

MARCH Board Notes

4a. Nothing too major to note in finances. You may want to pay attention to management as that is an area in the budget I will be discussing during that presentation. The SAVE fund is growing, but that is intentional as we will be spending a lot this summer for the parking lot and the wall repair downtown.

4e. We have a number of resignations and appointments. Resignations include: Madison Stoffregen as MS Para, Retha Praska as Library Associate, Abbigail Mizer elementary SPED teacher—effective at the end of the year, Maggie Konecne from Wrestling Cheer sponsor. We also have Glen Kuehn retiring effective April 24th. He worked for us for 12 years. Appointments include: Spencer Schmitz as an interventionist (23-24 school year), Kyra Ross as Wrestling Cheer sponsor, Jessica Moore as a nurse for 2023-2024, Reece Reams as MS Boys Track (this year), and Anthony Harris as JV Softball Coach.

4f. It's time to start reviewing our board policies again to get them updated and reviewed. This is required every five years.

6. For student achievement we will have some fourth grade students present to talk about their Invention projects and some 8th grade students to share their social justice speeches.

8a. I've received the feedback from the staff and adjusted the calendar accordingly. They asked for all 4 of the work days to remain outside the school calendar, like this year, so each teacher will have 32 hours of work time to use how they see fit and when they see fit. Also, the first 3 days of school will be a two hour early out and the time will be used for teacher work time. We also heard a lot of comments about a break some time in February or March as it can be a long time. We've added February 16th as a day off to provide at least some type of break. That coincides with an inservice day on February 19th so our parents could plan a four day weekend if they choose to. Also, this is the Friday of state wrestling and that is a day that we struggle to find adequate subs, so this addresses several concerns for us. Also, we got rid of the work day in April and moved it to outside the calendar. Finally, I did reduce the total number of school days to 175 down from 176 this year. This allows for the extra day off in February, keeps the 4 work days off the calendar and allows us to be done with students on Wednesday. It's a good trade-off.

8ai We need to set a public hearing to receive comments on the Calendar, the start date, and going with hours instead of days.

9a. When we purchased the land for the soccer fields we verbally agreed to allow the Tribe Trail to travel along the Eastern Edge to hook up with the trail behind the CWC. This agreement formalizes that in writing. I did ask them to include a clause that they can place the trail on top of the berm but they cannot lower the berm in the process.

9b. We have some technology to purchase for next year. I would like to order this now so that we are sure to have it arrive by the time school starts. This will be for the IPADS for incoming 5th grade students. The cost is \$20,580 for IPADS and \$4,320 for cases. This will come out of the PPEL account.

9c. We need to keep up with the finish on our gym floors. We will be redoing the new gym floor this summer so that is not part of these bids. We would like to recoat the old gym at the high school and the gym downtown. It has been several years since we've done the downtown gym and since we're not doing the new gym it's a good year to do it. Stalker sports has always done this for us and we're happy with their products. We also know that staying with the same product/company won't create any issues with the product peeling, etc. We would like two coats on the old gym at the high school at a cost of \$3,175 and two coats on the downtown gym at a cost of \$2,500—the downtown is likely incorrect, so I have reached out to the vendor to verify the amount. I will have an update by the time of the board meeting.

9d. We need to approve the AEA cooperative purchasing agreement. This allows us to purchase as part of the statewide cooperative to receive the best pricing. This is used primarily by food service.

9e and 9f. We need to approve our placement agreements with UNI and Morningside. This allows them to have student observers and student teachers in our classrooms. This is a good thing for us and them.

9g. We need to make a decision on the Natural Gas program for next year. Frankly, I wasn't thinking we would participate next year until I saw the rate. For this year, we paid \$217,018 dollars which included \$35,480.54 for a Polar Vortex Charge. The total renewal is \$143,833.70. In talking with the representative, we're much lower because of the elimination of the Polar Vortex fee and it's so early they are able to lock in a much lower price for us now compared to last August when we joined. It's been a mild winter, but as a comparison during the 2021-2022 school year we paid \$140,221.62 in Natural Gas fees to Black Hills Energy. I now recommend we do this. It helps the general fund and locks in a known price for energy for next year. We are also allowed to take this out of the management fund, but you should also know we don't have to. Either way I would recommend we participate.

9h. We need to renew our shared programs with Turkey Valley. This includes Wrestling and Soccer. I recommend we do this. This may look different after the joint meeting before this meeting.

9i. Our contract for audits ends with the 2022 school. Our current auditor is Nolte Cornman and Johnson from Newton. They've been doing this for us for a long time and have always done a good job until this past year. You are aware of the countless delays until we finally received our audit last month. Under Iowa Law the audit is supposed to be complete by March 31st of the year following the audited year. For example, our 2021-2022 audit is supposed to be complete and turned into the state auditor in two weeks on March 31st. In the law, they can

also request a 3 month extension to June 30th if needed. It's unlikely they will meet either deadline this year as they just completed the field work a couple of weeks ago. So we sent RFPs to five audit firms and heard back from 2 of them. Our current audit firm and our local firm, Hacker Nelson. Our current auditor bid \$11,000 for the 2023 audit, \$13,000 for the 2024 audit, and \$15,000 for the 2025 audit. Hacker Nelson bid \$27,315 for the 2023 audit, \$28,135 for the 2024 audit, and \$28,990 for the 2025 audit. Frankly, I was ready to recommend a change, but that is a large difference so I did some further research. I reached out to Matt Gillaspie with Piper Sandler, he handles our bond issues for us. I asked him if there were any consequences or penalties or concerns with the audit arriving so late, specifically for our bond holders. He gave me a long answer, but in the end he said the answer was no unless we were planning to issue additional bonds in the near future and the reality is we're not. I will continue to get the emails and phone calls from the representatives of the bond holders if the audit is late, but it won't affect the current bonds and there is not penalty. I've talked to other districts who use Hacker Nelson and they speak very highly of them. They're very helpful throughout the year with questions and they're very responsive. The schools that have them say they are worth it. They are right down the street from us so I would expect that to be true for us as well. If you wanted to go with them so we have our audit in a timely manner, I can understand and agree with that. Also, the cost difference is significant and we've been happy with Nolte Cornman and Johnson until this year with the delays. If you're okay with the delays and want to save the money, I'm on board with that as well. If you have questions, we can discuss this more at the meeting.

9j. We need to approve the list of teaching staff for the 2023-2024 school year.

9k. I will have a short presentation to preview the 2023-2024 budget and we will also need to set the date and time for the public hearing on the budget.