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Community Newsletter - Jan 2025

Dear South Nodaway Family,

Welcome to the 24-25 second edition of the South Nodaway School District Community Newsletter! We are excited to share with you the latest news, updates and highlights. This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about important events, achievements, opportunities, and challenges within our educational community!

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE & DISTRICT NEWS

I hope this message finds you and yours in good health. As we embark upon the third quarter of another school year, I want to reflect upon our shared goals and values and provide some important updates.

I'm sure most are aware that **Missouri's 2025 legislative session** is underway. As always there are several pieces of legislation aimed at Missouri's school districts! A few items of note:

- **Open Enrollment (HB 711 – Pollitt)** – A topic that has garnered much attention and discussion over the last few years is at the forefront of this legislative session and likely to be **heard as early as next in committee hearing**. This bill has the potential for both positive and negative impacts on small, rural school districts across the state.
- Proponents tout increased choice and the empowerment of families as reasons for this bill. It is believed that a successful school district may attract new students and families outside their current communities. Opponents express concerns about the impact open enrollment will have on students who remain in districts that see a loss of students and state funding. Districts that see a loss of students would likely see a reduction in funds because of tax revenue leaving the district with students and therefore could need to cut programs, services, and teachers. An additional consideration for South Nodaway is that our state revenue is capped through the formula (and has been since 2006) due to our status as hold-harmless. Therefore, **SN would not see any additional state aid upon receiving new students**, essentially increasing the per-pupil tax-burden on our resident constituents. Essentially, district tax payers would subsidize non-resident attendance.

- **Assessment (HB 371 - Pollitt)** - This legislation proposes adding an additional achievement level to EOC & MAP assessments. Creating a “Grade Level” category in between Proficient and Basic to account for such a wide range of outcomes. Under the current system many students categorized as “Basic” are actually on grade level - **this legislation seeks to clarify and better reflect student performance.**
- **Governor Kehoe's Budget** - January 29th newly sworn in Governor Mike Kehoe presented his priorities and budget many of which pertain to education. Areas of note include additional funding for small schools and teacher salaries through grant programs, state funding for newly expanded voucher programs and lack of funding for the foundation formula. Governor Kehoe asked congress to pass Open Enrollment legislation and tasked DESE with creating a new foundation formula.

Please remember that these bills and budget are currently only proposals and will likely undergo revisions and changes.

AMI Days and School Closure - As I'm sure most of you have noticed the district has utilized more AMI hours than in the past. The increased usage of AMI is a **direct result of legislative changes** that occurred last session. Despite being well-above the minimum threshold of hours established by DESE **the district now must use AMI hours and/or make-up days or risk losing revenue tied to the minimum number of days.**

Please consider reaching out to your state representatives and senators if you have concerns or questions regarding the aforementioned legislation.

In related news, the district is **looking to assemble a committee to assist with revising our Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP).** The district received 30/30 points when our plan was last reviewed. However, the new cycle starts next fall and we will be revising and updating the current plan. This strategic plan was crafted by a **committee composed of various stakeholders after three nights of collaboration, data analysis, needs assessments, reflection, and evaluation.** If you are interested in serving on this committee in late spring/early summer please contact me via email at dustin.skoglund@snr4.org or phone call at 660 652 3221.

Please use the following link to find the CSIP if you'd like to review South Nodaway's current strategic plan!

CSIP link: <https://www.southnodaway.k12.mo.us/vnews/display.v/SEC/CSIP>

I want to express my gratitude to our SN family for your unwavering support and dedication to our school. **It is through your collective efforts that we continue to strive for excellence in education and create an inclusive and nurturing environment for our students to thrive!**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

South Nodaway's students have consistently demonstrated remarkable achievements in academics, with many receiving recognition at local, state and even national levels. Some recent triumphs and milestones include:

Joslynn Heath competed in the Visual Design contest for FBLA. For the contest, she was asked to design a booth for a farmer's market highlighting the products sold. Joslynn developed her project around a fictitious company named The Sweet Bee that sells honey. She designed the required name and pricing signs for the booth, carefully determining fonts, colors, and styles that represented her vision of the company. **Joslynn went beyond the requirements by designing a sidewalk sign promoting the business**, a sign describing the history of the business and labels for two sizes of honey jars.. Joslynn's project was selected to present in the preliminary round for District Contest. **She placed in the top five of the competitors** and was chosen to give her Canva presentation in the finals. **Congratulations Joslynn!**



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

We'd like to take a moment to extol a couple of staff members that have gone **above and beyond** the call of duty to help a colleague, and do what's best for kids, school, and community!

The district would like to recognize **George Render** for his tireless efforts in keeping out facilities in working order. **George recently retired this fall** and we want to wish him well! **He saved the school district countless dollars during his tenure with his vast array of knowledge and skills! Thank you, George!**

Speaking of **above and beyond** - **Mr. Aaron Murphy**, while waiting for a basketball game, lent a hand to our area **volunteer firefighters** responding to a fire across the street at **Brandon and Anna Manship's house**. Mr. Murphy's temporary duties required him to climb to a roof and wield a fire house while waiting for additional assistance to arrive! **A big thank you to all our first responders and volunteers!**

CURRICULUM CORNER – Understanding APR

South Nodaway's recent APR saw a **significant increase of almost 12%** over last year's score!! This is in-line with the expectations and excellence we've all become accustomed to. **The state again made alterations to the formula for calculating each school's APR which DESE is calling another recalibration.** The chief purpose of these changes is to **manipulate the data to create a bell-curve**. While South Nodaway is proud of its **most recent APR**, these significant swings in scores and inconsistency of application of the process **reflect the volatility of the new system** and further illustrate the **significance of local benchmark assessments** to accrue actionable data to drive decision-making processes. This is further exacerbated by small class sizes, like ours, that could sway percentages in data that is not statistically significant.

South Nodaway again performed well above average when considering the performance results - with overall (combined elementary & high school scores averaging 75% of all students achieving proficient or advanced levels (above grade-level) in any subject area. Additionally, high school **math and english students were 100% proficient or advanced**. Keep in mind (as mentioned above regarding legislation) **Proficient or Advanced status means they are above grade level!**

This APR score also includes a **new (last year) “growth” calculation** to provide a mechanism for schools with lower achievement but high growth on MAP & EOC tests to improve their APR. However, as a (perhaps unintended) result, schools that are **high achieving like South Nodaway** have little room for “growth” when areas are performing at 100% thus making it hard to accrue those points.

The district will continue to focus its effort and allocate resources to **our students and their learning** while also pursuing methods of addressing the procedural aspects necessary to produce a better APR.

At this juncture it seems appropriate to point out that this accountability system of the APR is not required of private schools receiving state aid through the voucher system. Nor does the (aforementioned) proposed legislation include an accountability mechanism such as APR despite suggested increases in tax-generated revenue.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Please look for our annual survey this spring. This information is shared with the SN Board of Education and informs decision-making processes. We value our strong connections with the Longhorn community and appreciate your input and feedback!

We are very **thankful for the Kawasaki Maryville Plant** and their recent donation of \$5000 to the South Nodaway School District. These funds will be used in a variety of ways to help students - primarily **updating our 1-to-1 technology and personal devices**.

PARENT RESOURCES AND INVOLVEMENT

We strive to keep parents and the community informed about school happenings. Please visit our website at www.southnodaway.k12.mo.us where you will find a live master calendar of events. You will also find the Lumen Portal login to keep up with your child’s grades and assignment information.

Community members can sign up to receive text alerts though TextCaster on your mobile device. Please follow our Facebook (South Nodaway Longhorn Family & Platte Valley Athletics) and Twitter pages (@SNLonghorns & @PlatteValley1) for additional content. **These have been especially important lately with all the weather-related closures!** Parents of students taking virtual classes also receive access to an additional parent portal through LAUNCH where they can monitor their online student’s progress.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

As always, we take the health and wellness of our students, staff, and extended Longhorn family very seriously. Cold and flu season is upon us. Unfortunately, we are seeing a significant **rise in flu** (a handful of positive tests) **and flu-like symptoms**. **This time of year the district increases cleaning practices - increasing desk disinfecting (thank you Peg!!) and surfaces and frequency of handwashing**. Nurse Tabitha would like to reiterate healthy habits to the kids. Handwashing, covering coughs, getting active, good sleep habits, and eating well. Please help us continue encouraging our kids to practice healthy habits!

We hope you find this newsletter informative and engaging. **I can't emphasize enough that your involvement in your child's education is invaluable.** Whether it's attending parent-teacher conferences, participating in activities or simply being a supportive presence at home, **your engagement plays a crucial role in our collective success!**

Additionally, your involvement in our school district is essential and we encourage you to stay connected, attend events and support our students' successes. **Stay abreast of school events and initiatives through our website, school calendar, social media pages, text alerts and regular communications.**

If you have any feedback, suggestions or contributions for future newsletters please contact me! There is a lot of information contained in this bulletin, please reach out if you have any questions, would like more information or need clarification!

Thank you for being a valued member of the South Nodaway family! Together, we are committed to providing the best possible education for our students! I feel truly fortunate to have the opportunity to work and live in a community that places such a high priority on children and their education!

Warm regards,



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