

Superintendent Report: October Board Meeting
Submitted on October 24, 2024

Administrative Updates:

October is National Principal Appreciation Month, providing us with a special opportunity to celebrate and honor our remarkable principals for their visionary leadership and commitment to student success. I couldn't be prouder of the incredible work done by Josh, Tania, and Amy every day.

We are also observing National School Lunch Week and National School Bus Safety Week this month. Our food service staff and drivers play essential roles in supporting our students beyond the classroom, ensuring they feel valued and safe in every setting.

The Student Superintendent Advisory Council is back in session! We had our first meeting today over lunch, with two student representatives from each of our elementary, middle, and high schools. Throughout the year, these students will advise on district matters, provide insights, and suggest actionable solutions. Our discussions today covered Chromebooks vs. iPads, the pilot math curriculum, arts programs, and athletics.

Looking ahead, the administrative team and I will be meeting with Debbie MacFalone on October 29 to further our study of *Strengths-Based Leadership*. We are identifying our individual top five strengths and will explore how they support the top four needs of our employees: maintain trust, provide stability, demonstrate compassion, and inspire hope—values that reflect our district's vision.

The mentor-mentee group met on October 3. Leah Braman and Kristen Ream facilitated the session which focused on the *15 Fixes for Broken Grades*. The meeting started with a review of the first three fixes:

- a. Include only achievement
- b. Support learners to meet timelines
- c. Only use evidence of achievement

And, introduced fixes four through six:

- d. How to handle academic dishonesty
- e. Don't consider attendance in grade determination
- f. Use individual achievement evidence, not group work

On October 9, our administrative team collaborated with the District School Improvement Team (DSIT) to plan our upcoming half-day professional learning session. To improve students' work ethic and to help move through the curriculum at an appropriate pace, we have mandated that students complete 75% of their practices before taking a summative exam. We listened to feedback from the team for early indications of its effectiveness. We also distributed an article from the September edition of Ed Week, *What Is Standards-Based Grading, and How Does It Work?*

It has been a joy to read to our preschool and kindergarten students this month—an experience that always lifts my spirits! Additionally, I had the opportunity to observe our pilot implementation

of the Envision math program in 5th-6th grade and Algebra II classes. The program is proving to be quite rigorous. For instance, fifth graders are mastering exponential notation, while sixth graders tackle complex word problems involving mixed numbers. Our Algebra students are also delving into arithmetic sequences using sigma notation:

$$\sum_{i=1}^9 2i - 6$$

Communication:

Our fall newsletter, *The Aggie Weekly*, has been delivered, and Shannon did a fantastic job bringing it to life. It’s a valuable resource for community members who may not be directly connected to our schools.

This year, we’re maintaining a consistent and positive presence on social media. To streamline efforts, I’ve linked our Instagram and Facebook pages. Feel free to check them out!

Feedback on ParentSquare continues to be positive from both families and staff, reinforcing its effectiveness as a communication tool.

Budget:

We have been analyzing our student enrollment data since Count Day. Dansville Schools was predicting a 15 student drop from the previous year, but experienced a loss of 30 students (FTE). Our official count came in at 718. This chart below compares last year’s headcount to this year’s. We knew the incoming kindergarten class was going to be small, and that’s why we did not have a beginning kindergarten class this year. Nothing else was too surprising except the loss of eight (8) students from fifth to sixth grade. After speaking to Tania and Amy, I learned that three of the students were residents of Mason and had always planned to move to Mason after elementary, but the remaining five moved completely out of the area.

| Count Comparison | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------------------|---|
| | Fall 2023 | Fall 2024 | Difference | Difference by Cohort | Notes |
| Kindergarten | 64 | 55 | -9 | -12.44 | Difference between graduating seniors and new kindergarten students 14 / 15 of the 2023-2024 beginning kindergarten students (coded as kindergarten) went to traditional kindergarten in 2024-2025 |
| 1st | 48 | 49 | 1 | -15 | |
| 2nd | 59 | 51 | -8 | 3 | |
| 3rd | 72 | 57 | -15 | -2 | |
| 4th | 55 | 73 | 18 | 1 | |
| 5th | 64 | 56 | -8 | 1 | |
| 6th | 52 | 56 | 4 | -8 | |
| 7th | 62.34 | 54 | -8.34 | 2 | |
| 8th | 45 | 59.16 | 14.16 | -3.18 | |
| 9th | 54 | 47 | -7 | 2 | |
| 10th | 48 | 54 | 6 | 0 | |
| 11th | 56 | 47 | -9 | -1 | |
| 12th | 67.44 | 60 | -7.44 | 4 | |
| | | | -28.62 | -28.62 | |

School of choice numbers have remained relatively stable:
187 in 2024-2025 versus 181 in 2023-2024

Safety:

Safety remains our top priority. We are collaborating with the Ingham ISD public relations team to create a Crisis Communication Plan and Response Messaging Manual. This manual will provide template language for quick and effective communication in any crisis situation, no matter the scale.

I am also coordinating with United Image Group to install safety film in key areas. Additionally, EverOn has completed the relocation of buzzers at the main entrances of all three buildings. While there are some minor programming issues with the doors, we are addressing them with the company.

Given recent events, I want to emphasize our ongoing work with a security consulting firm. They have provided recommendations to strengthen campus security, and we are systematically addressing these tasks within our available budget. While there are calls from some community members to install metal detectors, our consultants advise against this approach. Evidence shows that detectors are not consistently effective (as seen in cases like Sandy Hook) and may negatively impact the culture of our learning environment. We believe that the most effective approach to school safety is through heightened vigilance and proactive measures.

UPCOMING DATES:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| October 30: | Half-Day Dismissal: Professional Development |
| October 31: | Halloween Parade, Elementary |
| November 6-7: | Elementary Conferences |
| November 7: | Ladybug Auction |
| November 11: | Veterans Day |
| November 23: | PTO Craft Show |
| November 27-29: | NO SCHOOL: Thanksgiving Break |

POSITIVE NOTES:

- We appreciate the secondary families who attended conferences this past month. We love partnering with you in the education of your children!
- Many thanks to Jaime Ruckel and Nicki Kalczynski for organizing dinner for teachers and staff during 6-12 grade conferences.
- Todd Magsig, a Dansville alum, recently lost his father due to illness. At the memorial service, guests were encouraged to provide monetary donations to our athletic program in lieu of flowers. What a kind gesture!
- Congratulations to our Middle School Cross Country Team who were Regional Champions!