



# Board of Education Recap

May 20, 2019



The final Board of Education meeting occurring during the 2018-19 school year is in the books. Here is a synopsis of their important work:

**Mount Horeb Band to Return to London:** Fresh off his thoughtful comments at Sunday's graduation ceremony, Mr. **Will Janssen** was on hand to seek the Board's approval for our students to travel to London to attend their annual New Year's Day Parade. Recently, families were polled, and the results were overwhelmingly in support of students' attendance. Details of the January 1, 2021 event are forthcoming.

**Mental Health and Wellness** continues to be front and center on the Board's commitment to improving our schools. This was evident in the following three ways:

1. An update was provided by leaders from the Building Bridges program. Building Bridges is a 90 day crisis intervention program serving students with significant mental health challenges in 4K – 8th grade. Our District's Building Bridges team, consisting of a Clinical Coordinator and a School Coordinator, has been helping families during the past two years. The Clinical Coordinator focuses their work on the school team (and some minimal one-on-one work with the student, if appropriate). At the exact same time the Service Coordinator is performing in-home work with the parent/guardian. The Clinical Coordinator and the Service Coordinator stay in very close communication to collaborate on each case. The positions are part of a grant with Dane County and Catholic Charities and a local annual match by our Board. Ms. **Ashleigh Carlson**, Clinical Coordinator, and Ms. **Emily McGonigle**, School Coordinator, presented their impressive results. **If you believe your student/family might benefit from this free program, please reach out to your school's counselor or principal.**
2. **Mr. Brian Johnson**, Director of Student Services, updated the Board on the progress being made on two of their Strategic Plan goals ([Vision 2023](#)), "Improve the Practices and Policies Related to School Safety" and "Improve Confidence and Knowledge of School Safety." A great deal has been done to enhance school security (using referendum and almost \$260,000 we received in grants). Brian's full report can be found [here](#).

3. The District's partnership with the Mental Health and Wellness Community Coalition is as strong as ever. In fact, we are sponsoring a **Wellness Fair on Wednesday, May 29, from 5 to 8 p.m.** that will be held at Mount Horeb Middle School. The fair is part of our joint Plaid Umbrella Project.

The Wellness Fair will include presentations that address nutrition, how to better manage our own feelings and the effect of trauma on mental health. A panel of community members who are living with mental illness also will discuss their experiences. Information tables that cover a variety of health and wellness topics will be staffed by local organizations throughout the evening.

Food will be available for purchase from Cafe Costa Rica, Jakarta Cafe and Kona Ice food trucks.

In closing, we celebrated Mount Horeb High School's 125<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony on Sunday afternoon. As emotional as that experience was for families, our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual "Graduation March" definitely brought a tear to our students' and staff members' eyes this past Friday. Regaled in their caps/gowns, the Class of 2019 had the chance to walk through each of their former schools – giving "high fives" to the little ones and hugs to staff members. At one point, the students stopped and played on the Primary Center's playground for old time sakes. This picture warmed my heart, and I hope it does yours.



I am proud to be a Viking, and I hope you are too!

Steve

**PS. We would like your input, please:**

1. We remain in an enviable position – on time and under budget. That has given the Board pause to consider what/how many additional projects can be considered using the earned savings and within the framework of the community's April 2017 authorized borrow. Very soon, the administrative team, with the assistance of Bray and Associates, will recommend additional work based on the District's Long Range Facility Plan. **Once this proposal is offered (June 17, 2019, Board meeting), it is essential that we receive the community's feedback. I hope you will please consider attending this meeting to share your perspective.** We anticipate the vast majority of any new work would be completed in the summer of 2020.
2. Is it time to revisit our dress code? After surveying staff, the Board is interested in simplifying our dress code. At their June 3 meeting, the full Board will take their first look. All students, families, and staff are encouraged to weigh in. While no decision will be made until the June 17 meeting, it is important to check the barometer of our Vikings before a final version is approved.