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Date Submitted: Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Date of Board Meeting: Monday, August 9, 2021

Board Member Making Request: Director Dan Greenwell

Submission(s): 1 Letter re: Class Rosters and Class Sizes

Regular Board Meeting Agenda Item: **XI.B** Return to Learn Plan and ESSER III Budget

August 4, 2021

Dr. Paul Gausman  
Superintendent  
Sioux City Community School District  
627 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sioux City, IA 51101

Dr. Gausman:

During the Finance Committee meeting on August 2, 2021, I shared a letter that was written to you nearly a year ago regarding obtaining accurate class rosters and class size information. Attached please find the letter to you dated August 20, 2020. We are now at the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday of a long-standing request to get basic classroom information so teachers can have an accurate class roster as we near the school starting date. The lack of complete and accurate rosters has caused significant frustration at the beginning of school for numerous years. Last year was horrible. Will we again have this multi-year debacle?

I believe by obtaining this information on an automated basis it will greatly enhance the COVID tracing process (fast identification) as well as adding a safety and mental health component should there be a safety incident at the schools. It will also enhance the confidence in the accuracy and validity of the class size information. There is general skepticism when significant manual processes and human intervention are primarily utilized to aggregate and calculate fundamental operating data such as class rosters and class sizes.

I believe the ESSER funds (close contact COVID tracing purposes) can be used to engage outside resources to assist in getting this basic, automated reporting completed. This unfinished fundamental task doesn't need a 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday. After all, you have been Superintendent for nearly 14 years. It's time to deliver. We owe it to our teachers, students, parents, and taxpayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel Greenwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Daniel" and last name "Greenwell" clearly distinguishable.

Daniel Greenwell  
Director  
Sioux City Community School District

*Attachment - 1*

August 20, 2020

Dr. Paul Gausman  
627 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sioux City, IA 51101

Dear Dr. Gausman,

Over the past several years, I have consistently asked for class size data from the District. For poorly understood reasons, this information has been extremely difficult to obtain. I have made FOIA requests, made requests to the Board, been given hundreds of slips of paper, been charged thousands of dollars by the District, and have been consistently stonewalled. I do not understand your Administration's fear of providing this core information.

As part of your goal setting process for 20/21, we (the Board) agreed that your Administration needs to develop an easy-to-use process whereby the district could quickly and accurately obtain this important information with a single "push of the button". The District has one of the most sophisticated reporting tools (Tableau) on the market and access to all student schedule data. Your Administration has good technology and data access, and a working process would greatly aid teachers, staff, and the Board. However, your Administration has consistently refused to sit down and discuss exactly how a very simple process could and would be developed and then successfully implemented. Instead, you have offered to delay a potential solution until December 2020.

I find that delay to be unacceptable on several fronts.

First, the potential schedule changes are near and present with virtual, hybrid, and in-person classes. Developing and understanding how to combine (for reporting purposes) multiple sections from an individual building or multiple buildings' sections is very simple. However, your Administration seems to have a cognitive freeze on how to do this in a low-cost, quickly implementable manner. We need an immediate tool to see (for transparency purposes) the class rosters and combination of students attending the respective sections. Quick tracing capability is necessary in the event of a likely COVID outbreak.

Second, the District's use of Tableau is comparable to owning a Ferrari and only driving it in first gear. It has all the capabilities to do exactly what we need. However, it seems your Administration is afraid to use this service to its full potential, and in fact for the purposes it is designed to serve. Waiting until December 2020 is not a responsible or smart strategy. We need to find the higher gears now.

Third, the Board has a responsibility and obligation to immediately understand the material changes that are occurring during this critical time with the instructional delivery methods. That includes class sizes.

Fourth, I have very little confidence that teachers, staff or the Board will get timely, accurate, easy to understand class size information/rosters for virtual, hybrid and in-person instruction, particularly if rapid changes are required to transition between the methods.

We must do better. Let us work together to get this done now. We owe it to our teachers, community, taxpayers, and most importantly, students.

Sincerely,



Daniel Greenwell

Director