



USD 232 BOARD OF EDUCATION

OFFICIAL MINUTES -- SPECIAL MEETING

Administrative Office (35200 West 91st Street, De Soto, KS)

May 7, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Vice President, Mrs. Danielle Heikes. A quorum of the Board was present. Board members and administrators present were as follows:

Board Members: Bill Fletcher
John Gaignat
Danielle Heikes
Kevin Makalous
Mitch Powers

Absent: Angela Handy
Rachele Zade

Administrators: Debbie Atwell, Facilities Coordinator
Alvie Cater, Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Educational Services
Steve Deghand, Director of Facilities
Wendy Denham, Board Clerk
Carrie Handy, Director of Human Resources/Elementary
Frank Harwood, Superintendent
Michelle Hite, Director of School Improvement
Joe Kelly, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Ken Larsen, Assistant Superintendent of Business & Operations
Jolyn Mortenson, Director of Student Nutrition
Brandon Riffel, Director of Technology
Sam Ruff, Associate Principal, De Soto High School
Brian Schwanz, Director of Human Resources/Secondary

Alvie Cater led attendees in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice President Heikes then explained that this special meeting is intended to give board members the opportunity to hear input from USD 232 families and community members on the topic of school safety and security. She noted that it will begin with prepared presentations by the School Resource Officers (SROs) and the Johnson County District Attorney and then the floor will be opened for additional comments patrons may have.

Alvie Cater, Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Educational Services, gave a quick overview of the School Resource Officer program and highlighted the experience and expertise of the USD 232 SROs.

Shawnee Police Officer Maurice Loridon spoke about training offered to staff, how the SROs serve as a resource for our schools through communication, and investigation of concerns and follow-through. Lenexa Police Officer Derrick Pierce spoke about the Johnson County Co-Responders Program and a partnership with Johnson County Mental Health. Johnson County Sheriffs Deputy Jonathan Keys spoke about the strong partnership SROs have with School Mental Health Teams, how they help USD 232 to stay connected to Johnson County and how they conduct home visits and well-checks.

Johnson County District Attorney Steve Howe, spoke about partnerships between county agencies and schools, county programs in place (a new education and training program, juvenile programs, truancy and mental health) and initiatives, laws and regulations, and potential threats.

Alvie Cater noted that one initiative the district is undertaking is inviting police officers in Shawnee Lenexa, and De Soto who are on duty and in the area of the schools to come in for breakfast or lunch at no cost. The purpose of the program is to increase visibility of the uniformed officers on school property and allow members of the law enforcement community to interact with students and create positive connections. In addition, he said they were invited to park on school property to complete reports if they would like.

Bill Fletcher asked how many SROs would be ideal in the schools. Noting that most people would prefer to have an officer assigned to each school, Officer Loridon suggested that having at least one additional officer that could float around to the various schools in his jurisdiction would be helpful.

Kevin Makalous suggested a possible social media tagging system where students could anonymously report threatening behavior that the SROs could see.

Mitch Powers asked how the SROs track students that are at risk and how communication between agencies works when an event is occurring. Officer Loridon and Deputy Keys responded to his questions.

Danielle Heikes asked if the new training Mr. Howe spoke about would include a component for suicide awareness and prevention. Alvie Cater said that it would and that this was one of the top concerns of Mr. Howe.

In conclusion, Alvie Cater noted that there will be five individuals in the school district who will attend a National Threat Assessment Training on May 31st in Overland Park that is hosted by the U.S. Secret Service. He also spoke about safety and security audits and noted it was discovered the district needed to update its emergency operations plan.

Vice President Heikes declared a five-minute break at 7:18 p.m.

The Board returned to open session and Vice President Heikes called the meeting back to order at 7:23 p.m. She then opened the floor for public input.

Heather Lucas, De Soto, KS, expressed appreciation for the mental health issue being a component of the safety and security discussions. She suggested that looking at mental health in students needs to begin at the elementary level. She also suggested USD 232 start programs other districts have like mental health assessments provided at no cost to parents, or the "I choose to Live" program.

Amanda Cocsis, Shawnee, KS, spoke about living in Colorado back when Newtown and the Theatre shooting took place. She requested that guns and weapons be a part of the school safety and security discussions; maybe safety measures with regard to weapons, gun safety.

Vice President Heikes adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

May 14, 2018
Date Approved

Wendy S. Denham
Clerk, Board of Education

Frederick Zede
President, Board of Education