

State of the District

Strategic Plan Update

The board and administration continue to focus on the Strategic Plan which was adopted in July of 2021. There are five main goal areas in this plan: Communication, Academic Success, Student Behavior and Support, School Pride, Parent and Community Engagement and Facility Updates. We will be conducting annual surveys to help measure our progress on the Strategic Plan. For example, this past spring we conducted the parent survey.

Communication: The goal is to improve communication amongst the staff, students, and parents, and communication between the school district and the stakeholders in the school district. We have received many positive comments about the updated website and Facebook communications. Communication between staff, parents and students also continues to be a key priority.

Academics: Academic achievement is a top priority and will continue to be a high area of focus going forward. Our goals will be to improve both SBAC state test scores as well as ACT test scores. The district is participating in a three year colloquium to determine which methods of personalized learning will be most effective at Deuel. NWEA/MAPS testing are the main assessment tool to track student growth. A parent Focus Group, which meets quarterly, was also formed this past year to provide a platform for parents and staff to exchange ideas and provide feedback in areas of academics and student behavior.

Student Behavior and Student Support: This goal focuses on the adherence of school policy by all administration, teaching staff and students. It includes a review and assessment of student participation on “Help Fridays”. In a period of January through April 2022, 42 middle school and 120 high school students attended Help Fridays. We will continue to evaluate the best ways to utilize these days going forward and look for methods to get the lower grades to participate more.

School Pride – Parent and Community Engagement: This goal involves increasing participation in the Booster Club as well as forming an active PTO to create more opportunities for parent involvement in the school. Both of these organizations have increased activity significantly this past year as discussed further in this article.

Facility Updates: The building project is underway to address the key identified areas of:

- School Security
- Kitchen Servery, Cafeteria
- Gym, Additional Classrooms and Parking
- Industrial Arts/Ag Facility

We will continue to monitor the facility to ensure it is a safe and clean environment to meet the educational needs of our students and staff.

Committee Overview

In August of 2020, the board formed six standing committees to support the key functions of the district. Those committees and members are as follows:

- Building /Facility – Joel Brandt and Jessica TeKrony
- Budget/Finance – Danay Nielsen and Michelle Prins
- Personnel/Negotiations – Jessica TeKrony and Wade Gubrud
- Policy - Danay Nielsen and Michelle Prins
- Communication/Community – Joel Brandt and Wade Gubrud
- Academics/Curriculum – Michelle Prins and Wade Gubrud

These committees meet multiple times throughout the year in addition to the bi-monthly board meetings.

Spring Survey

A parent survey was conducted this spring as a follow up to the areas outlined in our strategic plan. Questions pertained to communication, the learning environment, academic needs, social-emotional needs, and school pride. Here are some of the take aways from the survey.

- 72% of parents felt that communication from the school improved over the past school year.
- 77% of parents indicated that their child/children are in a positive and productive learning environment here at Deuel.
- 76% of parents felt that their child/children/s academic needs have been supported by the district.
- 74% of parents felt that their child/children/s social-emotional needs have been supported by the district.
- 60% of parents felt that school pride improved over the past year.

The numbers indicate a definite improvement across the board and we will continue to make improvements in each of these respective areas moving forward. Thank you to all of the parents that took the time to complete the survey and we appreciate the input that was provided.

Academic Data

A high level of focus has been placed on the NWEA MAPS testing over the last four years. The MAPS test is taken three times a year by students in grades K-11. Students test in the fall, winter and spring. Students are tested in the areas of math, reading and language usage. The results provide more than a one-time snapshot of how a student is doing during the year. It allows us to see the growth that a student makes through the year as well as from year to year in their academic career. After each testing event, a family report is sent home and parents can see how their child is doing according to the norms that are set at the national level.

Teachers, administration, and the school board have spent time examining data from these testing applications. Administration and the teaching staff use the data from these test results to drive instruction, set goals and look at curriculum holes that we find to be consistent.

The Deuel School District has created a strategic plan, that was implemented during the 2021-22 school year. One of the goals in the strategic plan states that 60% of our students will test above the national median score. The national scores are an average of other schools across the nation that are implementing MAPS testing into their academic plans. In the 21-22 school 65% of our students tested above the national norm in math. During the 21-22 school year 67% of our students tested above the national norm in reading and 66% of our students tested above the national norm in the area of language usage.

As a district we have been very pleased with the data that the MAPS testing has been able to provide administrators, teachers and parents. We will continue to use and analyze the data from MAPS to improve instruction and provide a high level of learning for all students.

Colloquium/Focus Group

In 2021 administration and staff embarked on a three year colloquium along with a number of other schools. This group has met collectively with other schools across the state three times since last summer and will be meeting five more times through the fall of 2023. The purpose of this colloquium is to assist schools in implementing personalized learning within our schools. We initiated a personalized learning approach about five years ago but this time has allowed us to reflect on what we have done, what we are currently doing, and where we want to go. We have had the opportunity to collaborate with other schools, listen to keynote speakers, and visit other South Dakota schools to see it in practice. Moreover, we have spent a great deal of time within our own group discussing what will work best for our students, staff, and parents.

In addition to the colloquium group, we have also established a parent focus group. The colloquium group and parent focus group met a handful of times this past year to bridge the communication between both groups. This has been a great opportunity for both groups to discuss communication, accountability, point of view, etc... We will continue to meet through out the next school year and engage in meaningful conversation with the students best interest in mind.

PTO Organization

There will be a new or revived opportunity for parents and staff to get involved in during the 2022-23 school year. Administration held a meeting last spring to gauge interest from parents and staff and about fifteen people were in attendance. A subsequent meeting will be held soon to kickoff of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). This group will be meeting to discuss purpose, goals, funding, and eventually branding themselves. Please note that the PTO's focus will be the elementary school.

Some might ask what a member of a PTO does. The number one reason to join the Parent Teacher Organization is to benefit your child. In doing so, you also help your school. Being part of a PTO group allows you to create a deeper level of communication and understanding of what is taking place in the school. Being part of this group will also provide opportunities to meet

other parents, staff and community members that might get involved in events that will be supported by the PTO. It is a great opportunity to show your talents and knowledge. Often funds to hold social events are gathered through fundraising opportunities that the PTO organizes.

By being part of the PTO, you are involved and help make positive changes that affect your child and all the children in the community. By being part of the Parent Teacher Organization, you show your child the importance of their education by being actively involved and holding a high level of importance on their education.

No matter your level of interest, please consider being part of the Elementary Parent Teacher Organization. You will be welcomed in whatever aspect you would like to be involved.

All School Reunion

The weekend of July 29-31, 2022, will be the 1st annual Clear Lake Days/All School Reunion. The weekend is filled with a variety of events. The planned activities include live music, food vendors and food trucks, a 5K Run/walk, golfing, museum tours, children's activities, and a street dance to just name a few.

There are also many activities that involve Deuel School. The Deuel Middle School, The Marching Cardinal Drumline, will be performing on Friday night under the direction of Alyssa Cassels, Deuel Band instructor. Friday night the local Gymnastics team and the local Boy Scouts group will be hosting fundraiser food booths. The High School Football team is assisting in setting up and providing "muscle" power to the weekend events where needed.

Saturday will find many activities at the school. School tours and a Clear Lake/Deuel Alumni Meet & Greet will be held Saturday morning. The school will also be a location for a "meet-up" space for past alumni to get together in various high school classrooms. The afternoon will find an Alumni Basketball Game(s) taking place in the High School Gym. The Alumni Games are being organized by Jon Peterreins, Deuel High School coach and teacher.

Saturday night will the street dance which will be in the empty lot to the east of the Bus Garage Area. The Bus Garage will also be a location for people to gather. The bus garage will have tables and chairs in that location for people to sit, eat, and enjoy the festivities in a place out of the sun!

Sunday an outdoor worship service will be held at the Deuel High School 10:00.

The Committee organizing the Clear Lake Days /All School Reunion have expressed their thanks to the Deuel School Administration and Staff; "The Deuel School has been a vital part of making this event possible. Their positive attitude of "what can we do to help?" has been a tremendous help and support in the planning of these events. They have offered the use of their facilities and their resources. We are thankful for their contributions!"

-All School Reunion Committee

Booster Club

The Deuel Booster Club is a parent-based organization that provides support for student activities through scholarships, team spirit, and financial assistance. In the last year they have recentered around their mission, built more awareness of the club, and modified concession volunteers. They have increased awareness with staff/coaches by meeting with them to share about the club and learn their funding needs. They also gained support to have students volunteer in the concessions in representation of their activity. They have also created an online sign up to gather volunteers for concessions. The club has done more on social media to also improve in parent awareness but still an area they would like to improve in the upcoming year. They are also looking to do more and need more volunteers in the areas of fundraising and team/activity spirit in the upcoming year.

Building Project Update

The building project commenced immediately after school ended in May with asbestos abatement and demolition prep quickly followed. Demolition is complete and they are currently trenching/connecting sewer and geothermal lines. Foundations will start soon after.

Mobile classrooms will be delivered the first part of August and will be placed on the grassy area outside the elementary office. Both the fourth and fifth grade classes will be utilizing those classrooms during the year. We have received word that we will only be able to use the west half of the playground this school year so we will still have plenty of room for kids to play during recess. We also found out last week that we will not be able to use our existing girls locker room adjacent to the stage for the year. This is a minor hiccup as we still have enough locker room space to accommodate.

In looking at the upcoming school year, both the pick-up and drop off locations for students will remain the same. The biggest challenge for us will be the availability of parking spots. As the start of school nears we will be providing an arial map which indicates where both students and staff can park. We want to encourage car pooling if possible. With the limited parking and condensed area of parking, everyone needs to slow down and be cognizant of their surroundings to ensure student safety.

We will also be providing building updates on both our website and Facebook page through out the project so the community can check on progress. This is an exciting time for everyone and we will need to roll with the punches until the project is complete.