district for field experiences and student teaching. I recommend we approve this.

h. We have an agreement with Mercy Medical Center to take and dispose of our medical waste materials. They charge us 44 cents a pound plus 10 dollars handling. It's minimal and I recommend we continue this agreement. The last agreement was signed in 2000.

i. We need to discuss preschool. Specifically, we are overspending our preschool budget by over \$150,000 each year. The district has always done this, as preschool was for a long time more a

public service instead of self-funded item. The bottom line is we provide considerably more time for preschool than the state requires. We charge tuition to make up for that extra time, but it is not coming close to paying for it. I will have some numbers and ideas to present to you at the meeting. Basically, we continue to run this as a deficit and continue to absorb the losses. This is part of the funding issue with our cash and taxes this year. We will look for ways to minimize the expenses as much as possible. The other option is to reduce preschool time to what the state requires. Basically, four year olds would attend 4 half days each week. That is considerably less than what is happening now. There is a lot of concern with this for our community and our students.

j. As I shared in one of my weekly notes, our teachers are doing a great job of using the technology as we provide it. I may have a request for 1 or 2 additional computer and/or laptop carts.

k. The principals and I have been working on an attendance policy for the district. It will likely not be a board policy but a policy that will go into the building handbooks. It sets actions when students miss 4, 6, 8 and 10 days of school in one semester. It starts with 4 absences and having the school counselor visit with the student and parents to make sure there isn't a social emotional issue causing the absences. It ends with 10 absences and the county attorney becoming involved to assist the district.

k. We need to update our tobacco policy. I will have information on this at the meeting.