



ADMINISTRATION REPORTS OCTOBER 2025

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES & HUMAN RESOURCES

by: Shawn Kirkeide

Flue Shot Clinic

We are in our second year of bringing back the Flu Shot Clinic during the week of October 13, and participation continues to grow. This year, 92 staff members and their families took part—up from 65 participants last year. We're excited to continue offering this opportunity through our Wellness Committee to support the health and well-being of our Bluejacket staff.

Wellness Challenge

Our annual Step Challenge, which began on September 22 and runs through November 2, is also off to a strong start with 202 participants registered—nearly doubling last year's total of 103. This year's theme, "*Stepping Our Way Down Route 66*," features teams of up to eight combining their steps as they virtually travel the 2,448-mile journey from the Historic Route 66 Begin Sign in Chicago, Illinois, to the Santa Monica Pier in California. The challenge continues to be a fun and motivating way to promote physical activity, teamwork, and connection among staff.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

by: Christopher Kampa, CFA

Finance

We were excited to present at last month's board meeting that the property tax levy will decrease by 5.9% for most households. We will work on solidifying that number in the coming months. In December we will hold a public hearing for the community to discuss how school finance works, the district's budget, and the levy. The final levy may be different depending on the outcome of the referendum in November.

Transportation

The Transportation Department has had a productive month, highlighted by a successful new evacuation drill conducted in partnership with building principals, which received positive feedback from both drivers and administrators. On October 10, the department held its annual Emergency Preparedness Inservice with a guest visit from the Superintendent, fostering meaningful discussion on driver safety and best practices. The new "Moving Forward" initiative, launched October 6 under the leadership of Gary Steffenson, engages students in helping clean transportation vehicles and has been well received. The Energy Bus program, introduced last year, continues to build momentum, with principals noting increased engagement and positivity among drivers. Staffing continues to improve, with two new CDL and two new Type III drivers hired this week, bringing the department

close to full staffing as it also responds to increased transportation needs for McKinney-Vento students.

Food Service

The department has begun its annual audit with MDE. The Procurement Review has been successfully completed, and the Resource Management Review is currently being submitted in coordination with the Finance Department.

Hiring activity remains strong, with eight new employees joining since the start of the school year. We are also celebrating several well-deserved retirements from long-time members of our Food Service team:

- Debbie Becker – Head Cook, Cambridge Middle School (37 years) - Debbie has been a cornerstone of the department, serving as Head Cook at both CIHS and CMS, and as the union steward for the Food Service team. Her kitchen always felt like home—a reflection of her warmth and leadership. Debbie will be greatly missed by staff and students alike. Congratulations to Debbie on an outstanding career!
- Pat Schafer – Cook, Cambridge Primary/Intermediate School (24 years) - Pat's career journey took her from CPIS to CMS and back again. She was an excellent trainer, cook, and teammate, always ready to support her colleagues. We thank Pat for her many years of dedicated service and wish her a happy and healthy retirement.
- Pam Hassel – Food Service Assistant, Cambridge Middle School (5 years) - Pam joined the department during one of our most challenging years—COVID—and quickly became a steady, adaptable member of the team. Her willingness to take on new challenges and support others made a lasting impact. We thank Pam for her contributions and wish her all the best in retirement.

Building & Grounds

The Buildings and Grounds Department has been busy preparing for the change in seasons. Smaller parking lots at IMS, CMS, and the High School were recently repainted, all with excellent results. The team is completing final roof repairs before winter, with the PAC roof project now fully finished. Preparations for colder weather also include blowing out all irrigation systems districtwide. In addition, efforts are underway to hire two night custodians—one at CPIS and one at the High School—to support ongoing building maintenance and cleanliness.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

by: Christina Thayer Anderson

Lights On Afterschool

Every October, we join schools and communities across the country in celebrating Lights On Afterschool, a national event recognizing the vital role afterschool programs play in supporting students and families. Research continues to show that participation in afterschool programs boosts students' confidence, school attendance, sense of belonging, social skills, and academic growth.

Lights On Afterschool shines a light on how these programs help students thrive while also meeting the needs of families and strengthening our communities. Afterschool programs provide safe, engaging environments for students during the hours that matter most—times that might otherwise be unsupervised or high-risk.

We are incredibly proud of the dedicated coordinators and staff who bring these programs to life every day. Thank you to Pat Bourke, Melissa Lupinek, and their amazing teams of youth workers for creating meaningful experiences that make a lasting difference for students and families across our district.

Volunteer Services

It's been wonderful to see so many volunteers already active in our classrooms, at events, and supporting the daily work of our schools and teachers. Last year, more than 1,000 volunteers contributed over 10,000 hours of their time to our schools, a tremendous gift that directly impacted students and staff. In addition, local businesses, organizations, and community members generously donated more than **\$27,215 (\$18,551 in donated supplies, \$8,664 monetary)** in supplies, snacks, and other essential resources for students and families.

The commitment and generosity of our community continue to make a meaningful difference in the success of our schools. We're deeply grateful for your time, talent, and support—and we're aiming to surpass last year's incredible totals. If you're interested in volunteering or donating, please reach out at c-i_volunteercoordinators@c-ischools.org. We look forward to connecting and continuing this great work together.

TEACHING & LEARNING

by: Dr. Jason Bodey

Reflection – October 10 Professional Learning Day

On October 10, licensed staff and administrative assistants came together for a districtwide professional learning day focused on strengthening instructional alignment, collaboration, and growth. The day reflected our shared commitment to continuous improvement and our Bluejacket character traits—creating welcoming, inclusive environments where diverse perspectives are respected and valued.

At the **elementary level**, teachers explored the math anchor standards and mathematical practices, working together to deepen understanding and strengthen instructional consistency across classrooms. Specialists in art, music, media, and physical education engaged in focused collaboration to align content and build shared practices across schools. Support staff, including special education, ADSIS, EL, and counseling teams, participated in cross-district collaboration to ensure a cohesive approach to supporting students' academic and emotional needs. Nurses and health assistants completed CPR certification as part of their ongoing safety and readiness training.

At the **secondary level**, math teachers examined the Minnesota math anchor standards and effective instructional practices to promote high-quality, standards-based teaching. English teachers engaged in training on Perfection Learning's digital texts, supporting efforts to strengthen literacy instruction and improve student skills. Other secondary staff collaborated through PLCs and departmental teams to align curriculum, set goals, and plan instruction. Counselors, EL teachers, and behavior support staff also participated in Language Line sessions to enhance communication and inclusion. Nurses and health assistants continued their CPR certification training.

Administrative assistants participated in professional learning focused on the Catalyst approach and Language Line. These sessions emphasized communication, grace, and belonging, reinforcing their essential role in fostering inclusive and supportive school environments. Participants expressed

appreciation for the opportunity to build new skills and requested continued learning to further strengthen their ability to serve families and students.

Feedback across all staff groups was highly positive. Participants valued the collaboration, clarity, and connection to district priorities. They appreciated the focus on shared learning, the chance to reflect with colleagues, and opportunities to connect instruction to real classroom practice. Staff also voiced a desire for continued, differentiated professional learning that allows time to apply new ideas and deepen implementation.

This professional learning day directly supports our strategic plan goals:

- **1.1:** Strengthening literacy instruction through focused professional learning.
- **1.8:** Ensuring consistent use of Professional Learning Communities to improve student outcomes.
- **1.14:** Aligning curriculum with current state, national, and industry standards.
- **2.2:** Exemplifying Bluejacket character traits by fostering welcoming, inclusive environments that honor diverse perspectives.

The day represented more than professional development. It was a reflection of our mission to educate, empower, and inspire *every student, every day*, to achieve their full potential.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

by: Rachel Kasper

Each year, the district is required to submit data to MDE for the Consolidated State Performance Reports (CSPR). The CSPR is a data collection tool administered annually by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). The CSPR tool collects information relating to activities and outcomes of specific ESEA programs, as well as information relating to activities and outcomes of the McKinney-Vento Act. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is federal legislation that was passed on December 10, 2015. It amends three separate federal laws: the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and the Education Flexibility Partnership Act.

To be eligible for services according to the McKinney-Vento Act, a homeless student must meet the Act's definition of homeless. The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" [42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)].

Lacking any one of these three conditions would make a child eligible. In other words, if the residence is not fixed, regular, and adequate, it is considered a homeless situation. As the District Homeless Liaison, I work with the building liaisons to determine eligibility for students based on their unique situations. Eligible students then receive assistance that may include transportation, food service, reduced activity fees, and Title I services.

For the 2024-2025 school year, Cambridge-Isanti Schools had 34 students that qualified under the McKinney-Vento Act. Students were in situations where they were doubled up, unsheltered, in shelters, or staying in hotel/motels according to the data.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

by: Dr. Nate Rudolph

Referendum Community Education and Engagement

Over the past several months, district leadership has been deeply engaged in extensive community education efforts surrounding the November 4 Facilities Referendum. As a public school district, we have both a legal and ethical responsibility to clearly educate our community about what the referendum is and how it impacts our students, schools, and taxpayers. Our focus has remained on transparency, accuracy, and accessibility—ensuring that every resident has the opportunity to learn about the facts behind the proposal.

From the beginning, our message has remained consistent: this is a community-driven plan designed to address long-term safety, maintenance, and learning space needs in a fiscally responsible way. Every presentation, meeting, and conversation has centered on sharing factual information and listening to community feedback.

Aligned with Strategic Priority 4.1—*Partnering to Support the Growth of the School District*—our 4.1 Team has dedicated significant time to engaging with community members and stakeholders. To date, the team has logged more than 360 hours across nearly 300 meetings, presentations, and collaborative sessions. This includes:

- 82 hours across 61 community presentations and public meetings with civic organizations, local groups, radio interviews, and one-on-one conversations focused on answering questions and clarifying facts.
- 95 hours in 68 planning and coordination sessions with staff, community partners, and advisory groups to ensure accuracy and consistency in communications.
- 68.5 hours in 65 stakeholder and partner meetings focused on collaboration and transparency.
- Dozens of evening and weekend sessions to ensure that working families and community members have access to these opportunities.

This work reflects our ongoing commitment to doing this *with* the community. This process was shaped by a nearly 60-member Community Task Force representing parents, students, staff, retirees, business owners, and local officials. Their recommendation forms the foundation of the plan now before voters.

As we approach November 4, our calendars remain full with meetings, presentations, and community conversations. We will continue these efforts right up to Election Day to ensure every voter has access to accurate, transparent information. The district's referendum website—ReferendumFacts.org—remains the central hub for factual information, tax calculators, FAQs, videos, and the full history of community engagement.

These efforts reflect the extraordinary commitment of our staff and leadership team to uphold the values of transparency, fiscal responsibility, and community partnership that define Cambridge-Isanti Schools. Together, we continue to Educate, Empower, and Inspire Every Student, Every Day.