

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 on 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 December school board meeting was held on Monday, December 21, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. Below is a summary of school district happenings:

School Audit - Our auditing firm reviewed the results of the 2019-2020 school year audit. As usual, Mrs. Kunstmann's excellent skills as our school bookkeeper was showcased again this year. I am pleased to report to our community that thanks to Jan, our school audit was excellent.

COVID-19 Report - The students are coming back to school on January 4th! We are all very excited to get our students back in the school building. Parents are reminded that January 4th is a scheduled late start, so the school buses will be arriving two hours later than usual on the students' first morning back. It is going to be nice to see things somewhat back to normal, but it is still very important that we all do our parts to stay as virus free as possible.

The COVID-19 is still surging everywhere in the world and we have to be very careful. As such, all of the safety requirements that were in place will remain in place, with the exception of taking temperatures at the bus stops and entrances. This means all students and employees will be masked and socially distanced wherever possible. Students will still be required to meet their parents outside and the building will remain locked throughout the school day.

We are going to begin to start opening our building up a little bit outside of the school day to some outside events. We will start with the Red Cross blood drive to be held in the large gym on Wednesday, January 6th. The public will be allowed in the building to donate blood, but will be restricted to the main commons entrance and large gym area. Please park with that in mind. Sanitation and safety requirements will be enforced. For further information, contact Mrs. Hovde and Mr. Rihn.

The decision has been made to start allowing some weekend basketball tournaments in the school, starting in January. Spectators will be limited to two parents per athlete and several other rules will be in place for masking, social distancing, etc. This will be somewhat of a trial basis to see how things go. If we start seeing virus outbreaks, it likely will not last long, so it is critical that everyone do their part to be as safe as possible. We really do want to try to start restoring some normal activities for the students, but safety will always be a priority.

Our school district will be recognizing the new guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) for quarantining. In short, it means that any person who has been a close contact and ordered to quarantine now has the ability to be tested on day 6 or day 7 of the quarantine. If they test negative, they can return to school on day 8. If a person does not get tested, they may now return on day eleven, provided they are symptom free through day 10. These are changes from the CDC that used to recommend a 14 day quarantine period. These changes can help us get students back in school faster if parents get them tested after day 6 of a quarantine. The same goes for our employees.

Our school board has also decided how they will address the potential problem of employees being placed on quarantine after December 31st. In case you didn't know, the federal

government's coronavirus relief program expires on December 31st. That means any employee who needs to quarantine after December 31st, would be required to use their sick leave, or be placed on unpaid leave. The school board has once again come through for our employees and graciously approved an emergency leave benefit for those affected negatively by COVID-19. This may make a huge difference in employees not being deprived of their pay.

Banking Authorization - Our new payroll clerk and future bookkeeper, Sharon Peterson, was approved as an authorized user on all district banking accounts. Sharon is now on the job and handling payroll, as well as training to be our new District Bookkeeper when Jan Kunstmann retires in June.

Resignation - The school board accepted the resignation of Catherine Nedland. Catherine has served the school district for the past few years as a special education paraprofessional and she performed some custodial duties. She will be missed.

Early Graduation - A student and parent request for early graduation was also approved last night. Congratulations were in order for that student and his family.

As always, community members are welcome to contact me with any questions. Thank you for following this column.

Happy holidays to our entire community!

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