



Board of Education Recap

December 17, 2019

The spirit of the holiday season (joy, wonderment, and hope) filled the Board room last night...

Joy

Against the backdrop of five high school band members playing a number of beautiful holiday selections, we celebrated our **state qualifying** girls and boys cross-country teams! Here is a picture of both groups setting the tone for the evening's meeting:



Wonderment

With a sense of wonder, our staff is regularly identifying research-proven instructional practices for helping students grow. We are fortunate to have a high achieving group of students. However, there is a difference between achievement and growth ("achievement" is measured against a given benchmark (e.g. state average, Badger Conference, etc); whereas, "growth" measures how each individual student is performing in comparison to his/her own past performance). Identifying the status of our students' growth was one of the goals of Director of Instruction, **Sarah Straka's**, [presentation to the Board](#).

Frankly, we can and must continue to engage our hardest to reach learners in ways meaningful to the *student*. We know there are internal and external factors which tilt the playing table in ways that are not favorable for all. This impedes students' growth. The promise we must make is to not only address those factors, but to meet students where they are. We will continue to work on this.

Hope

The very nature of the "Building Bridge's" work is to build hope for students not experiencing joy. Building Bridges is a 90 day crisis intervention program serving students in 4K – 8th grade. The audience for this program is students with significant behavior struggles and/or mental health challenges. We provide hope not only for children but to the student's entire family. As you can imagine, when in crisis the entire family is impacted.

“Building Bridges” is a collaboration between the District, Dane County’s Department of Human Services, and Catholic Charities. In the three years since its inception, we have been able to support over 75 families. The purpose of last night’s Board report was to take stock of our results and discuss how we can realize an even greater return on the investments made. If you believe your family/student might be interested in this opportunity, we will soon begin our next 90 day cycle. You are always welcome to reach out to your student’s principal or me (salernosteve@mhasd.k12.wi.us or 437-7010) to make the connection to this program.

As I close out this edition of the Recap, I can’t help but note this was the Board’s last meeting of the decade. There are many events (successes and opportunities for growth) over the past 10 years that have shaped the current state of your schools. During this time, there has been approximately 1,700 young people who have graduated from the Mount Horeb Area School District. These Vikings now serve as productive, compassionate citizens in communities near and far. With joy, wonder, and hope in their hearts they are making a difference in many ways, and reinforce why...

I am proud to be a Viking, and I hope you are too!

Steve