

Dale's School Board Meeting Recap

July 7, 2020 School Board Meeting

Our Mission Together

**Empowering students with
knowledge and skills to succeed.**

Our Vision

**To be the school district of choice, inspiring
excellence in academics, arts, and activities.**

NOTE: This review is authored by the Superintendent, intended as information for the District employees, to keep them informed of the important decisions made by the School Board. This review includes selected items as determined by the Superintendent, and does not include all items of business conducted by the Board. This review is not intended to replace the official minutes of the School Board. Additional information can always be obtained from the official Board minutes or by contacting Dale.

Special School Board Budget Work Session

The School Board met June 7, 2020, at 5:30 pm for the purpose of planning for the November 3, 2020, operational referendum. Four Board members attended in person at the Secondary School while three members attended remotely via Google Meet. Also participating in the meeting were Doug Anderson, Dave Bunn, Dale Carlson and Karla Christopherson.

The primary purpose for the work session was for the Board to examine a potential resolution placing a question on the November 3, 2020, ballot to increase its general education revenue. This work session followed a June 1 work session where the Board took action to move forward in preparing a resolution calling for an operational referendum on November 3, 2020 (See Dale's June 1 Board Meeting Recap).

At the July 7 work session, the Board took the following action. **To develop a resolution relating to increasing the general education revenue of the school district by \$560 per adjusted pupil unit to include on the ballot for the November 3, 2020, election.** The Board will plan to take action on the resolution at the July 20, 2020, School Board meeting.

In determining the revenue amount to be included in the ballot question, the Board examined revenue and expenditure trends including projections through 2025. As you know, the Board most recently approved in May a planned deficit budget for 2020-2021 in the amount of \$200,000. At the same time, the Board made more than \$160,000 in expenditure reductions as part of the 2020-2021 budget. These reductions will impact field trips, curriculum support, sports shuttle, transportation vehicle replacement, maintenance, and other programming and operational needs. The District's unassigned fund balance has trended downward in the past three years and is projected to be below the Board's target range in as few as two to three years. As was noted as part of the 2019-2020 budget revision in May, we may experience a slight increase due to unplanned expenditure savings due to COVID-19 related one-time savings but should not plan for those savings to continue. In fact, we are anticipating less revenue from the state in the next several years due to the projected state budget shortfall and the unknown economic outlook which will place increased stress on our finances. Long-range budget planning out several years is never an exact science; however, with the impact COVID-19 is having not only on public schools, but the state's economy as well, adds additional variables to our budget planning that will make it even more challenging and uncertain.

Over several years, staff have identified more than \$600,000 in unmet and/or underfunded programming needs and services which the Board has acknowledge and expressed interest in addressing as part of long-range budget planning. While a successful referendum in November does not guarantee the District's ability to address all, some or any of these needs, increased revenue would provide further options for us in budget planning. Without additional revenue, the District will likely experience significant budget reductions over the next two to four years.

While there has been communication with staff for some time regarding budget challenges that has led up to the Board's decision to move forward with an operational referendum, it will be important for staff to understand even more so the purpose and focus of the resolution once approved. It will equally be important for staff to be engaged in the communication and education process throughout our communities leading up to a November vote. More to come . . . stay tuned!

I hope you are staying safe and healthy while enjoying the warm summer days!