

Superintendent Report: November Board Meeting
Submitted on November 22, 2019

Administrative work:

We have been meeting extensively with teacher leaders from DSIT and others to find ways to provide appropriate support for staff as we come to the end of a very long stretch without a break. The research describes a “window of tolerance” that closes when staff and students go through a long period such as this and we are doing whatever we can to help get everyone to Thanksgiving in the most productive way possible. We created and distributed a 40-Day challenge that began to encourage staff to engage in self-care or other gratitude/positivity activities over the 40 days from November 11 until Winter Break.

Athletics:

The winter sports seasons are in full swing and Meet the Aggies was last night. Most notably, we have a much larger wrestling team as Coach Adkins begins his second year at the helm of the program. Also new this winter, our cheer team will be doing competitive cheer this year as well as some sideline cheer. Bowling is also back in action as well as the girls’ and boys’ basketball teams. It has been really nice to have all of our gyms open and in full use this winter by both school and DCAA teams.

The Winter Coach meeting took place on November 4th where Christy and I talked through the upcoming season.

Several fall athletes in all of our sports earned CMAC and state honors for their outstanding performances this past fall, particularly in soccer. Unfortunately, all of the soccer info isn’t available for public release because they haven’t had their banquet quite yet.

Basketball is holding its first Alumni Game on Friday, November 22, 2019, which will include a banner presentation.

We rolled out the Aggie Fan App at Meet the Aggies, which is synced to the Scorevision board, allowing fans to follow games when they aren’t able to attend in person. Search for Scorevision Fan App in the Apple Store or on Google Play to download and engage in this new way!

Several of us met with Josh Tkaczyk on November 13th to learn more about the features of the Scorevision Boards. We continue to increase our capacity in this area and also now have more staff able to help run and program the boards.

Wrestling will hold “A Night to Remember” on Tuesday, December 17th to honor and recognize coaches and wrestlers who have contributed to the establishment and success of our program since its inception. This will take place in the Big Barn at 5 pm.

Budget Info:

Our anticipated count is approximately 737, although we recently added another student and have another new student tour next week. We had 724 last year in the fall and 737 the year before. This is the first increase in enrollment in approximately ten years.

Raelynn and I have been working on Revision I of the 19-20 budget, which will be presented at the Board meeting as part of discussion.

We are very thankful that the community voted to pass the sinking fund earlier this month, followed by a very successful auction event held by the Education Foundation. We have much to be thankful for in our district as we reflect so far on this school year.

Negotiations proposals for all groups will be shared in Closed Session at the board meeting.

Ingham ISD will be putting a Headlee Restoration for the countywide SE millage on the ballot in March. There is a memo regarding this vote in your board packets from IISD. These monies are used to support programs that help students in the county with special needs.

Communication:

The elementary held parent-teacher conferences during the first week of November, which are always well-attended. We have also held parent information nights this month for early elementary (for literacy) and middle and high school (for college visits, tech help, drug tips, etc.).

We received a lot of positive feedback about all of the communication that went out regarding the Sinking Fund. We are now gearing up for the Winter Newsletter and ongoing use of our social media outlets.

Community Outreach/Partnerships:

I attended the LadyBug Auction on November 7th to show support for this group, as they are also generous contributors to our school district. It was a very nice event with a lot of community support.

It was wonderful to have so many Board members attend the DSEF dinner/auction on November 9th at the English Inn. They are anticipating raising nearly \$30,000 when all is said and done, which is awesome! We will use these funds to pay for the reading curriculum, the math curriculum, the Project Lead the Way supplies and hopefully Promethean Boards for the remaining middle school classes that don't have them. This would mean that every general education classroom in the entire district would be outfitted with this most updated technology!

The Board will host the annual Staff Holiday Breakfast, including current and past staff and board members, on Thursday, December 19th with a cancellation date of Friday, December 20th. The Board will discuss supplies and details about the plan at the Board meeting on Monday night.

Curriculum/Training:

We are planning an Aggie STEAM Adventures Showcase for the IKS Marvel Simulator on Monday, December 16th. You are all invited to come visit that day to check out the latest updated version of the program in action! We will also share this with visitors from the ISD and our visitor from MDE that afternoon. Your generous contributions have allowed us to add a few more special features to this experience, so we hope you are able to check it out! More details to come!

Data

The kindergarten and first grade classes have been taking the Spring Math screener and started with classwide interventions. One of our high school classes has completed all of the interventions for the entire year, which is a huge celebration!

Many students are also continuing to receive individual interventions as part of their regular school day. This will happen primarily in Grades K-10.

We held a Spring Math Data Review meeting at the district level on November 12th. This includes all of the administrators, the Spring Math coaches and Joe Liberato from Ingham ISD. We talked at length about our data, barriers to success and individual intervention time. We also generated questions that will be followed up on with Amanda VanDerHeyden.

Facilities:

Several contractors will be in the district next week completing warranty or punch list work as we near the completion of the construction and renovation project. We anticipate getting final inspections complete before the end of the year.

A rep from Consumers Energy, Steve Rusnock and Mark Slabaugh did a walk through the district to examine what additional energy-saving methods could be used throughout the district. We will continue to change out bulbs as suggested. We have also reminded the Clean Team and our district staff about the energy savings programs we had in place prior to construction to help with energy reduction.

Personnel Update:

The district gave tokens of appreciation with personal notes to the Food Service and Bus Driver folks during the last few weeks of October.

All staff will be given an Aggie “Black Out” shirt as their Christmas gift from the district after the positive feedback we received last year when we did the “white out” shirts.

We did a “Beverage Cart” the day after elementary parent teacher conferences where we offered coffee, hot chocolate and water to staff to start their days after such a long week.

Policy Update:

We held a policy committee meeting earlier this month and the Fall Update were presented to the Board in this month’s packet for consideration for approval in January.

Safety:

The Board received the most updated version of the district's Emergency Operations Plan in the board packets this month. Just a reminder that the Board can receive public comment about the plan, but please note that the plan is not intended nor is it required to be made public, as the district needs to prioritize safety. This plan was shared over the past few years with the local fire department, local law enforcement, athletic personnel and district staff. We received an endorsement of our plan from the emergency management officials as part of our safety grant submission last year. The plan includes most all of the FEMA recommendations. Thank you to Tania Dupuis for extensive work on this plan. The Board is allowed to go into closed session to discuss the EOP in detail, if desired.

Teaching and Learning:

We will be changing our approach to teacher classroom visits as part of our commitment to implement best practices with fidelity. Instead of entering a classroom with an iPad and entering observations directly into the evaluation system, administrators will take notes when they enter, meet with the teacher to discuss the visit and then enter the data into the system. Student surveys will also be administered, but not taken into consideration as part of the evaluation, but rather only for reflection and teacher growth.

The Middle School staff started something called Aggie Achiever Time for half an hour on Fridays. I offered to teach one of the groups to allow for smaller team sizes and it is the highlight of my week. We have met three times and worked on team-building and getting to know each other while also knocking out some gratitude and PBIS activities. We meet in the Board Room, so you will most likely see our team agendas on the dry erase board when we have board meetings. The goal is to create mini Aggie Families where we are checking in with students and making sure every student is getting the support they need to be successful.

They have Aggie Time on Tuesdays to work on a number of items ranging from typing to leadership.

Several teachers and the admin team attended a Grading Conference today featuring author and speaker Ken O'Connor. We have read several of his books, presented with him in Oregon and appreciated the refresher today.

Our admin team continues to meet regularly to ensure coordination of the district's special education services. Erin Graf added to our team this year as part of her role as the MS principal.

Technology:

We have an Apple demo coming up in early December where we will see the newest iPads that would be available for our students and staff for use starting next year, as the current iPads are at the end of their useful lives.

We will be rolling out our first season of Scorevision ads this winter. The ads we have already sold will pay for almost all of the annual subscription cost of the boards. We are adding birthday, anniversary and special message ads to the slate of options as well for this season.

Upcoming Dates of Note:

*Half Day on Tuesday, November 26

*Thanksgiving Break 11/27-12/1

*Aggie STEAM Adventures Showcase/HS Band concert 12/16

*A Night To Remember Wrestling Event 12/17

*Staff Holiday Breakfast 12/19

*Christmas Break 12/21- 1/5

Check out the Aggie App Calendar to find upcoming school events!