



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

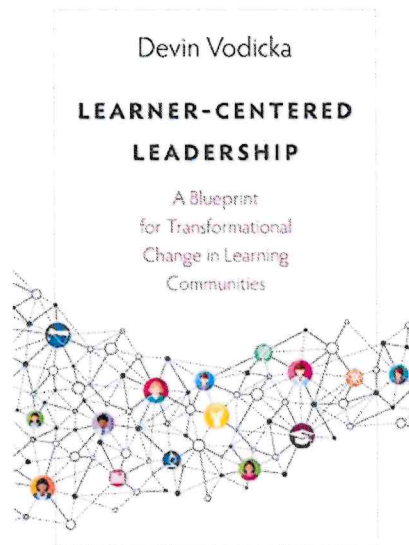
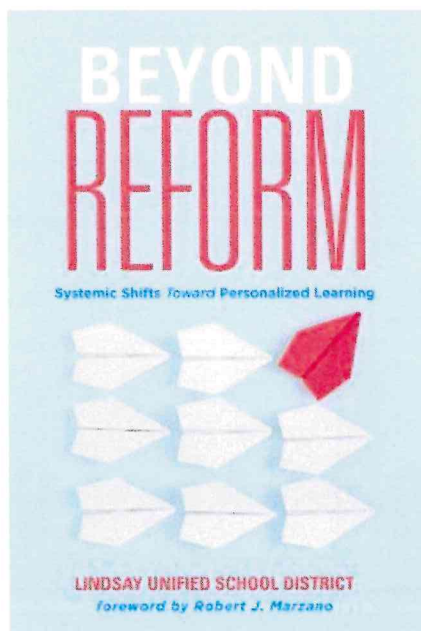
Jacque Kennedy, Business Manager
Rick Zollner, Activities Director
Josh Stukel, Technology Director
Kim Tuin, Food Service Director

September 2025

It is beginning to look and feel a little more like fall. With that come a number of activities and events. Here are a few items of note for the board.

1. **School Start** – We have experienced a great start to the school year. I believe that spirits are high and things have been moving smoothly as we have started this school year. I want to thank the custodial staff for ensuring everything was in great shape as we launched the new year.
2. **Rock surplus** – We were able to sell off the surplus rock. I know some individuals contacted us asking for rock. We will have more next year as Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the roofing project take shape.
3. **Shop area** – There have been a few meetings on doing some improvements in the shop area. As you will see on the agenda, there are a number of obsolete items that we are recommending to declare surplus. While our original plans with the bond proceeds were to address some facility needs, we had to pivot and focus more on the roof. However, some of the CTE space facility needs remain, including the shop area. I have asked our teachers and the principal to see what we can find for grant funding that may provide us resources to make some needed improvements in the space and with the equipment. We certainly have work to do and needs to meet!
4. **Artificial Intelligence (AI) On the Rise** – As we keep moving forward in what we do, we need to be mindful about the challenges and opportunities that AI will present for our schools and students. We have access to training and support for teachers from the Service Cooperative and we are planning to access training and support throughout the year. I also believe that as we start our work on our district strategic design, conversations about the role of artificial intelligence will be critical and significant.
5. **Strategic Design and Plan work** – I have connected with the Knowledge Works team. They have conducted strategic design work for school districts in the past. I have asked them to put together a proposal and lay out a process for our district on a comprehensive strategic design that would include revisiting our mission and vision statements, reviewing our key focus areas, and helping define the core metrics we want to have in our plan. Once I have the proposal, I envision a review of the proposal with school board representation and then taking steps to being the process of our new strategic design. My goal is to have the strategic design completed within 6 or 7 months.
6. **School Board Leadership Conference** – It is time to begin thinking about participation and attendance at the conference. It is scheduled for January 15 and 16 in Minneapolis. If you are interested in attending, please let Deb know so she can plan for registrations and lodging needs.

7. **Staff Training** – One question that came earlier from the board was the expectations of staff regarding child maltreatment. We have, in the past, and we will, in the future, continue to train staff on the expectations of reporting child maltreatment. Lisa has worked to find training modules that we require all staff to complete regarding recognizing and reporting child maltreatment.
8. **Book Study** – As we work to implement the Portrait of a Graduate into the schools and consider how to improve and expand opportunities to personalize the teaching and learning process for students, the administrative team is completing two book studies this year. The first book is titled “Beyond Reform: Systemic Shifts Toward Personalized Learning.” The other is titled, “Learner-Centered Leadership: A Blueprint for Transformational Change in Learning Communities.” Both of these books solution oriented and provide proven examples of personalized learning. If you are interested in either of these books, please let me know and we would be happy to provide you a copy.



9. **Goals and Metrics** – Last year I introduced school improvement planning to the principals. Each principal worked with their respective leadership teams to develop a school improvement plan with one academic and one non-academic goal. This practice will continue. I have also asked the department leaders including activities, finance, maintenance, and technology to develop an improvement goal for the year with some metrics. I believe if we focus on small, incremental improvements with some clear goals, the work of our team and staff can make positive contributions to the success of the district.
10. **Scuppers** – I have asked Len to work with our roofing company to install scuppers on the roof. As we put a new roof on, one thing that can help improve the performance of the roof is removing rain water as quickly as possible. With a few of the significant rains we have experienced this year, there have been instances where the drains have not necessarily kept up with the demand. Scuppers will help address excessive rains and help remove those excessive rain waters as quickly as possible.



11. **Elementary Gym Floor** – We are working on solutions for the buckled floor. A contractor has been out to review the situation and the insurance adjustor has been out as well. I am pushing for this situation to be corrected as quickly as possible to ensure that floor is performance ready for the start of the winter activities season.
12. **Gym Curtains** – The system of dividing curtains in the high school are not performing as they should. We have been informed on a few occasions the systems would be fixed. However, there has not been any action as of yet. I have communicated to the company that installed the curtains that, rather than repairing the failing system, it would better serve the district to replace the failing system completely. We have not heard a formal response from the company yet. We know that this work would require the gym to be out of use for a few days so we are hopeful we get a solution yet this fall so physical education activities can be held outside while the gym curtains are replaced.
13. **Portrait of a Graduate** – We continue to seek ways to promote our recently adopted Portrait of a Graduate. We are providing all staff and board members with cards to reference and share and highlight our attributes and focus.
14. **School Board Appreciation** – I want to thank you all for your service to the Pipestone Area Schools and the communities of our district. Your work to provide policy direction for the success of our school district is truly appreciated! As a symbol of appreciation, the administrative team has provided the board with pizza and pop for the board meeting. Again, thank you!



Thank your local school board members!

I believe that is all I have for now. Thank you for your service and commitment. Here is wishing you all a great week ahead.