

Approved Minutes  
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION  
Albany Area Schools – ISD #745  
District Office Board Room  
July 26, 2023

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kreuzer at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Kreuzer, Hansen, Sands, Rueter, Dirkes, Carbajal

Late:

Absent: Sand

3. Community Education Presentation

Cassie Novak introduced Marie Reszel as our new Community Education Coordinator. Cassie gave the board an update on Goals for Community Education. Goals listed below:

- 1.) The BEAT Series: 561 season tickets are sold for 2023-24 Season (Cap of 600). The BEAT will accommodate 800 people. Community Sponsors have been very generous with donations for entertainment with \$10,000 in community donations. Summer BEAT Series (Partnership with GRRL and Albany Jaycees) with approximately 600 in attendance/show.
- 2.) Collaborations: Examples include: Lake Wobegon Community Expo, Great Theatre, Avon Hills Folk School, Beat Series/Summer Series, City of Albany, Albany Township, Oak Township, Avon Lions, ABE Partnerships-Custodial teal and Local Churches, Finding opportunities with community members
- 3.) Early Childhood: Early Learning Center, COR Advantage Assessment, Funding Opportunities
- 4.) Communication: The District is working on creating a comprehensive communication plan including tools to ensure content is consistently communicated across the district.
  - a.) Print Publications: Huskie Howl and Community Ed Brochure
  - b.) Electronic Communications: Social Media, Website, Marquees, Superintendent Update, Building E-Newsletters
- 5.) Kids Company-Progress:
  - a.) Certified Child Care Center: Compliant with all DHS requirements, annual visits, etc. Program has been high quality and allows us to be eligible for DHS Grants to help our Districts Parents and Students.
  - b.) Kids Co Staff Development: Ongoing training relevant to childcare program/district procedures (PBIS, school safety, etc.).
    - i.) 216 Summer Contracts
    - ii.) Average 105 Students/Day (140 on Wednesdays)
    - iii.) 40 Staff

Upcoming areas of focus are Communications, Early Childhood and Program Growth focusing on youth enrichment.

4. Transportation Update

With the increased difficulty in finding bus drivers, the District is enforcing the one mile exclusion for all families within the one mile walk zone. A letter will be sent to all families impacted within one week. There will be some exceptions to this exclusion in both Albany and Avon because of safety concerns on

major roads and crossings. The exclusion has been looked at by the transportation department and identified students within one mile and a “safe zone” with sidewalks and adequate safety protocol that will be able to walk safely to school. If there are concerns or exceptions needed, please contact Superintendent Okerlund.

The reduction reduces one bus route and also reduces the duration of the bus routes. Discussion was had about what it would like if the one-mile exclusion is and would result in much longer bus routes. The district is looking to hire three additional drivers to cover the full-time routes and also have substitute drivers and extra-curricular activities drivers.

Incentives were also discussed for additional employees to earn their bus license and be able to sub. The finance committee has discussed this and will provide a proposal. Current bus driver pay has been compared with other local districts and it is at or above most districts, although direct comparisons are difficult as route length, benefits, hourly or daily pay and contract or district run transportation varies widely between districts.

#### 5. Superintendent Report

POC met yesterday with Bryan Schiffler to talk about the possible addition of two bathrooms on the exterior of the Early Learning Center to complement the city park additions which include a dog park and pickleball courts (Phase 1), soccer field, splash pad (Phase 2). The City of Albany is on board with Phase 1 at this time but not Phase 2. Bryan brought up several community suggestions for improvements and has been working with both the city and school to improve the community experience.

The Board discussion centered around 1.) the cost of the bathrooms 2.) the city of Albany’s intention to hold off on the splash pad and soccer field initially which delays the need for the bathrooms 3.) Location of water service to run utilities 4.) Maintenance of the bathroom and risk of vandalism 5.) Work that would be done outside of the contract (by local/private contractors) is not an option during the construction process.

The district would like to complete the existing project and then work together with the City of Albany and the community leaders to continue the process.

Social Media Comments on Local Bidders: We are required to post in the local newspaper for two weeks, which was done in the Star Post. There was also discussion at several Albany and Avon Chamber meetings and Lions’ Club Meetings to alert local businesses of the call for bids. We also posted into 15 separate Builder Exchanges. State law requires insurance and bonding requirements to meet the state bid laws which may be inhibitive on some smaller contractors bidding on larger projects. The school district needs to accept the low, responsible bid.

#### 6. Adjournment

Agenda completed at 7:20 p.m.

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Dean Dirkes, Acting Clerk