



**Superintendent's Report
January 15, 2010**

January 14 Board of Education meeting

Board officers for 2010: State statute and Norris Board policy call for the Board to organize at the regular January meeting of each year. In odd numbered years, newly elected members are seated. This being an even year, there were no changes in the Board. Wards 2, 4, and 6 are up for election in 2010; Patty Bentzinger, Jim Craig, and Craig Gana have all indicated an intent to run for re-election.

Officers for 2010 remain the same as those for 2009:

- President Patty Bentzinger
- Vice President Larry Grosshans
- Treasurer Jim Craig
- Secretary Craig Gana

Patty Bentzinger re-appointed Jim Kruger, Larry Grosshans, and herself to the Salary and Bargaining Committee. She named Jim Kruger as the chairman of the committee. The Transportation and Buildings & Grounds Committees remain as committees of the whole.

Science report. Science curriculum chairs/cochairs Darcie Kvasnicka (Elementary), Betsy Barent (MS), and Jan Zink and Rachel Goracke (HS) recently completed their review of student performance in Science and reported out to the Board. They also presented information about our Science staff and curriculum. Well done, ladies.

State Aid certification date – March 1. The impact of the equalization formula changes made the the Legislature in the fall special session will not truly be known until the NDE's computers spin out the data in late February. Overall, the amount of State Aid going to K-12 education will remain the same as it is in this 2009-10 fiscal year. However, the distribution among the ~ 250 school districts will change. Districts with increasing enrollment will generally get more, and decling districts will get less.

In the fall special session, the Legislature changed the teacher education provision. Norris has benefitted greatly in State Aid in that we are close to the top in the State in the percent of teachers with Masters degrees. This year, our teacher education adjustment was \$920,217. The Legislature's fiscal impact study indicated the State will save \$80,000,000 with that change in the teacher education component of the State Aid formula. That does not bode well for Norris. Hopefully our 30-student increase in enrollment will somewhat offset the expected loss due to the change in the teacher education component.

This year, and next year, there is ~\$934,000,000 total for State Aid to K-12 schools. In 2011-12, when the two-year stimulus money goes away, there will be just \$793,000,000 available for State Aid. The Legislature has project out to the end of the 2011-12, 2012-13 biennium and shows a negative \$636,000,000 budget imbalance. Needless to say, everyone is hoping for a dramatic turnaround in the economy so the funds start flowing back into the State treasury at a much better rate in the short term future. If there is any consolation, it is that everyone is in the same boat, and other states are far worse off than Nebraska.

Superintendent selection update. Search consultants Steve Joel and Randy Nelson will be presenting the candidates to the Board at a special meeting on Monday, January 25. That will be a closed session, for obvious reasons. At that meeting, the Board will review the applications, receive information from the consultants who will have vetted the leading candidates, and narrow the field to four finalists who will be invited to come to Norris for personal interviews. The interviews of the four finalists will be held on February 1, 2, 3, and 4. The itinerary for the candidates' interview days is shown below:

9:00	Candidates arrive, greeted by Board member
9:10 – 10:15	Candidates meet with Supt.
10:15 – 11:30	Meet with the administrative team
11:45 – 1:00	Lunch and tour with Supt.
1:30 – 2:15	Meet with support staff representatives.
2:15 – 3:00	Meet with students.
3:30 – 4:30	Meet with staff representatives (2 per bldg.)
1:30 - 4:30	Spouse program- Janet Grosshans
5:00 – 6:00	Meet with community/parents (Bd. Selected)
6:00 – 7:00	Dinner with Board at Roca B & B
7:15	Interview with Board

A final selection will be made by February 12. After all of the candidates are interviewed, the Board will determine whether or not it needs to conduct community visits to assist in their final decision. I do know that there are some very good applicants in the pool, and likely the Board will have the pleasant but difficult task of picking from among four very good people.

Board orientation. Boardmanship standards were reviewed. In discussion, the members singled out and reinforced the following fundamentals:

- Review essential facts, consider others' ideas, and then present personal opinions during board deliberations but, once the board vote has been taken, support board decisions regardless of how individuals voted.
- Act only as a member of the board and do not assume any individual authority when the board is not in session, unless otherwise directed by the board
- Expect an equitable amount of board meeting time be spent both learning about educational programs and conducting the business of the board.
- Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well run, but not to run them.