



ADMINISTRATION REPORTS DECEMBER 2024

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES & HUMAN RESOURCES

by: Shawn Kirkeide

Wellness

C-I Schools staff recently wrapped a five-week Step Challenge on November 24, 2024, showcasing incredible collaboration and enthusiasm! A total of 96 participants formed teams of three or four, combining their steps to virtually explore Minnesota's hidden gems, such as the Hjemkomst Center and the Jeffers Petroglyphs. Together, they walked an impressive 25,705,565 steps, covering a distance of 12,852.78 miles.

Last week, staff received a Gratitude Challenge via email, encouraging them to focus on thankfulness and positivity. Each day includes a simple prompt designed to inspire reflection and bring a little extra joy to their day.

Retirement/Extended Leave of Absence

Educators, please note that February 1 is the deadline to submit your intent to retire, take a 3-5 year extended leave, or request a childcare leave of absence. For retirement, you are required to submit a written letter of intent to the District. If you are requesting a leave of absence, please complete the designated [Google Form](#).

Support staff, while there is no set deadline for notifying the District of your plans to retire or take an [extended leave](#), we encourage you to provide as much advance notice as possible to your supervisor. For additional information, please refer to the Retirement Frequently Asked Questions specific to your position: [Educator Retirement FAQs](#) and [Support Staff Retirement FAQs](#).

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

by: Christopher Kampa, CFA

Finance

In December, school districts and other local governmental units approve their final tax levy for the following calendar year. We are excited to put forth a proposed levy that will lower taxes for many of our residential households. The preliminary levy was approved by the Board in September, and the same levy will be brought forward for approval at the December Board meeting. Also, we will be holding a special Truth in Taxation meeting at 6:00, just prior to the regularly scheduled board meeting. This gives us the opportunity to present how school finance works, the district's financial position, and details about the proposed levy. Some people would say it's the most exciting meeting of the year and we encourage all who are interested to attend.

Transportation

This past month in transportation was highlighted by a presentation from Sgt. Kevin Brisk, the newly assigned State Patrol officer for the central Minnesota region, at our well-attended in-service meeting. Following the presentation, Sgt. Brisk conducted an audit of our driver files and found them in perfect order, which is a testament to the team's diligent record-keeping. The remainder of the meeting focused on Emergency Preparedness and Winter Safe Driving, providing an excellent opportunity to prepare new drivers for the challenges of winter conditions. In the shop, preparations for the colder months are well underway, including testing heater cords, installing front bras on buses, and ordering winter fuel. A special acknowledgment goes to the Sunshine Group for their ongoing efforts to fund and support our meetings and events, as well as to the drivers who have been instrumental in assisting Cindy Anderson with these initiatives. With the holiday break approaching, we are well-prepared for the season ahead.

Food Service

November was a successful month for Food Service, marked by continued momentum from last year's implementation of MN Free Meals for All, resulting in growth in both breakfast and lunch participation during the first two months of the year. We are also benefiting from operating at 92% staffing, which has provided a much-appreciated improvement in workflow. A special thanks to Jerry and the Transportation team for collaborating on a creative solution: several drivers are now supporting lunch service between their morning and afternoon routes, exemplifying the power of teamwork in finding effective solutions.

Building & Grounds

We are addressing several maintenance and improvement projects to enhance safety and functionality across our facilities. In the IMS kitchen, where the sprinkler line has broken twice in the past two years due to cold weather, we are exploring the installation of a dry system to prevent freezing and ensure reliability. Additionally, we have resolved two trip hazards caused by uneven sidewalks at CIS and IPS by leveling the affected sections. At the high school, a mini-split system is being installed in the server room to provide adequate cooling during summer months, ensuring proper climate control for the servers; this project is expected to be completed over Christmas break. During the same period, we will replace the main shut-off valves in the old locker rooms, enabling us to address long-standing hot water issues at the high school.

Technology

Over the past month, the technology department successfully facilitated the 2024-25 Cybersecurity Training using the Infosec platform. This year's training, curated by Network Security Coordinator James Klimek, focused on phishing, social engineering, password security, and other critical topics. Concurrently, the department launched monthly phishing campaigns to test staff awareness and reporting of phishing attempts. The Cybersecurity Committee also convened to discuss enhancements to email security through an email hardener, implementation of improved Chrome browser security practices for staff, and progress on the cybersecurity training initiative. In early December, the District Tech Advisory Committee met to address key topics, including the Alexandria Library System's migration to a cloud-hosted solution over the summer, the development of the District Technology Plan, and policies surrounding personal streaming services used by teachers. Following these discussions, staff will receive updates and guidance to support their classroom planning and adapt to any upcoming changes.

TEACHING & LEARNING

by: Dr. Jason Bodey

READ Act and OL&LA Training

On July 1, 2024, 108 teachers began Phase 1 of the Online Literacy and Language Acquisition (OL&LA) training, successfully completing the course by November 18, 2024. Preliminary data indicates that nearly all participants met or exceeded the required 80% passing threshold. Looking ahead, we are excited to share that approximately 44 additional teachers will begin this same training in January 2025.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our principals and coordinators for their exceptional leadership and unwavering support throughout this initiative. Additionally, I want to recognize and commend the extraordinary effort our teachers dedicated to this rigorous process. Their commitment and hard work are not only commendable but will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on improving our students' literacy achievement.

Minnesota Student Survey in 2025

Every three years, Minnesota surveys students in grades 5, 8, 9, and 11. The survey data is used by school districts, counties, and the state to develop programs and support for students and families. We encourage all students to participate in the survey. An email will be sent to all families of students taking the survey. As has always been the case, parents can choose to opt out of the survey if they choose.

Catalyst Training Update

In mid-November, Kim Sagan, Christina Thayer Anderson, and I had the opportunity to attend Catalyst Live at Andover High School and Andover Elementary. This experience was similar to what many of our principals participated in last spring. We were able to observe the Catalyst strategies in action, gaining valuable insights into the approach and philosophy behind them.

Additionally, this event provided an opportunity to collaborate with Jacki Brickman on the next steps for our district. We are currently in the process of finalizing our plan. Moving forward, Kim and I will work to share information regarding upcoming Catalyst Live events and in-person coaching opportunities for PreK-8 staff, starting in December.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

by: Dr. Julie Williams

SEAC

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) met on November 14, 2024, for the first meeting of the year. The SEAC is an advisory council composed of parents of special education students. Its purpose is to advise and advocate, not to decide policy. Minnesota law requires each school district in the state to have a SEAC. Local SEACs advise school districts on the development of programs and services to meet the special education needs of children and families. By sharing their unique perspective of what it is like to use these services, parents can help the district be more effective. The

meeting was a great opportunity to share information and resources with parents. We also were able to discuss future virtual parent workshops.

Isanti County Collaborative Resource Site

The Isanti County Collaborative group has created a [resource website](#). The goal of creating this website was to establish it as the “Hub” for Isanti County—a one-stop place where individuals and families can easily find the services they need, access free or low-cost community activities, and explore trainings that help build a resilient community.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

by: Dr. Nate Rudolph

Recognizing and Thanking Tim Hitchings and Carri Levitski

As Superintendent, it has been my distinct pleasure to work closely with Mr. Tim Hitchings and Mrs Carri Levitski over the past six years. Their dedication and service to the students, staff, and families in our community is tremendous and I am so thankful for their leadership and guidance over the years. As they complete their final meeting of their terms we wish them well and remind them - Once a Bluejacket ALWAYS a Bluejacket!

Tim Hitchings - Chair Hitchings has tirelessly served on our board since 2011. He has not only served as the school board chair for 10 years, but he has also served as our District’s Lead Negotiator, participated in the Finance Committee, led Meet and Confer meetings, served on the Facilities/Long Range Planning Committee, represented the School Board on Community Task Force, led policy discussions on the Policy Review Committee, and served on the Human Resources Committee.

- Attended 10 MSBA Conferences & Workshops during his time on the board

Carri Levitski - Carri began serving as a board member in 2017. During her time on the board, she served on various committees including the Policy Committee, Communication Advisory Committee, Long-Range Facilities Committee, Legislative Government Committee, SEE Committee, and several others. Additionally, she served as Clerk for a year.

- Carri has attended 15 MSBA Conference & Workshops during her time on the board

Both board members have earned Leadership Development Certificates.

Welcoming Our New School Board Leaders

Congratulations to Heidi Sprandel, Brette Halverson, and Becky Roby, who were [elected to the Cambridge-Isanti School Board](#)! We are excited to welcome them to this vital role in our community. Heidi, Brette, and Becky will begin their terms in January. We look forward to their contributions and the continued growth of our district with their support.

Planning for the Future

As we plan for our future, we have a lot of opportunities for community members to connect and to engage. As you will read below, please consider lending your voice and feedback to one of our upcoming community task force opportunities. Our schools are owned by our communities and we are very thankful for the perspectives, feedback, and guidance that we gain through this vital input.

Strategic Plan Update

Nearly two years ago, we launched our [Strategic Plan](#)—a vision shaped by the voices of our families, staff, students, and community members. Adopted in December 2022, this plan has become our road map, helping us create a school environment where students feel supported and connected.

Our annual review will take place in January. This is the time of year when we will invite our past community task force to come together, review and evaluate progress, and provide feedback regarding any needed adjustments. This feedback then will drive the work that our administrators do in preparing for year three. We are seeking approximately 10-15 new members to join the task force in this important work. If you are interested, please complete this [form](#). We're proud of the progress so far, and we thank you for staying involved and helping us reach our goals.

Facility Planning Task Force

As part of our Strategic Plan, Strategy 4.1 directs school district leaders to develop a comprehensive master plan to address our district's future facility and programming needs. To begin this work, we completed a facility study that has identified needs for updating and/or improvements in four main areas:

- Addressing capacity (space) issues
- Addressing deferred maintenance
- Reimagining learning spaces
- Improving athletics and activities spaces

Our district facilities are a community asset, therefore, we are seeking community feedback and direction to help us to develop our master facility plan in accordance with our strategic plan. A Facility Planning Task Force will be assembled in order to capture the thoughts, vision, and direction of our community and will be scheduled to meet between five and seven times over the course of the winter. If you are interested in joining this initiative, please [complete this interest application form](#). It will once again be important to pull together a group of community members and stakeholders that represent all views and perspectives of our community.