

ISD ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY
June 29, 2015

Present: Paula Chance; Kris Smith; Jerry Covell; John Miller; Susan Dramin-Weiss; Sheila Stephens, ISD HS Principal; Angela Botz; Christine Good-Deal, ISD HS Principal; Amy Richards; Juan Bernal; Dede Summers; Kathryn Surbeck, ISD Evaluation Center Director; J.D. Bordean, ISD Interpreter. Absent: Ben Lachman; Gwenn Eyer; Matt Fraas.

Visitors: DeDe Summers; Eloise Davies; John Harper; Charlene Hicks; Joe Vieira.

Paula Chance, Chairperson, opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and announcing that Amy Richards and Juan Bernal were attending via phone.

Paula stressed the importance of the search for a Superintendent for ISD due to the departure of Dr. Janice Smith-Warshaw at the end of June. Paula asked Kris Smith, DHS/DRS Director to explain this process and the coverage of the position in the interim. Kris stated that she was working with the Governor's office and had plans to meet with Beth Purvis the following day to discuss the ISD Superintendent position. Kris stated that she would act as the DRS liaison until an interim superintendent is announced. Kris feels that the principals at ISD know their job and can provide leadership at ISD with her assistance to keep things going.

Jerry Covell expressed concern regarding the Governor's office involving the Advisory Council in the interview process for a new Superintendent at ISD. Jerry realizes that the Governor can make the decision himself, but as this involves deaf education, he would like for the Advisory Council to have some involvement in the decision making process. Kris insured Jerry that the Advisory Council's concerns regarding the Superintendent position would be relayed to the Governor's office.

Paula stated that she was concerned with the six teaching positions that are currently vacant at ISD. She stated that in sixty days Senate Bill 220 and House Bill 2657 would become law. Because of the timing, Paula stated that it would be nice if the Governor would go ahead and sign off on the bills so that we could speed up the process of filling those teaching positions. John Miller stated that he had checked on House Bill 2657 and that it had been signed and would go into effect in sixty days from that date. Jerry Covell stated that Senate Bill 220 arrived at the Governor's office the previous Friday and that the clock had started for that one. He said that House Bill 2657 has had some problems and would not really be in effect until there are changes made to the application process and what kind of licensure is recognized. He said this could take some time, so ISD is stuck waiting before they can hire for those positions. Kris Smith agreed that the process with the bills could take some time, as bureaucracy is being changed. She stated that Angela Leavell, ISD Personnel Director is currently in the process of posting those positions. If there are candidates, interviews for positions could proceed through the CMS system. Kris explained that applications through CMS are good for twelve months and that applicants need to reapply if their application goes beyond twelve months.

High School Principals, Sheila Stephens and Christine Good-Deal pointed out that filling these teaching positions is important as far as meeting the legal requirements for how many students are in a classroom.

Sheila stated that this is tough for the high school, but impossible for the PK-8 school. The PK-8 school has two classrooms that are over the legal limit for the number students in the classroom. There are currently four vacancies in the PK-8 school and two vacancies in the high school. So far, there has only been an interview for one of the vacant teaching positions.

Paula stated that she felt good that Kris would be meeting with the Governor's office as a representative for ISD. Jerry stressed the importance of presenting ISD as a school rather than a state agency. Amy Richards offered any help she could provide from the state board issue. Kris thanked Amy for her willingness to assist she would mention Amy's name as another resource on the State Board of Education side.

The council then moved on to the membership committee report. Gwenn Eyer was absent, but provided a report. Because Amy Richards is an administrator, may not be able to join as a full member. Amy was informed by her current administration that because she represents the entire state, she could not participate as a voting member. Amy cannot be counted toward the quorum, but she could still join the meetings and give advice regarding licensure, et cetera. Jerry suggested the council look at the bylaws and possibly make an amendment stating that although Amy can't be a voting member she could still be involved as a representative from ISBE. Kris suggested making Amy's position on the council an ex officio position. Paula made a note of this and said the council could address this at the fall meeting.

Paula then moved on to applications for council membership. They have an application, but discussed cleaning up the bylaws and the membership categories before voting on membership applications. Also, Angela Botz questioned rather or not her position met the current rules set up for council membership. There has been some confusion regarding who represents the deaf experts or deaf experience. It was decided to work on cleaning up the categories at the fall meeting.

The agenda item of election of officers was tabled until the fall meeting since several members were not present.

Jerry Covell was chosen as the parliamentarian. It was decided that the first council meeting of next school year will be held on September 11, 2015 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The council members will go to the ISD dining room for lunch. Other meeting dates for the school year will be decided at the meeting on September 11th.

The council took a break and reconvened at 10:30 a.m.

Paula started by complimenting the interpreters on doing a good job. She also mentioned that there should be a visitor sign-in sheet so that visitors to the meetings can be documented.

Paula asked for a motion to approve the IHSA membership renewal for the 2015-2016 school year. Motion to approve: Jerry Covell. Second: John Miller. Motion passed.

Paula asked for a motion for the election of officers for 2015-2016 for the Advisory Council Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary be postponed until the first meeting of the school year. Motion: Jerry Covell. Second: Angela Botz. Motion passed.

Paula then shared with the group that she attended the IAD conference. There was an open forum on cued speech and also ISD Educator, Fara Harper, presented on her ASL program.

Jerry Covell gave a presentation on the governance of ISD. Jerry conveyed that there has been some concern with the composition of the board. He stressed that if this passes and becomes law, we want to make sure that we have appropriate representation of the diverse groups within the board. He presented the fifth draft.

Jerry said that at the IAD conference and the Jacksonville presentation it was suggested there be a business representative on the board, possibly someone like Nestle, who has been very involved with ISD. Questions surfaced about having a business representative on the board that could possibly donate funds if ISD is in need. John Miller stated that Nestle has been a big contributor to ISD and that if they are on the board that would probably prohibit them from being a business partner and providing the support they currently give. Jerry agreed that would be an issue. Kris Smith stated that there is new federal legislation called the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act, WIOA, that represents businesses and employers in communities, similar to a Chamber of Commerce. WIOA's are statewide, so potentially there could be a WIOA member on the school board that isn't from the Jacksonville area. Jerry Covell stated that this sounded like a good idea and he could add it to the third bullet point. Kris said that she would send Jerry information regarding what the WIOA board looks like in terms of their advisory board and how the different categories are represented.

Jerry stated that the number of board members has been an issue that has come up. It currently says 13 members, but some people have suggested it be 9, or 11, or 15.

Paula asked Jerry to explain about the lawyer. Some people have stated they would like a lawyer on the board as a voting member, but others have said that a lawyer would be a nonvoting member. After some investigation, it has been found that if this law passes, it becomes an independent agency that would be attached to DHS. DHS would have their own lawyer, so if we are independent we don't have to have a lawyer on the board. The school would have their own lawyer or maybe could use the DHS lawyer.

Paula stated that another issue with the board has been the involvement of parents. Paula said that she and Jerry did some research, and most school boards do have parents on those boards. Paula stated that in the past, Gwenn Eyer has felt that four parents was a good number to have.

Paula stated that Senator, Sam McCann, has a copy of the proposal and that she has contacted Sam McCann, C.D. Davidsmeyer, John Sullivan, and Andy Manar to let them know that the group is still meeting and working on this proposal.

Jerry stated that Senator McCann is interested in this proposal, but has concerns about the unions. Jerry said that he is planning to meet with AFSCME representatives at ISD and ISVI in July. He will then meet with regional AFSCME, probably in Springfield. Jerry pointed out that they have tried to take everything from the state contract, and that the intent is that everything will function as it always has with the unions. The intent is to not change anything, only make it a transfer of power. Therefore, the intent of the group is not to talk about the money because they do not want this to go to budget. Kathryn Surbeck stated that she thought it would be impossible to separate the money from the power. She also stated that concerning having lawyer on the school board, she felt that ISD will need some form of legal advice and that would be very expensive. She doesn't feel you can rely on the lawyer for DHS if you're not under DHS. Also, she doesn't feel you can ask a board member for free legal advice. Jerry stated that these are issues they are discussing with the legislators and that for now they have removed having a lawyer as a member of the board.

Kathryn Surbeck also questioned discussions of the school board with current administration. Her feelings are that the new bills have addressed the biggest concern we have which is hiring for the schools. She is

wondering if there are really any other benefits to leaving DHS. Jerry stated that they have been told to talk with administration at the school, but haven't done that yet. He said AFSCME is open to discussion, but so far IFT has refused to meet with them. Jerry said that Sam McCann suggested they talk to a variety of people and groups and that they are making attempts to do so. Jerry pointed out that Paula mentioned a meeting has been scheduled in the Chicago area, possibly Schaumburg. He said that meetings are being planned in Bloomington-Normal and possibly in the Alton area, they just need to be scheduled. Paula suggested showing Kathryn the composition of boards at other deaf schools. Jerry said he likes Kathryn's suggestion of talking to administration and would prefer to do that before getting into what other schools are doing.

Susan Dramin-Weiss questioned the term limits of the board and how it relates to parents serving on the board. For instance, if someone is a parent of a senior and has a three year term, to they have to be removed from the board when their student graduates? Jerry said that nothing is said in the law about a parent being removed from the board before the end of their term if their student is no longer a student at the school.

Jerry then went back to the discussion of meeting with administrators and asked Kathryn when would be a good time to do this. Kathryn stated that meeting with administrators in July would be hard because so many people are on vacation during that month. Jerry stated that he wanted to meet with other department administrators as well, not just the principals. Kathryn suggested they address the Administrative Council (SWAT) so that everyone is included. Paula suggested that they maybe try to meet with the Administrative Council sometime after Labor Day.

Kathryn asked for verification in her understanding that the school board issue is being dealt with by an independent group, not the Advisory Council. Jerry confirmed that it is not an Advisory Council issue. The initial intent was to get Advisory Council support first, but instead they went to private citizens for support. Jerry stated that official support from the Advisory Council has never happened. Jerry said that he is working as a legislative liaison for the Alumni Association not on behalf of the ISD Advisory Council.

Jerry suggested the council meet next month and again in August to focus on the governance issue. He stated that they had finished all other business related to the school and since the council was interested in this proposal they could use their input. Paula agreed that the Advisory Council would like to take the time to go through the entire proposal. Susan Dramin-Weiss agreed and made a motion for this to happen. Second: Jerry Covell. Motion passed.

Discussion continued regarding the dates and location of the meeting in July and August.

Juan Bernal had excused himself from the meeting, so Jerry made a motion to adjourn the meeting due to there not being a quorum. Second: John Miller. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Informal discussion continued regarding the September 11, 2015 meeting. Susan Dramin-Weiss questioned if Dr. Beverly Trezek was going to present at that meeting. Kathryn Surbeck stated that Dr. Trezek was unsure if she would return in the fall or not. Paula decided to put Dr. Trezek on the agenda for the September 11, 2015 meeting and if she is unable to come maybe someone else could present in her place.