

MOKENA

SCHOOL DISTRICT #159
Superintendent's Weekly Update

March 1, 2024

Metra Parking Lot

Today Dr. Johnson and I sifted through boxes in our records room and managed to find the lease agreement the District has with Metra regarding the parking lot on the south end of MES. The lease agreement was signed in May of 2003 and it is a 25 year lease.



The Metra lot is not in good condition. There are many potholes of significant depth and previously patched areas are beginning to fail again. The lease agreement states that Metra is responsible for the cost of maintenance for the parking lot.

I have reached out to John Tomasoski from the Village to put me in touch with the appropriate contact at Metra to discuss the situation. With the recent paving of the lot on the south side of the Rock Island tracks it is unlikely that Metra will want to put any of their resources into repairing our lot. It is not used by commuters anymore.

I spoke with John Fester about drafting an agreement to terminate the lease. I hope that this will allow us to begin repairs before the lot's condition deteriorates much further.

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Staffing Update

Certified positions for retirements/resignations have already been posted. We will likely have some internal transfers of teachers moving grade levels. We have several special education positions available; at least one at each building. We are posting these positions early to try and get the best candidate pool possible.

We interviewed for Cathy Hite's position on Wednesday. Our preferred candidate emailed us this afternoon declining our offer. We could not reach an agreement on compensation. Our administrative team will discuss the other candidates next week Monday.

Parent Advisory Team

On Monday the Parent-Advisory Team met to discuss the feedback we received about our E-Learning Plan. A report on the meeting will be presented to the Board in March. The results of the parent feedback will also be discussed with the staff on the E-Learning committee when we review the plan and prepare to reauthorize it later in the Spring for another three years. The last meeting of the Parent-Advisory team will be in April when they take a look at the Parent-Student Handbook.

This Week / Next Week

Today Dr. Johnson and I met with the representatives from Northwestern's Center for Talent Development to go through the surveys which we will be sending out to parents, staff, and students. We have another meeting scheduled next Thursday to continue the conversation. We will also be scheduling site visits for observations soon.

Next week is very busy with MTA bargaining, MES family night, the MJHS spring concert, and an insurance committee meeting. Monday night the MJHS 7th grade girl's volleyball team competes for the sectional; with a win they will go to state! Good luck Meteors!

For What It's Worth

Culture doesn't change when a coach tells a player they're wrong. It changes when players tell other players, "No, that's not how we do things here."

-Jeff Hecklinski