

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
HERINGTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 487
DISTRICT OFFICE
April 10, 2010
8:00 a.m.**

David Powell called to order the special meeting of the Board of Education of U.S.D. 487 at 8:00 a.m., April 10, 2010. Board members and other staff present were: Alan Stuart, Anna Gustafson, Beki Denning, Bret Beye, Superintendent John Thissen and Clerk of the Board Robyn Heitfield. Stacey Berndt and Phil Brockmeier were absent.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Beki Denning moved (Gustafson) to adopt the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.

2. FACILITIES PLANNING/GOAL SETTING

David Powell addressed members reminding them goal setting is one of the main responsibilities of a board. This is the time for board leadership and exceptional ideas to come forward. Planning is not about resource and finance. It is about the district. The district's mission statement becomes the parameters of what a board wishes to accomplish over a time span. Today's objective is to review the existing mission statement and decide as a group if it should remain as is, require additions or deletions or change entirely. New goals or priorities will be established. Administration will interpret and utilize the district's resources and finances to accomplish the revised priorities.

John Thissen spoke to members about the issue of perspective. The last time changes were made to the district's mission statement and priorities was six years ago. Recent school accomplishments and future projects with both the school and the community have brought about a sense of unity among citizens. Success breeds success. In the last ten to fifteen years, the building of the middle school, the success of the community learning center and the future construction of a new elementary building and track have brought about change that is promising and exciting. Previously established goals have been accomplished through technology. The next three years are so important. Children will be attending the new elementary school. Track meets will be held at on our combined campus. Mr. Thissen challenged members to keep the following ideas in mind when working on a new mission statement;

- ✓ Currently, professional development is a weakness
- ✓ Establish a path so the children of our district can be successful after high school
- ✓ Help teachers, support staff and the community provide the very best for children
- ✓ Instructional leadership is most important right now
- ✓ The board has the ability to make a positive change for the entire community
- ✓ Behind the scenes is not a matter of concrete and bricks

In reviewing the current statement, suggestions were made by board members and administration to use descriptive words to make the statement exciting instead of just

“comfortable”. Another suggestion was made to shorten the statement. After much discussion a new mission statement was formed;

Our Mission

The mission of USD 487 is to build cutting edge educational excellence, which support all students and community to be responsible, contributing citizens, successful in tomorrow’s world.

An order of sequence in determining district priorities to be incorporated into the revised mission statement was outlined by David Powell:

1. Members will be given index cards and asked to list 3-7 priorities they believe most important in accomplishing what has been identified within the revised mission statement.
2. A list will be compiled using all priorities as voiced by each board member.
3. Clarification will be made on any priorities not understood (identified with >)
4. Omit priorities dealing with finance or resources as these are objectives
5. Omit priorities that do not concur with the revised mission statement
6. Determine duplications by color and eliminate or combine
7. Members will individually rate the top five priorities by importance

Steps 1, 2 and 3 were completed and the following list was created:

- A. Maintain activities programs that are a source of pride for school and community
- B. Enable teachers to be their educational best through professional development and positive leadership
- C. Maintain high student achievement
- D. More directional students
 - Students are able to set personal goals of their own
 - Transition to the next level/goal
 - Career planning
- E. Develop effective communicators
- F. Build family, faculty, staff and student partnerships though open communications supportive of learning
- G. Make education the highest priority of the community
- H. Maintain low student-teacher ratio in developing grades
- I. Upgrade teacher education specific to their areas
- J. Community involvement
- K. Engage parents
- L. Provide ongoing superior staff training
- M. Make sure all students can read and demonstrate appropriate math skills by the end of third grade
- N. To build 2 or 3 programs of the highest educational excellence
- O. Consistently provide innovative technology which enhances education
- P. Retain and maintain quality education and teachers
- Q. Quality technology
 - Stay on top of technology changes
- R. Best learning environment for students

- S. Engage community participation with the children's academic and extracurricular activities
- T. To accomplish at least 1 major school-community partnership
- U. Prepare PreK-12 students for high lifetime goals by emphasizing individual achievements
 - Becoming own person
- V. All students reach or exceed state and national standards
- W. Help teachers stay/be excited about what they are doing
- X. Establish and maintain a curricular battery that accounts for tomorrow's world
- Y. To create school project based experiences
- Z. Challenge all students to learn in a style that works for them
- AA. Create a community of life-long learners
- BB. Our facilities are a community learning environment
- CC. Students have career plans

Steps 4, 5 and 6 were then accomplished:

- G. Make education the highest priority of the community
- ~~A. Maintain activities programs that are a source of pride for school and community (objective of G)~~
- ~~J. Community involvement-(duplicate)~~
- ~~S. Engage community participation with the children's academic and extracurricular activities (objective of G)~~
- ~~T. To accomplish at least 1 major school-community partnership (objective of G)~~
- B. Enable teachers to be their educational best through professional development and positive leadership-(last part of statement is a resource)
- ~~I. Upgrade teacher education specific to their areas (objective of B)~~
- ~~L. Provide ongoing superior staff training (objective of B)~~
- ~~W. Help teachers stay/be excited about what they are doing-(duplicate)~~
- C. Maintain high student achievement
- ~~M. Make sure all students can read and demonstrate appropriate math skills by the end of third grade-(objective of C)~~
- ~~V. All students reach or exceed state and national standards-(objective of C)~~
- U. Prepare PreK-12 students for high lifetime goals by emphasizing individual achievements-(last part of this statement is an objective)
- ~~D. More directional students (objective of U)~~
- ~~CC. Students have career plans (objective of U)~~
- E. Develop effective communicators
- F. Build family, faculty, staff and student partnerships through open communications supportive of learning-(last part of statement is an objective)
- ~~K. Engage parents~~
- H. Maintain low student-teacher ratio in developing grades
- N. To build 2 or 3 programs of the highest educational excellence
- ~~O. Consistently provide innovative technology which enhances education-(resource)~~
- P. Retain and maintain quality education and teachers
- ~~Q. Quality technology-(resource)~~
- R. Best learning environment for students

- X. Establish and maintain a curricular battery that accounts for tomorrow's world
- Y. To create school project based experiences
- Z. Challenge all students to learn in a style that works for them
- AA. Create a community of life-long learners
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Board members and Mr. Thissen were handed a new sheet and asked to rank the top five most important ideas from the revised list they felt would move the district closer towards the new mission statement. Sheets were tallied and five board priorities were created.

Our Priorities

- 1. To make education the highest priority of the community. (G)**
- 2. Maintain high student achievement. (C)**
- 3. Enable teachers to be their educational best. (B)**
- 4. Prepare PreK-12 students for high life time goals. (U)**
- 5. Build family, faculty, staff and student partnerships. (F)**

David Powell asked board members to brainstorm individually to create objectives for administration to apply to the above priorities.

3. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:40 a.m., David Powell declared the meeting adjourned.

Robyn Heitfield, Clerk of the Board of Education

Attest: _____
David Powell, President

Date: _____