

JAMESTOWN SCHOOL BOARD
Board Retreat
Minutes

The board retreat for the Jamestown School Board was held in the Central Office Conference Room and Thompson Community Room at Jamestown Middle School at 5:15 pm on Monday, November 11th, 2023. In attendance were board members Heidi Larson, Dan Tweten, Jamie Bear, Jason Rohr, Gayle Nelson, Melissa Gleason and Aaron Roberts. Steven Veldcamp arrived at approximately 6pm. Diane Hanson was unable to attend. Kristi Grounds and Dr. Robert Lech attended representing Central Office Administration.

The board discussed Policy DCCA regarding Reduction-in-Force (RIF) criteria. Dr. Lech shared that the policy, which is recommended by North Dakota School Board Association, provides criteria that allow for the flexibility necessary to make the best decision should a Reduction-in-Force be required, which is very infrequent. Dr. Lech further discussed that the district would always prioritize attrition before considering any staff reduction.

Dr. Lech led the board in a review of the Enrollment and Facilities Task Force Report. Group discussions were held regarding primary concerns and how they are represented in the options proposed. There was additional discussion regarding staffing impact, attrition and the Dean of Students positions.

Dr. Lech facilitated a board engagement exercise, which was held in the Thompson Community Room. Board members collaborated in groups to analyze each option presented in the Task Force Report and make recommendations on needed information, potential problems, and other things to consider. Each option was then presented.

Option 1 (Transition to Three K-5 buildings)

Key takeaways:

- Phased-in approach to reducing facilities
- Income potential from the sale of retired buildings
- Emotional ties to these buildings
- What happens to communities after closing a school
- Elimination of neighborhood schools

Option 2 (Build on to HS for Grades 7/8; Move Grades 4/5 to MS; K-3 at 3 Elementary schools)

Key takeaways:

- Positive and negative aspects that would affect every grade level
- Considerable complexity
- Large up-front capital
- Hardest to sell
- Doesn't address possible Pre-K options
- Inadequate outdoor space for Grade 4/5 children

Option 3 (Something else)

Key takeaways:

- Phase 1 of a larger project
- Pre-K and Level C/D facilities could be incorporated
- One Campus or Two Campus options with purchase of current buildings
- Move Grade 5 to Central Office and Central Office to Maple Mall
- Could “get stuck” in phase 1
- New Enrollment Study needed? Capacity study?

The board directed Dr. Lech to continue develop Option 1 to define specifics and problem solve different variables. They would like to be able to make a decision by June/July 2024.