

The Administrator

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Michael J. Sieh

Preparing for the FUTURE?

This newsletter article addresses how the district has and will continue to deal with the fiscal cliff that will affect all schools. This is not a preferred topic for one of my first newsletter articles, but sometimes timing is everything.

As we all know, preparing for less money does not start when the money is no longer available, but when the district is aware that a substantial loss of money is coming. In a perfect state aid world, where every school remained the same size and spending remained constant, Stanton School would lose \$229,461 for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year.

For Stanton's Board of Education and administration, conversations started at our annual board retreat in February 2010. The theme of the conversations was how we could start saving money now without losing the *integrity of our school* in the future. *Integrity of our school* means cutting money far away from students and the programs that support students. This may sound simple, but the reality is that everything we do affects students somehow.

To add to the complications; cutting, keeping, or adding any program could affect students moving in or out of our district. For example, if we cut all athletics, how would this affect our future enrollment? After all,

enrollment numbers have the largest impact on our state aid.

With all this in mind, here is how the district proceeded so far. Since salaries account for about 80% of our budget, the Board of Education needed to start with salary increases.

First, all administrators took a salary freeze. This falls directly in line with what Governor Heineman proposed for all state employees.

Next, the board has negotiated a minimal gain for our teaching and non-teaching staffs for the last couple of years. For example, the board was able to negotiate a \$600 increase in the teachers' base pay for the 2010-2011. This is considerably low compared to other settlements by other school districts in Nebraska.

Teachers also need to be credited for this small increase as well. They understand the current economy and want to be part of the solution. I know this because the teachers' union would tell the teachers that they could get more dollars based upon settlements of other schools within the area with similar student numbers. By the way, neither the teachers nor the board want to get too far out of compliance with our array of schools for it is very difficult to make gains.

As far as the non-teaching staff, they received a \$0.25/hour raise along with a

\$1.50/day increase for insurance stipend. However, our lowest paid people need the money the most in order to keep up with the cost of living increases.

The only other way to cut salaries is to reduce the number of people on our payroll. Starting this year, we reduced a half time secretary who served the guidance counselor and superintendent. This reduction will create more work for others involved. The biggest shift will be that I will assume the responsibility for maintaining our student records, and submitting student and staff data to the Nebraska Department of Education.

Possible cuts for the future would be delaying future purchases such as textbooks, cutting back on maintenance of the building and grounds, reducing the number of conferences attended, and further staff reductions.

Any solutions that you may have can be submitted directly to me by email (msieh@esu8.org). However, all potential solutions will have to be evaluated so we don't lower the *integrity of our school*. But don't let this keep you from thinking "outside the box" for all ideas are welcomed and will be seriously considered by the Stanton Board of Education and the Administration.

Volume VIII, Issue 2

August 30, 2010

Reporters

Dr. Sieh Superintendent
 Dr. Stogdill H.S. Principal
 Mrs. McKeon..... Elementary Principal
 Mrs. Marshall..... Guidance Counselor
 Mrs. Chilcoat Librarian
 Mrs. Hoehne School Foundation
 Miss Gray English Instructor

Events Calendar

September 7

- No School - Labor Day

September 10

- Homecoming

September 13

- School Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)

September 17

- Curriculum/School Improvement Workshop for Staff (K-6: No School, 7-12: 11:35 a.m. dismissal)



www.scs-ne.org
 (402)439-2233

Welcome back to another exciting year at the Stanton Community Schools!

Questions??? Please Call!
 Central Office – 439-2233
 High School Office – 439-2250
 Elementary Office – 439-2639

Messages from Mrs. McKeon

By Mary McKeon

Welcome

Welcome to the 2010-2011 school year! I am thrilled to welcome back our returning families who helped to make last year a wonderful success. Likewise, it is with great enthusiasm that I wish to extend a warm welcome to our new Stanton Elementary families. At Stanton Elementary we are committed to making this school year another positive experience for you and your family. Your active support and cooperation, combined with our best professional efforts, will ensure academic success for your child.

As you step into the school this year, you will see a few new things. There are new lunch tables in the gym, new shelves in the library and spiffy new blue carpet in the fourth grade classrooms. Our custodial team has been working extra hard to get things looking great for the new school year.

As always, our focus this year will be on providing each child with new challenges that will result in a rewarding school experience. Academic emphasis on the core content areas of

reading, language arts, science, social studies and math will remain a priority as well as providing a learning program that builds on each year to reach local and state standards. Instruction in art, music, foreign language, library skills and physical education complete our program providing each student with the opportunity to develop areas of interest and skill.

As we begin this year, please remember that this is your school, and we welcome your involvement. Our Parent-Teacher Support Group is a wonderful organization for you to join and an awesome avenue for your involvement. Meetings take place at the elementary school on the first Monday of each month at 6:30pm. We are always looking for volunteers to help our students with academics. If you are interested, please give us a call anytime!

I look forward to working with you and your child throughout the school year to provide a productive and safe learning environment that supports student success.

The Principal's Perspective

By Chris Stogdill

Sportsmanship Award Presentation

On September 3, 2010 at the Stanton vs. West Holt football game, the NSAA and Farmer's Insurance will present a sportsmanship award to Stanton Community Schools. The Nebraska School Activities Association recently announced the first recipients of the Farmers School Sportsmanship Program. Stanton was included among the initial 10 school award winners.

The annual awards program is designed to recognize member high schools that establish and follow a quality sportsmanship program within their athletic activities. Joining Stanton in meeting the criteria for the 2009-2010 school year were Arapahoe, Bancroft-Rosalie, Norfolk Catholic, Gothenburg, Lincoln Lutheran, Loup City, Milford, Ralston, and Seward.

"It has been said many times that sportsmanship is not

a destination, but a journey," said Dr. Jim Tenopir, executive director of the NSAA. "We need to continue our efforts to make sportsmanship a high priority among the coaches, athletes, parents and fans of high school activities. These schools have made a concerted effort to prioritize sportsmanship this past year and deserve to be honored."

"Farmer's Insurance is proud to be the sponsor of the Nebraska School Activities Association's sportsmanship program," said Charles Browning, vice president, Farmer's Community Branding. "Instilling good sportsmanship in school curriculum and activities is an excellent step toward helping our young students today succeed in all of their pursuits in life. Farmers congratulates the NSAA for their continuing support of Nebraska's students."

Come Celebrate Homecoming!!!!!!

September 10, 2010

National Honor Society Selection Coming!

(*Chilcoat*) The school year is only just getting started but it is already time to start the process for National Honor Society selection. It is a requirement of the national organization that the selection procedure be published each year. Selection to the society strictly follows the constitution of the National Honor Society. To be eligible for membership consideration, students in grades 10, 11, and 12 must have a grade point average of 90% or above. Additionally, potential members must meet high standards of leadership, service,

and character. Leadership is based on the student's participation in community or school activities, or election to an office. To meet the service requirement, the student must have been active in projects for the school and community. Character is measured in terms of integrity, behavior, ethics, and cooperation with both students and faculty.

An information sheet and letter of explanation will be given to all academically eligible students. This form must be filled out, signed by the appropriate adults and returned

by the deadline stated in the letter in order for the student to be considered for selection. The purpose of the information sheet is to help the faculty committee know what activities the students are involved with. There will also be an informational meeting for all students interested in learning more about the society.

The names of all academically eligible students are given to the high school staff. Teachers are asked to rate these students in each of the categories mentioned above. These evaluations, along with

the information sheets filled out by the students, are then taken into consideration by a faculty council. This council, chosen by the principal, consists of five staff members in addition to the society adviser, who is a nonvoting member. The council then has the responsibility to select those who will become new members of the society.

Students selected to become new members will be notified at an informal tapping ceremony and inducted into the National Honor Society at a formal candlelight ceremony on a date later in the fall.

Counselor's Corner

By Kendra Marshall

It's College Fair season!

Want to find the right fit for college? Stop by the Norfolk Area College Fair Sunday, September 26 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at Northeast Community College. The fair will feature representatives from state and regional colleges and will also include financial aid presentations.

The College Fair is sponsored by EducationQuest Foundation in partnership with the Nebraska Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers and Nebraska high school counselors.

Follow these tips to help you make the most of your College Fair visit:

Before you attend, determine which colleges you want to visit ([a list is available](#) in the College Fair article at EducationQuest.org).

Prepare a list of questions to ask college representatives. Ask about deadlines for admission, scholarships and financial aid.

Attend a financial aid program at the College Fair to learn about types of aid and how to apply.

If you have questions about the Norfolk Area College Fair, contact EducationQuest at 888.357.6300.

Norfolk Area College Fair is September 26 at Northeast Community College

Other college fairs scheduled for this fall are as follows:

- Grand Island Area College Fair, Sunday, September 19, 1:00-3:30 pm - Heartland Event Center
- Tri-State Area College Fair, Sunday, October 3, 12:30-3:00 pm - Marina Center, South Sioux City
- Scottsbluff/Gering Area College Fair, Sunday, October 10, 1:00-3:30 pm - Gering Civic Center
- Lincoln Area College Fair, Sunday, October 17, 1:00-3:00 pm - Southeast Community College
- Omaha Area College Fair, Sunday, October 31, 1:00-4:00 pm - University of Nebraska at Omaha

Be ready for the ACT!!! John Baylor Test Prep will be offered again this year at Stanton High School. The cost will be \$25. Contact Mrs. Marshall for more information.

See Mrs. Marshall for information on additional college tour information.

Explore Northeast (Northeast Community College) is a day designed to give you a broad range of information about Northeast Community College. You will have an opportunity to go and experience Northeast with a group of prospective students.

September 21, Oct. 20, Nov. 18

The Explore Northeast day will include

- An overview of NECC
- A campus tour
- Visit with a faculty member
- Lunch (free)
- ASSET/COMPASS testing available

Important Dates:

ACT Test DateRegistration Deadline
 October 23 September 17 (preferred date for seniors)
 December 11November 5



Elementary teachers and principal show their school spirit re-enacting *Toy Story* during the K-4 opening day ceremony!

Foundation Takes On Pole Vaulting

(*Hoehne*) When the Foundation first took on the project of creating a Sports Complex around the football field in 1996, a pole vault pit was part of the plans. The pole vault was removed from the project when complications with insurance were raised. The insurance question has been resolved and the Foundation feels that now is the time to fulfill the dream started many years ago.

In the 2009-2010 school year, the Stanton Community Schools track team had four girls and four boys compete in pole vault events. They had to travel to West Point to practice. The lack of a pole vault facility has made it difficult to attract a District track meet in Stanton. The school has committed to providing the cement for the runways and the standards for this event. The Stanton Community School Foundation has committed to raising \$10,000.00 toward the purchase of mats and additional poles that will be needed to provide a competitive environment for the Stanton track team. Donations for this project can be made at the Stanton State Bank or Stanton Community Schools, PO Box 749, Stanton, NE 68779.

Thoughts to Start the Year!

By Karen Gray

The start of this school year brings exciting opportunities for English students. For the first time in 16 years, students will be getting new textbooks. The former books were of excellent quality, but it was time for a change. The new literature books will offer a nice mix of classical, along with relevant historical and contemporary works. The books were written with state standards in mind. There is an emphasis on vocabulary, literary terms, and comprehension. The format will hopefully help our students become more comfortable with standards testing.

There is also a new testing format coming up this year that will allow us to measure student growth in English. Students will see where they rank with others, but more importantly, they will be able to chart their

growth from the start to the end of the school year. This will better allow students to be aware of their areas of strength and weakness, which in turn, should help teachers know where to focus student learning.

Our goal is for students to be successful not only in school but also in the adult life to follow. We are going to be using some materials this year that should help us meet that end. That is an exciting opportunity.

I love fall. To some, fall may be a sad time since the carefree days of summer are gone, but I see fall as the beginning, not the end. Each fall is an opportunity for a fresh start in school life. The slate is clean. It doesn't make any difference what subject, teacher, or activity a student struggled with last year; fall is

the opportunity to start anew. If students were unsuccessful because they fell behind, fall is that chance to leave the starting block with the rest of the group.

Fall is that time in the school year when we can change "who" we are to an extent. Bad habits can be overcome. Any goals that students or teachers have set for themselves can be

put into place. It is a time to set challenges for ourselves. The "I hate English" student has the opportunity to plant his feet and become determined that this will be the year that grammar is learned.

Fall is the time of opportunity, not just for Nebraska football, but for students as well.



(Sigh) This is the start of Miss Gray's 21st school year at Stanton Community Schools. When asked to write an article for the newsletter, she never complains but steps up to the plate and puts together these two articles. I hope you enjoy reading her thoughts.

With the start of the school's activities, you will find Miss Gray wandering around the sideline cheering hard for our Stanton athletes.

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