



Board of Education Recap

March 3, 2020

The full Board of Education met for the first time in a month. (You may remember the bad weather we had on February 17.) They immediately rolled up their sleeves and got down to some important business. Please read on for details:

Student Spotlight: **Andrew Ahrens** is a 5th grader at the Intermediate Center. His teachers, **Ms. Thronson** and **Mrs. Liska**, told us, “Andrew is an all-around fantastic student. He is a hard worker who always gives his best in whatever he is asked to do, and he is a kind and generous friend to his classmates. Andrew always has a smile on his face, has a positive attitude, and can work with anyone. He also looks to take on leadership opportunities when he has the chance. He is both a member of our 5th grade Safety Patrol as well as Student Council.” With credentials like these he is well-deserving of this month’s Student Spotlight! Here is a picture of Andrew and his family celebrating this special recognition.



Do reductions to federal governmental programs (like SNAP) impact Mount Horeb’s students? Yes. [Please take a look at this brief slidedeck.](#)

*Thank you to Board member **Leah Lipska** for sharing this information with our Board and community.*

Can you do something to help? Yes. Please join us at our Community and Legislative Engagement Committee meetings. We meet the fourth Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Our Career and Technical Education (CTE) program continues to thrive. During last night’s Board of Education meeting, audience members learned, firsthand, how three of our many offerings are taking learning to a higher level. Below, please find a picture of our students who are competing in our co-curricular [SkillsUSA](#) program. It bills itself as, “... a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce.” As evidenced by the report shared by the students and their sponsor, **Mr. Tyler Bass**, the program embodies SkillsUSA’s mission. While only in their second year, their team’s membership has exploded from 18 in 2018-2019 to 38 in 2019-2020. [Here is a link](#) to the team’s impressive report.



The Board also took time to recognize the impressive efforts undertaken by our [DECA](#) students/staff. DECA prides itself in preparing, "...emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management..." **Mrs. Allison Carroll**, DECA Advisor, and her students shared how students have been preparing for several contests this winter and sought permission from the Board to travel to Nashville this spring to DECA's International Career Development Conference. Good luck in Music City, USA, Vikings!



Eh, there – Last, but not least, our FFA requested permission (and was approved) to travel to Jutten Lake, Ontario - June 21-28 2020 for their 53rd annual fishing trip.



In 2018, the Board surveyed the community as it developed their [Strategic Plan](#). Above all else, the community (500+ respondents) told the Board a very top goal should be to attract and retain high quality employees. Well, how have we been doing? That was the purpose of [this report](#). Despite historic unemployment rates, the impending retirement of the baby boom generation, and significant dips in university's teacher preparation programs, we are continuing to attract and retain highly skilled staff. To the former: this year, we hired more teachers from other school districts than in recent history. (I believe this speaks to many factors; chief among them: professionals are looking to be a part of something special.) To the latter: our non-retirement turnover rate, 3.1%, remains favorably low in comparison to the all industry standard, 18%, and Dane County industry average of 6.1%. Other growth areas remain: recruiting support staff, notably paraprofessionals, custodians, and bus drivers continues to be a challenge. In that spirit...



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In action items:

- We have some very special friends of education who wrote a check for over \$26,000 so the District could purchase 115 new Chromebooks. As part of the recently approved mathematics adoption process, our dedicated teachers have seen natural ways of connecting the [Bridges](#) program to technology. This generous gift will go a long way in achieving the teachers' vision.
- The Board approved a three year partnership with Johnson Block, CPAs to serve as our audit firm
- Approved an extension to our contract with Bray Architects to complete work this summer that is part of our long-range facilities plan.

The work of a Board of Education member never seems to be complete. It is for that reason, among many others, that we appreciate their gifts of time and talent in helping achieve our important mission.

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

Steve