

DCSD School Board Meeting
12-1-09

Present: Cliff Stahl, Tim White, Justin Williams, Emily Hansen, Ryan Stuart, and John Carson

5:00-5:15 p.m.: Call to Order, Pledge, Oath of Office for elected officials

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Acceptance of the agenda: accepted by voice vote
3. Approval of election results: moved and seconded, accepted by voice vote
4. Oath of Office given to elected officials: Douglas Benevento, John Carson, Daniel Gerken, Meghann Silverthorn

Present after swearing in of new members: Cliff Stahl, Daniel Gerken, Justin Williams, Meghann Silverthorn, Ryan Stuart, John Carson, and Douglas Benevento

5:25-5:35: Organization of the Board/election of leadership

1. Chair Pro Tem: Justin Williams
2. Election of Board of Education President: John Carson
3. Election of Board of Education Vice-President: Ryan Stewart
4. Appointment of Board of Education Treasurer: David Hart
5. Appointment of Board of Education Secretary: Nona Eichelberger
6. Appointment of Board of Education Assistant Secretary: Anita Gregg
7. Approval of the use of facsimile signatures

Move made to begin Executive Session (closed session in Steve Herzog's office) for ½ hour. Board returned from Executive Session at 6:30.

- John Carson made the following comments: want a collaborative relationship and dialogue on the Board, at the same time we want to be able to take votes. We want to be a model of reform in education; we want a better pay system for teachers, to compete globally and nationally. We want to lead public education reform in Colorado. We have great employees and teachers in this district and will utilize them. We also have a critical decision to make, hiring a superintendent. Turned it over to Mr. Williams to discuss the superintendent search.
- Justin Williams: a firm will be used to do a national search for superintendent. Three firms have been met with. Mr. Williams asked the Board members for their views on using a search firm. Mr. Stuart thinks a search firm should be used, Mr. Carson agrees, Mr. Gerken is unsure after meeting with a superintendent from Colorado Springs who expressed his belief that using the District's HR Department would make more sense. Mr. Benevento does not feel strongly either way. Ms. Silverthorn was not asked to give her opinion. Mr. Williams asked if the new Board would like to have the three firms come back to present. Mr. Stahl expressed his being comfortable with the firm the former Board had already "interviewed" and felt comfortable with. He expressed concern with waiting another two weeks to make a decision. He asked Bill Hodges if he is comfortable doing the search "in house." Mr. Hodges expressed his opinion that a firm should be used. Mr. Williams felt that it would be a well-spent \$25,000 to use a search firm.

- Mr. Carson outlined some of the Board's goals: Ryan Stuart will be heading teacher pay structure changes, working with AFT, teachers and District staff. Mr. Benevento will be working with the legislature on state budget cuts. Transparency had been worked on by the former Board; Ms. Silverthorn will head up the process of moving forward with full transparency. The Board will start meeting in different high schools by feeder area and no longer meeting exclusively at Wilcox. Nona was asked to begin this at RCHS for the second meeting in January, and then make arrangements for other high schools. Mr. Stahl will begin changing the website to increase transparency and to make it more user friendly. Mr. Gerken will work extensively with David Hart on the budget. The Board needs to be fully aware of the budget situation. Mr. Williams will head a health advisory group. Mr. Benevento will work on improving the relationship with charter schools. The former Board had discussed an "audit committee." David Hart was asked to give a status report on this. He responded by explaining that he had given Mr. Stuart a plan and will be meeting with him. Mr. Carson explained that the former Board had passed very general language about non-profit groups having access to buildings, i.e. Boy and Girl Scouts, etc. That language is being discussed and should be presented to the new Board. Mr. Stahl has expressed interest on a discussion of policy governance. Some believe the Board should be more engaged in the governing process.
- Mr. Stahl expressed his concern with his future time commitment as a liaison with the Douglas County Educational Foundation. He would like to open the position to one of the new Board members. Asked if the Board could run through the committee positions now open with the change in board members:
 - ~Long Range Planning Committee: open
 - ~District Advisory Committee: open
 - ~Colorado Association of School Boards: open
 - ~Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning: open
 - ~Fiscal Advisory Committee: Dan Gerken
 - ~Douglas County Youth Initiative: Justin Williams
 - ~Student Advisory Group: open
 - ~Public School Capital Construction Assistance Board: open
 - ~Partnership of Douglas County Governments: open
 - ~Community Engagement: open

7:10: Public Comment Opened

Parent from an elementary discussed a problem that occurred yesterday (Monday 11-30-09) around the prevention of parents being allowed to enter the school to walk their children to their classes. Mr. Carson explained to the parent that they usually arrange for a district official to deal with this type of matter. Steve Herzog explained that the parent has a meeting with a district administrator tomorrow (12-2-09). Annette Fante asked the Board President to allow the parent to go into a closed session in order to protect the rights of the employee being discussed. Mr. Carson believed that a resolution had been reached because of the pending meeting with the district administrator and saw no need for a closed session discussion, the parent agreed.

7:15: Conclusion of Public Comment

~Vote/adoption on “Supplemental Resolution” for certificate of participation (COP) for North Star Academy

~Vote/Adoption of Consent Agenda

~Presentation on five course proposals, by Karen Brofft (Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment)

*Voice vote taken, passed unanimously

~Presentation on application of STEM Middle/High School by Pat McGraw and Kindra Whitmyre

* McGraw and Whitmyre went through strengths and weaknesses of application

*Opened to questions from the Board

~Mr. Carson asked if the date set for enrollment was “typical” to a normal timeline.

~Mr. Carson asked what the financial commitment of the school district is to enable the school to hire a principal. Are there assumptions on a COP?

*The District has not fronted money to a charter school

~Mr. Carson asked when the first money would flow into the school.

*August

~Mr. Carson asked the applicants to come forward

~Ms. Silverthorn asked in relation to their request to extend the February requirement for enrollment to May 15th, if they anticipate that they will be ready with numbers why move it out so far?

*the denial requirement if deadline not met is seen as a problem

~Mr. Stuart asked about the request for a Waiver from one of the Board End Statements. What don’t they agree with and why do they want a Waiver?

~Mr. Stahl wanted to discuss the same thing. Accountability comes from the End Statements and to ask for a waiver deviates from this.

*The applicants are o.k. if they are not held to the “strategies” of District. Mr. Stahl assured them this is the case, however wanted to make sure they understand that the purpose of the End Statements is accountability to all tax payers

~Mr. Gerken asked if they don’t hit the required enrollment by May 15th what happens then?

*The school would be a no go

~Extensive discussion took place on the enrollment percent and dates

~Mr. Stahl asked for clarification on the make-up of the Board of the school

*The majority of the Board would be industry representatives

~Mr. Stahl expressed concern that industry representatives would outnumber parents on the Board, and as a parent he would want to have some say on the members of the Board. Currently outgoing members will be able to appoint their successor

*That is true, we want industry to have “buy in” to the school

~Mr. Stahl expressed concern that parents don’t have the ability to impact

- who is on the Board
- ~Mr. Stahl expressed concern that there is no plan for a counselor for the first year of operation
 - *Another staff member will fill role
- ~Mr. Stahl: what is the “science” behind that decision?
 - *Same answer
- ~Mr. Stahl stated that he is a fan of “performance pay” and asked how they plan to use the 4%?
 - *Top down management, the boss will determine what a person gets paid, just like for you
- ~Mr. Stahl: yes; however I know what I am being measured by. In addition, 4% is too low to impact student achievement and teacher behavior. That is about the % we have now and it is obvious we have Board members who are unhappy with that now so why would we say your 4% is acceptable.
- ~Mr. Carson: we have five options of what to do now
- ~Mr. Gerken suggested to change the % of enrollment to 75% and the March 1st dates to April 1st and that all are subject to Board approval. Asked if that is a viable option for the STEM group, group left to revise their proposal with Mr. Gerken

9:20: Legislative update, Jason Hopper

- ~Provided information on pending legislative cuts and had a discussion with the Board on keeping them informed of upcoming legislation
- ~Discussion held on drafting a letter to legislators/governor about how the cuts will impact Douglas County
- ~Mr. Carson mentioned the need to make sure our district stays in line with our Douglas County legislative delegation

9:43: STEM group resubmitted changes as suggested by Mr. Gerken

- ~STEM charter accepted by unanimous voice vote

9:48: return to superintendent search firm discussion

- ~Presentation by Rick O’Connell (former Douglas County Superintendent) and Ellen Bartlett (former Human Resources Superintendent) about their search firm
- ~Mr. Carson asked for clarification around identification of candidates and if using a firm would preclude Board members from making their own suggestions of possible candidates
 - *Board members are able to suggest their own candidates
- ~Ms. Silverthorn asked about teacher and employee input
 - *Ellen Bartlett explained that the Board could give them a list of groups to seek input from
- ~Discussion among Board members on making a decision at this meeting to go with this firm for the search.
- ~Mr. Stahl questioned why they wouldn’t just stand with the decision made by the former Board to go with this firm since four of those previous votes are still with

the current Board and this would be a majority.
~Mr. Carson expressed his belief that the present Board should be given the chance to make the decision and maybe there needs to be more than a majority vote.
~No vote was taken, tabled until the next meeting

10:20: discussion on who will fill open committee positions, no decisions

10:25: David Hart informed the Board that a decision would need to be made before the next scheduled meeting on setting the 'mils' with Douglas and Elbert Counties
~A decision was made for the Board to meet early on December 15th to do this
~Mr. Carson mentioned the intent to address transportation issues at the next meeting

10:35: adjournment