



The Knight Times

North Cedar Community School District

November 2021 Issue

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Superintendent Dohmen's Message

Rural School Advocates Set 2022 Legislative Agenda

FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus, Ankeny, Iowa October 26, 2021

Representatives from member school districts of the Rural School Advocates of Iowa convened their Annual Meeting on Wed., Oct 26, at 4:30 PM at the FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny. RSAI advocates on behalf of the students, parents, and communities in rural Iowa, to ensure that all students have access to a great Iowa education, regardless of where they live. RSAI members include over 140 Iowa school districts but several are among the largest geographic school districts in the state. As Dennis McClain, Chair of RSAI and superintendent of the Adair-Casey and Guthrie-Center school districts reminded the members, "this is an organization of rural schools with a common mission of equality, not an organization of small schools."

School Funding, known as State Supplemental Assistance, or SSA, was a clear priority for RSAI members. Superintendent Dan Peterson, Central DeWitt Community School Districts, said this funding is not just a priority, but supports the very survival of rural schools. "We have 47 fewer school districts than we did just 20 years ago," he stated. School funding primarily pays for people. The teachers, counselors, librarians, administrators, nurses, secretaries, coaches, and custodians, many in critical short supply today in rural schools. According to Dr. Peterson, "Low funding inhibits our ability to attract and retain staff and to remain competitive with the private sector in Iowa's growing economy." Joel Pedersen, Superintendent at Cardinal Community School District, advocated for RSAI to insist on a specific increase of at least 3.75% per pupil. "In 11 of the last 12 years, the increase per pupil has not been enough to cover our schools' cost of doing business. We appreciate the legislature and Governor committing to funding for formula equity and transportation assistance, but with today's wage inflation, we simply can't continue with 2% increases and keep up with Iowa's private sector employers." The group discussed the record FY 2021 surplus carried forward in the state budget, with over \$800 million available to the state for funding Iowa's priorities, including public education.

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Innovation during the pandemic will improve instruction and student engagement in the future, if students and staff have access to good internet connections. Closing the technology divide is a clear priority for RSAI members. Superintendent Brian Johnson, shared superintendent for Prairie Valley and Southeast Webster-Grand Community School Districts, thanked Governor Reynolds for her push on expanded Internet in Iowa last session and encouraged her and Iowa's Legislators to keep at it. "Iowa's rural students and staff need reliable and affordable broadband Internet connections to continue our progress in STEM and computer science classes, as well as connecting us to resources throughout the world. This is no longer just a homework gap for our students."

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Message from Principal Horman

October has been a busy and fun month. Below are some pictures and brief details of events from the elementary buildings.



"Letter Monster, Letter Monster, Munch! Munch! Munch! What letter will you eat for lunch?!" The Mechanicsville preschoolers worked on letter recognition while feeding a VERY hungry letter monster.

During Fire Prevention Week, the Mechanicsville preschoolers went on a scavenger hunt to find all the safety equipment in their school that helps keep them safe in the event of a fire. They discovered their school is a pretty safe place!



The Mechanicsville Kindergarten class did an impressive job with their fall FAST assessment and are well on their way to learn how to read. They are such a good and fun group of kids. They also had the chance to enjoy the outdoors via a field trip to Bloomsbury Farms.

Kindergarten and first grade students learned about bus safety and PBIS bus expectations earlier this year.



Mrs. Walker's second grade has had some generous donors who have sponsored a "Book a Month" program in which each student gets a book to take home each month. Our goal is to get students into rich, meaningful text and ENJOY it! The students were so excited to receive their second set of books and read them at home!

Ms. Winkel's fourth grade has had 2 purple ticket celebrations. They have been doing a phenomenal job with following schoolwide and classroom expectations. Recently, fourth grade has started the process of writing book reviews for the classroom library! They love the opportunity to recommend, or not recommend, books that they are reading.

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Message from Principal Bendixen

The weeks are flying by! We've completed the first quarter of the school year and sent out progress reports at the end of October. Fall sports have come to an end, so we have a bit of a break before winter sports start up. On November 6 and 7, students and staff are putting on a Variety Show in the Debbie Harms Theater. Performance times are 7:00 pm on November 6th and 2:00 pm on November 7th. Please consider attending this event!

Academics

During September, October, and November, I will be sharing information about our 7-12 math program. Last month, I shared a summary of our math curriculum, and this month a summary of the professional development our teachers are involved in throughout the school year. Next month, I will provide a summary of math assessment data.

The secondary math teachers are:

Ms. Tannor McDonald, Junior High Math

Ms. Alex Curley, High School Math

Mr. Scott Kasik, High School Math

Professional Development

Standards-Based Grading

- Priority Standards
- Powerschool Gradebook
- Proficiency Levels
- Reassessment Policy
- Assessments, Scoring Guides, Rubrics
- Pacing Guides

SBG - Math Department

- **Priority standards** - too many, can't teach everything to mastery
 - Achieve the Core
<https://achievethecore.org/category/774/mathematics-focus-by-grade-level>
- **Assessments** - develop common formative assessments for Algebra
 - 8th grade Algebra, Algebra A/B, Algebra I
- **Resources** - select & purchase new that align with SBG practices

Professional Development

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

- Core instruction focused on priority standards
- Formative assessments to monitor progress
- Whole class reteach
- Individual or small group reteach
- Differentiated assignments, projects, assessments

AEA Training Opportunities for Math

Math Strategies to Support Students for Grades 6-12:

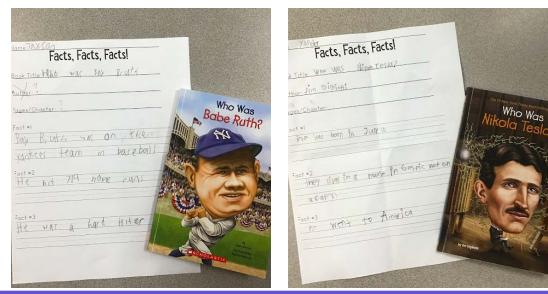
<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/label%3Aprofessional-development+dmrifeld%40gwaea.org/FMfcgzGjvQfzvcIksSpRRJiFKhPJC?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

Contextual Learning: Integrating Math & CTE to Become Future Ready

https://www.gwaea.org/2021/09/29/contextual_learning/

Principal Horman's Message (Continued from page 2)

Just a little news from Mrs. Jackson's third grade. They are super excited about their book sponsors this year. They found 19 wonderful people to sponsor them with free books through scholastic. During October, Mrs. Jackson chose biography books, since they studied biographies during reading. Big thank you to their sponsors. They are very excited about their new books and books to come!



Mrs. Farrington's fourth grade has been working on reading personal narratives during our literacy block. They will begin writing their own personal narrative in the upcoming weeks. They have also been busy doing small group work, reviewing sounds and spelling patterns, using HD, and reading some fun texts together. In math, they are doing a lot of review work on addition and subtraction with regrouping and multiplication facts, also. They enjoy the videos and explorations in Mystery Science, and they just started working on map skills in Social Studies.

Superintendent Dohmen's Message

Continued from page 1

Barb Schwamman, shared superintendent for Riceville and Osage Community School Districts, advocated for flexibility and supports for rural schools to recruit and retain great teachers, bus drivers and staff. "Those of us on a state border see teachers drive a short commute for thousands more in salary. State licensure, accreditation and retirement requirements are barriers to recruiting local community members and retired teachers to fill vacant positions right away. Although the pandemic has made it harder to fill vacant position, we've seen this coming in rural Iowa for years. Educators must be a critical component of Iowa's Future Ready Workforce focus."



RSAI members also included the following issues as additional priorities for the 2021 Legislative Session:

- Local School Board flexibility and authority, including a commitment to implementing home rule and interpreting Iowa's laws (liberally construe the statute and court rulings) to effectuate the purposes of local control.
- Quality Preschool, including funding for 3- and 4-year old preschool at a 1.0 weighting, to help provide full day service and cover transportation costs in rural schools.
- Student mental health, including resources to assess and address student's social, emotional and behavioral needs, especially for Iowa's rural students living in communities without mental health providers.
- Formula and Transportation Equity: formula equity, closing the state and district per pupil gap within ten years and continued transportation equity support without burdensome reporting requirements.
- Sharing Incentives/Efficiencies: extension of Whole Grade Sharing, Reorganization and Operational Sharing Incentives. The 21-student cap should expand to allow access to any new flexibility.
- Opportunity equity for students from low-income families, with funding to help cover mandated fee waivers and to provide services to support these students to success.

October Board Meeting Highlights

Each month the North Cedar School Board shares two or three highlights of our monthly board meetings. These takeaways are messages that the board collectively feels are important for the public to know. Here are the highlights from the Oct. 18, 2021, meeting:

Facilities Improvement Committee. The next step toward making improvements to the district's facilities was confirmed with the approval of a Facilities Improvement Committee. This action comes after a recommendation from the district's Student Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC), to explore the feasibility of enhancements at the Jr./Sr. High building in Clarence. Recommendations include a fine arts performance center/theater and multi-use sports court for physical education classes, wrestling, cheerleading, and other community and youth recreation activities.

Teacher Professional Development. In part two of a three part special Focus on Education presentation, administrators shared an overview of the district's staff training and collaboration initiatives along with efforts to offer individualized math instruction and supports to all students. Next month, district leaders will share assessment data related to math.

To view the full agenda and attachments of North Cedar School Board meetings, click the Online Board App button at https://north-cedarstu.org/Board_of_Education. Meeting minutes are also posted online following each meeting.

North Cedar Lunch & Activities Calendar

November 2021

Calendar is subject to change.

Mon., Nov. 1: Lunch: Elem.: Corn Dogs or Hot Dog; Jr/Sr High: Orange Chicken

Tues., Nov. 2: Lunch: Pork Chop
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball @ Maquoketa MS

Wed., Nov. 3: Lunch: Spaghetti
1pm Early Dismissal--PD Day

Thurs., Nov. 4: Lunch: Popcorn Chicken
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Northeast @ Jr/Sr High

Fri., Nov. 5: Lunch: Hamburger

Sat., Nov. 6:
7pm Variety Show @ Debbie Harms Theater, Clarence
State Cheer Competition @ Des Moines State Fairgrounds

Sun., Nov. 7:
2pm Variety Show @ Debbie Harms Theater, Clarence

Mon., Nov. 8: Lunch: Elem.: Tacos; Jr/Sr High: Sloppy Joes
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Bellevue @ Jr/Sr High
4:15pm Jr. High Wrestling @ Wilton HS

Tues., Nov. 9: Lunch: Lowden: Turkey; McVille: Hot Ham & Cheese; Jr/Sr High: Chicken Fajitas
7pm Jr. High Band & Choir Concert @ Jr/Sr High

Wed., Nov. 10: Lunch: Pizza
1pm Early Dismissal--PD Day

Thurs., Nov. 11: Lunch: McVille: Turkey; Lowden & Jr/Sr High: Lasagna
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Monticello @ Jr/Sr High
4:15pm Jr. High Wrestling @ Bellevue HS

Fri., Nov. 12: Lunch: Elem.: Breaded Chicken Patty; Jr/Sr High: Louisiana Style Breaded Chicken Breast
12:30pm Band Festival (7-12 Conference) @ Wilton HS

Mon., Nov. 15: Lunch: Elem.: Sloppy Joe; Jr/Sr High: Hot Ham & Cheese
4:15pm Jr. Girls Basketball @ Camanche
4:15pm Jr. High Wrestling @ Northeast MS
6pm School Board Meeting @ Stanwood

Tues., Nov. 16: Lunch: Salisbury Steak
Honor Squad (Taylor Lohman and Lexi Baker) perform during 1/2 time of the 1A and 4A state football games at the UNI dome.

Wed., Nov. 17: Lunch: Taquitos
1pm Early Dismissal--PD Day

Thurs., Nov. 18: Lunch: Elem.: Chicken Drumstick; Jr/Sr High: Turkey
All State Music Festival @ Ames
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Cascade @ Jr/Sr High
4:15pm Jr. High Wrestling @ Tipton MS

Fri., Nov. 19: Lunch: Corn Dog or Cheddarwurst
All State Music Festival @ Ames

Sat., Nov. 20:
All State Music Festival @ Ames

Mon., Nov. 22: Lunch: Walking Tacos
7th Grade STEAM Field Trip @ Coralville
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Anamosa @ Jr/Sr High
4:15pm Jr. High Wrestling @ Regina HS

Tues., Nov. 23: Lunch: Chicken Nuggets
7th Grade STEAM Field Trip @ Coralville
6pm JV Girls Basketball @ Bellevue HS
7:30pm Varsity Girls Basketball @ Bellevue HS

Wed., Nov. 24 - Fri., Nov. 26:
No School

Mon., Nov. 29: Lunch: Chicken Tenders
4:15pm Jr. High Girls Basketball vs Maquoketa @ Jr/Sr High

Tues., Nov. 30: Lunch: Elem.: Mac & Cheese; Jr/Sr High: Open Face Beef Sandwich
4pm JV Girls Basketball vs Northeast @ Jr/Sr High
5:15pm JV Boys Basketball vs Northeast @ Jr/Sr High
6:30pm Varsity Girls Basketball vs Northeast @ Jr/Sr High
7:30pm Varsity Boys Basketball vs Northeast @ Jr/Sr High

The mission of North Cedar Community School District, in partnership with its community and staff, is to ensure a safe and caring environment for each student, providing the essential knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes to create lifelong learners who are responsible, contributing, and productive citizens in a changing and increasingly diverse world.

Everything we do at NCCSD is for our students, and we encourage them all to take part in the enrichment and extracurricular opportunities for which they are eligible.

- Athletics for junior high school and senior high school students
- Fine arts activities for 5th through 12th graders
- Extracurricular clubs and organizations for junior high and senior high school students
- Counseling services for all grades

An active, supportive community strengthens NCCSD. Parents and patrons who elect to get involved and support our students and their activities aid the district.

- Athletics Boosters bolster our student athletes and the athletics programs
- Encore Club supports our fine arts programs
- Knights Community Organization fosters the relationships between parent, student, staff, and community
- North Cedar Education Foundation provides financial support to help broaden the district's education opportunities

Postal Customer

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