



# Board of Education Recap

September 22, 2020

Good Tuesday, Vikings!

Our Board of Education met last night. Here are a few updates:

Information and Advocacy Report: A sign of a healthy organization is reflection. Each month, the Board sets aside time to reflect on the results of their strategic plan, [Vision 2023](#). This month, we assessed our performance against four key indicators:

- the percent of students taking an Advanced Placement test during their high school career;
- the percent of students taking at least one Advanced Placement course in their high school career;
- the percent of students scoring “three or better” on their Advanced Placement exams; and
- the percent of students receiving dual credit.

The short answer is up 5.1%, down 0.2%, up 7.7%, and up 7%, respectively – The details may be found [here](#).

COVID 19 Update: Since the Board last met, the Supreme Court’s issued a temporary injunction regarding Public Health Madison and Dane County’s Order #9. The Board approved [Gradual Reopening Plan](#) will continue to guide decisions moving forward. In addition, we continue to monitor other districts’ return to school (and in some instances re-return to virtual).

The District has welcomed 30+ special education students back to the schoolhouse, taking special precautions to ensure everyone’s health and safety. At the beginning of next week, we anticipate that number will increase.

Last night, I proposed the District return our K-2 students to “in-person” learning at the beginning of the second quarter, November 9. (The District will also continue our K-2 all virtual pathway for the foreseeable future.) Our K-2 students’ return to school would be in a hybrid model – in order to keep children physically distanced – and would only be done with approval from Public Health Madison and Dane County, per our [Gradual Reopening plan](#). I made this recommendation after speaking with several key people throughout the organization and medical professionals.

In the coming days, the Early Learning and Primary Center will be reaching out to families to determine under which conditions they would return to the building. We recognize such a decision will be dependent on a variety of factors. The Board and the District agree those factors should be well informed by our employees. It is also important to hear from our families. If you have feedback, please [send me an email](#) (all emails will be shared with the Board).

The Board could make a decision at their meeting on October 5, 2020.

*There is still time to complete our parent survey about your online experience.*

*Please [click here](#) to complete – The deadline is Wednesday, September 23, 2020*

*If you missed last Wednesday night’s “Back to School Virtual Chat” with our school administrators, you can watch a replay [here](#).*

In action items, the Board hosted a hearing regarding the Department of Public Instruction’s “[COVID-19 District Flexibility Application](#).” Specifically, the Board:

1. approved a waiver to, among other things, give administrators greater flexibility in working with parents and students not fully meeting the [compulsory attendance law](#) and relax the [mandated supervision and evaluation model](#).



# Board of Education Recap

2. approved a waiver from the minimum number of instructional hours required for the 2020-21 school year.

MHASD Partnership with Mount Horeb Telephone Company: The pandemic only serves to highlight the importance of being solutions-oriented and fostering stronger alliances with our business partners. I am pleased the Board of Education approved one such cooperative with our friends at MHTC. Using MHTC's piping and the District's network, qualifying families could access the District's network (with the same filters as our young people receive at school). This model has the potential to reach more families (especially those living on the outskirts of Mount Horeb); reduce access/equity issues for children to education, and mitigate a hotspot distribution model that is not fiscally sustainable. We have successfully tested this solution with in-town and rural families.

- How does it work? **New** families acquiring access to MHTC service will need to schedule a visit with MHTC to their individual homes. Qualifying families would receive access to high speed internet at a reduced rate (approximately, \$20/month (before taxes). The internet would be subject to throttling (limiting online gaming or Netflix).
- Who qualifies? Unfortunately, not everyone. Similar to the distribution of district owned hotspots, the MHTC service will be prioritized to families qualifying for the Free and Reduced lunch program. Next, we will look at MHTC's service map coverage based on home addresses. Lastly, we will maximize the added bandwidth to provide for the most children living at the same residence.
- What if I already have MHTC and I need more bandwidth? MHTC leaders tell me you should call them to see how they can support you during this period.
- How do I sign up? More details are forthcoming.

The District is in a position to partner with MHTC because of you, our taxpayers. I have been told we have the infrastructure to provide this option without adversely impacting our internet bandwidth (In fact, I have been assured that the District has not even come close to reaching its available bandwidth (we are 500 up/down)); nonetheless, we know there are hiccups occurring even without Google's national issues. Please continue to use the [TechTicket link](#) to address any needs you may have.

Lastly, congratulations to Seniors **Allison Gundrum** and **Braden Schleip** who were just named Semifinalists in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship competition! Allison and Braden earned this honor from their exceptional performance in last year's PSAT exam. They will now compete with other National Merit Semifinalists to become a Merit Scholar. Both of these young people are just as kind and compassionate as they are brilliant. Best of luck to Ally and Braden!



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

Steve Salerno