

Superintendent Report: January Board Meeting
January 25, 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK:

Mid-year is the time to check-in with each staff member. We review their professional growth plans and the progress they have made toward their goals.

January marks our second half-day of professional learning devoted to school improvement goals. The administrative team and DSIT worked collaboratively to design the sessions for January 31.

I have met with DEA leadership to review the 2025-2026 calendar which is on the agenda for discussion during this month's meeting. There is one big change for the 25-26 school year: ending after Memorial Day. This calendar was collaboratively developed between administrators and DEA leadership. At the request of our teaching staff, we were trying to avoid an early August start. This calendar allows Dansville Schools to end the year before June 1, and it allows June to remain as an intervention month. We also decided to leave the Friday before spring break as a day off for those families and staff members who may be traveling over spring break. The trade-off to make this happen means that our Welcome Back Day for staff will occur on the Thursday before school begins.

We are still working closely with Opportunity Thrive to bring coaching to our teaching staff. OT initiated a mid-year wellness check and will personally reach out to anyone who scores within an at-risk range to see if they would like support. So far, we have only had about four people participate, but OT assures us that it usually starts small handful of employees.

I will be reaching out to the policy committee soon to update policies centered around labor laws. As you know, there was quite a bit of reform in the Public Employees Relation Act (PERA) last fall that repealed many prohibitive subjects for our bargaining units. NEOLA has established policies that reflect these changes in law which need to be reviewed and adopted by the board.

On January 18, I attended a session through MASA specifically designed for new superintendents where we discussed instructional leadership. Relationships were emphasized for the basis of learning, and we worked directly with Hanover Research to review best instructional practices in the post-covid era of education. This past month I have also attended professional learning through Thrun on the Open Meetings Act and all things FOIA.

We met with our first and second year mentors and mentees on January 25. We continue to focus on best practices in instruction, assessment, and classroom management.

FACILITIES:

I have been in contact with WM Floyd, the contractor for the middle school HVAC project. The units are in, and they assure me that they are all set to do the install over spring break.

The ISD and I have been preparing an invitation to bid for the parking lot rehab that was tabled in 2022. We are looking forward to reviewing those bids when they come in.

Rick has been working on these extremely cold days to address some issues we've had with the new HVAC units at the elementary. Some units would trip the freezestat which would require a manual reset. We have a Trane technician that will be on site to help us problem solve.

The catch basins in the parking lots have been cleaned out. We are waiting until the ground is either frozen or past the spring thaw to finish vacuuming the basins that are located in our grassy areas. However, the basin closest to the retention pond cannot be cleaned until the pond has been drained as they are at the same level. If we decide to drain the pond to clean this basin, we should also consider dredging it.

BUDGET UPDATES:

Look for Revision I to go before the board in February.

ESSER (COVID) funds are coming to a close in September. David, Reaelynn, and I are ensuring that all of our compliance work has been completed as we've been told that the state will be auditing the use of the funds and comparing it to posted plans.

Great news! Moody's Investors Service has upgraded Dansville Schools' issuer and general obligation unlimited tax (GOULT) rating from an A3 to an A2. The upgrade rating is driven by a consistently sound financial profile that supports a gradual trend of improving our fund balance. There are only two ratings that are higher: AA1 and AAA. This type of rating is a way to measure the creditworthiness of a bond, which corresponds to the cost of borrowing for an issuer. The higher our rating, the lower interest the bond will carry.

SAFETY:

The principals and I are diving deep into the Oxford report with assistance from Secure Education Consultants. We continue to discuss and plan safety improvements as grant funds allow. Mr. Adams from IISD is working with us to develop an upgrade to our camera system. We conducted our second lockdown drill of the year on January 24.

Cybersecurity measures are going in to place as presented last November. Districts within the ISD have entered into a consortium agreement with a company that monitors the network 24/7, uses AI to detect anomalies, and provides end-point detection of potential cyber attacks. The price point for Dansville has come under the bid threshold and does not require board action.

Dansville will be hosting a tabletop exercise with Ingham County Sheriff's office on February 9. There will be no disruption to learning as our school leaders talk through an active shooter scenario in efforts to deeply understand our emergency plans and make necessary adjustments as needed.

I was able to attend a virtual webinar with the FBI on January 11. The session was called, "Responding to and Investigating Hoax Bomb Threats and Swatting." They had excellent takeaways for both school administrators and law enforcement.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS:

Winter Homecoming is quickly approaching!

Even though kindergarten round-up isn't until February 22, we already have 32 students enrolled for next year.

Save the Date: The Linsey Ebert Memorial Commons will be dedicated in her honor on February 13, 2024 at 6:30 pm. Please join us for this occasion.

I will be joining the planning committee for Memorial Day weekend. We plan to meet on January 31 at the village hall.

UPCOMING DATES:

- February 2: Winter Homecoming
- February 13: Linsey Ebert Memorial Dedication, 6:30 pm
- February 19: NO SCHOOL - PRESIDENTS' DAY
- February 20: Elementary STEAM Night
- February 22: Kindergarten Round-Up

ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

- Loved seeing Dansville High School students and staff featured on the local news in a positive way. WLNS aired a piece under their "Extraordinary Student" segment on December 22 which featured our equestrian team. Mr. Andrews and several high school students were featured on WILX on January 9 for hosting the "Save a Life Tour."
- Congratulations to former graduate Carson Voss for making the transfer to MSU as a punter for the Spartans!
- We wanted to say welcome to Marcia O'Brien who is filling in for Amy Popek. She is knowledgeable, experienced, relational, and a great problem solver.
- We also wanted to say congratulations to the Popek Family. Baby Siena was welcomed into this world on January 20th.
- Mrs. St. Amant did a fantastic job with the Little Play again this year. It was rescheduled a few times due to weather, but our students eventually got to enjoy, "Happily Ever After" on January 17.
- If you have never joined Dansville Elementary's all school sing-along, then you are missing a treat. Mrs. McNabb did a beautiful job leading 300+ students in holiday carols on December 22. There will be patriotic-themed sing-along on the last day of school.