

March Board Meeting Notes

4b. Nothing to note in the financial reports

4d. We have the following resignations: Anthony Harris from JV softball coach, Jordan Rommes from JV high school track, Alexis Martinek JV Volleyball Coach, Steve Farrell high school special education. We have the following recommendations: Cael Krueger for high school PE pending licensure and background check, Krissy Anderson for 7th grade boys track, Gloria Bjergum to full-time cook effective, February 19, 2024 and Michelle Lechtenberg as a part-time cook. We also need to approve Dave Coltrain and Jason Meyerhoff as volunteer soccer coaches—pending suitable licensure and background checks.

8a. School calendar. I'm still tracking the calendar legislation. It sounds like it's getting pushed to the side with all the other legislation happening, but we will wait and see. I will have two versions for you to review at the meeting. As of now, the earliest start date is August 23rd. The major change that may happen is if we're stuck with the 23rd as the start date, I plan to survey the staff about going past Memorial Day this year. Normally we don't like to do this, but since it's so early that may be more palatable.

9a. We have received our audit for the 2023 school year. This is the first time in 12 years that we've had it before the March 31st deadline. There will be someone here from Hacker Nelson to present the findings to you and also answer any questions you may have.

9b. Ms. Bredman and Mrs. Knudson will be here to talk about starting special Olympics in our school. They have lined up funding and will have more details to share on this program.

9c. We've had some issues on the playground both during school and after school hours when the daycare is using it. I've been asked by staff to put some signs around the playground that say it's not open during school hours and also by the daycare to keep it closed until 5 pm. The school staff tell me they've had adults with their children playing on the playground while we have recess going on. It creates some uneasiness with the staff in these situations. The daycare staff tell me they've had kids playing on the playground while they have their children out there after school which has created some concerns as they have no control over the visitors. I would suggest we put up signs that say, "The Elementary Playground is closed from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. every week day.

9d. We are seeing more students in preschool and kindergarten than we normally do for this time of year. Right now, we have 46 students registered for our 3 year old preschool program and we have 60 students pre-registered for our 4 year old preschool program. We always have more by the time school starts. We can have a maximum of 20 students per classroom. 3 year olds go 2 days per week and 4 year olds go 4 days a week. In anticipation of more students registering we would like to add an additional 4 year old classroom. This year we added a ½ time 3 year old classroom and we would also like to continue that for next year. Finally, we have 73 students who are eligible for kindergarten for next year. We anticipate about 12 of them

moving to our TK program, which leaves 61 in our kindergarten classrooms. Again, we anticipate having more kindergarten students register by the time school starts in the fall. In addition, having class sizes of 15 will allow our teachers to give more individual time to our students. So, we would like to add another kindergarten classroom as well. This is in addition to the 4 year old classroom mentioned above and keeping the ½ time 3 year old classroom. All of this is pending finding suitable classroom space as we have some requirements when dealing with younger students.

9e. We have a lot of Literacy stuff coming at us from the state and next year we will have all of our elementary staff undergoing what is known as LETRS training, which focuses on the “Science of Reading”. In addition, there is a lot of legislation coming out related to literacy such as any student not proficient by the end of 3rd grade will need an Individual Reading Plan with the goal to be proficient by 6th grade and every teacher will eventually be required to take a competency test to demonstrate that they are proficient at teaching reading. With that big focus by the state, I feel it’s important to get a Literacy “expert” who can be available every day to help our staff as they work through the LETRs training and implementation of that training in their classrooms. This person would also assist with managing the IRPs of the children who need them and would also work with our staff to help them prepare for their proficiency test. I plan to use Early Literacy Funds for most of this position, which are ongoing for the foreseeable future.

9f. We have some professional development planned for May 1st and would ask the board to approve having a 2 hour early out that day. It’s a pretty important training for the school and community and would be a great benefit to everyone involved.

9g. We need to purchase our IPADs and related materials (Gumdrop cases and carrying bags) for next years students. The Ipad are \$29,400; the gumdrop cases are \$2,400 (these go on the Ipad to protect them; the bags are \$4,590. You will note there are 170 bags but only 100 Ipad. That’s because we also purchase these bags for the Chromebooks that we previously purchased for the freshmen. The total is \$36,390 and this will come out of SAVE.

9h. The custodians had a scissor lift that they used extensively in the gyms and cafeteria at the high school. It is used a lot. Prior to having the scissor lift, we used ladders which when looking back wasn’t always the safest at that height. We sent our scissor lift to have it safety inspected and it did not pass. There were a lot of issues with it—we purchased it used at an auction several years ago—but without the safety inspection we cannot continue to use it. The lift is a lot safer alternative for our custodians compared to a ladder so I asked our maintenance director to see what he could find. Attached is a quote for a used one for \$13,000. It goes 5 feet higher than our last one which will help us in the new gym. I recommend we purchase this for the safety of our staff as it does get used quite frequently. This will come out of SAVE funds.

9i. We need to approve our AEA purchasing agreement. This allows us, primarily food service, to buy things at a price that is negotiated through the AEA on a bulk basis as they represent many schools across the state.

9j. We need to approve our agreement with Morningside College. This allows student teachers and student observers to be in our classrooms. It's good for our teachers and for the students as well.

9k. Timberline services assists with our Medicaid billing. We find them invaluable in what they do as they answer many questions and make sure we are doing it correctly. We need to continue with them to aid in this process.

9l. We need to approve our shared athletic programs with Turkey Valley for next year. We share Soccer and Wrestling with them. It's been good for both schools and I recommend we continue this.

9m. I would like to approve the certified staff contracts so that we can get them out. There is a bill in the Iowa legislature that may impact these, but if it does we will simply amend them with the new salary information. Last year we settled on a 3% increase with an escalator/de-escalator clause that said for every 5 student we increase or decrease we will add or subtract .1% to the settlement percentage with a maximum increase of 3.5%. We ended up increasing 40 students so we are at the maximum increase amount of 3.5%

9n. I will have a preview of the 2024-2025 school budget.