

## Board Meeting Update

February 25, 2016

Central DeWitt Constituents,

As I do every month, the following are the highlights of the February 22, 2016 regular school board meeting. I hope you enjoy these updates that are focused on keeping you informed of what is taking place at the school board table.

- If you would like to view any of the public documents that are available to the board, you can visit our BoardDocs site to view the agenda and the supporting documents that go with each agenda item. This information can be found [at this site](#). We're also back with video recording our school board meetings after some time away for redesigning our system. You can view the video recording of this school board meeting [at this link](#).
- Jen Vance, Elementary Principal, spoke to the Board regarding our plans for summer school instruction for the coming summer, as well as into the future. You may or may not know, but the Iowa Legislature passed a law a few years ago that requires the retention (holding back) of third grade students who aren't proficient in reading by the end of their third grade year. These new rules go into action at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. There are multiple assessments that students are provided, and we've been working on interventions and teaching strategies, beginning as early as preschool, to help ensure that our students are proficient readers by the end of their third grade year. However, there will be students that are not proficient by the end of their third grade year, for a wide variety of reasons. This new law requires that third grade students be provided an intensive summer reading program after their third grade year, if they are not proficient in reading. Otherwise, we are required to retain these students in third grade. The intensive summer reading program requires that students receive 70 hours of reading instruction over the summer. As I mentioned, this is required to be in place for the summer of 2017. However, we've received grant funding to provide and pilot an intensive summer reading program for this year's third grade students. We also know that if this is good for third grade students, we shouldn't be waiting until after these students' third grade year to provide this instruction. With that in mind, we're also going to be providing similar programming for kindergarten, first, and second grade students that aren't proficient readers this summer. The retention law is not in place for this year's third grade students, but the grant we've received does provide a great start for this summer programming as we move into the future. The grant also gives us tremendous support from Mississippi Bend AEA and the Iowa Reading Research Institute. There will be additional

# Central DeWitt Community School District

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information on this summer programming from the elementary school in the coming months for the students and families that will be involved. Some additional information on this topic can be found [at this link](#).

- Terri Selzer, 7-12 Assistant Principal, spoke to the board about a program that is going to be available to some special needs students in the coming year, called [Project Search](#). Along with several of our neighboring school districts, led by the Clinton School District and Mercy Medical Center, this new Project Search opportunity is being developed for special needs students that would benefit from an additional year beyond their four years of high school, specifically focused on employability and work skills. This program will be starting in the 2016-2017 school year, and we have two students that have applied to participate in the program. While participating in this program, their entire experience will be at Mercy Medical Center in Clinton. This will prove to be an exceptional opportunity for students that qualify for this program!
- Mia Frommelt, our district's auditor from Bohnsack & Frommelt LLP, was in attendance to present the certified audit from fiscal year 2015 (2014-2015 school year). The full audit, and other supporting documents can be found [at this link](#). Overall, she was very complimentary of the corrective actions we have put into place after the prior year's audit.
- The Board approved a School Nurse Agreement with Genesis Medical Center. The agreement can be found [at this link](#). Our school district is supported very well by Genesis Medical Center, and this agreement we have with them to provide our nursing services within the school district is a perfect example of how they partner with us.
- Our school district's website is now five years old, and it's time to do a redesign. One of the important aspects of websites now is that they should be "mobile friendly". Many people visit websites with their smartphones and other mobile devices, and in order for your website to properly fit on these screens and be condensed into a better view for these people, the website needs to be programmed in a way that it is mobile friendly. There are also many new features that we'd like our district website to have as we move into the future. With this in mind, the Board approved a proposal from Twin State Technical Service (TSTS) to redesign our website in the coming months. TSTS built our current website, and they know our district very well since they also work with us in providing all of our technology needs in the area of device management, networking, filtering, etc. The new website will be developed and will go live in the spring/summer. The full proposal and timeline can be found [at this link](#).
- Last spring, the Central DeWitt Performing Arts & Athletics Center Committee made a recommendation to increase the signage and recognition of the Performing Arts & Athletics Center (where our high school gymnasiums and auditorium are located). This committee is continuously seeking to enhance the culture and arts opportunities available to our

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constituents, and we are attracting visitors from outside of our school district as well. Through the years the Committee has been working, they found that many people have trouble finding where the various shows are located. With that in mind, they applied for a grant through the Clinton County Development Association and received half of the funding required to put up some large signage on the exterior of the gymnasium, facing 11<sup>th</sup> Street. At the time, the Board committed support to this project if they received grant support. Since the grant was approved, the Board has now approved for the signage to be installed. This work will be completed by Custom Art & Signs and Jansen Electric, both of DeWitt. A rendering of the signage, as well as the quotes for the work to be completed, can be viewed [at this link](#).

- The Board approved a Resolution of Intent to continue the school district's participation in the Instructional Support Levy (ISL). Every school district in Iowa has the ISL, and it provides additional funding for the school district, in the amount of 10% of the general fund budget. However, the Board has to recertify the ISL every five years in order to keep it going. The ISL is funded by a combination of Income Surtax and Property Tax. Central DeWitt has had the ISL in place for decades, and it is spent on regular general fund expenditures every year.
- Under the Personnel Report this month, the Board approved the following:
  - Hiring of Dave Jenkins as the High School Health Teacher (16-17)
  - Hiring of Tori Grantz as a 1st grade Teacher (16-17)
  - Hiring of Rebecca Barnes as a HS Family Consumer Science Teacher and Co-FCCLA Advisor.
  - Hiring of Grady Gallagher as our 8th Grade Boys Track Coach.
  - Resignation of our Head Varsity Boys Soccer Coach, Eduardo Garza, effective immediately.
  - Transfer of Javier Ramirez Bautista to the position of Head Varsity Boys Soccer Coach.
  - Resignation of Terry Matzen as Assistant Varsity Baseball Coach.
  - Hiring of Rachelle (Shelli) Griffin as a Special Education Associate at the Middle School
  - Hiring of Stephanie Schoel as a Special Education Associate at the Intermediate School
- All of the monthly financial reports as presented by Cyndie Johnson, our Business Manager and School Board Secretary, can be found [at this link](#).
- The Board also went into closed-session at the end of the meeting for the purpose of having a confidential evaluation conversation with me, regarding the current status of the district's goals. We strive to have a superintendent evaluation closed-session conversation every 3-4 months so that we're all "on the same page" and there aren't any surprises at the end of the year.

Those are the highlights of this month's regular meeting. The next regular board meeting is on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 6:00 pm, in the Central DeWitt Middle School Media Center. If you

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have any comments, questions, or concerns regarding what I've written here...or regarding anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me!

Thank you,



Dr. Dan Peterson, Superintendent  
Central DeWitt Community School District

