



# PIPESTONE AREA SCHOOLS

District No. 2689

Dr. Klint W. Willert, Superintendent  
Sonja Ortman, MS/HS Principal  
Jennifer Moravetz, Elementary Principal  
Len Burzynski, Maintenance Director  
Lisa Pease, Coordinator of Curriculum, Teaching & Learning, and Continuous Improvement

Jacque Kennedy, Business Manager  
Rick Zollner, Activities Director  
Josh Stukel, Technology Director  
Kim Tuin, Food Service Director

Happy Summer! June 21 marks the official first day of summer. However, summer work around the school district has been underway since the last days of school. Here are a few updates for the board.

1. Portrait of a Graduate – We had a great session facilitated by KnowledgeWorks on our Portrait of a Graduate. We had staff, school board, administration, and parent representation. I have included a draft version of the work thus far. In the next few weeks, we will refine this document and make it more “publishable” for our community. We wanted to share the draft with the board for any input and reflection.
2. Budget – We have worked diligently on the budget. I want to thank Jacque for her tireless efforts and commitment to fiscal responsibility for the district. While the budget is projecting a deficit, we are still within the parameters of our fund balance policy. We will need to discuss our financial plans and programming throughout the months to come as we do anticipate the next biennium in the state will be quite challenging.
3. Roofing – On Monday, June 23, the district will receive materials and supplies for the roofing project. Black Hawk Roofing will make delivery of roofing material. It will be stored in the west parking lot. We have multiple cameras in that area of the school to monitor the materials.
4. Turf Tank – I continue to hear positive feedback about the acquisition of the Turf Tank in the district. It has been quite effective as well as efficient in helping mark fields and playing surfaces.
5. Legislative Session and Policy Changes – There are a few policy changes that have come from the recent conclusion of the legislative session. As a result, we will schedule a policy subcommittee meeting sometime in July to review the policy updates and consider them for the July board meeting.
6. Academic Eligibility – There has been some talk among the administrative team about making changes to the academic eligibility policy in the district. I have asked that we take this year to review our current practice, evaluate it against some others in the Big South Conference, and make a determination if we need to make some changes to our academic eligibility requirements in the district.
7. Personalized Learning Institute – Earlier this month, we had a team attend the Northern Cass Personalized Learning Institute at the Northern Cass School District near Fargo, ND. It was a great event. Our team of teachers and administrators heard from many speakers and practitioners on some best practices to improve teaching and learning for better student outcomes and student engagement. Sessions talked about the use of artificial intelligence, the need for reform in grading, leadership best practices, tools to personalize learning for students, and strategies to engage the community in the school through creative partnerships. There are pockets of activities and work we are doing in Pipestone that are align to this work. We need to better coordinate our efforts and align practices. I anticipate the team will present at either the July or August school board meeting.
8. Staffing – We still have a few vacancies we are working to fill in the district. Our administrative team had a conference call with an international provider. We are going to pursue this avenue a bit more as well as traditional avenues to fill our vacancies.

*“Inspire life-long learners. Build Character. Prepare them for their future.”*

9. Legislative Session – The legislative session has finally closed. There were quite a number of compromises made at the end to arrive at an agreed upon budget bill. Many provisions that were already in place will continue such as Earned Safe and Sick Time, seasonal unemployment for teacher aides/paraprofessionals, and the paid family leave program which will take effect in January 2026. There were new and stricter requirements placed on worker's rights to take breaks and there were changes made to the teacher retirement program. There were also changes to Long Term Facility Maintenance funding which will help us with the plans to finance Phase 2 our roofing project. Here is a news article that highlights some of the more significant items from the session: [Which labor bills passed — and which didn't — in Minnesota in 2025 • Minnesota Reformer](#).
10. Transportation Negotiations – We have held one meeting to discuss the transportation contract. There will be another session to discuss a possible agreement with the negotiations subcommittee. I anticipate we may need a special meeting to complete the adoption of the agreement for the 2025-26 school year.
11. Teacher Contract Negotiations – Now that the session is finished, I have notified the Pipestone Area Education Association of the board's intent and interest in moving forward with negotiations. We will work to get these dates scheduled soon.