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## **Superintendent Jeff Elstad's Board Report**

*May 2025*

### ❖ Important Dates

- June 6: Last Day of School/Graduation
- June 9: School Board Work Session, 5:30 p.m. at the District Office
- June 16: School Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at Charles S Crandall Center

### ❖ District Updates

- At this meeting, you will be introduced to Lowell Schultz, our new student school board representative. He will officially start in August.
- This will be the last meeting for Erin Baker, who has served as a student school board representative for the past two years. We wish Erin well as she writes her next chapter by going abroad to Costa Rica.
- The Finance Committee of the School Board will convene on Monday, June 2 to review financial scenarios related to a potential operating levy in November 2025. They will be tasked with creating a recommendation for the full school board to consider at the June 9 work session.
- I continue to work with Dr. Champa to successfully transition for her start on July 1st.

## **Human Resources**

*Chris Picha, Director*

- 5 certified staffing positions filled as of May 14, 2025
- Interviewing and hiring with a goal of May 31, 2025 to fill all positions that are open as of 5/1/2025
- Records Management and Data Requests
- Employee Relations issues
- Teacher Licensing and Renewals
- Policy Committee
- Teacher Apprenticeship Cohort 2
- Grant writing for Teacher apprenticeship funding

- GYO Student and Adult Pathways
- Paid Family Leave

## **Teaching and Learning**

*Julie Sullivan, Director*

As we begin to wrap up this school year, we are busy planning for next year. We have chosen our new K-5 Math resource, Illustrative Math through Imagine Learning. We are excited about this new resource and what it will offer our students through conceptual math understanding. We have a team from each grade level across the district to be early adopters of this resource for the '25-'26 school year. These teachers have agreed to three days of summer PD and weekly meetings as a team with their instructional coach to plan the use of the resource throughout the year. This is an impressive undertaking by so many teachers; it shows their eagerness to adopt a new resource to best serve our students. It will be fully implemented by all elementary classrooms in the '26-'27 school year.

In addition, we are proceeding with the purchase of Wit & Wisdom, the only state-approved knowledge-building resource. We have done site visits, and have a strong schedule of PD and support as we roll this out for the '25-'26 school year. Meanwhile, we are working to develop our screening process for 4-12 that is required by the state starting next year. This includes a mandatory test for all students who meet a threshold of not making adequate progress with reading. This new screener, Capti, is required of all schools in the state and comes with a cost per student; we were informed of this requirement within the last two months. While it will help us identify students with characteristics of dyslexia, it comes at a cost to the district. We hope the new screening process and required interventions help us scoop up readers who need additional support.

### **Upcoming Dates:**

- Thursday, June 5: Jeff's Retirement Celebration (MSB) from 4:00-8:00
- Tuesday and Wednesday, June 10 & 11: Curriculum Writing
- Thursday, June 12: Big 9 Leadership and final DLT of the year
- Tuesday, June 17: Wit & Wisdom PD--Coaches, Principals, T&L Members
- Wednesday, June 18: MEP Summer Institute; W&W PD Strategic Planning (2:30-4:00)
- Monday and Tuesday, June 23 & 24: Grade 8 Math Standards Work
- Monday and Tuesday, June 30 and July 1: Curriculum Writing

## **Special Services**

*Dr. Sarah Knudsen, Director*

- Planning staff development for Licensed School Nurses serving students receiving special education services (June)
- Submitted Steele County Children's Mental Health Grant; if approved, funds support behavior interventionists in four buildings
- School social workers continue learning the process for Medical Assistance (MA) billing; MA reimbursement is a substantial revenue stream for special education
- Applied for and received ~\$12,700 to support a demonstration project sponsored by MDE for Social Emotional Learning (SEL); School Social Workers and School Counselors will benefit from the project by participating in staff development and purchasing intervention materials
- Extended Year Special Education Services (ESY) program planning is near completion; ESY will be held July 14-25

## **Lincoln Elementary**

*May 2025*

### Important Dates

- May 22nd-K-2 Field Day at Lincoln
- May 30th-Lincoln Fun Run at Lincoln
- June 3rd-Senior Send off at Lincoln
- June 5th-5th grade graduation at Lincoln

### Lincoln Updates

- Federated Insurance employees taught four sessions of Scratch in May to Lincoln 5th graders.
- May 5th through May 9th was Staff Appreciation week. There were snacks, pizza and donuts provided by PTO along with dress up days in honor of staff.
- We wrapped up our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) this past week with goal reflections. Teams were highly engaged in the PLC process this year, working through standards and aligning with their instructional practices.
- Teachers are working through the final modules of their READ Act training this spring. They have been completing the learning work alongside our staff meetings in an effort to be fully immersed in the learning and application of the learning.

## **McKinley Elementary**

*Justin Kiel, Principal*

May is a busy time in an elementary school! Not only are we wrapping up a great year, we are fully planning for the 25-26 school year! It's a busy, but exciting time.

### **Class List Placement:**

We are busy creating class lists for next year. This process is actually quite extensive - balancing student needs, classroom communities, and how we will support students with services. It's truly a team approach to making sure students end up in the best spot possible.

### **End of Year Celebrations:**

- Senior Send Off - June 3
- 5th Grade Graduation - June 5
- Last Day Stations - June 6
- 5th Grade Tunnel (out of building on last day) - June 6 @ 2:30pm

It's been the best year ever. We look forward to ending this amazing year with some celebrations!

## **Washington Elementary**

*Libby Zeman, Principal*

- We are finishing strong with showcases of learning/research in many grade levels.
- Our 3-5 track and field day was a success and our K-2 field day is coming up!
- We are examining data, reflecting on our goals and planning forward for

## **Wilson Elementary**

*Cassie Mitchell, Principal*

As we approach the end of this incredible year at Wilson, I want to take a moment to reflect on the remarkable journey we've embarked on together as a community. As a first-year principal, I have witnessed firsthand the resilience and dedication of our students, staff, and families as we've navigated the challenges that often accompany change. It's been truly inspiring to see our community grow, adapt, and thrive, creating an environment that fosters both academic success and personal growth. We've shared countless memorable moments that have strengthened our bonds, and there's so much more to look forward to! Anticipation is building for our upcoming events, including the much-anticipated Talent Show, our lively Quarter 4 celebration, the

heartfelt 5th grade graduation, and the exciting 5th grade vs. staff kickball tournament, which never fails to ignite our competitive spirits and school pride. Together, we are on an upward trajectory, and I am so excited for what lies ahead as we finish this school year strong!

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

- May 31 - PTO Carnival
- June 3- Wilson Talent Show
- June 4- Q4 Celebration
- Jun. 5 - 5th Grade Graduation
- June 6 - 5th Grade Kickball Tournament
- **Jun. 6 - Last Day of School**

**Owatonna High School**

*Kory Kath, Principal*

Spring is here and with that comes the end of our school year. We are focused on ending the year strong and supporting students to make sure they give their best until the last day! We are working hand in hand with students and parents to review grades and academic progress right now as we want all students to end the year with maximum credits. Teachers are ready to support and will do their best to help in any way they can. We are also excited to celebrate our OHS class of 2025 with many honors, awards, scholarships and showcases of talent on the field, classroom and in the arts!

We look forward to a great end of the year and welcome you to join us in many upcoming events.

**Important Events & Dates:**

- Tuesday, May 20 - Pops Concert, OHS Gymnasium, 7pm
- Wednesday, May 21 - Final COMPASS Day
- Wednesday, May 21 - Academic, Scholarship & Athletic Awards Night
- Monday, May 26 - NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY
- Friday, May 30 - Graduation Concert, St. John's Church - 8pm
- Friday, June 6 - LAST DAY for STUDENTS in GRADES 9-11
- Friday, June 6 - OHS Commencement - Football Field - 7pm (Rain Date: 6/8 @ 7pm)

**Area Learning Center**

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

As we approach the end of the 2024–25 school year, we are proud to share several key updates from the Area Learning Center:

- **Increased Student Attendance:** Our end-of-year PLC report reflects a 12.64 percentage point increase in student attendance compared to last year.

- 2023–24 Average Attendance: 51.35%
- 2024–25 Average Attendance: 63.99% - This 12.5% improvement indicates more consistent student engagement and presence in class throughout the year.
- Community Involvement: On May 22, ALC students and staff participated in the annual Downtown Cleanup Day, giving back to the community and strengthening partnerships with local businesses to help maintain and beautify the Owatonna downtown area.
- Graduation Outlook: We are excited to potentially celebrate 27 graduates from the Area Learning Center this school year—a testament to our students’ resilience and the team’s dedicated support.

We look forward to closing out the year strong and celebrating these important milestones with our students and families.

### **Owatonna Online**

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

Owatonna Online continues to show steady growth in student enrollment, reflecting increased interest in our flexible, high-quality learning options. We are excited to wrap up another successful year and begin forward planning with our dedicated Owatonna Online staff.

As we look ahead to the 2025–26 school year, several exciting updates are underway:

- We are revamping our outreach and marketing efforts to better showcase the unique strengths of Owatonna Online and to reach more families seeking innovative learning opportunities.
- Our learning platform is receiving a major upgrade, featuring new, high-interest content designed to increase student engagement and academic relevance.
- Teaching staff will be utilizing summer hours to customize and align courses with high-quality instructional practices and learning objectives, ensuring a more personalized and effective learning experience for our students.