

# Superintendent Report

School Board Meeting

August 21, 2017

## Our Mission

**Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.**

## Our Vision

**To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.**

The Superintendent Report summarizes the communication with the Board of Education (BOE) throughout the month including the weekly District Status Report. In addition, the Report includes the building administrator reports as well as other information believed to be beneficial to the work of the BOE and school district. Detailed information for the items listed under the District Status Report Summary can be found within each weekly Status Report from the District's website. I appreciate feedback as to how we can improve the report. Thank you.

### **1. Weekly District Status Report Summary from July 14, and August 4 & 11.**

#### **A. Information, Communication, and Correspondence**

- **News from Around the State and Beyond**

Policy: Austin School Board gives lunch debt policy its first reading

Transforming schools starts with asking why?

Concentrate on quality of work rather than employee retention

How to clarify expectations to achieve desired outcomes

How to improve teacher PD

Safety: New Minnesota guidelines aim to reduce bullying of transgender students

Health: Student athletes who specialize early are injured more often, study finds

Politics: Minnesota Department of Education provides update on state's Every Student Succeeds Act plan

Which early indicators predict math success?

Why you shouldn't apologize so much, and what you should do instead

Should schools give awards?

Homework: Schools ditching homework for younger students in favor of reading, family time

How can early learning blend play, academics?

More listening, less showing off how right you are

- **ISG Update**
- **Long-term Substitute Nurse**
- **Soccer Cooperative Agreements**
- **Elementary School Maintenance Projects Update**
- **Changes coming to the August 21 Board Meeting Agenda**
- **Elementary School Library Media Specialist Resignation**
- **Upcoming Board Work Sessions**

### **2. Elementary and Secondary Principal Reports**

### **3. Curriculum and Instruction Report**

4. **Board & Administrator for Board Members Monthly Publication – July 2017 Reflection** - I have provided a brief reflection on a few of the articles from the July publication. I hope you have had an opportunity to read and reflect.

- Board planning prevents leadership problems – The article encourages a board to practice a comprehensive planning process and offers “some things to keep mind” about strategic planning including:
  - ✓ Make sure board and superintendent are on “same page” with the district’s plans
  - ✓ Promote positive board-staff relations and trust by sharing planning, accountability, and transparency
  - ✓ Regular planning updates to the Board by administration and lead staff
  - ✓ Recognize successes
- Keep planning effort relevant – The article offers questions to ask in order to ensure planning efforts work for the long-term including:
  - ✓ Is plan relevant for at least 5 years?
  - ✓ Does plan focus on matters of strategic importance?
  - ✓ Is plan sufficiently separated from day-to-day operations?
  - ✓ Is plan realistic?
  - ✓ Is there a process in place to regularly review progress of plan?
- Respect the board and administrator Golden Rule -- The article emphasizes the importance for the board to support the superintendent’s work by being clear on what it wants and expects. Also, boards provide support by providing resources to carry out its mission. At the same time, boards should expect regular and meaningful communication from the superintendent as well as recommend next steps and actions.
- Base superintendent’s evaluation on principles -- The article offers “ground rules” for a board and superintendent when evaluating the superintendent.
  - ✓ Evaluation criteria be clear, in writing, and mutually agreed upon
  - ✓ Evaluation tool acceptable to both superintendent and board
  - ✓ Evaluation process conducted annually at mutually agreed-upon time
  - ✓ Individual Board members provided opportunity to evaluate and then individual evaluations be compiled into one evaluation by the board
  - ✓ Superintendent conducts a self-evaluation prior to board’s evaluation, and full board discusses the superintendent’s self-evaluation and its own evaluation with the superintendent
  - ✓ Be mindful what is shared in open versus closed session
  - ✓ Board chair prepares a written summary
- Are you responsible for finances – The article encourages a board to spend time being “policy makers” and addressing the district’s strategic business, and spend less time on micromanaging every detail of the District’s finances. A board should utilize its appointed Finance Committee as well as superintendent to manage finances. The board should then monitor results.

5. **Strategic Plan 1-Year Review with MSBA** – Board Chair Rick Schultz and I met on July 25 with the MSBA consultants who facilitated the strategic planning process a year ago. We discussed the following questions. I have summarized the conversation to each question.

- a. What has been achieved to date?

- Reviewed progress made with the goals and objectives within the six focus areas of the strategic plan beginning with Student Achievement with specific attention given to the five performance areas of the World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Plan.
  - It was noted the focus areas of Student Achievement, Facilities, Workforce and Finance were identified as priority areas for the first year.
- b. What goals and objectives are you currently working on?
- Within Student Achievement and the WBWF plan, primary focus is on addressing student achievement gap and performance growth in reading and math.
  - Within Facilities, the Board is waiting for the assessment report from ISG and then will be developing a plan for next steps.
  - Within Workforce, work continues with planning staff development opportunities; developing a system to track and address employee recruitment, development, and retention; and implementation of a new teacher evaluation system.
  - Within Finance, a three-year budget forecasting model is in development.
- c. What goals and objectives need to be modified in order to move forward over the next 1-3 years?
- Allow yourself to adjust timelines as well as measures to be used in assessing our progress.
  - Within Student Achievement, continue to modify targets, benchmarks, and timelines moving forward especially in the area of Closing Achievement Gap. Challenge is to determine most effective strategies and actions based on data review and examining best practice.
  - Within Student Support, challenge to prioritize objectives of increasing student and community involvement.
  - Within Facilities, will depend on facility assessment.
  - Within Workforce, unsure at this time.
  - Within Communication & Marketing, timelines may have to be adjusted especially in the goal area of marketing the school district. Unsure as to next steps?
  - Within Finance, may need to adjust timelines as to engagement and role of Finance Committee and communication efforts?
- d. Are there any objectives that should be added due to changes that have occurred over the past year?
- Not sure at this time?
- e. What questions do you have for MSBA?
- Ongoing support and services
  - Future review
  - Action plan tools

**6. ISG Update** – The administrative team met with representatives from ISG on August 16 for the purpose of reviewing a draft report. Revisions will be made in preparation for a Board presentation scheduled for Wednesday, September 20 beginning at 5:30 pm in the Board Room.

**7. Policy Committee Meeting Recap** – The Policy Committee met on Tuesday, August 1, 2017. The agenda included:

- a. Review of annual policy revisions from MSBA to recommend to Board for first reading. The committee recommended forwarding the MSBA policies as recommended. Two policies were removed from the list as requested by administration for further review.

The policies were 613 (Graduation Requirements) and 616 (School District System Accountability). The policies will be presented to the Committee when ready.

- b. Review of Policy 203.6 (Consent Agendas). Administration recommended no changes were needed to the policy in order for the Board to move forward with adding a Consent Agenda to the Board meeting agenda. The Committee reviewed a sample draft of a consent agenda. For the consent agenda, the board will be furnished with background materials on each item or will have discussed it at a previous meeting. These will be acted upon with one vote without discussion. If a board member wants to discuss any item, it will be pulled out of the consent agenda and will be voted on separately.
  - c. Review of Policy 206 (Public Participation in School Board Meetings / Complaints about Persons at School Board Meetings and Data Privacy Considerations), and considered recommended revisions in order to move forward with adding “Public Comments” to the regular Board meeting agenda. The Committee recommended moving the policy forward to the Board for a first reading at the August 21, 2017 School Board meeting. The Committee also reviewed a sample Public Comment Request form to be used at Board meetings.
  - d. Review of a new Policy 534 (Unpaid Meal Charges) that is a required policy. The Committee reviewed the MSBA recommended policy along with administrative modifications to reflect local interests. The Committee asked for further work to be done and bring back to the Committee.
- 8. Board Agenda Format Revision** – You will notice the agenda format for August 21 looks a little different with the inclusion of the Consent Agenda. In addition to the Consent Agenda, the agenda includes a Report section intended for items not requiring Board action. A Recommended Action section is included for the purpose of including items requiring Board action that do not fall under the Consent Agenda. I encourage the Board to discuss the changes and provide feedback.
- 9. Upcoming Board Work Sessions:** The following dates have been identified for upcoming Board work sessions.
- a. Wednesday, September 6 beginning at 5:30 pm in the Board Room to review progress made on the Board goals for 2016-2017, conducting a self-evaluation, and identify work goals for 2017-2018.
  - b. Wednesday, September 20 beginning at 5:30 pm in the Board Room for the purpose of having ISG present findings of the facility assessment.
- 10. New Staff Orientation:** Board members are invited to join us for the start of the new staff orientation on Monday, August 21, beginning at 8:00 am in the Secondary School Media Center.
- 11. Kick-off Breakfast and Keynote Speaker:** The Board will be hosting the staff breakfast on Monday, August 28, at the Methodist Church in Ellendale. We needed to change the location due to maintenance issues at the Elementary School. We are finalizing the caterer for the breakfast. We will want to be ready to serve starting by 7:45 am. Following the breakfast, Board members are invited to remain for our keynote speaker, Mama J. Please let me know how I may assist the Board with set-up. In the past, Board members have gathered the night before to set-up and decorate.

Thank you for all you do!  
Dale N. Carlson, Ph.D.  
Superintendent