

School chief a disappointment

Dear School Board Member:
I am writing in an attempt to be proactive instead of reactive in the matter of the superintendent of the Oberlin School District.

As a taxpayer in this county, I am disappointed that we are paying Dr. Cullen the amount of money we are, in comparison to the contributions we are getting back into our community. He is a part-time member of our community. I assumed when he went through the interview process that he and his wife would be living in Oberlin. During the interview he talked about this grandson. I thought maybe his grandson and his daughter would come to Oberlin to visit him. I assumed that he would live here with his wife (at least some of the time), buying groceries, participating in clubs, attending school activities, and being involved civically in our community. I am discouraged to see that this did not occur. I don't see this as a plan of Dr. Cullen.

In these times, I think it is crucial that we have someone in this position who is committed to Oberlin and our community. I believe that you need to carefully consider asking Duane Dorshorst to be superintendent. The following are many reasons why I believe this.

He is dedicated to the Oberlin School District. He has worked in the district for some 26 years. During that time he taught, coached, and was principal. Three of his children have graduated from Decatur Com-

munity High School, and another is currently attending Decatur Community Junior High.

His professionalism qualities are impeccable. He is very active in national organizations, such as past president of the Elementary School Principals Association. He is and has been involved in many committees at the local, state and national levels that I will not even try to enumerate.

His leadership qualities I have personally witnessed at Oberlin Elementary School. He spends much time in the halls and classrooms with the students and teachers. He is always trying to continue enthusiasm and spark new enthusiasm for learning for the students as well as the teachers. He is a leader in initiating new and current teaching practices. He is well respected by leaders and teachers in our school, as well as other schools across the state.

He is a leader in our district meetings. His expertise in curriculum and alignment is super valuable to our district. He has been involved in (accreditation) processes in our district, as well as the leader in this process in other districts. The teachers in the district respect and look to him for guidance. We look

to him to provide us with up-to-date information on what is happening in education locally as well as nationally.

He is very active civically and socially. He is very active in his church, at the movie theatre, the golf course, 4-H activities, Bridge Club, Rotary, Supporting Our Schools and volleyball officiating, to name only a few. He attends many activities at both schools. The students know him and his family and they are respected. He has always owned a home in Oberlin and has raised his family here.

His wife Pat is important to our school and community. She is an outstanding math teacher. Her volleyball expertise would be hard to match. She is involved in local and state math committees, as well as national volleyball committees. She is always willing to help with extra-curricular activities such as coaching, concession stands, basketball books, taking tickets and so on.

Mr. Dorshorst is respected in the community and in the schools. He is a man who can be trusted, and I believe that is a quality that is very important.

Most school districts would feel blessed to have him working in their district. I don't know if we are

aware of the gem we have right here in our district. He and his wife have dedicated and are dedicating their lives to education. I hope and pray that you will make the best decision for our schools in the upcoming months. I truly feel that if we let the Dorshorst move on to positions in another school, we will be losing two people whose leadership will be very hard, if not impossible, to replace.

This is a subject that I feel very strongly about and I would guess with many others in the district and community do also. Please do the research and see what other faculty, staff and community members have to say. I think this decision is important and will affect the morale of the faculty and staff in our district, as well as members of the community.

Thank you for the time that you dedicate to the being on the board of the Oberlin School District. I know that it is not an easy position, but it is a position with great significance. I would like to thank you in advance for your concern in this matter.

If you have questions and would like to speak with me personally, please contact me.

Carol Brown
Oberlin

Letters to the School Board

Board looking for new bids

The Oberlin School Board discussed having a few tuck-pointing problems on district buildings fixed, but the superintendent asked for more time to find companies that might bid on the project.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said at the meeting Oct. 13 that he's been looking for someone to do the brickwork repairs for quite some time, but there aren't a lot of people or companies that do that kind of work. The architect working on a new front entrance for the high school pointed out some of the issues with the buildings, he said.

Are the areas that need to be worked on structural, not cosmetic? asked member Dan Nedland.

Both, said Dr. Cullen, but the main reason for the tuck-pointing, replacing missing mortar, is to keep water out of the buildings.

There were a couple other contractors recommended for the project, but he hasn't been able to get in touch with them. There weren't any bids opened on the project.

The board briefly talked about a lighting project, which Dr. Cullen said Johnson Controls told him would cost \$260,000 for all the buildings. He said he wouldn't recommend going with the project with the Nebraska firm. There are local people who could do the work, he said.

Member Dan Grafel said he would rather go that way, mentioning that indoor facilities supervisor Kenny Black has already replaced a few of the lights at the high school and they look good.

Dr. Cullen said he could get someone to come in and look at the gyms and other big areas and get a bid.

Dr. Cullen said he talked with John Nelson, an area contractor, about coming and looking at the project to replace the front steps and entrance area at the high school. Dr. Cullen said Mr. Nelson told him he doesn't want to be the general contractor on the project, but would come look at it and see what he can do.

Member Jerry Chambers read through sections E and F in the policy book for the first reading. The sections include handling and disposal of hazardous materials. There is no regular inspection on this now, he said, adding that he doesn't know what kind of role the Kansas Department of Health and Environment plays. He said it might be worth making a phone call to make sure the disposal of these materials is handled correctly.

Mr. Grafel suggested maybe checking with the fire chief, who might have the training for the disposal of such items. Or the county emergency director, said member Mr. Nedland.

A list of radio and television stations that need to be contacted when school is closed for a day needs to be inserted into the policy, too, said Mr. Chambers.

He said there weren't any changes in section F.

In other business, the board members:

- After two 10-minute closed sessions and five for five minutes each, called to discuss personnel with the superintendent and board, the members decided to table the decision on the administrators' salaries.

- Heard that Garrett's Plumbing out of Norton had started on a new return line for the heating system for the high school. Dr. Cullen said some space heaters might be needed in the rooms that don't have steam lines until the work is done. He said work on replacing the steps to the stage in the auditorium also had started.

- Received a \$964 rebate check from Nex-Tech Wireless. The rebate comes from a percentage of the bills that cell phone users who have the company in the county pay.

- Appointed Mr. Nedland as the voting delegate for the Kansas Association of School Board state convention from Friday, Dec. 5 through Sunday, Dec. 7 in Wichita.

- Approved Mapes and Miller doing the audit for the district for 2008 through 2010.

Parent tells board, talk to parents, staff

Oberlin Board of Education:

I want to take a moment of your time to thank you for taking the time to serve on our Board of Education. I feel the many meetings that I have attended over the past year, I have learned a great deal about the amount of decisions that must be discussed, weighed in on, researched and made. I appreciate that you, as board members, have voluntarily chosen to make that time to make well-informed decisions in the best interest of our district without the desire for personal agendas.

I think it is equally as important for those of us who elected you to take the same time to give you our input so that you can weigh it in, research it and make a well-informed decision. That being said, I feel, as a parent, it is important for me to encourage you to take the time to visit with those people who work for the Oberlin School District before making a decision on whether or not to renew our superintendent's contract. I feel that it is an important part of making a well-informed decision.

Working in harmony, I feel, can

only truly be hoped for if you have a team that respects each other and works toward a common goal. I feel that is true with any business, organization, group, or family for that matter.

I would like to encourage you to

Board advised to listen to teachers

Dear School Board Member:

We want to thank you for your willingness to serve on the school board. It is not always an easy position to fill. We are sure there are times when it is downright unpleasant to undertake some of the issues that are presented to you.

We wanted to drop each one of you a note before the board makes the decision of whether to renew our superintendent's contract or not.

Since your position is not just

look to your teachers, administrators and staff of all areas and ask them for good and bad and why they feel that way. What better way to know what is truly happening than to go to the source. Then you will truly be able to make a well-informed decision

for our district. Thank you for letting me take the time to address an issue that I feel is very important to our district.

Abby J. Hisson
Oberlin

one of our own personal feelings, but carrying out the will of the community, I would encourage you to ask questions of your community to help make your decision.

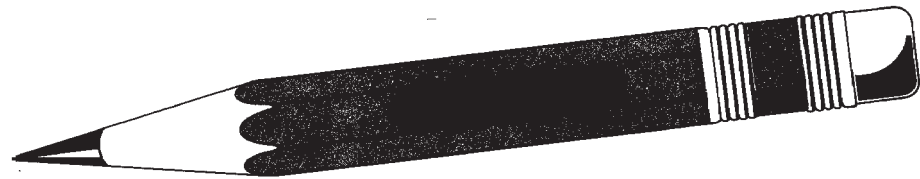
Have you visited with teachers, school district staff or your administrators? If they know they can visit with you without any repercussions, the information may be very valuable to you.

Our school district is a very significant part of this blessed commu-

nity. Our hope is that it will be run by a superintendent who is respected by his employees and one that also respects his employees.

Our belief is that our district would be better served with a new superintendent. This will mean more work for your board, but your employees and students and district are worth the effort.

Jim and Tammy Fredrickson
Selden



"It wakes you up in a hurry."

Dianna Havard, CNA, Hanston Quadruple Bypass Surgery

A certified nurse's aide by profession, Dianna Havard knew that something was definitely wrong when she began experiencing extremely high blood pressure while resting. Her family physician referred her to the local DeBakey Heart Institute cardiac outreach clinic and interventional cardiologist Dr. Christine Fisher.

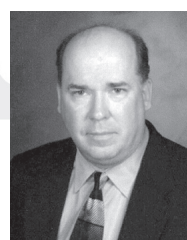
"She comes down here in an outreach for Jetmore and she wanted me in Hays for a couple of tests," Dianna said. "The tests revealed that I needed surgery." Having discovered severe blockages in several arteries, Dr. Fisher and cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Gary Benton scheduled quadruple bypass surgery the next day.

"When you find out, it wakes you up and it wakes you up in a hurry," she said.

Following her recovery, Dianna was able to return to her hometown and make the short drive to the Hodgeman County Health Center in Jetmore where she completed six weeks of cardiac rehabilitation exercises and physical therapy. She continues follow-up with Dr. Fisher when the cardiologist comes to the outreach clinic in Jetmore.



Dr. Christine Fisher
Interventional
Cardiologist



Dr. Gary Benton,
Cardiovascular Surgeon

Dianna urges women to talk to their doctors about heart disease. "I think that women kind of overthink themselves, they really do," she said. "They go get checked for cancer. They need to check their heart, too."

"If I hadn't had the surgery, I'd have had a massive heart attack," she said. "The surgery's what saved me."

DeBakey Heart Institute regularly brings specialists in heart surgery and cardiovascular diagnosis and treatment to a location near you. For information about dates and times, call Toll Free 1-888-625-4699, or ask your primary care physician.



DEBAKEY HEART INSTITUTE

At HaysMedicalCenter

Bickle Pavilion
2214 Canterbury Drive - Hays
Toll Free - 888-625-4699
www.haysmed.com

"The surgery's what saved me."

Lighting project bid rejected

The Oberlin School Board received one bid for a lighting project at the grade school, which they opened at the meeting last Monday, and then decided to re-bid the project.

President Dewayne Jackson opened the bid from Trenton Electric to replace the lights and fixtures

in the grade school gym for \$7,130 and in the cafeteria for \$5,475.

Member Jerry Chambers made a motion to accept the bid and move ahead with the project, but Mr. Moore and member Chris Bailey agreed that they would like more bids.

