

Ida Public Schools Superintendent Brief

Where Learning Strikes

Greetings!

In the past few years, I have seen the board, staff and parents grow toward a collaborative energy of trust and empowerment. There has also been laughter as we tackle the challenges. We are doing the work in a highly effective manner and having fun in the process. When the adults lead with this energy, it impacts the classroom.

Based on data from the 2020-21 school year (heart of COVID – 19), EPIC/MSU identified Ida Public Schools as a higher growth district in Michigan during the pandemic. Their findings were not based on our tradition of solid achievement scores which continued throughout COVID. These findings were based on the rate of growth surpassing those expected achievement scores in a pandemic state and other benchmarks the research team identified as pertinent. EPIC/MSU interviewed district and teacher leaders from Ida and will report findings and practices to the Michigan Department of Education as promising practices.

In my interview, I stressed we worked as a team to survive and then thrive during COVID – 19. It took all of us, the parents, students, staff, and the community of Ida. We built a collaborative framework based on

surveys, team meetings and data from the very start, communicating that information and developing the infrastructure we needed as the challenges of COVID unfolded. Parents, you did the heavy lifting at home from March to June of 2020, prior to the 2020 - 2021 school year, which set the foundation for the 2020 – 2021 school year for Hybrid transitioning to Traditional. Teachers and support staff, you continued the learning opportunities from the start for the classrooms and you assisted by providing staffing, food, and transportation for the learning labs during Hybrid. Teachers, your commitment to the complete curriculum, including students in quarantine, was extraordinary. Educational options and choice at every stage promoted trust and optimal student and staff attendance which was imperative to our students' and staff wellbeing and learning. All these efforts went into our students not experiencing the learning loss that was predicted for students during COVID, instead showing marked higher growth than peer districts. Thank you does not begin to let you know my gratitude! Our students are the winners!

Have a wonderful and safe spring break!



Ida School District Mission Statement

The Mission of Ida Public Schools is to bring students, staff, and community together to maintain our rich traditions. We will provide students with a safe learning environment, an exceptional curriculum, skills to meet the challenges of the future, and the means to become life-long learners.

HEALTH PLAN UPDATE

COVID – 19: Please continue to report positives to Tracy Getzinger for elementary and middle school and Robin Nowak for high school. They will guide you with the latest protocol. Refer to our website for the latest guidance from the MDHHS. The main update is schools are no longer required to provide a COVID – 19 Dashboard (see website). Ida Public Schools COVID – 19 protocols are in-line with the latest from MDHHS's MI Safer Schools Guidance for K-12 School Settings in a COVID-19 Recovery Phase, released on March 11, 2022. We already moved to these protocols, based on our data, when the MDHHS provided these recommendations, not mandates in the fall. We adjusted, as needed, when hot spots occurred at the elementary. Our protocols, which were data driven, controlled exposure and promoted optimal student and staff attendance which was imperative to our students' and staff wellbeing. Thank you for hanging in there through it all. At times, it was not easy.

SCHOOL NURSE

Whitney Rhoades is our new school nurse. She will be here each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Welcome Whitney! Nurse Lisa Wagenhauser and Nurse Marianne Molnar will still help when able.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

We have used part of our Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) money for adding achievement support and social and emotional support and services for our students. The social and emotional growth and needs of our students was impacted from the interrupted schedule, and the isolation, anxiety, and trauma of the pandemic. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and the Harvest Academy are assisting the high school students in need. We

shifted our assistant principal full time to the middle school for the first months of school to assist the social and emotional team there. The baton was passed in January to an additional school counselor. The interventions, restorative conversations, and social and emotional guidance are making a difference. The elementary students, especially the early years, also have great need for assistance with this development. The elementary school counselor was part of the vision before COVID and is new this year. Based on the data, we need even more support for our students. We are in the process of assessing the additional support needed and will keep you apprised.

IDA PUBLIC SCHOOL BOND PROPOSAL - AUGUST 2, 2022

The Building Committee, Board of Education and conversations with staff and community members assessed the Bond Proposal after the Bond Election in November. The result: A Bond Proposal, with additions from the previous proposal, to be put on the August 2, 2022 election ballot. For sustainability, the proposal is a collaborative effort based on data from an in-depth facility study and 20-year master plan. More information to follow.

HOUSEHOLDS MISSING FROM OUR IDA INSIGHTS MAILINGS

Please let me know if you are aware of residents in our school district that do not receive the Ida Insights. It is meant for all households in the Ida Public Schools district, with or without children currently in school. We discovered during the Bond election that our mailing lists for Ida Insights did not include all our households. For example: Plum Grove was not included as well as sections in some of our other areas. We were able to get the needed

communications pieces to them in time. We would like to make sure there are not others left out of the mailings.

KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP

Ida Elementary School is now accepting student registration information for Kindergarten 2022-2023. "Round-Up" will be held on Friday, May 6, 2022. If you have or know a child that will be five (5) years old by September 1 or as late as December 1st, please call Ida Elementary at (734) 269-3605 to get on the mailing list for registration materials.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL MISSION AND VISION - GOALS 2021-2022

Recommended for the staff, by me, in August of 2021: The emotional and mental health vision for our staff is to enjoy what we do. Mission: As the challenges come, and they will, choose a position of believing in your strength (you have proven how strong you are from March of 2020 to June of 2021), look for opportunities in the challenges (silver lining), and gratitude for what is working (glass half full). To make this easier to do, add levity. Laughter is a great stress reducer. Let's create some fun memories this year. Your energy will spill over to your family, friends, and students. **From my experiences and observations, we are on track! Still more levity ahead!**



UPCOMING

DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

APRIL

April is Child Abuse and Prevention Month - Please see website under In the News for more information.

April 19, 2022 - District Wide Parent Safety Night @ 6:00 p.m. in the Elementary All Purpose Room - Based on the Parent Safety Survey and input from student leaders, all principals and the superintendent will cover ALICE and other safety protocols for students and staff.

MAY

May is Mental Health Awareness Month - The objective is to raise awareness of trauma and the impact it can have on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children, families, and communities. Nearly 450 million people worldwide are currently living with a mental illness, yet nearly two thirds of people with a known mental illness never seek treatment. Those living with anxiety, depression, and co-occurring disorders and their loved ones are encouraged to find treatment, support, and resources based on their need. Our counselors and service provider can provide names of community resources to assist you.

Bond Proposal Information Opportunities for Parents

- April 12, 2022 - Band Boosters @ 7:00 p.m. in the High School Media Center
- April 19, 2022 - PTA @ 7:00 p.m. in the Elementary All Purpose Room - All elementary parents invited
- May 2, 2022 - Athletic Boosters @ 7:00 p.m. in the High School Media Center
- TBA - General Parent Bond Informational Night