

## Superintendent Jeff Elstad's Board Report

*October 2024*

### ❖ Important Dates

- November 1: End of 1st Quarter
- November 4: No School, Teacher Work Day / Professional Development
- November 5: Election Day
- November 7: School Board Data Retreat, 3:00-6:00 pm (District Office)
- November 11: Veterans Day
- November 12: World's Best Workforce/Comprehensive Achievement and and Civic Readiness Annual Meeting at the District Office, (5:00 pm)
- November 12 (Tuesday): Special School Board Meeting Followed by a Work Session at the District Office (5:30 pm)
- November 15: No School, Grades K-5 - Conferences
- November 25: School Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

### ❖ District Updates

- At our meeting, you will be presented with a draft RFP (Request for Proposal) that will be circulated to real estate firms in our community searching for a representative that will assist the district in the selling of the Bridge St. property and could potentially be used for the Rose St. property when that is ready for listing. This was discussed at our work session.
- The United Way campaign for ISD 761 employees and students started this past week and will go until Tuesday, November 19th. The United Way is a great partner of ISD 761 and a great way to support our community.
- Next week, Mark Sebring and I will be accompanying Erin Baker and Ayoub Farah to a student school board development event in Farmington. I look forward to attending with our representatives.

## **Human Resources**

*Chris Picha, Director*

**We are here to serve, not judge**

### Updates

- Continuing interviews and selection of candidates for our open support staff positions and onboarding new hires
- Recruiting substitute teachers and support staff
- Job Fairs - St. Mary's, UW River Falls
- Employee Relations Issues
- Policy Committee work
- MASPA Work Group reviewing New Family Paid Leave implications and implementation processes
- Teacher Apprenticeship Weekly meetings
- STARR Report
- Data Request Responses

## **Finance & Operations**

*Lori Volz, Director*

### Finance/Business Office

- Financial and staff level analysis of the General Fund has been completed. A financial forecast presentation is in development.
- A Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for October 21st.
- The 23-24 Financial Audit is nearly complete.

### Food & Nutrition Services:

- The Single Audit of federal funds for the Food Service Fund is completed.
- We are still working on filling some vacant positions in the food & nutrition department.

## **Teaching and Learning**

*Julie Sullivan, Director*

We had our first PD for the READ Act on Monday, October 21, which included a one hour live session with our internal facilitators. Having the dedicated time for teachers to participate in the learning and have conversations with grade-level colleagues across the district is much appreciated and invaluable. While those going through the OL&LA training were focused on Module 3, the secondary staff and elementary specialists worked with Rebecca Bultsma, an AI guru. Her presentation was both eye opening and educational; finding how to best use AI and teach students of its strengths and drawbacks will be an ongoing endeavor. The day was filled with professional learning that will ultimately benefit students!

#### Upcoming Events:

- Tuesday, October 29: LA Committee meets to work on state standards
- Monday, November 4: READ Act PD Day for K-5 classroom teachers and K-12 Special Education teachers (work day and PD day)
- Thursday, November 7: Data Retreat with School Board
- Tuesday, November 12: CACR report at Board meeting

### **Special Services**

*Dr. Sarah Knudsen, Director*

- Continue to recruit substitute special education teachers and paraprofessionals
- The Special Education Administrative Team meets weekly to problem-solve issues, plan for supporting program implementation and work to support building programs
- Special Education Paraprofessionals spent the first staff development day (October 21) engaging in ALICE training, learning about Occupational Therapy services and support, reviewing the district action plan and engaging in discussion related to providing positive behavioral support to students
- All licensed special education teachers participated in the Read Act training day on October 21
- School psychologists are in the process of completing Child Find Evaluation training for specific staff and beginning the development of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) training to be delivered over November and December

### **Lincoln Elementary**

*Justin Lang, Principal*

#### Important Dates

- October 1st-4th grade Youth Frontiers Kindness Retreat
- October 2nd-4th grade field trip to Farmamerica
- October 4th-1st grade annual Teddy Bear Parade at Lincoln
- October 9th-1st grade field trip to Fireside Orchard & Produce Farm
- October 9th and October 10th-Let's Smile Dental Clinic at Lincoln
- October 22nd-United Way Campaign Kick Off
- October 23rd-Kindergarten field trip to Kaplan's Woods
- October 25th-Author Kim Larson visits Lincoln
- October 28th-District wide 4th grade field trip-Austin Symphony Young People's Concert at Austin High School
- October 29th-Oath of Office for Lincoln patrols and student council members

#### Lincoln Updates

- The Lincoln 4th grade retreat was put on by Youth Frontiers. Their programs are designed to define, explain and inspire key character traits like kindness, courage and respect through music and high energy activities that break down social barriers.

- Let's Smile dental clinic was at Lincoln on October 9th and October 10th. They were able to provide dental cleanings for 35 Lincoln students.
- The first grade annual Teddy Bear Parade was well attended by many parents. Lincoln first graders paraded around the school outside with their teddy bear floats they constructed.

## **Washington Elementary**

*Libby Zeman, Principal*

### Updates:

- We have had a record number of positive office referrals this year! Our students are demonstrating great growth and leadership.
- In addition to all of the reading learning work we are doing, we are also doing some collaboration around best practices with math instruction.
- Students who need additional support in literacy or math are receiving interventions or specific instruction to meet their needs.

## **Wilson Elementary**

*Cassie Mitchell, Principal*

October has been an exciting month at Wilson Elementary as we proudly embrace National Bully Prevention Month. Throughout the month, our dedicated staff has been teaching valuable skills and strategies to empower students in recognizing and addressing bullying, fostering a safe and supportive environment for everyone. Additionally, we are thrilled to announce the re-launch of "Pizza with the Principal," an initiative aimed at ensuring that every student has the opportunity to share lunch with the principal before graduating from Wilson in 5th grade. This opportunity not only encourages meaningful connections but also allows students to engage in open conversations about their experiences at school. We look forward to a wonderful month filled with learning and growth!

### **Important Upcoming Dates:**

- Oct. 28-30- Let's Smile Dental Clinic
- Oct. 29- Wilson Unity Day
- Nov. 1- Quarter 1 Celebration- All school bowling
- Nov. 7- PTO Fall Fest
- Nov. 8- Pizza with the Principal

## Owatonna High School

*Kory Kath, Principal*

First quarter ends this week! Our teachers are working hard to support our learners and encourage them to connect if they need help. We are also doing a lot of work making sure attendance is a priority through communication to students and parents.

A huge thank you to our SHOC members for promoting positive choices and spreading the word to all students about the importance of being drug free during this week's Red Ribbon Week. We are lucky to have a record number of students in SHOC and their willingness to be positive role models for all students!

Finally, thank you to everyone who came to conferences on October 10th and our Family Connect Meeting on October 21st. We enjoyed seeing families and sharing in conversations about student progress and OHS opportunities.

Please plan to join us for upcoming events like our Fall play, music performances and winter athletics!

Best of luck to our football and Cross Country teams as they move on to section play.

Important Dates:

- Friday, Nov. 1 - END OF 1st QUARTER
- Monday, Nov. 4 - NO SCHOOL (Teacher Work Day)
- Wednesday, Nov. 6 - College & Career Fair/COMPASS DAY
- Wednesday, Nov. 20 - COMPASS DAY
- Weds. Nov. 27 - Fri. Nov. 29 - NO SCHOOL (Thanksgiving Holiday)

## Owatonna Area Learning Center (ALC)

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

- **Increased Focus on Attendance:** The ALC has prioritized improving student attendance with targeted interventions and tracking to promote higher engagement and consistency in student participation.
- **Established Goals for 2024-2025:** Our goals for the year focus on credit attainment, social-emotional growth, and fostering a strong sense of community. High attendance is a key component to reaching these goals.
- **Compass Time Initiative:** Starting in November, ALC will implement "Compass Time," providing both incentives for learning and opportunities for staff and students to engage in the Building Assets and Reducing Risks (BARR) model through iTimes.
- **Expanded Support Systems:** The ALC continues strengthening support systems by incorporating Career Pathways, School Linked Mental Health, and community resources, fostering a holistic approach to student success.
- FALL Credit Recovery begins this month!

## Owatonna Online (OO)

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

- **Work-Based Learning Development:** We have begun laying the groundwork for a Work-Based Learning program for OO students. We aim to build partnerships both locally and with partnership districts to provide hands-on, real-world experiences.
- **Integrated Support for Special Education and ELL:** OO remains committed to ensuring streamlined and effective services for Special Education and English Language Learner (ELL) students, refining collaboration and support structures with Partnership Districts.
- **Progressive Programming:** OO continues to lead innovative online education, with ongoing efforts to foster local and statewide partnerships to enhance student experiences and learning opportunities/internships.