

Superintendent Report

School Board Meeting
November 21, 2016

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 October 14, 21, 28 and November 4 & 11 publications.

A. Information, Communication, and Correspondence

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

Health: Anxiety about school can feel like being chased by a lion

Courts: Fight over transgender locker room lawsuit roils Virginia

Regulations: U.S. Education Department releases long-delayed regulations for teacher-preparation programs

ESSA committee votes to allow school districts to replace MCAs with ACT or SAT

Policy: Board approves revised open forum policy

Curriculum: Kindergarten is becoming the new first grade

Testing: Redefining school accountability

Safety: Farmington Area School District implements Run-Hide-Fight method for active shooter scenarios

Every Student Succeeds Act: ESSA online meeting scheduled for November 2

Graduation: College courses for high school students is a touchy subject in small school districts

Climate: How a happy school can help kids succeed

Youth: Teen night owls struggle to learn and control emotions

Politics: What will Donald Trump do on education? Seeking clues on Common Core, school choice and the Every Student Succeeds Act

Politics: What Donald Trump's win means for education

Politics: What does a President Trump mean for public education?

- World's Best Workforce 2015-16 Summary Report and Public Meeting
- Board Member Quarterly Check-ins with Dale
- Superintendent Work Goals and Objectives for 2016-17
- School Board Work Goals for 2016-17
- Building and Grounds Committee Meeting
- New School Board Member Mentoring Program Development Committee Meeting

- MSBA Annual Leadership Conference
- School Board Candidate Forum
- School Make-up Days for September 22 & 23 Cancellations
- Organizational Meeting Date
- AgCentric Trailer
- November 15 Special School Board Meeting Agenda
- Congratulations to Newly Elected School Board Members Neil Schlaak, Dan Schmidt, and Karen Flatness
- American Education Week November 14 -18
- November 11Cancelled School Day and Plan for Make-up?

B. Celebrations and Recognitions

- **2016 Homecoming Royalty:** Congratulations to Rachel Collins and Alex Blaschko for being named Homecoming Queen and King.
- **NRHEG Football:** Congratulations to senior Jack Schultz for being named to the Minnesota Football Showcase All-Star Game.

2. *Board & Administrator for Board Members Monthly Publication –October 2016 Reflection - I* have provided a brief reflection on a few of the articles from the October publication. I hope you have had an opportunity to read and reflect.

- Study the board-superintendent relationship to understand what makes it work – The article offers three principles that can help ensure an effective relationship between the board and superintendent including:
 - ✓ Include the superintendent as a team member.
 - ✓ Stress effective and open communication.
 - ✓ Build trust.
- 10 rules for boosting community trust – The article shares 10 rules for sound communication between the board and the community beginning with honesty and listening.
- Policy review can protect district on bullying issue – The article highlights the importance for having a strong bullying policy in place and systems in place to enforce and carryout the policy.
- School board accountability: Does your board measure up when the gavel falls? – The article offers a checklist to determine how accountable a board is with its meeting performance. Transparency, timeliness, openness, and accurate records are included.
- Asked to comment on a school issue? Keep these guidelines in mind – The article provides helpful guidelines for individual board members when being contacted by media.

3. **Building and Grounds Committee Met** -- The Committee met on November 15. The agenda included:

- Facility Planning
- City of New Richland Athletic Field Lease and other Athletic Field needs

The Committee will be exploring further options for conducting a facility study. ICS provided information at the meeting pertaining to planning efforts prior the June 2015 referendum vote, and also provided thoughts on potential next steps leading to completing a facility study prior to September 2017 as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Administration will continue to work with the City of New Richland regarding a new lease that will include specific details on the management and maintenance of the ball fields. Information was also shared with the Committee regarding improvements to the dugouts at the Ellendale baseball field, as well as red rock delivered to the site as well as the Ellendale softball field. Accessibility issues for the Ellendale softball fields were discussed with no special action at this time.

4. **New School Board Member Orientation** – I met with our newly elected Board members on Thursday, November 17, as they begin to make the important transition to serving on the School Board. We reviewed many of the topics included on the draft Orientation Plan that is being presented to the School Board on November 21. The development of the Orientation Plan is in response to the Board’s goal to *develop and implement a mentoring program for new school board members by December 1, 2016.*
5. **MSBA Annual Leadership Conference** – The 96th Annual Leadership Conference of the Minnesota School Boards Association will be held January 12-13, 2017, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The Conference concludes at noon on Friday, January 13. I will be planning to leave on Wednesday, January 11 and perhaps attend some of the “Early Bird” workshops and pre-conference events. There is the possibility I will leave on Tuesday, January 10 as there is a Phase 1 Training Tuesday evening, and then Phase 2 Training throughout the day on Wednesday. My departure on Tuesday will be contingent upon our newly elected board members attendance at the Phase Trainings. Sue and I will need to know by **Monday, November 28,** those Board members planning to attend and how many nights of lodging is needed. Sue has reserved rooms sufficient for all Board members for two nights (Wednesday and Thursday), and has also reserved an additional night (Tuesday) for those new Board members who may attend the Phase I and/or Phase II Trainings. She will revise the reservations prior to the cancellation date. Please contact Sue with your plans.
6. **2017-2018 School Calendar Development Update** – Originally, I had communicated to the Calendar Committee and School Board I would be recommending a 2017-2018 School Year Calendar to the Board at the December School Board meeting and then ask for the Board to approve the schedule in January. In a November 3 e-mail communication to the Board, I mentioned the likelihood of a one-month delay as we consider the possibility of *flexible learning days*. In addition, since there will be a change of the Board between December and January, I believe it would be best to delay the presentation of the calendar. Researching the possibility of *flexible learning days* as an alternative to having teachers and students report to the school buildings continues. Examining this possibility may delay the presentation of a calendar to the Board if it is believed that implementation of a *flexible learning day model* could take place for the 2017-2018 school year. At this time, the Board should anticipate a calendar to be presented no later than the March School Board meeting.
7. **Flexible Learning Days** –As I mentioned above, the Calendar Committee, including administration, continues to research the possibility of implementing a *flexible learning day model* as an alternative to having teachers and students report to the school buildings. The most common scenario being considered is implementing the *flexible learning day model* when the District must close our school buildings in response to a weather event or some other event

preventing students and staff to report to the school buildings. Holding a *flexible learning day* could take the place of having to consider making up a cancelled school day. As I shared with the Board via e-mail communications on October 18 and November 3, there are essential questions to be answered as we move forward in considering the implementation of flexible learning days including, but not limited to:

- How do we make sure the focus is on learning at high levels for all students?
- What measures will be in place to ensure that the model is successful?
- What steps will be in place to ensure student and staff accountability?
- What does the model look like for early elementary students?
- Are there master agreement issues to be addressed for teachers and/or support staff?
- Will the plan result in a loss of pay for support staff?
- Are there requirements on how to report student attendance on the flexible learning days?
- Are there technology issues including access?
- What is the process for involving all stakeholders in the conversation i.e. staff, parents, students, community?
- Board policy?

Thank you for all you do!

Dale N. Carlson, Ph.D.
Superintendent