

Superintendent Report: December Board Meeting
Submitted on December 8, 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK:

Personally, I have been trying to put in as many hours as possible to help the district with this unplanned leadership transition. It's not easy to process the ending of a 30-year career unexpectedly in such a short window. It has been particularly sad and difficult going through my notes of draft plans for the district for the next several years, reminding me that, in spite of the many rumors I have been hearing, my heart's plan was always to be here with my Aggie Family for many years to come.

I have been working hard to finish some of the projects and plans that were started but interrupted first by the intense time requirements of the construction project followed immediately by the intense demands of the pandemic. I am trying my best to do everything I can to wrap things up and put the district in the best position possible moving forward.

Part of this transition work has been to work with Mike Kapp to develop a draft plan and timeline for the hiring of a new superintendent, in accordance with our hiring protocols. This draft plan and timeline as well as a draft job posting will be presented to the Superintendent Search Committee and then the committee will share it with the full Board at the December meeting.

Our office changed locations 4 times during the construction project, so time has been spent finally looking through everything that was plopped into our current location to make sure things are in good order in preparation for a new superintendent.

We continue to work with the nurse to help with all things related to contact tracing, testing, documentation and communication related to COVID-19.

Each principal submitted updated goals for this school year. We have had to cancel several of our planned individual meetings to discuss their goals due to unplanned work such as covering for classes, dealing with rumors, etc. that have prevented those from happening. The principals have remained focused on support for the teachers and making improvements that would directly impact students. We hope to be able to follow through on meeting before Christmas break.

We have been meeting together to discuss transition plans and for me to share other information that could be beneficial in light of my departure.

Staffing continues to be a challenge and again, stretches our staff daily as everyone pitches in to help cover absences.

We all attended additional Title IX training recently to ensure we are in full compliance with the law. Title IX is expected to go through more changes this spring and more training will then be needed after the law is changed.

Our Aggie Family has again worked to provide various levels of support for school families including holiday meals, gifts and other needs as they arise.

I have continued to communicate and attend meetings with all county superintendents to talk about the latest challenges, as well as policies and practices in place in our area.

ATHLETICS:

Varsity football coach Jeff Graf resigned from his position recently. The position has been posted.

Our winter sports teams have started games/meets. Our girls' basketball team is 2-0 and off to a strong start!

I have continued to meet regularly with Mr. Dassance and also talked specifically about long-term athletic department goals that the district has had for his consideration. These include the establishment of an Athletic Hall of Fame.

BUDGET UPDATES:

The first Revision of the 21-22 budget is on the agenda for approval this month.

All contracts are now set until they expire on June 30, 2023. I met with the non-bargaining unit members to explain the details about their situations. Please note that after the ESSER III survey was completed, the hazard pay will be paid as part of that funding, which will delay its receipt by employees.

Raelynn and I have been working on getting everything ready for the ESSER III grant application, which is due on December 15, 2021. This includes creating and analyzing the survey results from the ESSER III survey that I sent to our families and we posted to the community before Thanksgiving.

Based on the results, Raelynn and I will complete a plan that also takes into consideration the needs and priorities identified in the district improvement plan and the asset management plan.

COMMUNICATION:

There is ongoing communication with the district around COVID-19, the recent tragedy in Oxford as well as things like the Day of Giving, the school nurse and the ESSER III survey.

It looks like the requested written submission followed by an interview with the Athena Leadership folks has made the latest cut as they move forward towards publishing a new revision of their book. I submitted a piece about Celebrations and highlighted the district's intentionality in prioritizing celebration as evidenced by our 10 grand openings throughout the construction project.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PARTNERSHIPS/CONNECTIONS:

The Board will host the annual Staff Holiday Breakfast on Thursday, December 16th with a backup date of Friday, December 17th. This is a very important annual event in the district that is evidence of the mutual respect and trust shared between the staff and the Board. This healthy relationship takes work to establish and has been something that has set our district apart for many years. All Board members typically attend this event and your presence and kind words/holiday greetings are very much appreciated by the staff- probably more now than ever in recent memory.

I met with the DSEF leaders to talk about the plans for the February auction, to share a vision I had hoped to work on with them related to starting college/post-secondary accounts for every Aggie kindergartener and to talk through other questions they had. This is a crucial partnership and an important relationship for the district. They were encouraged to use the Scorevision boards in the gym to advertise for their events, as their sole purpose is to raise funds for the school. They will be able to use the new electronic signage as well when it is in place.

We met with the Daktronics rep after the Board approved the purchase of the two electronic signs, to finalize the use of the grant funds to purchase the signs. These signs can be accessed remotely so that staff can provide the community with on-time updates regarding school info and events. Our administrators are excited to work with our Aggie Media Club as well as others to make the most of these new tools to enhance district communication with our stakeholders and to bring this long-time desire of the community to life.

One of our long-time volunteers, Dee Brown, passed away recently. Dee, her late husband Don Jr. and her mother-in-law Eva, sold tickets at our athletic events for many years. It is for this reason that I will be proposing a change to the Naming policy as well as asking the Board to consider naming the Fuller Field ticket booth after their family. I suggest the sign read as follows: The Brown Family Ticket Booth, with special thanks to Eva, Don Jr., and Dee for their decades of service to our Aggie Family.

We have also planned to propose the naming of the wrestling room in honor of former youth wrestling coach Greg Mack. Greg coached not only youth wrestling, but baseball, softball, basketball and football. He touched the lives of hundreds of young Aggies through his genuine love and intentional father-like guidance. Greg was instrumental in ensuring that a wrestling room was included as part of the bond project and it is hoped that the Board would consider naming the wrestling room as follows: The Coach Mack Memorial Wrestling Room, Dedicated in loving memory of Coach Greg Mack, 6/27/69- 2/15/17 (including the Mack Strong logo).

Both of these naming items are on the agenda for the Board's consideration.

In addition, much of the district-wide signage/artwork that was planned as part of the bond project has been finalized, including adding the district mission statement, Aggie logo artwork, historical signage and identifying signage throughout the district.

We have a new student rep joining the Board this month. Markas Hamlin is a junior at DHS. Ms. Dupuis shared the following about Markas: He is a member of the band and the jazz band, attends the law enforcement program at the Wilson Talent Center and is an excellent student with an impressive GPA. Markas also shared with her that he is active in his church and youth group.

CURRICULUM/TRAINING:

There was a District School Improvement Team (DSIT) meeting after Thanksgiving to help our district teacher leaders plan for the January PD and beyond. The structures we have put into place have laid out a long-term professional learning plan for the district.

We have also been finalizing binders with additional materials for the Aggie Problem-Solving Teams so they are set for the foreseeable future.

Met with the teacher leader of our social studies Aggie Improvement Team to talk about plans for the next professional development time and brainstorm plans moving forward.

Plan to meet next week at the request of a teacher leader about the long-term vision for math/engineering for the district.

DATA:

Another one of our HS math classes finished the entire Spring Math intervention since the last report. The district's commitment to Spring Math has paid off for our students much sooner than expected.

FACILITIES:

Much time and work has been devoted to preparing for mediation, as per the Board's decision earlier this fall as part of the wrap up of the bond project.

All projects related to Graham Construction have been wrapped up, although they have offered to help with a few more items over Christmas break, which is much appreciated.

Please note that there are no electrical code issues in the elementary. This is another rumor that has been circulating. The entire district was inspected as part of the bond project, including an electrical inspection of the elementary.

Meetings with both Rick Miller and with Mike Sykes took place recently to be sure the district asset management plan is updated. Other projects such as more MS/HS parking lot signage, etc were also shared.

PERSONNEL UPDATES:

It is hoped that the district will be able to work with IISD superintendent Jason Mellema as an interim support as the district embarks on a superintendent search.

The district had no applicants that met the grant requirements to fill the elementary counselor position. The district still has a secondary math position open as well.

POLICY WORK:

The policy committee met on November 29 to talk through all of the NEOLA policy updates, a suggested revision to the naming policy to allow the ticket booth to be named for a living member of the Brown family, as well as to discuss the many items raised by Mr. Stolz at the last board meeting.

SAFETY:

In light of the recent events in our state, we have reminded staff and when appropriate, parents, about our safety protocols. We use ALICE as our approach to an intruder or hostile person in the district. We also have several strategies in place to do our best to ensure the safety of our Aggie Family. We have been advised not to share all of our strategies broadly to help protect our school.

Our district received a Certificate of Excellence from the Michigan State Police for achieving 100% pass rate for our school bus safety inspections again this year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

Met with leaders from Ingham ISD about the necessary steps to launch our Aggie Family Preschool second semester and after much consideration about the impact this would have on our staff to make this happen, we have decided to launch it next fall instead. Plans will continue to move forward, with classroom inspections happening after the school year ends. Much appreciation to Mr. Cox, who is continuing to fill out paperwork and attend inspections as we move closer to realizing this long-time district dream.

Opening before and after care with the preschool is the goal, but if necessary, opening the preschool will be prioritized.

TECHNOLOGY:

Our school district is well-equipped in the area of technology. We have chromebooks in every elementary classroom for students to use in small groups, we have iPads in place for students in grades 6-12, our classrooms are outfitted with Promethean boards, desk tops and other teacher-specific teaching tools and our computer labs have all been updated.

For the first time in many many years, the district anticipates no significant technology purchases for the next few years.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

*December 16: Staff Holiday Event w/the Board

*December 17: End of first semester/Winter Break begins

*January 3: Second semester begins

Check out the district calendar @ www.dansville.org to find upcoming school events!