

## **SPECIAL CALL BOARD GOAL WORKSHOP AUGUST 21, 2006**

The Board of Directors of the Davenport School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met for a Special Call Board Goal Workshop Session on Monday, August 21, 2006, pursuant to law and the rules of said Board. The Board met in Conference Room A at the Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa, in said district. President Patt Zamora called the workshop to order at 5:45 PM following a light supper.

On roll call the following members were present: President Patt Zamora, Directors Richard Clewell, Nikki DeFauw, Katie Hanson, Ralph Johanson, Larry Roberson, and Timothy Tupper. Superintendent Julio Almanza attended and participated in the discussion.

President Zamora talked about the process to be used for the evening to evaluate current goals and outline new goals. She recommended making a list of ideas everyone would like to work on, prioritize the list, and finally work on the wording for the goals. Director Clewell talked about information he had researched from IASB on the effectiveness of boards and efficient use of time. He felt the Board should examine the procedures for the board meetings to make sure the work they did was directed to accomplish the goals. Director Roberson said his highest priority was to have student achievement as the main goal; but he had concerns about measurement and how everything fit under that one goal. Director De Fauw wanted to have three or four areas defined but also felt student achievement was paramount. Director Clewell felt having a good process in place for conducting the board meeting business would lead to having better goals. President Zamora suggested the process for board meetings should be reviewed as a separate matter but tonight we would present specific goals to be accomplished. Directors Johanson and Hanson agreed student achievement was a large area that should be considered as a key goal. Director Hanson added the Board should create a systematic plan for regular reports and getting information from the administration a few weeks prior to discussion at board meetings. The Board could have as a goal a formalized system for conducting board meetings promoting efficiency and impacting discussions. President Zamora felt this goal needed to be addressed in a different setting on how to conduct the board meetings.

Superintendent Julio Almanza remarked if the goal was to create more effective and efficient board meetings, it could fit into the discussion. The Board could discuss the need for data from IASB and ask a third party for advice on how to run the meetings if we want to improve the process. Director Tupper talked about the current goal of holding the superintendent responsible for developing a system of accountability. The group brainstormed a number of areas including having student achievement as a main goal with measurements for continued improvement in math, reading, and science. There should be outcomes for partnerships and community participation. Another area should be strengthening early childhood learning. A different emphasis dealt with a comprehensive community-wide communications plan and forming better partnership relationships. An additional area of interest was improvement of school climate, especially at the middle school level. Board members talked about developing a process to look at a new vision, mission statement, and long-range planning during the year as a goal.

Director Tupper brought up the concept of goals dealing with board governance or board oversight. How can we support education in our community and be effective as we meet? Board members tried to have a clear understanding of whether they were working on personal goals as board members or working on development of district goals. Superintendent Almanza explained the Board sets the climate and works with perspectives and strategies to lead other people to accomplish certain goals during the year. There are numerous areas board members can consider but their job was to set the priorities and direction for the district. The Board could consider one major goal for support of higher student achievement and continuing with an emphasis on ways to improve the learning opportunities.

The Board talked about goals from previous years and how they created SMART goals that had measurement and timelines for completion. Those goals help people stay on target as they work on expectations during the year in whatever jobs they hold. They talked about providing better opportunities for the public to participate in the meetings and with board members. They wanted to set the bar and the vision for the district by having focus areas. Superintendent Almanza said the goals are set by the Board and eventually work their way to the teacher in the classroom. The Board can set the broad vision and the staff can look at ways to accomplish the priorities with subsets and action plans. Director Tupper wanted the administration to present clear reports. If questions coming from board members aren't answered, than additional reports will need to be made so everyone understands the data. The Board needs to hold the superintendent accountable for getting this work done.

The group talked about having a major focus on student achievement and how they could support the superintendent and others to help improve efforts with students. They talked about measurements and achieving the goal, as well as looking at action steps. What was possible, measurable, and could be accomplished? How can we achieve the goal of improving student achievement? Everyone agreed student achievement and improvements in specific areas were key focus points

For the remainder of the meeting, board members worked at wording and ordering ideas they had written on a chart. Director Roberson brought up the matter of the Board making policy and there should consistency as we do this work. There were comments about having IASB help the Board write their goals as a possibility later. Director Tupper wanted to make sure we had action steps where we continue with goals on the evaluation of performance, legislative advocacy, developing facility needs, and understanding financial accounting. There were other areas such as bullying prevention that would fit into the climate area and how to assure financial stability as a responsibility of the Board. Director Hanson would like to have some systematic communication, and President Zamora would like a better evaluation of staff including teachers, administration, clerical, custodians, and everyone we employ. Bullying and school climate needed to be addressed again this year.

The suggestion was made we should have research done on what the law says are the duties of the board members and what was actually expected of them as far as day-to-day management or oversight responsibilities. Director Roberson wanted to know how do we reach the children in our community and how do we get people more involved. The Board Secretary was asked to combine the statements to show one goal and priorities listed underneath. Board members will discuss this at the next regular meeting and they may rearrange the order or revise the wording before final approval of the goal list. Superintendent Almanza talked about community perception, safe schools, climate, and addressing financial stability issues which could be listed. There were comments about improving trust, better listening, and good customer service. We will create one major goal and all the other ideas will be grouped underneath as priorities. This will be a powerful message and will mean a great deal to the staff and community. Board members mentioned how much they liked the format of the new Readiness for School reports. A format like this for reports would help them focus on the goals and see what people are doing to improve student achievement in many different areas throughout the district. This report style provides concrete information and is data driven. There were comments about "Bridging the Gap" work and moving forward with this idea which would help with student achievement. The goal and priorities list would be discussed on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Board members agreed to adjourn. President Zamora declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

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Linda Smith Kortemeyer, Board Secretary