



Board of Education Recap

December 3, 2019

In the spirit of the holiday season, now is a perfect time to introduce a project anticipated for Staff Appreciation Week in May!

We are looking to create a collaborative project with current students, alumni, and families. This will be a compilation of video testimonials thanking the staff of Mount Horeb Area School District.

Want to participate? It's easy: please film yourself or your child talking about why a specific staff member has impacted your life, OR you can keep it general to the entire District!

Please try and keep your videos under 20 seconds so we are able to include as many submissions as possible in the final product! This can be done in groups or classes as well. (e.g.: a whole family video, all fourth hour study hall, etc.)

If you prefer not to make a video, please feel free to email us your testimony or your child's testimony. If desired, include a picture for your message. This is so confidentiality can be maintained if desired.

Email your submissions or questions to MoHoStaffTestimonials@gmail.com. Due April 10 by 11:59pm but THE SOONER THE BETTER!

[Here is a link](#) to the full guidelines for this project.

Thank YOU for helping to recognize our amazing staff members!

In my mind, there is no better way to begin a Board of Education meeting than recognizing the contributions of a pretty amazing student. Last night's meeting allowed the Board to meet someone who fits that bill in spades! This is **Owen Ziegler**. Principal **Cody Lundquist** told me, "It is not unusual to see Owen interacting with teachers one moment and then players on his team the next moment. Later in the day just talking to underclassmen. He comes in with a positive attitude and willingness to support students and staff across the district. His empathy and how he treats people is a quality that comes up over and over when speaking about Owen." Owen, thank you for representing the very best about our District.



In Discussion Items...

Homelessness Update: This hidden phenomenon is becoming increasingly real in our community. Elementary Social Worker, **Megan Miller**, was on hand to explain the definition the government uses for counting those without permanent, regular housing. In order to provide stability for families during such a difficult time, the District provides transportation and meals to students meeting this definition.

This might be a good time to remind our community of the "Little Pantry" that has been built in front of the District Office (and other locations throughout the community). Items may be dropped off at the District Office between 7:30 – 4:00 daily. We are seeking donations like:

Toothpaste Toothbrushes Feminine Products Diapers (all sizes) Deodorant Cereal
Ready to Make Meals (e.g. pasta with sauce)
Canned goods with lids that pull open (**not requiring a can opener, please**)
Individual servings of mac and cheese, apple sauce, peanuts, granola bars, canned fruit, etc.)

Charter School Governance: In the Board of Education’s [letter to the community explaining their rationale](#) for not approving a requested letter of intent to partner with the Driftless Area Community School (DACS), District representation on the DACS school governance was cited as a “non-negotiable” topic for both parties. Recently, Board President, **Diana Rothamer**, spoke with DACS Design Team Leaders to see if previous attempts at a compromise could be reconsidered. While DACS has agreed to permit the Board to select one (more?) of the charter school’s governance board members, they remained unchanged about the District’s staff or elected School Board members to serving as voting members on their governance board.

DACS has altered their timeline as it relates to receiving a letter of intent from the Board. Initially, they sought a letter of partnership from the District no later than November 30; however, they are now open to receiving such a letter by the end of January.

At this point, the interests of both parties appear to remain unchanged from the majority of the Board’s initial communication with DACS on July 10, 2019. Lastly, no one from the Board called for this to be an action item at a future meeting. Perhaps, more information to follow.

Learning and Leading for Equity Conference: In September, two Board members (**Dani Michels** and **Damon Piscitelli**) joined me in attending a special meeting with all of the Boards of Education from around Dane County. The goal of this learning centered on the history of diversity in Dane County and the emerging need to engage traditionally marginalized populations of our schools. Dani and Damon shared their experiences while attending the conference. This was not a “one and done” conference. In fact, the Boards of Education from all around Dane County will be meeting again on January 15. These efforts complement, very nicely, work being done at the school level. Ultimately, I would like our participating students to share with the Board their work. There is a great deal to be done. If we make it a priority, we can make inroads.

In their sole action item, the Board approved, on first reading, updates to their policy on administering medications to students. The details of this policy were developed by our amazing school nurses, **Pam Schaal** and **CJ Goodwin**. Please [click here](#) for more information.

We are heading in to a time of year that is all at once exciting and stressful. Please be sure to take mindfulness moments that will permit you to fully enjoy the season ahead.

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

Steve

