

2022-23 District Family Update No. 9 | Dec. 6, 2022

*****en Español*****

Dear Northfield School District Families:

I hope this message finds you well. Our staff is privileged to continue serving you and your students. At this time of the year, we look forward to many special events, including the [24th annual Winter Walk community celebration](#) held on Thursday, Dec. 8 in downtown Northfield. The celebration begins at 5 pm and includes performances from our middle school choirs and many other festivities. This week's update includes.

Family Engagement "Pulse" Survey

The district has been using feedback from previous parent satisfaction surveys to improve how we provide feedback and updates about your students. We have made some changes to the way we approach family engagement. We want to learn how you feel we are doing so far.

The following "pulse" survey is short and focuses on the parent satisfaction survey results we have been working to address.

Please complete an individual survey for each of your students so we can understand how our efforts have impacted communication with your family.

» [Take the survey](#)

The survey will remain open through December 15, 2022, at 5 pm.

Northfield High School Facility Discussion Update

At the Nov. 28 board meeting, I presented a recommendation to the board regarding addressing the facility needs at Northfield High School.

As a review, a task force was convened in March and April 2022 to suggest potential solutions for Northfield High School facility improvements. The board weighed those solutions and, in partnership with the City of Northfield, commissioned a professional, random and stratified voter survey in October 2022 to gauge community support for various options. [That report was presented to the board on Oct. 24, 2022.](#)

The recommendation includes three bond referendum questions: Q1 would request \$60 million of bonding authority to remodel the existing Northfield High School. Q2 (contingent on Q1 passing) would request \$17 million of bonding authority to construct an athletic field house on the high school property to expand access to physical education and athletic practice space. Q3 (contingent on Q1 & Q2 passing) would request \$3 million of bonding authority to install artificial turf on some of the fields adjacent to Memorial Field.

» [You can read the full recommendation here.](#)

Rounding

Leader “rounding” is an employee engagement strategy used in the district. Rounding is an opportunity for administrators to meet with employees and learn, in a structured manner, about their workplace experience. During a rounding conversation, these general questions are asked (the administrator may slightly modify them):

- What’s going well?
- What is one thing we could be doing better?
- Are you feeling supported?
- Who can I recognize on your behalf for their good work?

This fall, administrators completed at least 360 rounding sessions with staff. After the rounding window, administrators submit a “3-2-1 report” for their building or department. These reports include the top themes for what is going well, what could be improved, and one leader action taken to address the areas for improvement. All administrators met in early November to review their rounding summaries and compare feedback from the district.

The top themes identified in this rounding window were:

- Good process leads to success
- People feel connected, strong relationships
- People have the resources they need
- Collaboration leads to success
- Communication - clear, ongoing, timely, predictable
- Benefits of LETRS training
- PLCs look different for staff; feedback was received and heard
- “Today’s problems are caused by yesterday’s solutions” (Senge)

The “shoutout” question provides an opportunity to provide specific feedback to staff members to let them know they make a difference for others in their workplace. We know that specific feedback reinforces high-performance practices.

Winter weather, cancellations, and e-Learning Days

As a reminder, the district will use “e-Learning Days” with the second and subsequent full-day closures due to winter weather. I shared more details about our e-Learning day plans in [2022-23 District Family Update No. 6](#). Please review that information. You will also hear from your child’s school about how these plans are implemented at the building level.

Short-Cycle Goals

As part of the continuous improvement process, we want to gauge progress toward our annual goals more frequently. We call this short-cycle reporting. It allows for analysis and reflection about what is working and what isn’t working in pursuit of annual goals. Below is one example update from this year’s elementary school improvement plan. This one is related to

progress in reading instruction. For your reference, the grade two acronyms used are ENW (expressive nonsense words) and ORF (oral reading fluency.) These two statistics are foundational for learning to read.

Learner Outcomes	
SMART Goal(s)	Quarterly Progress
<p>Reading: For 2022-23, 80% of students will meet grade level benchmarks for fluency by Spring of 2023.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p>Example from 2022-23 elementary school improvement plan update.</p> </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Q1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ K 70% ○ 1 91% ○ 2 (ENW) 58% ○ 2 (ORF) 59% ○ 3 71% ○ 4 72% ○ 5 64% ● Q2: ● Q3: ● Q4:

Professional learning communities (PLCs) review the progress, evaluate strategies, and make modifications as needed. Most recently, PLCs completed a first quarter reflection, asking them to consider what they would keep doing, what they would stop doing, and anything they would start doing in response to the short-cycle data. Short-cycle goals are essential in helping us reach our annual goals.

Board update

The school board held a regular board meeting on Nov. 28. The board packet & table file are [located on our website](#). The board approved the consent agenda. A [video](#) of the Nov. 28 regular board meeting is available on our website and you can [listen to my recap of the meeting](#) on KYMN radio.

Thanks

Thank you for your ongoing support. We are grateful for our partnership. As always, don't hesitate to contact me if you have feedback about our school district.

Sincerely,



Matt Hillmann, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools