

**Belmond-Klemme Community  
School District**  
Belmond, Iowa 50421



## Superintendent's Report

**TO:** The Belmond-Klemme School Board  
**FROM:** Dan Frazier, Superintendent  
**DATE:** Friday, December 10, 2021  
**RE:** Superintendent's Report on School District Business

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### **Iowa Department of Education Issues Ruling Stating that IEP Teams May Need to Consider Masks on A Case-by-case Basis for Eligible Students Under the IDEA**

*By Attorney Miriam Van Heukelem of Ahlers Law*

On December 1, 2021, the Iowa Department of Education (the "Department") concluded that, where a student requires masking as a support service because of disability, the school district would be "required by law" to implement this masking requirement. The Department's ruling indicates that schools that *fail to implement* mask requirements consistent with the Department's December 1 decision may be violating individual student rights under the IDEA.

Iowa law was amended last May 20 to generally prohibit schools from adopting, implementing, or enforcing mask rules for employees, students, or visitors (See Iowa Code § 280.31). No guidance was issued to assist schools with compliance with or interpretation. On September 13, 2021, a Temporary Restraining Order was entered by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa in the case of *Arc of Iowa et al. v. Governor Reynolds et al.*, preventing the State of Iowa from enforcing section 280.31. This TRO, now a preliminary injunction, remains in effect, but has been appealed to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Oral argument was heard in this matter on November 18, 2021, and the parties are now awaiting a ruling from the Court, which could come at any time.

In the meantime, a number of parents from school districts and AEAs around the state filed IDEA State Complaints with the Iowa Department of Education, arguing that Iowa Code section 280.31 violated their children's right to a Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment, by preventing schools from implementing mask requirements for students, employees, and visitors.

## Early Retirement Applications Due by Monday, January 10, 2022

The Belmond-Klemme Board offers an early retirement plan for full-time licensed employees. A licensed employee is eligible when the employee:

- Is at least age 55 prior to the start of the next school year.
- Completes a total of seven (7) years of service as a full-time licensed employee to the school district;
- Submits an application to the superintendent for participation in the plan on or before Monday, January 10, 2022; and
- Submits a written resignation. (The resignation may be contingent upon approval by the board of participation in the voluntary early retirement plan.)

Teachers who are considering retirement will be offered a payment of \$5,000 (*\$10,00 next year*).

Approval by the board of the licensed employee's early retirement application shall constitute a voluntary resignation. Approval will also make the employee eligible for disbursement of the early retirement incentive by July 1 or a date mutually agreed upon.

*This policy will remain in place for four years—through January 2025.*

## The School Board Wars, Part 1

Across our nation, school board meetings have become battlegrounds between opposing political factions. Even some Iowa school boards have needed to call police to board meetings to control the polarized crowds.

Nationally, there is a large foundation that is funding extremists to run for local school boards all across the country.

The podcast below is called "The School Board Wars, Part 1." It contains an analysis of what is going on in our nation right now.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-daily/id1200361736?i=1000542084824>

## Calendar of Upcoming Board Events

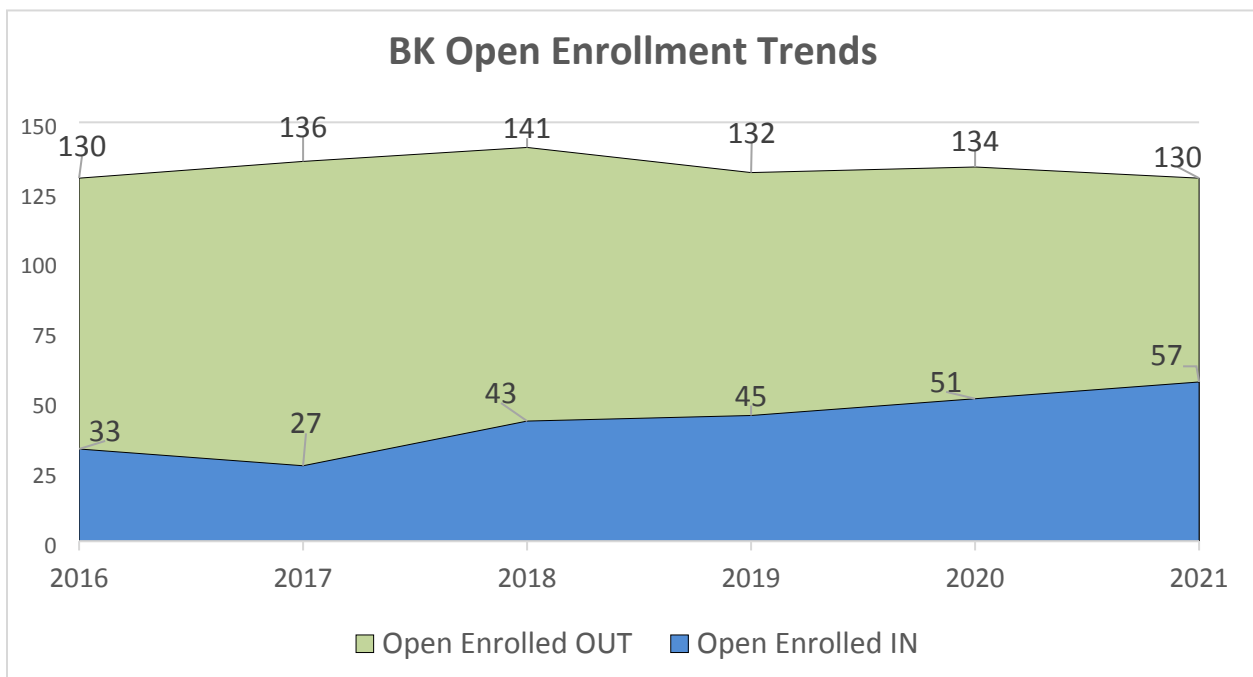
|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| December 23 – 30  | No School – Christmas Break             |
| January 3, 2022   | School Resumes                          |
| January 17, 2022  | Teacher PD Day – No School              |
| January 20, 2022  | 7:00 P.M., Regular School Board Meeting |
| February 2, 2022  | 1:00 P.M. Dismissal for Teacher PD      |
| February 21, 2022 | Presidents' Day – No School             |
| February 24, 2022 | 7:00 P.M., Regular School Board Meeting |

# Open Enrollment Report 2021

The table below shows the net flow of students in and out of the B-K district due to open enrollment.

| SCHOOLS                   | Students Open Enrolling OUT | Students Open Enrolling IN | NET FLOW 2021-22 | NET FLOW 2019-20 |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| ▪ CAL                     |                             | 17                         | + 17             | + 16             |
| ▪ CAM (online academy)    | 2                           |                            | - 2              | - 2              |
| ▪ Clarion-Goldfield-Dows  | 13                          | 10                         | - 3              | - 3              |
| ▪ Clear Lake              |                             |                            |                  | - 3              |
| ▪ Forest City             |                             |                            |                  | - 1              |
| ▪ Garner-Hayfield-Ventura | 109                         |                            | - 109            | - 106            |
| ▪ Hampton-Dumont          | 1                           | 1                          | 0                | - 1              |
| ▪ Mason City              |                             | 2                          | + 2              | + 2              |
| ▪ West Fork (Sheffield)   |                             | 23                         | + 23             | + 17             |
| ▪ West Hancock (Britt)    | 5                           | 4                          | - 1              | - 2              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>130</b>                  | <b>57</b>                  | <b>- 73</b>      | <b>- 83</b>      |

Looking at the Belmond-Klemme Open Enrollment trends over the past four years, the data show that our number of students opting out has remained largely stable. Meanwhile, our students choosing to open enroll in has increased substantially.



# Teacher Salary Report

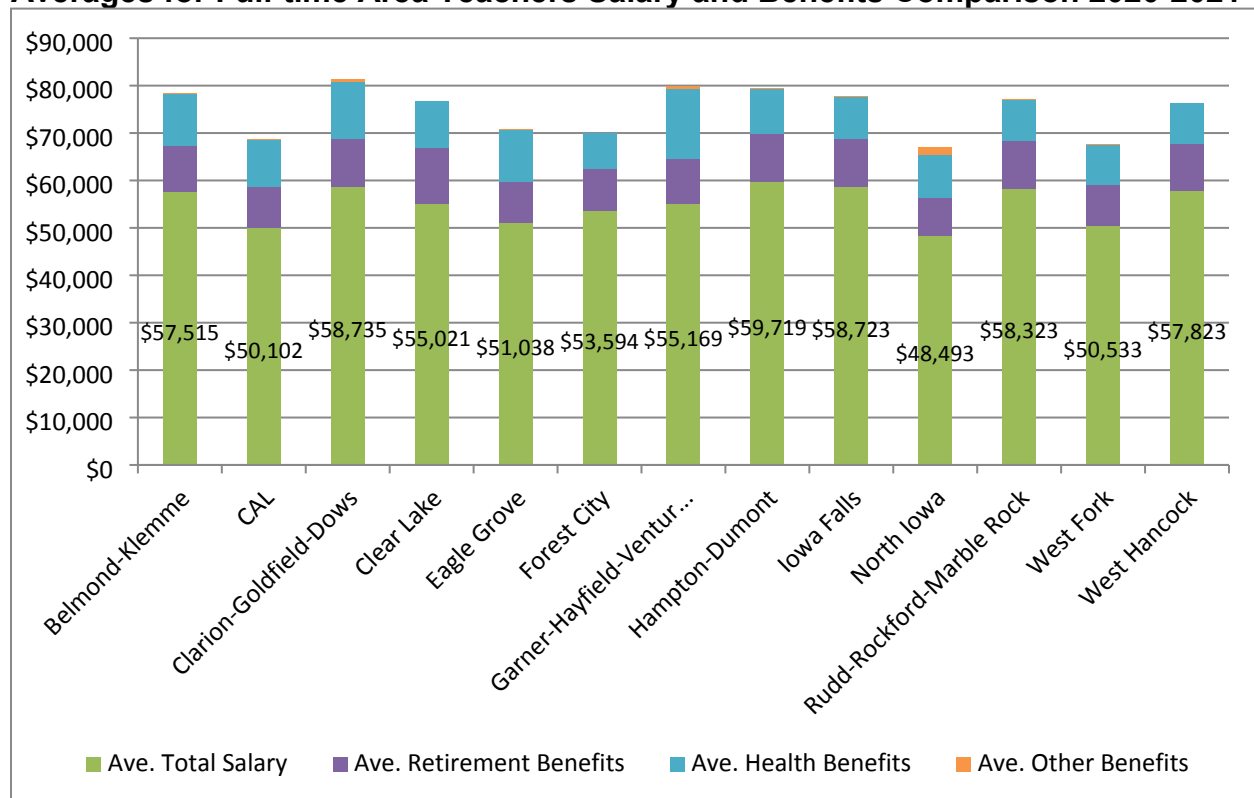
Before the board enters the contract bargaining season, I report on the status of our pay system. Below is the average teacher salary for our school district and in comparison to 12 schools around us. The data suggest our average teacher salary is competitive.

## Average Area Teachers Salary Rankings 2020-2021

|     |                           |                 |
|-----|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | Hampton-Dumont            | \$59,719        |
| 2.  | Clarion-Goldfield-Dows    | \$58,735        |
| 3.  | Iowa Falls                | \$58,723        |
| 4.  | Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock | \$58,323        |
| 5.  | West Hancock              | \$57,823        |
| 6.  | <b>Belmond-Klemme</b>     | <b>\$57,515</b> |
| 7.  | Garner-Hayfield-Ventura   | \$55,169        |
| 8.  | Clear Lake                | \$55,021        |
| 9.  | Forest City               | \$53,594        |
| 10. | Eagle Grove               | \$51,038        |
| 11. | West Fork                 | \$50,533        |
| 12. | CAL                       | \$50,102        |
| 13. | North Iowa                | \$48,493        |

*Area Average: \$54,984*

## Averages for Full-time Area Teachers Salary and Benefits Comparison 2020-2021



Source: Iowa Department of Education, Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS)

In this time of teacher shortage, it is extremely important that we maintain a salary schedule that attracts and retains quality teachers. This starts with the salary we pay to beginning teachers.

The table below shows the salary averages for *first-year teachers* in ten area schools as compiled by the Iowa Department of Education for the last three years.

### Beginning Teacher Salaries

| 2018 – 2019     |                      | 2019 – 2020     |                      | 2020 – 2021     |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| \$41,350        | Clarion-G-D          | \$42,517        | Clarion-G-D          | \$43,300        | Clarion-G-D          |
| \$38,381        | Clear Lake           | \$39,781        | Clear Lake           | \$40,881        | Clear Lake           |
| \$37,200        | Hampton-Dumon        | \$37,418        | Eagle Grove          | \$40,000        | Belmond-Klemm        |
| \$37,143        | Eagle Grove          | \$37,209        | Hampton-Dumon        | \$38,238        | Hampton-Dumon        |
| \$36,262        | CAL                  | \$36,712        | Belmond-Klemm        | \$37,634        | Eagle Grove          |
| \$35,806        | West Fork            | \$35,915        | West Fork            | \$37,362        | CAL                  |
| \$35,672        | Belmond-Klemm        | \$35,670        | Garner-H-V           | \$36,934        | Garner-H-V           |
| \$34,837        | Garner-H-V           | \$35,495        | CAL                  | \$36,593        | West Fork            |
| \$34,770        | Forest City          | \$35,063        | West Hancock         | \$36,023        | West Hancock         |
| \$34,200        | West Hancock         | \$34,980        | Forest City          | \$35,504        | Forest City          |
| <b>\$36,562</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  | <b>\$37,076</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  | <b>\$38,247</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  |
| <b>\$36,857</b> | <b>State Median</b>  | <b>\$37,389</b> | <b>State Median</b>  | <b>\$38,019</b> | <b>State Median</b>  |
| <b>\$37,406</b> | <b>State Average</b> | <b>\$37,908</b> | <b>State Average</b> | <b>\$38,515</b> | <b>State Average</b> |

During the 2018-19 school year, starting pay in Belmond-Klemme was well below the state median. We have worked on this, and now our starting BK teacher pay is \$41,000 this year.

Next, the table below shows the *average top salary* for teachers in ten area schools.

### Highest Area Teacher Salaries

| 2018 – 2019     |                      | 2019 – 2020     |                      | 2020 – 2021     |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| \$79,575        | Garner-H-V           | \$80,952        | Garner-H-V           | \$82,380        | Garner-H-V           |
| \$75,055        | Forest City          | \$77,893        | West Fork            | \$80,160        | West Fork            |
| \$74,163        | West Fork            | \$74,810        | Forest City          | \$74,342        | Belmond-Klemm        |
| \$73,463        | Clarion-G-D          | \$72,569        | Belmond-Klemm        | \$72,830        | Clear Lake           |
| \$72,322        | Belmond-Klemm        | \$71,030        | Clear Lake           | \$71,026        | Clarion-G-D          |
| \$71,538        | Hampton-Dumon        | \$69,490        | Clarion-G-D          | \$69,828        | Hampton-Dumon        |
| \$71,292        | Clear Lake           | \$68,979        | Hampton-Dumon        | \$68,762        | Forest City          |
| \$65,060        | West Hancock         | \$66,464        | West Hancock         | \$68,302        | West Hancock         |
| \$63,136        | Eagle Grove          | \$63,411        | Eagle Grove          | \$66,163        | Eagle Grove          |
| \$50,006        | CAL                  | \$58,606        | CAL                  | \$61,028        | CAL                  |
| <b>\$69,561</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  | <b>\$70,420</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  | <b>\$71,482</b> | <b>Area Average</b>  |
| <b>\$69,919</b> | <b>State Median</b>  | <b>\$70,313</b> | <b>State Median</b>  | <b>\$71,167</b> | <b>State Median</b>  |
| <b>\$70,144</b> | <b>State Average</b> | <b>\$71,382</b> | <b>State Average</b> | <b>\$71,877</b> | <b>State Average</b> |

The highest salary for a BK teacher last year was \$74,342. This was significantly higher than most other area schools.

As the teacher shortage worsens, a competitive salary will be very important to attract and retain teachers to our faculty to maintain the viability of our school system.

Iowa is ranked 31<sup>st</sup> highest in teacher salaries among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, according to data analyzed by the National Education Association (NEA). In inflation-adjusted dollars nationally, starting teachers' pay has dipped 2.9 percent over the past decade, according to the analysis.