

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORT
By
Scott Johnson, District Administrator
June 2020

Greetings to All District Residents!

This school district report is a summary of current events happening in school and a summary of actions taken at the monthly school board meetings. We understand that some residents are not able to attend school board meetings but would still like to stay informed of the great things that are occurring. This report is our attempt to keep you informed and be as transparent as possible with our community and staff.

This report will appear on a regular basis in our district newsletter, our school web page, and our school Facebook site so that everyone has equal access to finding out what is happening in the New Auburn Schools.

The June school board meeting was held on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. Below is a summary of school district happenings:

- **New School Board Member** - At a special school board meeting conducted thirty minutes prior to the start of the regular school board meeting, the school board interviewed Lindy Reimer, Matt Branville, and Tanya Leo as candidates interested in filling the second year of McKinze Berg's vacated, three-year term. (McKinze stepped down from the school board for medical reasons last month.) Following the interviews, the school board deliberated and voted to appoint Tanya Leo as the newest school board member. She was sworn in at the very beginning of the regular monthly meeting. Tanya is a parent who has returned to our school district. She is originally from New Auburn but left the area for a multi-year, military career. Congratulations and welcome to Tanya! Thank you to Matt and Lindy for stepping forward to be considered.
- **Handbooks** - Each year the principal and athletic director review the student handbook and athletic handbook and make any necessary revisions before recommending each document to the school board for approval. The school board approved both handbooks with very minimal changes to the student handbook and no changes to the athletic handbook.
- **Graduation** - The school board approved a plan for the Class of 2020 Commencement Exercise to take place in person, on site, on July 10th. The ceremony will start at 7:00 p.m. and it will be held in our high school gym. The ceremony will provide our students and families with an opportunity to experience a modified graduation, complete with speeches, a diploma, and a photo op. Some sacrifices will have to be

made that will change some of the ceremony from our typical ceremony, but these changes are necessary in order to provide for social distancing and other pandemic related health and safety assurances. Some of these things will include recorded music as opposed to our band or choir performances, no senior slide show in the gym, graduates and families will be assigned seating that allows for social distancing, specified entrance and exit doors, and added hand disinfectant stations will be provided. We expect this ceremony to be much shorter than our traditional graduation ceremonies. Several of the specific details have yet to be finalized by a graduation committee that will be meeting this Thursday. Those final details will be shared by Miss Mason and Mrs. Hebert as soon as this information is ready to go out to students and parents. For any person who is not comfortable attending the ceremony in person, we will be broadcasting the graduation ceremony so people can watch the ceremony from any location that has wi-fi internet services.

- **Summer School Cancelled** - The school board has agreed with the administration's recommendation to forego the modified summer school plans that were scheduled for August. In lieu of the ongoing pandemic situation and the uncertainty of what school will look like this fall, we have been forced to cancel our plans for summer school. Instead, we will be spending much of that time properly preparing for two or three different scenarios for the start up of the 2020-2021 school year. There are just far too many health, safety, and educational issues that have to be addressed for our students, staff, and facilities in order to be ready for the start of the new school year. We all feel bad that we have been forced to make this decision, but our priority must be on planning for a safe and successful start to our new school year. Many thanks to Mrs. Guest for all of your hard work in communicating with parents and staff members to organize a modified summer school on short notice. We also thank the parents who offered their enthusiasm, as well as the staff members who were ready and willing to teach in August. We hope to make up for this next summer.
- **Driver's Education** - It should be noted that we do still plan to offer Driver's Education this summer. Letters will be sent this week to those students who are eligible.
- **School Year Start Up Plans** - The school board has agreed to the administration's two-part plan for the start up of the 2020-2021 school year. There are many, many details that still have to be decided, but those are on hold until the Department of Public Instruction sends us the updated school reopening guidelines on June 22nd. We will have lots of work to get done once we see the new guidelines, but for now we want all employees and families to know that we fully intend to open the doors to our school and start our school year on time. We plan to offer an at-home virtual education pathway for any families who are not comfortable sending their children inside a school building at the start of the school year; and we are planning on offering as close to a normal school experience as we can, in our school building, for those families who want to accept the risks and take responsibility for sending their children to school. We fully plan to incorporate some social distancing and health and safety provisions in the school and on the buses, but those families who choose to send children to school will be expected to accept some risks and agree to some responsibilities that will help assure a safer experience for all students and staff. We will be working out these details and sharing them just as quickly as we can do that,

but in the meantime, we wanted all parents to know that we are tentatively planning on two educational options this fall to choose from for their children.

- **Facilities Report-** The two sections of the roof that were scheduled for replacement this summer were completed last week, ahead of schedule. The high school office flooring project is next on the list for projects to be completed indoors. The school parking lots resealing and relining has now been moved up to be done in early July. The maintenance staff has refurbished one of our old storage sheds that holds our playground supplies and they are building a new shed that will house some of our athletic supplies near the football field. Our maintenance staff has been very busy cleaning, painting, and repairing throughout the building. I am very proud of their hard work and accomplishments. We will have our building ready ahead of time.
- **Resignations** -Following closed session, the following resignations were accepted: Mitchell Hanson-Custodian, Brian McFaul-Custodian, Rachel Farrell-Special Education, Jed Weix-Physical Education, Holly Brekken-Varsity Volleyball Coach, and Michaela Hanson-JV Volleyball Coach. Thank you to all departing staff members!
- **New Hires** - The school board also approved the following new hires: Steve Shackelton-Custodian, Daniel Gengenbach-Physical Education and Assistant Varsity Football Coach, Ashley Rodencal-Special Education. Welcome aboard to all new hires!

*As a special note, our building will be closed to the public until further notice, with the exception of the district office, which will continue to be open for business each day.

As always, community members are welcome to contact me with any questions.

Thank you for following this column.

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District Administrator
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