



October 18, 2017 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.

GWAEA Meeting – October 4, 2017

We held our regular monthly meeting on October 4 with keynote speaker on growth mindset, Trevor Ragan.

Highlights from his presentation were:

- Are you a “zoo” tiger or a wild tiger?
- Resistance- Why people choose comfort over growth
- Beliefs and Focus- How to beat the resistance and thrive in the wild
- Building a Learning Culture- How feedback can make or break a learning environment
- Courage to Fail- Navigating and feeling your way through the bumps and failures

Also highlighted were, Andrew Bracken, attorney from Ahlers & Cooney, and PERB attorneys, Mary Gannon and Susan Bolte. They provided information on re-certification voting in the state of Iowa.

IASB Priorities for FY18

The following five priorities were collected from Iowa School Boards several months ago. From this list, delegates will select those of highest need to draw focus from when the legislative session begins.

1. Maintain the focus and finish the job of an aligned **Standards and Accountability** system—including a high-quality state assessment aligned to Iowa student learning standards.
2. Increase statewide access to and funding for **Mental Health** services for children.
3. Fix flaws in **School Funding Policy**. Iowa’s complex school foundation formula has strengths but its flaws allow inequities that hamper education. The resolution calls for equalizing per-pupil funding, addressing the impact of high transportation costs and demographic changes, and more.
4. Make decisions on growth factors in **Supplemental State Aid** on time, and at a rate that moves us toward world-class schools.
5. Ensure Iowa students continue to have safe, modern schools and technology by extending the state penny sales tax for school infrastructure, known in law as **Secure an Advance Vision for Education (SAVE)**.

Fall and Homecoming Go Hand-in-Hand

Fall is one of the best times in education. Students are eager to start back to school because of being reunited with friends, establishing a routine, starting extra-curricular activities, and, yes, learning. It is kind of like the first quarter of a football game or the first game of a volleyball match; everyone is fired up and ready to get the job done. The first day of school in the fall is a time for new beginnings, hopes, dreams, challenges, and sometimes disappointments that turn out to help prepare students for life’s challenges they soon will be faced with.

Homecoming is one of the highlights in the fall. The word itself means a return to one’s home and a celebration at an educational institute. When alumni return to the school they graduated from, a sense of belonging to someone or something from the past can bring about a warm, homey feeling. As much as post-graduates go out and desire to explore the world, it is a wonderful, safe feeling when they return home and reminisce of fond school memories.

When alumni returned to Iowa Valley Community School District for Homecoming, they saw a few physical changes and heard about some academic changes. Here are some of these changes from one year ago:

- New gym, fitness center, lobby area, and concession stand at the elementary building
- Chromebooks, instead of iPads, for all students in grades 6-12
- CBM-R testing for elementary students
- STEM Science Camp in summer
- At-risk coordinator hired
- New water fountains for bottles
- Dugouts updated for baseball/softball
- New press box for football/track area
- Bleachers welded to meet safety regulations
- New gasoline bus (instead of the traditional diesel bus)
- New boiler for Jr./Sr. High School
- New security system for both buildings
- CAKE (Community and Kids in Education) Kick-Off
- Staff involved in Live Healthy Iowa competition

In addition to many changes, some things did not. The one thing that did not change was the commitment and solid foundation both school districts retained in providing the best educational programs possible for its students. We have excellent staff members both in and out of the classrooms. Also, our school boards provided the guidance, leadership, and resources to meet district goals in helping students become college and career ready.

I am proud to work with our outstanding school district as we provide top-notch educational programs for all of our students. Homecomings allow us to witness some of the changes and also experience some of the positive things that will never change. We hope you felt welcomed at this year's homecomings and are looking forward to the start of another great school year; let's keep moving forward with pride and progress in the 2017-2018 school year.



Fall Fitness Day- October 4, 2017

Students participated in the Fall Fitness Day- Healthiest State Annual Walk, sponsored by the Live Healthy Iowa Program. Walking is one of the best ways to stay healthy as well as connect with others. By encouraging our youth to walk, it will help to instill behaviors when they become adults and reduce a wide variety of health issues later in life. Here are some of the benefits of walking:

- Reduces anxiety
- Improves sleep quality
- Improves cognitive functioning

- Is inexpensive and can be done year round
- Reduces the development of diabetes
- Strengthens bones, balance, and energy levels
- Fun to do!

Thanks to Iowa Valley's school nurse, Jill Svare, Ryne Christner, Elementary PE instructor, and Cindy Miller, Elementary Principal, for organizing this activity for our youth.

