

October 19, 2020

The North Mahaska Board of Education met in regular session on October 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the elementary library New Sharon, Iowa. Those members present: Dirk Wilkin, Keith Foster, Arvin DeBoef, Margaret Ratcliff, and Michelle Sampson. Also present: Angela Livezey, Amber Goemaat, Shayla Schilling, Sarah McGriff.

Dirk Wilkin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Arvin DeBoef and seconded by Keith Foster to approve the agenda with an amendment to change the bank discussion to an action item for a decision on a bank for the district. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Keith Foster and seconded by Margaret Ratliff to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

There was no written communication or public forum.

DESIGN CONSTRUCTION INTEGRATION GROUP – UPDATE

Ben Gannon presented the board with an update on the construction project. The elementary addition was paused for two weeks awaiting steel trusses which have now arrived. That section is now awaiting the steel construction team to build a sub-roof for the roofers. Once the roof and windows are done, the final MEP touches can be completed. The connector link electrical was sorted out with Mid American and boring has been done from the high school transformer to the elementary. Foundations are in place, and the slab will be poured this week and be ready for the steel workers to complete while they are onsite. Once the retaining wall is done in this area, the construction workers will be able to move out of the daycare area and into their main construction areas. The wrestling and fitness area block laying is going well, and they will be done in about a week and a half so that the steel workers can begin there as well. Pre-cast for this area is expected to be done during the first part of November, preferably on a no-school day for safety and logistic purposes.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF DISTRICT'S SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

A motion was made by Ratliff and seconded by DeBoef to approve the district's special education service delivery plan. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF STAFF

HAILEY EWING - PARAEDUCATOR

A motion was made by DeBoef and seconded by Sampson to approve a letter of assignment for Hailey Ewing as paraeducator. Motion carried.

SHAYLA SCHILLING - CO-DANCE INSTRUCTOR

A motion was made by Sampson and seconded by DeBoef to approve a letter of assignment for Shayla Schilling as co-dance instructor. Motion carried.

REVIEW CERTIFIED ENROLLMENT FOR 2020-2021

Mrs. Livezey explained that the district is down 3.94 students from last year. She noted that the .94 comes from how homeschool and preschool students are calculated. This results in a total certified enrollment of 484.78 and a total served amount of 567.28. Mrs. Livezey and Ms. McGriff will work with Forecast5 on five year projections beginning October 27 and bring the projections back to the board.

REVIEW AND FIRST READING OF BOARD POLICIES - 600 SERIES

Arvin DeBoef suggested leaving the non-discrimination policy as it was originally printed without the presented corrections..

DeBoef also pointed out that code 605.7R1 requires a decision be made on who should be responsible for ensuring that warnings are posted to educate and warn individuals using school district equipment of the copyright law. Dirk Wilkin suggested those responsible should be as already listed: superintendent, principal, teacher, and teacher-librarian.

Mrs. Livezey expressed concern with the wording that warnings must be posted directly on each computer, as students have individual computers from which the warning could easily be removed. Wilkin suggested a notification upon log-on to each computer. Mrs. Livezey said that she would follow up with the IT team to see if this would be possible on Apple devices.

REVIEW DRAFT OF BOARD GOALS AND UPDATE

Mrs. Livezey presented draft board goals, and noted that any changes can be made but that she suggests there being a student achievement goals. She explained that student achievement goals should tie back to the state report card data, but to keep in mind that the report card we currently have is based on 2018 data. She also suggested a building and grounds goal in line with current construction. Finally, she addressed the need for a financial goal to maintain a healthy and viable school district, even with the understanding that we are in an uncertain time and that rural Iowa has declining enrollment. She made a point to note that these are only suggestions based on her conversation with Mrs. Goemaat, and that long-term goals can be adjusted.

DeBoef added that the construction project will be done next year, but there are always things that will need to be addressed. Mrs. Livezey agreed, and included that ADA compliance will need to be addressed on the older part of the buildings and grounds. She suggested a compliance audit at some point to be sure we are inclusive of all visitors to the school.

Wilkin questioned whether the goals were attainable in 4-5 years, such as in the math improvement areas, or if these are 10 year goals and need to be adjusted. Goemaat noted that the growth in the math area this year from MAP testing was impressive and that more effort was being put into this area to maintain this momentum. Mrs. Livezey added that the curriculum was being reviewed as well.

Wilkin asked if there is time in the day for classroom walkthroughs. If this is detrimental to achieving the goals, then what is done if this is not possible? Mrs. Livezey clarified that Mrs. Schilling's role as a math lead has helped with this, but that there are times when walkthroughs are not always possible. Mrs. Goemaat noted that she has much more contact tracing to be keeping up with on her end so walkthroughs are not quite as feasible for her right now.

Teacher's individual development plans are tied into the district goals. Mrs. Livezey shared the professional development from today's PD day, noting that items on the agenda align with the goals.

Wilkin asked if these goals look good to the staff. Are we spending our time on the things that make a difference and help us meet our goals, or do we have too much on our plate to make these goals possible? He emphasized the need for work-life balance for teachers in order to be high achieving and give them time to focus on everything that is being asked of them, especially during this time.

Mrs. Livezey responded that they meet with the leadership team regarding the professional development agenda prior to each PD day. The goal of each session is half PD and half planning time, with a strong focus on math and literacy, as well as social emotional learning. In addition to required PD time, 36 hours of collaboration are required of teachers at the state level. The leadership team will continue to help drive these actions as the year progresses.

DeBoef expressed his appreciation for the focus on staff self care during this unusual start of the school year.

DECISION ON BANK FOR THE DISTRICT

Mrs. Livezey recommended switching banking services to First State Bank of Lynnville. US Bank has closed the New Sharon branch and is not allowing multiple deposits at one time or a courier service. FSB has offered a courier service as well as some banking practices that may provide easier processes for the business manager.

Margaret Ratliff also talked with FSB. From her conversation, she confirmed that they do have the capacity for technology to serve the school, including ACH processing. She also noted that they are fee adverse and their interest rate would be higher for the schools than other competitors. She noted that she does not see any reasons not to switch.

A motion was made by Ratliff and seconded by DeBoef to use First State Bank of Lynnville as the primary bank for the school. Motion carried.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Mrs. Livezey noted that the positivity rate in the community is 15.3%. This is not conducive to how conferences are normally conducted at North Mahaska. After discussion with other SICL schools as well as Oskaloosa, the district will be moving to an online format for conferences. The staff tested being on Google Meets at the same time today, and were successful. Mrs. Goemaat has sent an email to parents informing them that the school will be moving to an online format for conferences. Grades 7-12 teachers have 14-16 students in their advisory periods whose parents they will reach out to in order to set up a time to discuss MAP test results, resort cards, and their student's progress. The advisory teacher will also ask the parent if there are any teachers they would like to specifically request a meeting with regarding their student.

Wilkin asked what the expectation was for teachers in the high school. Mrs. Goemaat clarified that the expectation is that each teacher will meet with the parents of their advisory period students. In addition, if parents request a one on one meeting with a specific teacher, the expectation is that the teachers set up this meeting within the week of conferences, with the understanding that some teachers see over 100 students per day and may not be able to accomplish this in just one week.

ACADEMIC SCREENING DATA OVERVIEW FOR ELEMENTARY

Math and literacy FAST occurs three times a year. The school is not currently above the 80% benchmark as teachers work to get students caught up following COVID interruptions. Targeted intervention is required for students who are below benchmark. Some classes are doing full class intervention where the majority of the class is under benchmark. Mrs. Livezey asked board members to keep encouraging teachers and know that teachers are feeling the pressure.

Sampson asked if the fourth grade level was so low due to levels of support in fourth grade. Mrs. Livezey explained that both missing a quarter of school and the jump in expectations at the next grade level impacted this most. The literacy leads are exploring an intervention package and curriculum for this grade area due to lack of intervention material for grades 4-6. There is also a need to increase curriculum on word work and decoding support which Mrs. Livezey assured is being focused on.

Wilkin asked what sort of progress monitoring is happening. Mrs. Livezey explained that Mrs. Schilling is working both with students below benchmark as well as kids that are not growing, in order to provide targeted interventions.

ACADEMIC SCREENING DATA OVERVIEW FOR JR/SR HIGH

MAP screening occurs two times a year. Mrs. Goemaat shared the first round data with the board. About 18% of students are not meeting growth targets in math, 21% are not meeting goals in science, and 23% in reading, resulting in goal achievement in math while coming up just under the 80% mark in science and reading. Compared to last year, the percent of students meeting growth targets is up.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Mrs. Livezey suggested an indefinite extension of the mask mandate for students and patrons. The board was in agreement.

Foster suggested that there be a sign displayed stating that if patrons refuse to wear a mask, they are not to enter school events.

WINTER MUSIC CONCERTS K-12

In the weekly call with public health, they explained that a concert will only be approved with limited attendance if the positivity rate is at or above 15%. The choir concert will be in the gym with patrons on the home side in order to social distance. Elementary concerts will be spread out at specific times on the 10th. Students will not attend these concerts as in the past. The grades 7-12 band concert will be the evening of the 10th and the grades 7-12 choir Christmas program will be the evening of the 17th. The concerts will be live streamed and recorded.

SENIOR CLASS TRIP

Mrs. Goemaat explained that right now would be the time that the class sponsors would normally be ordering tickets for the events in Chicago. That is not feasible right now given health concerns and precautions, so class sponsors are instead looking into smaller day trips throughout the year to provide responsible opportunities to the students that do not include overnight stays.

HOMECOMING REVIEW

Homecoming went very well. Mrs. Goemaat commended the students on complying with COVID restrictions and going along with all of the changes. Students expressed that they liked the outdoor game night compared to being in the gym, but do still prefer coronation and skit night to be indoors when possible.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

TRAFFIC FLOW UPDATE

Looking to turn the portion of the 135th St after the first high school entrance into a one-way. The new proposal has been sent to and approved by EMC. Costs would be incurred for sandblasting to change the pavement markings. A quote was received in the amount of \$350. The board expressed no concerns with the plan.

K-12 DESK AUDIT AND PRESCHOOL DESK AUDIT

Mrs. Livezey shared that no desk audits are required this year.

IASB ANNUAL CONVENTION

The convention will be held online this year. The agenda was shared with the board, should they wish to attend.

OPPA UPDATE

Meals assessment will be done on Friday. Students and parents are able to give feedback regarding the food and the changes will be looked into being implemented. Families in quarantine have been given the option to pick up lunches and many have taken advantage of this.

COMMENTS

Margaret Ratliff thanked Mrs. Livezey for taking swift action in addressing concerns from community members regarding the traffic flow concerns.

Michelle Sampson asked what the oversight will be of conferences and what the follow up will be on the administrative side. Mrs. Goemaat noted that parents need to be sure to request the specific teachers and she will then be made aware of the request via a spreadsheet. The advisory teacher will not schedule the meeting, but they will pass on the request to the specific teacher who will then reach out to make the appointment with the teacher. Elementary will keep the same schedule they already have, but will be in an online format.

Arvin DeBoef noted that the Warhawk Megaphone that was sent out today is missing two pages. Mrs. Livezey is looking into this to send out a new copy.

Dirk Wilkin asked if COVID data is being shared every day. Mrs. Livezey explained that sharing the information every day would be incredibly time consuming. Wilkin was contacted by a member of the community who had seen an app that other schools have showing the daily data, but can see how this would add additional work to administrators plates.

Wilkin asked how WiFi services are at the school. Mrs. Livezey responded that after testing the connectivity in the school during personal development, things went smoothly and teachers feel comfortable with the capabilities,

Wilkin asked for a detailed asset depreciation report to be included in next month's board agenda.

Wilkin suggested considering a public Zoom meeting in order to let the community be more involved.

THANK YOU

Amber Goemaat thanks the City of New Sharon for use of picnic tables to help spread students out during lunch time

Dirk Wilkin thanks Earl Ratcliff for help with the traffic flow study.

Michelle Sampson thanks the YSF football coaches for their leadership

ADJOURN

A motion was made by DeBoef and seconded by Sampson to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m. Motion carried.

Sarah McGriff
Board Secretary

Dirk Wilkin
Board President