

Superintendent Report: July Board Meeting
Submitted on July 13, 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK:

Planning for Fall: We have spent much of the last month working on plans for fall. In addition to more hiring of support staff and ensuring all of our Schedule B positions are filled, we have been working with all of our newly hired Aggies to help them to transition into their respective roles as they prepare for fall. Much time has been spent personally with the new personnel in the executive assistant and athletic director spots.

Welcoming New Families: We have also been working on preparing for new students who are planning to join us in the fall. We have had several new high school students enroll in the past few weeks, along with families that have moved into the district. We are giving tours, sending information and getting classrooms prepared to help them make a smooth transition.

District Improvement Planning: After close examination of the MI Blueprint document, in addition to considering the work of our AITs and the work our admin team did while completing our state reporting in June, our District Improvement Plan (DIP) has been formally compiled into a draft document. The DIP will be shared with our District School Improvement Team (DSIT) when we meet in early August and then with the Board at the August meeting. Our administrative team goals were developed and I am working on finalizing my goals for fall, that will also be shared with the Board for consideration in August.

Fall Protocols: We have also been working on our protocols for fall. After getting the most recent guidance from the CDC, and conversations with the health department, we worked with representatives from our staff and were pleased to be able to share some of our basic plan components this week with staff and families. This is ongoing work as we continue to plan and put mitigation measures in place to do our best to keep our students and staff safe as they return in the fall.

We did have some students join our online option for fall after hearing about our plan and I had a few conversations with families with polar opposite views who expressed their thoughts about the shortcomings in what was proposed.

We are aware that our plan to recommend but not require masks may mean that more students will be considered direct contacts if we have positive cases in the fall, but we have chosen to take this approach because of the other layered mitigation measures we are putting in place.

Back to School Meetings and Events: In addition to all of this, work is being done to prepare for many orientations and meetings that rev up starting the first week of August as we have an administrator orientation day, new teacher orientation day, launch DSIT for the upcoming year and engage in professional development planning and host multiple student back-to-school events.

ATHLETICS:

Athletic Updates:

Mr. Dassance has been a very visible presence throughout the district as he has begun his time as an Aggie. He has met with multiple coaches, administrators and other stakeholders and has also increased our presence on social media. He has also agreed to be part of our Relevance and Relationships AIT for the fall. His enthusiasm and positivity about joining our Aggie Family has been appreciated by all he has met. Much appreciation goes to Ms. Minnis, who has helped him in his transition and has continued to work on the golf outing fundraiser that will take place this weekend!

Vacancies: We have posted for a Varsity Cheer Coach and will be posting for the JV football coach position as well.

Summer Athletics: Many of our programs have held youth camps and open gyms/camp experiences for our students throughout the summer. We appreciate the dedication of our Varsity coaches as they provide these opportunities for our students.

BUDGET UPDATES:

Planning/Updates: The Governor approved the plan for funding schools since we last met that ensures that all schools are meeting the same minimum funding level for the first time in decades. We are thankful that the per pupil funding will be more than we had budgeted as we plan to address the needs of our students in the fall. We have yet to get the relief funding that has been designated for schools, but that will also help as we add mitigation measures like plastic barriers and additional staff in multiple areas.

We have started recording changes for Revision I of the budget based on actual hiring and other changes that we will learn over the next several months, including enrollment numbers. We are still currently anticipating more students than was budgeted.

COMMUNICATION:

District Communication: The district newsletter went out recently, as did the communication about our basic plan for returning to school.

Building-Specific Communication: More details about the plans for 21-22 will be shared with families by building principals on August 2nd. Much work is being done to finalize every detail in light of our current low-spread/positivity COVID status to help keep it that way when our students and staff return.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PARTNERSHIPS:

District Kudos: It was a very significant honor to be asked by renown assessment and grading guru Ken O'Connor to contribute to the most updated version of one of his grading books. We will be submitting both district and teacher information for his consideration. It was nice to speak with him recently, along with one of our teachers, and to hear from him directly about the high quality of the work our district has done in this area.

We were able to meet and get to know Ken several years ago when we were asked to send teams out to the national grading and assessment conferences in Portland, Oregon, so it was nice to reconnect and get his thoughts about our ongoing work.

Much effort has been devoted to helping plan and host a Celebration of Life on Saturday, July 17 at 2 pm for Aggie Alum Adam Jones, who passed away last February. This will take place in the middle school gym, where Adam excelled as a basketball player and all community members are invited. Much appreciation to the maintenance and cleaning staff as well as community member Steve Moran, who is once again helping us with sound.

CURRICULUM/TRAINING:

Still Working: In addition to the teachers who have provided summer intervention and credit recovery support for our students, teachers have continued to come in throughout the summer to meet and plan for a number of different plans for fall including: changes in Power School, advisory/house system work, moving and setting up classrooms and assessment work.

DATA:

Misc: We have not yet received our school data from the spring testing. We also anticipate the AP test scores sometime in July.

FACILITIES:

Bond Update: Conversations have been ongoing related to final completion of all work associated with the bond project. More discussion will take place in closed session with the Board at the July meeting.

Overall Facilities Work: As teachers move to different classrooms, work has to be done to prepare the rooms for different uses, which Rick has been doing throughout the summer. We also added six more air conditioning units to elementary classrooms since all of our online teachers are coming back in person. Rick is also making the plastic barriers that will be in place in several areas throughout the district. Many other smaller projects are in progress throughout the district as we prepare for fall, as summer is the prime time to get these accomplished.

PERSONNEL UPDATE:

Staffing: All of our teaching positions are still filled and we are finalizing hiring in our food service department. We are very thankful to be in this position at this time. **It is important to send a word of thanks to the community, as we have been told that the quality of our facilities was a deciding factor for several of our new hires in choosing to accept our offer of employment.**

POLICY WORK:

Shannon has been working with NEOLA to get trained in how to upload and post our policies using Board Docs.

SAFETY:

Every aspect of our school day and every event is being examined through the lens of how to create as much normalcy as possible, while also working to make it as safe as possible for students, staff and families. This will be clear when plans are released by each building and as event details are rolled out in the next few weeks. In general, protocols and events will resemble the past, but will be tweaked.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

Several teachers are attending training this summer and working to be the best they can be for our students this fall. Teachers are also working in their rooms to continue to take inventory and create welcoming, organized spaces for student return this fall.

TECHNOLOGY:

There is quite a delay in the orders we placed for technology for fall, but we realize this is a national issue and will look forward to getting everything in place as soon as it arrives.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

Registration Day- August 10

Opening Day for staff- August 16

(Board members are invited to attend the Welcome Back Breakfast at 8 AM in the MS Commons)

First Day of School- August 17

Check out the Aggie App Calendar to find upcoming school events!