

Dr. Joshua J. Isaacson
Superintendent

De Soto School District #73



Superintendent's Office

Ensuring learning, growth, and success for all.

Dr. Clint Freeman
Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Doréan Dow
Assistant Superintendent

To: De Soto School District Staff
From: Josh Isaacson
Date: January 20, 2017
Re: Summation of January 3, 2017 Special Board of Education Meeting and the January 19, 2017 Board of Education Meeting

Please accept this communication as an abbreviated highlight of actions from the regular and executive sessions on January 3, 2017 and on January 19, 2017. The official board minutes will be posted on the District Communication page of the district website. The official minutes from each meeting are posted in the arrears by one month due to the approval of the minutes at the following board meeting.

January 3, 2017 Special Session:

- Discussion was held over the district goals and construction projects.
- The five main goals of the De Soto School District Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, which include a focus on learning, high quality staff, communication, curriculum and facilities, and inclusive leadership were discussed. The five main survey strategies and actions from the district Listening and Learning survey-creating a collective vision focused on learning, high quality educators, comprehensive communication structure, effective curriculum and safe facilities, and financial sustainability through inclusive leadership-were also reviewed.
- The PROPOSITION K.I.D.S. ballot language that was authorized on Thursday, December 18, 2014 during the Board of Education meeting was reviewed. The language included the following: . . .site development, construction, equipping and furnishing of a fine arts auditorium at the secondary campus, a new kitchen/cafeteria, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance elevators and other improvements at the junior high school and five new classrooms, gymnasium, and other renovations, repairs and security system improvements to the existing facilities of the District including heating, ventilation, air conditioning and parking upgrades at Athena Elementary.
- Our bond commitments to the community were reviewed which included the ballot language as well as the bond issue communications for each campus listed below.

Vineland Elementary Needs	Completed
5 new classrooms	Yes
New gymnasium with increased court space	Yes
Gym seating for events	Yes
Additional elevator to access all floors	Yes
Renovated restrooms and storage	Yes
Renovate the old gym to a library with a media lab	Yes
Removal of modular	Yes

Athena Elementary Needs	Completed
Mechanical improvements	Yes
HVAC boiler replaced	Yes
Rear roadway improvements	Yes
Parking lot improvements	Not Completed

Junior High Needs	Completed
New cafeteria and new kitchen	Yes
New elevator to provide access to the lower level	Yes
New Counseling Center (modified to renovated CC to allow for a special education classroom with a restroom facility)	Yes
3 renovated science classrooms	Yes
Renovation of choir room	Yes
Old cafeteria to house the food program (modified to JH office near nurses office)	Yes
Improve the roadway behind campus	Not Completed
New handicap parking spaces	Yes
Corridor connecting the junior high to the high school	Yes

High School Needs	Completed
450 seat auditorium (527)	Not Completed
Additional space for set design and storage space	
Constructed to house a future balcony	

- The current bond project financial estimates were reviewed which includes the General Obligation Bonds, QZAB bonds, and the capital improvement energy loans. The approximate balance amount \$3,419,474 was reviewed along with the estimated balance of \$3,189,864 to finish the bond projects, which does not include an amount for parking lot improvements at the Athena campus. This results in an estimated contingency amount of \$229,610.
- Balcony auditorium considerations included legal aspects, district needs, and financial considerations. Legal aspects included the ballot language and state statute 177.086 concerning construction and bidding. The initial auditorium bid rejected by the Board of Education on January 21, 2016 was approximately \$1,253,945 over our architect's stick estimate. Aspects of the Board work session on February 23, 2016 were reviewed, which resulted in a redraw of the initial design, and included the modification on the ground floor of the auditorium seating (approximately 450 to 527) and the balcony engineering and seating (approximately 250 to 240). The balcony, which was always listed as a future aspect of the auditorium throughout the bond campaign, was not included as an alternate when the project went for bid a second time.
- A general list of district needs was reviewed as well as the possibility of having a future work session to consider input from a facilities review committee if the district is successful in having contingency money. Financial considerations included the advantages of upgrading to energy efficient equipment, safety improvements, and savings resulting from some remodeling conducted by district personnel. Additionally, financial effects of remaining contingency money, lease purchasing, deficit spending, fund transfers, and fundraising were reviewed and discussed.
- The Board of Education discussed moving forward by ensuring the items on the ballot language are completed as promised. Continuing to be fiscally responsible in finishing the current projects may allow us to be fortunate to have money at the end of the bond projects. The district has the drawings for the future balcony and is awaiting a stick estimate from our architect. An estimate on the future auditorium balcony cost, as well as having the promised items on the ballot completed, will provide an opportunity to continue the conversation on the best way to move forward.

January 19, 2017 Board Meeting:

District Report:

- Dr. Isaacson reported on December enrollment numbers for each grade-level: 186 students at ECC, 609 students at Athena, 817 students at Vineland, 448 students at DJHS, and 962 students at DHS, for a total of 3,022 students district-wide. Average daily attendance is off to a good start for second semester. A yearly comparison of AESOP absences was provided and due to recent fill rates, the substitute committee will be reconvening shortly to review data. Lastly, Dr. Isaacson reported on the Board Candidate Filings in the order listed on the upcoming April ballot: Mark Ferrell, Gene Moses, Tarrole Milfeld, Timothy Martin, David Kite, and Susan Liley.
- Mr. Lawlor reported on progress on the auditorium, indicating that the metal deck and joist were in the process of being delivered and as the steel continues to be set, workers will be moving out of the interior of the building and sealing up sections of the west wall. Additionally, brick work will begin on the south side of the building as workers shift to accommodate the setting of steel and backfilling over the next few weeks.
- Mrs. Dow reported on Math, PE/ Health, and Fine Arts textbooks, kindergarten registration dates, and Summer School Hiring Committee summary. Mrs. Dow shared that it's already time to start thinking about kindergarten registration. Registration appointments are available:

February 27, 2017	2pm - 8pm	VES only
February 28, 2017	2pm - 8pm	VES and AES
March 1, 2017	9am - 3pm	VES and AES

These dates and necessary information will be published in *The Leader*, as well as our own *De Soto Digest*, and will be posted the district webpage and Twitter accounts. Mrs. Dow explained that the DARE Graduation and Social is planned for January 27. Lastly, Mrs. Dow reported that the district Summer School Hiring Committee met twice to discuss the implementation of Policy 4131. After reading the policy closely, the committee agreed that it is the principal's obligation to staff summer school with the best candidates. The committee worked on the application, which has been adjusted to include a narrative, a list of brainstormed qualifications, and successful experiences, which have been shared with principals. District staff were surveyed to see if the mention of seniority should remain within the policy. One hundred and fifty eight respondents voted that it should not be removed (67.1% DO NOT REMOVE; 32.9% REMOVE). Mrs. Dow summarized, noting that nothing in our policy will change, and principals will continue to staff our summer schools with caring and engaging teachers by ensuring they are selecting applicants who have evidence of qualifications and successful experience. Mrs. Dow also expressed thanks to those who served on the committee.

- Mr. Ferrell reported on the three State Board seats open for appointment by Governor Greitens. Mr. Ferrell stated that the legislative session had started, and budget cuts have been made impacting K-12 education, including A+ and transportation. Lastly, Mr. Ferrell reported that the MSBA Legislative Forum at Jefferson City would be held on February 14, 2017.
- Building principals reported on the following mid-year building goals.
 - Dr. Rickermann reported that Winter EOC Testing is complete and ASVAB is complete. CCR is in process with only three graduating seniors not yet contacted. Dr. Rickermann stated that there have been 1319 referrals (796 tardy to class) and attendance is at 84.66% on 90/90.

- Mrs. Mahn reported on student achievement reading levels, indicated that the building had 245 discipline referrals, and shared that 88.5% of students are attending 90% of the time. Mrs. Mahn explained that parent involvement and communication has increased along with the number of parent contacts.
- Mr. Grindstaff reported on effective communication and the focus on consistency and relevance for parents, students, and staff. Mr. Grindstaff discussed how technology was being integrated as a tool for effective dialogue and enhanced learning. Lastly, Mr. Grindstaff explained how ongoing assessment through on-the-spot formative checks for understanding and problem-solving was focused around the Missouri Learning Standards. He also shared how the critical thinking aspects of Why? How? What? are being integrated into lessons and being related to real world applications.
- Dr. Britain reported on how each K-6 team wrote an ELA and a math goal and how each special area team wrote specific goal(s) for their content. Dr. Britain shared the following update on the three building goals focused on student achievement and discipline. These included 100% of the teams will progress toward mastery of their individual goals, increase positive office referrals to 50, and 100% of discipline referrals will be documented by three minor forms prior to an office referral. Dr. Britain stated that she was proud to report that Athena had already met seven out of the twenty-two goals.
- Mrs. Schmitz reported the ECC is finalizing building baseline data with the goal of ensuring 90% of all students are kindergarten ready.

Personnel:

Employment:

- The board approved the resignation of Dr. Amanda Britain as Athena Elementary Principal, effective June 30, 2017.
- The board approved the resignation of Rhonda Short as Vineland Elementary Teacher, effective at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.
- The board approved the resignation of Dana Stukey as Vineland Elementary Assistant Principal, effective at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.
- The board approved the resignation of Lisa Queen as High School Student Council Advisor effective at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.
- The board approved Layna Richardson as volunteer of junior high track team.
- The board approved the extension and modification of the Superintendent contract until June 30, 2020.

New Business:

- The Board approved the MCE Policies 2315 (Student Attendance) and 4750 (Administrative Leave).
- The Board approved the Health Services Report.
- The Board approved the District Voice Over Internet Protocol Phone Proposal.
- The Board approved the Junior High Student Council to attend MASC State Convention- March 9-11, 2017.
- The Board approved the HS Academic Team to attend National Academic Quiz in Atlanta, GA- May 26-29, 2017.
- The Board approved the Multi-Vendor Athletic Supplier Contract with Johnny Macs.

Closing:

De Soto Staff,

Thank you to everyone for making last night's junior high ribbon cutting ceremony a memorable event for all. There has been a great deal of change this year with the integration of Chromebooks, new classrooms, a new gym and library, and a new cafeteria and connecting corridor. Very soon we will have a new auditorium, with the possibility of a balcony a little ways down the road.

Thank you for the part each of you continues to play in making positive changes for our students. Thank you for your continued flexibility and willingness to adapt to each of the changes. Thank you for continuing to keep the focus on our students in an ever-changing world.

Ironically, change is somewhat a constant; the control we have over it is whether or not we allow the change to have a positive or negative effect. Thank you again for positively effecting change in the De Soto School District. Have a great weekend and Go Dragons!

With Dragon Pride,

J. Isaacson