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Comet Highlights from the December 13, 2016 Board of Education Meeting

December 15	Lt. Governor of Iowa, Kim Reynolds, will be visiting Bellevue MS/HS to visit about the "Bellevue Big" program, and some other community activities (Bellevue Heart and Soul, Parks to People, and improvements at Marquette facilities) - I will be at a meeting in Des Moines on both Wednesday and Thursday, but Mr. Recker, Mr. Jaeger and Mr. Ernst will handle the logistics of this. Dave Heiar from the Jackson County Economic Development Program arranged this meeting to highlight things happening in Jackson County.
December 19	Bellevue HS Music Concert - 6:30
December 20	Bellevue MS Music Concert - 6:30
December 23-Jan. 2	Winter Break
January 3	School Resumes
January 13	End of 1st Semester
January 16	No school for students; Teacher PD/Grading and Planning

Believe in the Blue

This week's "Believe in the Blue" update.

<https://youtu.be/hO331C679mg>

Highlights from the Board Meeting

Consent Agenda

Approve Recommendations to Hire

Jake Hesselman - Volunteer Wrestling Coach. He is currently helping out and has a certification. Jake is from Dubuque and will actually be student teaching in Dubuque Schools this Spring semester. His personal qualifications and characteristics also make him a great person for our students to be around.

Curt Ernst - Substitute Bus Driver (when all requirements from the State of Iowa are met)

Recognize any Visitors

Tod Bowman - Local State Senator

Local Legislative Discussion

Tod Bowman was in attendance to discuss legislative items related to education. Andy McKean (local representative) was not able to attend. Meyer also contacted Rod Blum from Dubuque who represents our area at the national level and he was also not able to attend. Both hope to attend in the future.

Senator Bowman discussed the following items as highlights:

- State Supplemental Aid - Likely done in 30 days, with rates between 0% and 1.5%. This is much lower than recent years, and will have an impact on schools.
- 3rd Grade Reading Intervention - Funds may be limited for this implementation in the future, and likely no action this legislative session (set to begin in the Summer of 2018).
- Preschool Funding
- ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) - Measuring of student learning will be done in multiple ways in the future (unsure of how)
- Educational Savings Accounts - Money given to parents to educate their students at home or private schools will be discussed in the session. *Personal Note: This could potentially make it possible to get \$6500 and home school your student or send to private school (keeping the extra money - this would not be good for education); Very detrimental impact on public schools.*
- Transportation Funding increase possibly
- Access to spend restricted categorical funds in other ways may be discussed to assist districts.
- Teacher Leadership and Compensation Grant (TLC) discussions - Little impact seen so far, but...
- One-Cent money extension - Likely not this legislative session
- Smarter Balanced Assessment - Cost will be significantly more (\$25-\$30 vs the Iowa Assessments that cost less than \$10); Better assessment, but cost is restrictive

Comet Curriculum

Amber Dullard, Spanish instructor, was not able to be at the meeting due to her role as Cheerleading sponsors, but Holly Herrig (student) shared her perspectives of the trip to Costa Rica from June 13-June 22, and what they are doing in Spanish class currently.

Promise Iowa Initiative

Board Approved...Meyer recommended the Board approve the "Promise Iowa" initiative encouraged, developed and supported by IASB. It is stressing the importance of public education, funding for public education, and the overall

importance of public education for our economy, communities, and overall quality of life.

If approved, we will send it into the IASB leaders to show our support.



Bellevue Community School District

Resolution of Support: Promise of Iowa Public Education Campaign

WHEREAS, The state's children constitute "The Promise of Iowa" through their potential as our future leaders, citizens, innovators and caretakers of their generation; and

WHEREAS, We believe funding a strong system of public education is the best investment Iowans can make to strengthen our economy, create thriving communities and improve the quality of life for every Iowan; and

WHEREAS, Our students face new challenges and opportunities in a changing world, and their public schools are evolving to help students prepare for their future; and

WHEREAS, We must continue to find ways to close achievement gaps so that Iowa public schools fulfill the ideal of equity and opportunity for all; and we must keep pace with improvements in other states, to ensure our public schools provide our students and state with an advantage; and

WHEREAS, State policy makers, locally elected school board members, educators and the business community all made a shared commitment in 2013 landmark legislation to ensure the next generation of Iowa students receives a world-class education; and

WHEREAS, The Legislature has made progress in investing in public education, but in this era of competing priorities and limited resources, state funding has fallen short in meeting the real needs of our students; and

WHEREAS, The case must be made to the Legislature that Iowa taxpayers and voters support greater investments in our public schools and are willing to commit public resources to ensure every student in our state has a well-rounded curriculum and safe, modern school facilities in each community; and

WHEREAS, As locally elected citizens entrusted with public education, Iowa school boards must take on the responsibility to tell the story and rally public support and understanding for continued investments in public education that move our state forward.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Bellevue CSD Board of Education pledges to join and support the efforts of "The Promise of Iowa" campaign to ensure that Iowa lawmakers continue to prioritize investments to improve the community schools that create opportunities for more than 480,000 public school Iowa students.

ADOPTED by ACTION of the BOARD this 13th day of December 2016.

Signed: Board President: _____

Comet School Finance Information

Meyer discussed some financial documents and graphics (attached to document and at a site on the website) about our district's finances overall. Some specifics discussed included the following:

- Page 1 - Revenues & Expenditures; Enrollment History
- Page 2 - Solvency Ratio; General Funds Balance History
- Page 3 & 4 - Key Fund Indicators
- Page 12 - Unspent Authorized Budget History
- Page 13 - Solvency History
- Page 23 - Property Tax Rate Comparison

In addition to this, forecasting for future year finances includes some of the information below:

Unspent Authorized Budget - Healthy right now, but in the next five years if we lose 7.5 students/year it will decrease significantly. This may seem high and pessimistic, but a few things to remember:

- Our high school classes are much larger than our elementary classes as a whole...
 - K-5 Average Enrollment per grade - 42
 - 6-12 Average Enrollment per grade - 52 (this does include roughly 5 students per grade from Andrew, but even with this the 42 average only increases to 47)
- Trends for Unspent Authorized Budget include the following:
 - FY15 Actual - 1,862,836
 - FY16 Estimated - 1,849,566
 - FY17 Estimated - 1,770,163

- FY18 Estimated - 1,614,839
- FY19 Estimated - 1,494,939
- FY20 Estimated - 1,242,498
- FY21 Estimated - 841,062

- These numbers also include an early retirement incentive built into the formula in the next few years.
- We are going down overall, which is okay to a point...We need to spend the money we have been given for students and their education and not to have a huge carryover, but going below 1,000,000 would start to indicate a significant concern.
- Do we know what student enrollment will do in the future? Absolutely not, but it will likely go down to some point.

Modified Allowable Growth/Drop-Out Prevention

Board Approved...The district needs Board approval to apply for funds for some of our instructional needs (staffing, programs, etc.) for "at-risk" students to provide targeted services and programs for students in our district (K-12). This is used for partial salaries for some of our staff members (teachers and associates). Meyer is working on the application, and it is due on December 15. This is a yearly application, and is part of our tax rate that is part of our overall school funding. The amount \$135,007.

School Calendar Update

Meyer is working on the upcoming school calendar with the local districts who we share some students (Maquoketa, Andrew, Easton Valley, and Delwood). He also met with our Teacher Leadership group in regard to professional development needs. Meyer's concern is for too many early dismissals or late starts for PD, for two reasons:

1. It is an inconvenience for our parents for supervision and "daycare" for their students when they are at work.
2. It takes away student contact time for learning.

As a result, my question was when could it be offered instead to make it valuable, time-worthy, and overall useful for our staff. What are the board's thoughts on early dismissals and late starts?

Some of the group's comments included the following:

Model teacher meeting

November 21, 2016

Focus of the meeting was on the calendar for next year, and potential changes for the 2017-2018 school year. Points of discussion included:

- Professional Development Time

- How much time is needed? If it is valuable learning it is great, but we must be careful to make sure it is valuable to those involved, and that it is engaging and not sitting in the same area the entire time (regardless of all day or part of a day)
- Too many early out or late start times could be problematic for parents sending students to our school (arranging day care, transportation, etc.)
- Early morning meetings could be difficult for our staff potentially, especially those with younger children.
- Meetings before school, before contract time...Count for "days" of contract? Would still have regular staff meetings.
- Meetings before school...add up time and have that be an end of the year day; Yet, still keeping TQ Day (separate funds)
- Less early outs/late starts means more student contact time
- It was shared that a staff survey indicated that staff was NOT in favor of more early dismissals for PD because of lost time for students
- Some other classes are also concerned with early dismissals...Bellevue Big meets in the afternoon; Afternoon practices for students, when students "hang around" for practice to start
- Early morning has a conflict with Early Bird PE and Unity Council; Would need to look at options for this for staff involved.
- Regardless...needs to be relevant and meaningful.
- Collaboration Time
 - Could this be connected with meeting times before school (before contract time)
 - Could before school meetings count as "days" contractually?
 - Could this be connected potentially with the PD time
- Early Outs/Late Starts
 - What impact does this have on parents?
 - What impact on student learning?
 - Must be a balance of PD time during school time AND student contact learning time (Meyer)
 - Some feel could get more accomplished in a shorter time in the morning than the way it is now, if regularly scheduled (not weekly...not sure how often, but not weekly)
 - Would not eliminate all of these or full days...but adjust accordingly.
 - Discussed conference dismissals...12:30-6:00 on Wednesday?
- The question was asked: Do we have to be the same as Andrew, Maquoketa
 - Not necessarily, just convenient overall \

Meyer is meeting with this group again next week.

River Valley Conference (RVC)

As I mentioned in the past, the Board of Control for the RVC was meeting. We met last week in Durant, with representatives from each school district. It was a unanimous 13-0 vote on admitting Anamosa into the conference. Official action does not need to be taken by our Board unless you wish.

I do believe it is a good move for the conference and the Bellevue Schools.

Notes from the past...

Adding ONE school would be beneficial in some ways for scheduling and evening out the North and South Divisions in the conference. Although, the more conference games you have, the less flexibility you have for non-conference games, where we typically schedule Easton Valley and Marquette specifically (for local interests and proximity for travel).

Are we smaller than Anamosa? Yes, but they would not be as large as West Liberty and not much bigger than a few other schools already in our conference. While some schools are bigger than us, it provides our program with opportunities for games at all levels (separate middle school teams, freshmen, JV, etc.) that other conferences with smaller teams do NOT provide us (this was the problem with our involvement in the past with the Big East Conference. We are also going to be in the same class as most of these schools in all boy's sports (no 1A schools in the conference, and we are 2A almost all years...and will remain for the next several years) and several girl's sports (the girls have 5 classes in comparison to the 4 classes for boys in some sports, and there is a mix of 2A and 3A schools in the girl's division...we are a solid 2A in girl's sports)

Enrollment Currently for grades 9-11 (how classification is determined)

● West Liberty	303
● Mid Prairie	259
● Monticello	245
● Camanche	231
● Northeast	229
● Cascade	204
● Tipton	202
● North Cedar	197
● Regina, Iowa City	188
● West Branch	188
● Wilton	180
● Bellevue	161
● Durant	159

(Anamosa is at 290)

One of the main reasons we went to this conference is to provide multiple opportunities for our students at all levels of competition (MS and HS), as many of the schools around here not in the RVC do NOT have full teams for both grades in middle school or JV teams (let alone freshmen teams). This is important for our students who are involved, and is a key benefit of this conference for us...It does not harm us like other conference affiliations could overall. We still play non-conference games vs Easton Valley, Calamus-Wheatland, Midland, Marquette, etc, but we do not have to rely on them. I think this is important...we are in a strong conference with schools that are of our classification size (unlike the non-conference teams I mentioned in most cases in most years).

Reminder: Football is not based on conferences. The sports that schedules are arranged based on the conference are: Volleyball, Basketball (B/G), Softball and

Baseball. Wrestling, Track, Cross Country and Golf (B/G) have conference meets but not a conference schedule to adhere to. Bowling is not conference related.

Facilities Update Discussion

Meyer has arranged meetings with several architectural firms (and met with some already with Brett Ernst), and I am planning on meeting with the rest of them in early- to mid-December. Meyer will keep the Board posted on their scheduling availability.

- LEGAT - 12.7
- FEH - 12.13
- Shive-Hattery - 12.20 (AM)
- DLR - 12.20 (PM)
- One additional group may also be interested.

Ultimately, I am asking them what their cost would be to give an analysis of our elementary building and MS/HS Music Room, and to gather comprehensive public input. I also want this to include their thoughts on building on either campus, and overall thoughts on our facilities for the short-term and long-term.

Likely information to the Board on this in February of 2017.

Early Graduates

Board Approved...At this time only one student is planning on early graduation, pending meeting all requirements. The student is Stephen Nicol, and he is on track to graduate.

Comet Reading and Reflection

I am including some excerpts/information from the book "Most Likely to Succeed" by Tony Wagner which was discussed. It shows the different "needs" of students to succeed today from the past in the beginning, and then some reading about "what is needed" for this to occur in our schools. What are your thoughts on the expectations for our district in these areas? Do you agree with this approach? Why or why not? What do you believe "kids" really need?

Informational Items

Wellness Committee Update

On Wednesday evening (November 30), 14 staff members/parents met to discuss our district Wellness Policy, specifically in regard to food allergies. We have a few students in the district who have been diagnosed with food allergies, which is much different than a typical seasonal allergy (specifically can lead to death if specific foods are eaten or ingested).

The main concern "nuts" in general (peanuts and other nuts). We have some policies in place already at the elementary school, but believe we need to

expand these across the district and reinforce these policies in the elementary. The group met from 6:30-8:00, and it was decided to begin a couple of things:

1. Begin to tell outside groups that are using the facilities for banquets, etc. to not serve any nut products.
2. The Athletic Boosters will continue to sell their peanut products they have on hand, but will not reorder the items when they run out of their current supply. Note: This means only the candy bars that specifically contain peanuts/nuts, and not chocolate bars that are manufactured in the same plant. The packaging sample below (Plain M&M's shows this, and they are allowed as they do not directly contain peanuts). The document indicates some of the candy bars that would not be allowed.
3. The Concession Stand at the MS/HS will still continue to sell chocolate bars, as discussed above. The Elementary will not sell chocolate, but will continue their work on selling non-chocolate products. Note: Popcorn and the oil and flavoring are nut free.
4. School breakfast and lunch are already "nut-free".
5. Other districts are also addressing this, but most are not addressing the concession stands at the time...we believe it is important to do this for the safety of our students (and others) not only on "game night", but on other days when residue from food may still be on bleachers, seats, tables, etc.
6. We cannot guarantee there will not be some possible violations, but we are going to be proactive in our work to promote this overall.
7. This is being done for the safety of ALL students, as about 20-25% of epinephrine (Epi-Pens) administrations in schools were given to students whose allergy was unknown.
8. There are also some dairy product allergies, but these are not as life-threatening (but can react worse with students who may already have allergies, etc.). Obviously milk chocolate is a dairy product, but it is not as dangerous to be transmitted with residue on tables, bleachers, etc.
9. Kelley Humphrey and Tom Meyer will begin some work on guidelines, and then meet with several other committee members who volunteered to finalize these before meeting with the entire group again in late January or February.

General Information (Legal Perspective)

- *Make it clear in your policy that you are not a "peanut free" school.*
- *State in your policy that if the District is aware of a peanut allergy it will partner with the students, parents to educate teachers, students and other parents about peanut allergies.*
- *Include information regarding training provided to teachers/staff and students regarding peanut allergies.*
- *Information regarding if parents can send peanut products for class snacks/treats or if only certain peanut-sensitive classrooms will be limited in sending peanut products for snacks/treats.*
- *Information regarding items sent by parents and products sold in vending machines, school-sponsored events, etc. (i.e., no foods containing peanuts)*
- *What happens if a parent or student violates the policy (i.e., sits at a nut free table and sends a nut product, sends a nut product in a peanut-sensitive classroom, etc.). I would advise not disciplining the child and instead simply sending the item home in a zip-loc bag*

with a note indicating that the food must be enjoyed at home because of the peanut policy it violated.

Main question is not only what needs to happen at events at the elementary and at events in the future at Bellevue MS/HS, but district-wide. Building policies may vary some, but need to be in the same realm.

To say the district is "peanut free" is extremely difficult, and to some extent impossible. But, to say we are "peanut aware" is certainly possible. In the latter example of "peanut aware" it could/would mean that we would not sell items with peanuts in them. It would still allow us to sell chocolate candy bars without nuts (even if they are made in the same factory) - It would not mean not selling any chocolate candy at all. It would eliminate Snickers, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, Reese's Pieces, Butterfinger, and a few others...But would allow for several candy bars to still be sold. Overall, some products may include:

- Peanut Butter
- Nutella, and similar spreads
- Most fruit and nut bars
- Chocolates which have nuts listed in their ingredients

Once again, the district acknowledges that it is impractical to ask parents not to send food which states 'may contain traces of nuts' on label. The proposal applies to those ingredients specifically listed on the label.

- For the health and safety of OUR students, and others visiting, this would seem necessary at the minimum

Other Information from Discussions

- Policy change: becoming a "peanut aware school" (not "Peanut-Free").
- Branding the school as "peanut aware" (and food allergy aware) and using this as a "selling point" for the district in being proactive in our approach for families.
- Awareness for staff and students and how to teach them about the potential deadly consequence that could occur for students (especially those in our district).
- Banquets, fundraisers, bake sales, booster club and concession stands: What to offer for concession stands? Still many things allowed. What should not be brought in for events, etc?
- Facilities: CAPS programs in the school building need to follow same policies.
- The argument that "what about when they go somewhere else to a game, etc.?" is not a statement that impacts the Bellevue Schools. We need to protect our students, period. We are aware, and need to act accordingly.

Positives and Marketing

Meyer is going to advertise for the Bellevue CSD on the "25 Days of Christmas" this holiday season. We will have 200 commercials on, with a part of our "Believe in the Blue" video we completed last year. I believe it is good advertising for our district for potential new residents, open enrollment, and also for our entire community. The cost is \$700.

The district is also working on a new brochure for the district.

IASB Conference Sharing

Kevin Lundin and Tom Meyer shared their perspectives and learning. Some of Meyer's "takeaways" included the following in addition to the Promise Iowa

initiative. Kevin also discussed this and a manufacturing program at Rock Valley HS and the TLC program across the state, along with IASB initiatives for the legislative session (State Aid, On-Time Funding, One-Cent extension).

Pedro Noguera (UCLA Education Professor):

- We have a role to cultivate people for talent
- A democracy that does not educate its people, is a democracy in trouble (we must educate everyone for the success of the country and the public. - only public schools do this); Need to serve the public, not the elite.
- Cannot be a great nation without great schools.
- Goal is not for all to get the same, but for them to get what is needed.
- Outcomes are more than standardized tests; Threats based on assessment scores do not work.
- Poverty is an educational issue, not a disability.
- Students need engagement, motivation and inspiration!
- We must foster conditions that foster potential
- Values are more important than rules.
- Focus on engagement, not on achievement...Engagement is the pathway to achievement. Students care when they are "invested" learners in what they are doing.
- Must provide conditions where kids have a hunger to learn..it is not a textbook or lecture.

John Draper (National School Public Relations Association) shared the following:

- We must recognize that if time is constant, achievement will also be. How are we adjusting time to meet student needs?
- Poverty is the greatest factor among poor achieving children.
- Highest scoring countries on international tests also have the FEWEST copyrights, patents, Noble Prize winner, and "creations" as a whole...Do we want to be them? No, we want creative and thinking kids!
- A focus only on tests means no creativity gained - "Not everything that can be counted counts. Not everything that counts be counted."
- By focusing on the conditions that foster powerful teaching and learning, students become more motivated and invested as learners.

Draper also focused on that we are not "Godless government schools"...we care deeply about students.

Learn to Use Language that Reframes!

•Godless,
government
schools

•Selfish,
union
employees

•Leaving little
children behind

•Caring,
community
schools

•Sincere,
dedicated
professionals

•Every Child
Every Chance

What can school boards do?

What School Boards Can Do

- Maintain the right priorities –
 - Support and recognize high quality teaching - focus on morale
 - Prioritize teaching and learning when setting budget priorities – cut away from classroom first
 - Publicize your district's success
 - Provide incentives for teachers with track record of effectiveness to work in "high need" schools
 - Promote leaders who value and understand teaching

Challenges and Purpose of Public Education...the Bellevue Schools

The challenge and the purpose of public education

- Using Education to equalize opportunity
- Reinvigorating support for public schools
- Addressing the needs of poor and disadvantaged children, recent immigrants, English learners
- Addressing the needs of chronically under-performing schools
- Unpredictable Financing - Doing more with less
- Public impatience and frustration are growing

Comments from Building Principals, Superintendent and Board Members

Adjourn

Board Approved...Next Meeting is supposed to be on Monday, January 10 (Tuesday), due to a conflict on January 9.

Other Notes (not on Board Agenda) :

- Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds visit (see information at the beginning of the notes for information).