



February 20, 2019 Superintendent Report

Mission: To provide a safe, comfortable, clean and caring environment where community and staff work together to provide an education that will maximize each individual's potential, instill a sense of self-worth, and prepare them for life-long learning.

Extension of SAVE Funds

The legislators have a very difficult job in balancing the State's budget, much the same way our school district or any other place of business has. We greatly appreciate their efforts, once again, in trying to meet the demands of Iowa's many priorities.

I am sharing my views about one of these legislative priorities, the State Penny for School Infrastructure or SAVE funds. SAVE was first established in 2008 and will expire on December 31, 2029. This original 20-year timeframe matched the bonding period needed for most school projects such as additions and new structures. So here we are, about ten years away from the expiration date of 2029. You may be thinking ten years is a long time, but not from a borrowing standpoint. The typical bonding period is 20 years and school districts across the state are feeling the pinch of a shortened bonding period. With low interest rates and unmet needs, now is not the right time to turn to property taxes to meet these unmet needs. SAVE is a means of not increasing property taxes.

We encourage the support of extending the state penny beyond 2029 for school infrastructure (SAVE) because it is a vital funding stream for our school district. Here are just a few of the major uses of SAVE funds in our school district:

- Update our security systems at both the elementary and junior/senior high school with cameras, programmed door locks, and fobs
- Technology purchases- Chromebooks, iPads, access point infrastructure updates, and desktop/laptop computer
- New gym facility at the elementary so our students could have physical education classes in a gym and not the cafeteria and also so our junior high students could play basketball games in a gym and not on the stage of our auditorium- extremely unsafe
- Fitness center for health and wellness activities
- Boilers
- Parking lot updates
- Concession stand
- Roof updates
- New windows

SAVE has given our district the opportunity to provide excellent education for our students. Without the extension of SAVE, these projects would not be possible as general fund and/or PPEL would have to be used and it would not cover the expenses for the above-listed projects.

One of the main concerns I hear from legislators is the use of SAVE funds to update sporting facilities. We recently finished a new gym/fitness facility at Iowa Valley in Marengo. The junior high students were playing their games on the stage of our auditorium. Thanks to SAVE funds, we were able to provide a regulation-sized basketball court used for almost all of our sports and the gym is also used for elementary physical education classes throughout the entire day instead of using the cafeteria. Our students deserved more than playing games on the stage of an auditorium or having PE classes in the cafeteria. SAVE was a "life-saving" fund for our kids.

I appreciate the service legislators provide for our great state. Please express your opinions with your legislative representatives about how important SAVE funds are for our school district. Representatives for the Iowa Valley CSD are Thomas Gerhold and David Maxwell and our district's senator is Tim Kapucian. Please reach out to our legislators and ask them to extend or repeal the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure. Your efforts will be rewarded with updates in technology, equipment, buses, and building infrastructure just to name a few.