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Lewiston - Altura Schools: Building A Caring, Adaptable, Respectful, Determined, Successful Community

Superintendent's Report to the School Board
Respectfully Submitted by Gwen Carman
April 11, 2022

Meeting Agenda Item Notes

District Office Transitions We are continuing to adjust to the changes in our Business Office. Welcome to Courtney and Sheala! They are a bright, capable friendly and positive addition to our staff and I am confident they will learn their roles and responsibilities. At the same time, we also must give them time, patience and support.

Teresa is providing them some training, as well as continuing to do payroll. I am assessing how/when to make a transition in this critical area of our work. Region V staff have also been and will continue to support us with Accounts Payable, as well as training.

Also on the agenda is a work agreement with Bergankdv. They have been extremely helpful in working through our pandemic funding grants and aligning them with the budget. We will continue to work together on monitoring the grants, drawing the funds when appropriate and helping with the many tasks and details necessary to close the budget at the end of the year and work through the audit. The current agreement with them is through June 30, 2023. As we move forward over the next several months, we will assess what their role will be (or not) with us beyond next year.

I want to emphasize I am cognizant of our budget situation and the need to maintain our business office expenses at an acceptable level for a district our size. However, I also want to emphasize the overarching importance of our business office maintaining complete and accurate financial procedures and completing all of the required reporting. This requires time and trained staff.

Joel Ellinghuysen On the Consent Agenda, you will see that Mr. Ellinghuysen has submitted his letter of retirement effective at the end of this school year. Mr. Ellinghuysen has been a teacher in our district since 1999. I know we all thank Mr. Ellinghuysen for his years of leadership with our Industrial Arts/Technology Education programs and wish him the best in his future!

L- A Principals' Association Contract The L-A Principals Association and the Board negotiating committee reached an agreement for their 2021-2023 contract after just 3 meetings. We will highlight the proposed contract at the meeting

Revised 2021-22 Budget It is not required but it is appropriate to update the current school year budget as this helps inform the upcoming year's budget. As you know, the original budget is based on estimates that are made in May/early June of the prior year. This process has been more complicated (in a positive way) because of the additional funds the district received as a result of the pandemic. As I have said many times, this funding has been extremely beneficial in 'cushioning' our budget challenges. And with all of the educational challenges and emotions associated with the pandemic, it has not been easy to consider significant staffing or other budget changes.

However, as you know, the pandemic related funding is short term and it is now essential that we 'right size' and balance our expenditures with our revenues. As you know, public school district budgets are primarily driven by student enrollment. The district has experienced a significant decrease in total enrollment each year for the past several years primarily due to having larger graduating classes in comparison to the number of incoming kindergarten students.

I have prepared a set of handouts that provide more detail about the amended budget for 2021-22 that I am recommending. Unfortunately, it does have a General Fund deficit of \$448,805. This is absolutely not sustainable, and we must make significant changes in 2022-23 and continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

OTHER UPDATES

Facility Planning Next Steps The School Perceptions survey showed that staff, parents and community members recognize the need for facility improvements to assure students and staff have schools that are safe, modern and appropriate for 21st Century education. As a result, you gave the administration the 'green light' to work with the InGensa staff to plan next steps for long term facility planning. Mr. Riebel, Dr. Hanson, Mr. Banicki and I met with them and representatives from ISG to talk about options and next steps. I would like to discuss if you are available to meet with them for a Workshop Meeting on April 25th.

As you know, in our Agreement with InGensa (and the contracting firms they work with) we do not compensate them for their time and expenses unless the district undertakes a major construction project.

Requests for Public Data: I have now received over 50 requests since December, the vast majority from one community member. I am in ongoing communication with our legal counsel to assure that my responses are appropriate and within the scope of the request and our legal obligations. This is resulting in a significant increase in our legal fees. The February invoice from Kennedy & Graven, Chartered (bill that is on this month's agenda) is over \$10,000 and I anticipate that every month will be of a comparable amount for as long as the requests continue at their ongoing current rate.

MSBA Workshops : A reminder about these important upcoming trainings. Let me know if you would like to attend.

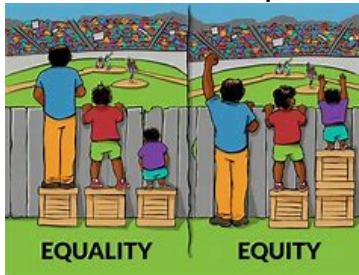
Building a High-Performance School Board Team: Phase III Workshop focuses on the stages of board development, characteristics of a high-performing school board team, navigating board dynamics, small-group interactions with school board video scenarios, and an overview of the MSBA School Board Self-Evaluation tool. The Phase III Workshop is scheduled for **Friday, April 22, 2022 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at the Eden Prairie Central Middle School Community Room (8025 School Road, Eden Prairie).**

Representing Your Community rough Policy and Engagement: Phase IV Workshop focuses on in-depth discussions and examples of a board member’s role as a policymaker and small-group sessions that walk through a community engagement activity. -is workshop will also have a segment on the media and public forums. The Phase IV Workshop is slated for **Saturday, April 23, 2022 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at the Eden Prairie Central Middle School Community Room (8025 School Road, Eden Prairie)**. Visit the MSBA website for more information.

THANK YOU

Bus and Van Drivers A special thanks to our very important transportation department! Their work is so important as we entrust our students’ safety with them every morning and afternoon. In addition, they are the 1st and last face our bus and van riding students see every day. They have been and will continue to be particularly challenged with the spring activities and their need for additional transportation. Thank you to Kevin Ziebell and Linda Leibfried for their flexibility and ‘magic’ of coordinating/juggling the routes and drivers to make it all happen!

A reminder of the importance of considering equity in the work we do:



All students deserve our best and what s/he needs to achieve.