

## **NOVEMBER 2025 - FROM THE BUSINESS OFFICE:**

The audit went very well this year, however, our auditors, Creative Planning-Bergan/KDV needed more time to process all of our information. Because of this, they have requested we move back our preliminary meeting to November 21<sup>st</sup>. By statute, school districts must have their audited data uploaded to MDE by November 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. They have assured us that LPGE will have no problem making that deadline. The audit will then be presented at our December board meeting. Once we get the final electronic version, I will send the file out to you via email so that you can take a look at it well in advance of the December meeting.

Just as a point of reference, I have been uploading our data to the State as we go along. This is done for a variety of reasons. Each time a school district does an upload, they receive what are called turnaround reports. These reports give us all kinds of information. Most importantly, any errors that might be occurring show up and we are required to fix them. An example of an error we might see is an account code that has an expenditure in it and it shouldn't have. The other common error is in our balance sheet codes. When you see our reserve accounts in the audit for things like Basic Skills, Capital Outlay, etc., some of these are not allowed to go in to deficit. If that happens, an error shows up and we are required to fix it. I'd be happy to do a walkthrough of any questions you may have when you are looking at any of our financials.

Another area that has been top priority for our office has been the open enrollment of our staff members benefit selections. Kudos to our team, led by Barb, for making sure that everyone got the information they requested and that hopefully the selections they made will serve them in 2026. As we all know, things like health insurance are confusing to everyone yet very necessary for our staff's peace of mind so they can concentrate on the kids.

My last topic of conversation is in regard to our school safety response protocol. If anyone caught the news on Channel 5 on Monday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, they talked about "New School Safety Response Protocols Implemented Across the Twin Cities." I am proud to say that Long Prairie-Grey Eagle has been making school safety a top priority for our students as well. We have used a response protocol named ALICE for approximately the past 10 years. ALICE is a tool that gives our staff and students a framework of how to respond to an intruder in our building(s). Nicole Cuchna and I have been certified ALICE trainers, and were instrumental in working with our local law enforcement a decade ago to run a scenario with our staff (no students) in a security exercise.

As the years have gone on, another resource we've used to train with has been with the I Love U Guys Foundation. If you remember back to this summer, LPGE was able to take a solid group to Sourcewell to get trained on the I Love U Guys Reunification Response. I Love U Guys uses a similar approach as ALICE, but adds more in-depth resources regarding our day-to-day operations. A highlight that we implemented right away was new plain language for any situation that might happen in our building. If you take a look in each of the rooms in our building, we have signs that assist us with how we might respond to any situation that requires students and folks in our buildings to avoid an incident. Mitchell and I also worked on new recorded information that goes over our loud speakers in case of a violent intruder.

For our November 3<sup>rd</sup> Professional Development in the morning, we invited other stakeholders besides our immediate staff to listen to our security training. These stakeholders included law enforcement, Aksamit Bus, Freshwater, Headstart, St. Mary's, etc. Quite a few took us up on our offer to learn our protocol in case they are in our building during an incident. We also invited Ryan Hanson

from the Long Prairie City Police Department to come in and give us some background information on school shootings and why we need to prepare our schools to the best of our ability. After Ryan was done with his presentation, I spent the next few hours training the staff on our protocol and response to an intruder in our building(s), along with what reunification could look like in a best-case scenario. For the last half hour of the training, we then broke out into groups based on our roles and did a tabletop Q & A session to drill down a little further into expectations and scenarios.

I feel that we created a very good base for our ongoing response to school safety, and we'll be spending future months working on creating improved plans and implementation.

One other reminder, if you have any burning questions for me regarding LPGE or school finance, please let me know so I can answer them in my upcoming newsletter report. As always, please call or stop in if you have any questions for me or any of the other folks in the District Office. We enjoy your visits.

*Sherri Evenson*