

Superintendent Report: January Board Meeting
Submitted on January 20, 2018

Administrative work:

The administrative team is working on sharing everything we've been learning about our current systems with staff in various meetings. This will be an ongoing conversation that will expand to all of the teachers and will most likely end up creating changes to our overall practice across the district.

Students in grades K-8 have been taking winter benchmark assessments with a screening tool called FastBridge. It allows students to take some adaptive measures in addition to more standard screening measures. This is closely aligned to the Common Core, which makes the results helpful to inform instruction. We have actually learned about additional capabilities this tool offers and will be sharing these with the staff as part of our overall improvement plan that will be rolled out at the next PD.

We have also continuing to work on the detailed logistics for the move and starting the planning of furniture/equipment as well as finalizing technology for the district. We will be hosting three vendors on Monday who will showcase different interactive screens to help us choose which will be placed in the new and remodeled classrooms.

Mid-year goal review meetings are scheduled for every employee in the district with their direct supervisor. This is an opportunity to ensure there is an intentional "check in" with every employee and a chance to get on the same page regarding progress in each goal area.

The principals have been visiting classrooms to provide feedback during both formal and informal observations. Teachers also have a formal evaluation every three years and those visits have been occurring as well.

Athletics:

High school bowling, basketball and wrestling are approaching the middle of their seasons while middle school girls' basketball has started and they are early in their season.

Candy Sherwood organized an event that took place last week for girls in grades 3-8 who are currently playing basketball. First they met in the HS library where Coach Walter spoke and then they heard about the experiences of five different women who are employed at our school who played collegiate athletics of some kind. The current Varsity players spoke to them as well and then they formed a tunnel for the Varsity to run through for their warm up. The girls also attended the Varsity game and then two grade levels played a short game during half time. There was overall great feedback about the experience from parents and students. It was nice to see so many Aggies intersecting and potentially impacting each other. Thank you to Candy for creating and organizing the experience for our young female athletes.

Budget Info:

Raelynn and I worked very hard on every detail in preparation for Revision I of the 2017-18 budget, which will be presented at the meeting. We tried hard to anticipate increases in every area, including natural gas/electric bill increases that may come as a result of construction. We monitored the impact of the budget reductions we made in anticipation of this school year and the anticipated savings are indeed being realized in areas such as athletic transportation.

The band has continued to relentlessly pursue grants and do fundraisers to help them purchase new uniforms. They have raised \$22,422.57 and have a pending \$5000 grant from Dart. This amount will cover the amount of the proposed bids from the vendors that we received this week, pending board approval. The band needs to order their uniforms by the end of the month to ensure timely delivery for next school year.

Our kindergarten numbers are crucial as we plan for next year. Kindergarten/Begindergarten Round Up is coming on Wednesday, February 28 from 4:30-6:30 pm. To be eligible for Kindergarten your child must turn five by September 1, 2018. To be eligible for Begindergarten, your child must turn five before December 1, 2018. Please encourage anyone with eligible young children to consider enrolling or at least checking out Dansville Schools.

We have received some generous donations since the last board meeting. The Lady Bugs have donated another classroom set of microscopes as well as the funds to purchase the software needed to make our donated SmartBoards fully operational. We are very grateful for their partnership! In addition, we received a donation of three megaphones for our emergency kits from one of our school families.

Communication:

Miller-Davis has been creating periodic bulletins highlighting project updates. We appreciate these visual updates to share with the community.

We are putting together the district's winter newsletter in hopes of sending it out in the next month or so.

The District Advisory Committee is meeting again this week. We will talk about the mission statement development as well as our normal periodic review of the district.

Community Outreach/Partnerships:

We continue to work with the Lady Bugs, Education Foundation and other local groups, but are also exploring more significant partnerships with 530 Productions and Dart as we work on the rollout of some potential new programming in 2018-19.

Curriculum/Training:

Social studies and ELA teachers met recently to review their learning targets and discuss their assessment practices.

Science teachers will be meeting along with Rob Stephenson from the ISD in the next few months to review learning target taxonomy and work on the development of assessments.

The secondary math intervention teachers met with Tania and I and two ISD consultants as part of the work to re-examine our intervention methods in light of what we are being reminded of related to MTSS.

We are still scheduled to have two half-day sessions for high school math and ELA teachers to dig deeply into our SAT data. SAT actually provides quite a bit of useful feedback for schools that can be evaluated in terms of what is working instructionally and in terms of curriculum.

Data:

A new parent dashboard has been rolled out by MDE to try to provide a different look at school district data. We are learning more about it and are frustrated by some of the lack of information related to how different comparisons are made. For example, if a parent does a search comparison of schools in one view, an elementary may be compared to a surrounding school that has similar demographics, but is in fact a high school.

Facilities:

We switched from doing traditional footings to installing geopiers over the past few months to reduce the overall cost of dealing with unsuitable soils. All of the footings and foundations we've installed have been done well. The switch was made to reduce the unanticipated costs- both in our overall timeline and in materials/labor.

We successfully moved the Superintendent's office to a classroom and the STEAM room to the elementary conference room. This has allowed for the renovation of those spaces into the elementary office to begin. In addition, Pauline Lee will be moving into the HS library and Jan Sweers will move into the health room. Ethan Felsing will teach health in a different teacher's classroom for this semester. These moves will allow for the renovation of Pauline's room into two middle school classrooms and the current Ag room into the HS Spanish room. There were other ancillary moves associated with these bigger moves that have already begun and we sincerely appreciate the great attitude and significant effort being made by all of the staff members involved in all of these moves.

The idea is that we will be able to leverage additional workforce in the summer by taking advantage of the chance to use additional workforce to do this work early. It is a way to get more done without paying overtime since this work was in the scope of the original bids.

Due to this change to geopiers and the involvement of the sitework contractor who ordered a new topographic study, it was established that we are back to having a balanced site as it relates to soils. The evaluation showed that it is anticipated that no soils will need to be removed or added to the site.

We have welcomed the expertise of ISD Facilities Director Steve Rusnock over this course of the past several months. He is attending the progress meetings and providing much assistance in particular in the environmental consultant/abatement process. He has been a great partner in

working with the health department and also in examining current HVAC systems as it relates to the renovation plans. We are very thankful for his involvement.

The HS roof project is now complete, as they took advantage of the warmer weather periods we've had to complete it. An inspection will be done that includes the Facility Director from the ISD, who has been helping us on a regular basis.

We are also in the process of figuring out how we will handle memorials. We have had several requests to either transfer or set up new memorials in the new school. Stay tuned for more information.

Personnel Update:

We hired two paraprofessionals (Randy Bontrager and Stacy Hallock) to share a job of working with one of our students who recently returned to school.

Middle School office paraprofessional Julie Novrocki will be leaving at the end of the month to stay home to care for her parents. The position has been posted.

Jan Sweers started teaching the Agriscience class in the high school this week.

Policy Update:

The policy committee met and brought forth several policies for discussion.

Safety:

We have continued to focus on safety as we have moved forward with building renovations. We talk through changes and the impact on school functioning prior to moving forward and include the building principal as a thought partner.

Teaching and Learning:

The elementary is about to kick off a partnership with the ISD called Project Practice. This was something that a few teachers participated in last year as a pilot. This involves a focus on the implementation of high-yield instructional practices that align with our district improvement plan. The staff at the ISD are then brought onsite to provide coaching, modeling and feedback within the classroom. The data behind this work is very compelling and will coincide nicely with our renewed focus on MTSS.

Technology:

We are working on the technology specifications for the new building as well as plans for temporary internet, etc. during demolition and renovation next year. In addition, the ISD staff are working on submitting items to a federal rebate program called erate and we are hoping to get a rebate of some kind in this area as well after the work is complete.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

-Kindergarten Round Up- Feb 28 from 4:30- 6:30 pm

-Check out the upcoming events on the district website homepage. Just click the CALENDAR button for these and all other school events!