

Superintendent Report 5/5/23

Updates from around the district and the state.

1. Thursday, May 11 will mark our 160th day of student attendance and leaves just 15 school days left in the school year. Just a reminder that Friday, June 2 is an 11:30 dismissal. The first day of student attendance for the 2023-24 school year is scheduled for Wednesday, August 16.
2. Spring sports (baseball, track and field, soccer, tennis, and softball) are well underway and the postseason will begin soon. What trophies and medals will our teams and individuals bring home this year? Time will tell. Schedules of final contests [can be found online](#).
3. Many extracurricular camps and clinics will take place this summer. Families should be on the lookout for camp forms at each school building and in your email.
4. Andrew Paleczny (Boyd Jones) will once again attend the board meeting to give everyone an update on the new CTE Center. Every day it seems like something new has been added to the building.
5. Regarding personnel for 2023-24, we still have a few vacancies. I will give a real-time update during the board meeting as we hope to fill several positions this month.
6. Regarding the [Start Smart](#) early childhood funding I shared with you last month, here are a few updates. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Early Childhood Block Grant is due by June 14, 2023, however we are not listed as one of the "[preschool deserts](#)". I plan on submitting the RFP prior to the deadline regardless. A webinar from ISBE on the process is May 8, which I signed up for. I have reached out to our local [Birth to Five](#) chapter which is listed as one of organizations best suited to assist with questions and troubleshooting the application process.
7. Regarding certain agenda items, below is additional, more specific information:
 - a. Certified Employee Retirements
 - i. We will be recognizing the educational careers of:
 1. Susanne Buennig/Northside (1st Grade)
 2. Jill DePauw/GMS (6th Grade)
 3. Jodi D'Hondt/Millikin (Reading Specialist)
 4. Deanna Humphries/Southwest (Math Interventionist)
 5. Shawn King/Southwest (3rd Grade)
 6. Stephanie Rickman/Northside (4th Grade)
 7. Michelle Schneden/GHS (English)
 - b. Special Presentations
 - i. Sarah Boone will be updating on all the great work and academic accomplishments of students and staff this school year.
 - ii. I will be giving a separate presentation updating the board on our academic work over the past few years and the work yet to be done.
 - c. Policy Committee Update
 - i. You will see the minutes from our meeting on May 4, 2023 in the board packet. Committee members may also add some individual updates.

- d. Student Handbooks: Each Leadership Team has made recommendations for changes to the student handbooks, marked in ~~striketrough~~ and red language to easily see the changes. Some positive changes place an emphasis on bringing accuracy to grades and the ability for students to demonstrate their highest level of academic achievement through reassessment opportunities. This will be a second reading.
 - i. I will try to bring clarity to these topics during Board Work.
- e. Circling back to our [Grow Your Own Program](#), I would like to request the Board commit funds to next year's budget to support this program in 2 ways:
 - i. Allocate \$25,000 for up to two current non-certified employees who would like to become teachers and we have identified them as strong teacher candidates, to pay their tuition at an approved program. The attached contract spells out the terms of employment and service to the district in return for the financial commitment of the Board. The attached article talks about an alternative route that Sterling is using that we may look into further.
 - ii. Allocate \$4,000 per year for tuition reimbursement for non-certified employees who are going to school to become a teacher on their own and do not want to be bound by the contract and terms referenced in e(i). The terms would align to the language you approved for tuition reimbursement to certified staff in the new CBA.
 - iii. Attached is a letter I am submitting to our local foundations asking them to partner with us to allocate \$7,000 next school year to provide a \$500 scholarship for each GHS student who successfully completes the GYO course at GHS and enrolls in an education program in college with the intent of pursuing an education-related degree. Such initiatives are often funded through foundations rather than using local taxpayer dollars.