

Superintendent Report: August Board Meeting
Submitted on August 20, 2017

Administrative work:

We had our first Administrative Orientation meeting on August 9th where we revisited the district vision and goals, administrative goals and reviewed everything that needs to be done to ensure a smooth start to the school year. We attended Marzano Evaluation training, held Registration Day, interviewed for open teaching positions, had a Community Day committee meeting, a DSIT meeting (where we finalize PD for teachers) and New Teacher Orientation last week. In addition to this, the HS had an iPad rollout session and the elementary had a back to school staff gathering. We have met throughout the summer to work on our staffing as various changes have arisen.

The district staff are serving on one of four K-12 Aggie Improvement Teams to work on our goals for the 2017-18 school year. Our teams will focus on literacy with distinct elementary and secondary subgroups, assessment practices and Healthy Habits. The details of this work will be shared at the Board Meeting as the entire District Improvement Plan is distributed.

The Welcome Back/Staff Recognition Breakfast takes place on Tuesday, August 22nd followed by teacher professional development. School starts on Wednesday with a half-day, followed by more teacher professional development.

Athletics:

Christy and I continue to meet and plan for athletics for this year. She is working very hard and has been a wonderful addition to the staff. All fall sports team are in full swing. We did have at least one angry parent as it relates to one-way transportation. Please let me know if you'd like more information about the concerns that were expressed.

Just to be clear, the one-way transportation was part of two months of budget presentations posted on the district website, Becky pointed out the changes to the athletic handbook/process when parents went through the tryout card process this summer and then we had an administrator in every team meeting at Meet the Aggies to personally discuss it.

Our new Varsity Softball Coach will be Bethany Walter. Bethany was an all-state player in high school and brings a strong vision to bring this program back. Sandy Hunt and Linsey Ebert will co-coach our 8th grade volleyball team. They have both coached volleyball for several years and Linsey played for U of M. We have not filled the JV Girls' basketball or wrestling positions, but are hoping to re-post these internally after all of our positions are filled and will keep working to get them filled.

Budget Info:

There will be changes to the budget that will be summarized in Revision I that gets presented later in the Fall/Winter. Staffing changes, actual enrollment and the implications of the actual adopted state budget are the biggest factors. Current enrollment is approximately 10 less than we budgeted. We will continue to monitor to establish a new number for Revision I. There were some pieces of good news with the audited numbers of the 16-17 budget. The details will be shared when the audit is complete and presented. Most of the changes were related to tax revenue at the local and county

level as well as a few staffing implications. We are still working on figuring out how the staffing changes for this year will end up impacting the budget.

We have yet to finalize a contract with DESPA. Negotiations will be discussed in closed session.

Communication:

The Back to School edition of the District Newsletter will be sent to the printer as soon as our staffing is finalized. The district has continued to use the School Messenger system, Facebook and Twitter to communicate as well.

Community Outreach/Partnerships:

We had a meeting last week with reps from the fire department, the township, the school, Miller-Davis and Kingscott. We reviewed the cost implications of the fire review changes and were thankful for the participation of the township, as fresh eyes brought a new perspective that will bring a good solution.

I will be meeting members of the Class of 1967 on Saturday for a tour of the middle school building.

Curriculum/Training:

We are going to work with ISD Science consultant Rob Stephenson to try to access curriculum materials to help boost our elementary STEAM program.

We sent a team of secondary teachers to Reading Apprenticeship training in August and look forward to its implementation in their classes. We also sent a team to Arts Integration training again this year at the Wharton. This is the program that gives us access to visiting professional artists.

During our August Professional Development, staff will receive training from a local company called Small Talk to learn more about how to recognize signs of abuse and neglect in children. In addition, they will be trained on the updates to our screening tool FastBridge and also learn about a new update to Power School, our student information and grading system.

Data:

We have not received any data from standardized testing that can be shared publicly. We hope to share the data at the September meeting.

Facilities:

The Band room should be demolished by the first day of school. The other outbuildings were demolished earlier in the summer. More abatement was required for the band building and has been completed.

Most of the site work is complete and utility work is in full swing. Work should be starting in the next few weeks on footings. Construction progress meetings are taking place biweekly and core team meetings will take place monthly starting in September.

Personnel Update:

New staff will be introduced at the board meeting on Monday. I've included a full update here even though some of these changes are not new. We were not able to find an EI teacher for the elementary behavior room, so unfortunately we will be discontinuing this program.

We hired Jenny Service, a longtime teacher in Jackson Northwest, to fill our fifth grade vacancy. She has three children in the district and brings a wealth of experience along with outstanding reference recommendations.

Current MS teacher Jessica Guss will be filling the role previously held by Shana Barnum- MS science and elementary STEAM. We are very thankful that Jessica is helping us in this way, as we had hired others for these roles and it didn't work out.

We will be posting for a full time MS position today to fill Jessica's position and will have to start with a substitute teacher. In speaking with other local schools, we are not alone in our staffing challenges. There is truly a shortage of teachers, as many young people have not entered into the teaching profession in Michigan as a result of a number of factors.

Local Dansville resident Jan Sweers will be our FFA Advisor for the upcoming school year. Jan has a degree in Agriscience as well as a teaching degree. She brings a fresh vision and energy to this position as we continue to seek a biology teacher for next year.

Nicole Greiter took a position as a preschool consultant at the ISD. Nicole has served on a countywide Great Start Preschool Collaborative group at the ISD for the past several years and they specifically sought her out for this position. In light of Nicole's move and our need to open a third section of Kindergarten, we hired a new kindergarten teacher named Emily Lewis. Emily is a Stockbridge/MSU graduate who has all of her experience in early childhood education. She is a great addition!

Speech pathologist Andrea Loomis has elected to take a childcare leave for the 2017-18 school year. She had her second child in May. We hired an experienced independent contractor named Nancy Gatesy as our speech pathologist for one year in Andrea's absence. Nancy brings many years of experience and comes highly recommended.

At the end of last year, HS Art teacher Kerri Shadbolt and her husband moved to Wisconsin. K-8 Art teacher Mary Hekman moved into the HS position. We hired Kat Blackwood as our K-8 Art teacher this summer. Kat has several years of experience and recently moved to Michigan. She will be fantastic!

Other changes include that Kelly Ryder is serving in the Secondary Teacher Consultant role that was previously held by Mary Warfle, who retired last spring. Katie Theurer is serving in the K-7 resource teacher role that was previously held by Doretta Arambula.

Eric Thackery, who was laid off in June, will serve in either an ELA or Social Studies position at the middle school depending on our next best hiring option. This position opened as previously mentioned, to take the vacancy created as Jessica Guss took the MS Science/STEAM position.

We also hired a new recess paraprofessional. Courtney DuFort, the parent of twin kindergarteners, was hired to take the position previously held by Dianna Brownridge, who resigned in the spring. Dianna shared that she wanted to return to a more direct instruction role like the one she had prior to taking this recess position at the beginning of last school year.

Evelyn Davis and Stacy Hallock also resigned paraprofessional positions. Evelyn was able to get a job working at Heartwood at Ingham ISD and Stacy will be taking classes to finish a degree in education. Both were excellent in their roles here and will be missed.

Safety:

We have been working on updating our safety protocols in light of the changes due to construction.

Technology:

The ISD changed their personnel assignments at the end of last year and we were sad to lose the direct services of Mike Lilly. He was a valued partner in his tech role for us. We will now be working with David Palme. He is working to get up to speed on all that has been done related to the bond work as well as the rest of our technology needs.

We were very pleased with the smooth rollout of iPads to the incoming freshmen this year. The ISD partnership as well as Tania's work together has helped us to make improvements in this process each year.

Other:

The superintendent evaluation committee will meet next Monday, August 28 at 5 pm to review the new superintendent goals, new merit pay criteria and the superintendent evaluation tool.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

Back to School breakfast- (board is invited): August 22nd at 8 a.m. in HS Commons
First day of school- August 23rd