

Updates from the District Office

May 20, 2022

Dear Parents and Caregivers: Good afternoon to you all and happy Friday! A number of items for your attention today:

1. **Budget Vote and Board Elections** – Thanks so very much to all who came out to vote and/or who otherwise supported our School Pride Day activities, the musical performances, etc. We had a significant increase in voters this year which is always a good thing and a great model for our students to see. The final [results](#) provided statements to us from the community about your expectations and what is important to you. That said, we are also aware that not everyone was supportive of our proposals and so we will continue to work on our communications and our openness to hearing how we can improve our work on the budget and what is included. Should any of you have specific questions on the specific items that are included in the budget, please do not hesitate to contact us.
2. **Buffalo Shooting** – I am sure I am not alone in my inability to shake the impact of the sheer act of hatred that took place in Buffalo at the end of last week. It not only served as a reminder for all of us to be very vigilant about our surroundings and to report any issues of concern, particularly when we have students outside, for example, but equally importantly it also serves as a call to action to continue to work together as a community to educate our students about the value of diversity in race, culture, gender, socio-economics, and beliefs that increasingly exist within our society. For our students – our next generation of state, national, and international citizens – this could not be more timely as creating learning environments that are welcoming, safe, and secure for **all** of our students and staff has to be our highest priority if we expect each of our students to learn at high levels
3. **School Culture and Climate Project** – Regarding our school culture and climate, one of this year's [District goals](#) is:
“By June 2022 the district will have an established plan for meeting the recommendations of the NYS Board of Regents on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practices within our schools and across all operational areas of the district including policy, practice, training, and personnel management.”
This work has been ongoing over the course of the past year with various Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) meeting and developing plans/goals, a districtwide project plan being developed, policy work being reviewed and adopted at the board level, closer looks at our curricular content to ensure that we are being increasingly reflective of this work, and data gathering for us to analyze about our students in our community alike. Margaret Giller, the District's Chief Information Officer, has been extremely busy developing the various data documents to support this project including the *Who Are We?* reports for each school. These reports provide a demographic overview of the increasing diversity that each of our schools are seeing thereby further emphasizing the importance of this work. All of this information is now posted on our website using

the [Quick Link](#) for School Culture and Climate. *If you are interested in participating in the work that is described in the Project Plan, please let us know.*

4. **Superintendent Transition Plan** – At Wednesday night's Board of Education meeting, the Board members listened to a presentation on the many details and actions steps that are associated with a Superintendent search. The Board is continuing to discuss both short and long term decisions and will be communicating those to all staff, parents, and the community in the coming days.
5. **COVID Updates** – After seeing rather sharp increases in cases recently – 130 cases last week – we are now seeing the numbers come down rather significantly – 88 this week – and hope that this trend continues. At this time, unless directed otherwise by the state and/or county (which we do not anticipate), we will continue to follow our [Mitigation Strategy Plan](#) for the remainder of the year.
6. **Activities and Highlights** – A few examples of the many goings on in the district are as follows:
 - **Wondering what it's like to drive a school bus? Join us Saturday!** The District invites adults interested in learning more about driving a school bus to come to the Transportation Facility on Saturday, May 21, 2022. Positions are now available for Bus Drivers, Bus Attendants and Substitute Drivers. Details are [HERE](#).
 - **Spring Concerts continue.** Join us for a performance this spring as students present their final concerts of the year. Concerts are free and open to the public.
 - May 23 – Middle School 6th grade Concert, BSHS Auditorium, 7:00pm.
 - May 26 – All-District Elementary Concert, High School Stadium Field (auditorium if rain), 7:00pm.

Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions on this information. Hoping you all have a relaxing weekend and enjoy the Arizona-like temperatures!

Ken

Ken Slentz
Superintendent of Schools