

HOS Report  
9/19/24

### Annual Charter School Assurances

In the consent agenda folder, is the annual assurances information. Approval of the consent agenda confirms this is accurate, allowing the Chair to sign it. All appropriate policies are in the folder as well. This is returned to MDE and VOA as indicated in the Instructions document. Happy to answer any questions.

As the Head of School, I also have to submit an entirely different set called Assurances of Compliance-they have been submitted (due 10/31). This is done through the MDE website, and is part of my role within their system as the IOWA.

This seems a good time to reflect on the Star Tribune articles I shared about how charter schools "lack oversight"-seems like we are doing double duty here.

### Red Rover

The program is a work in progress. Most subs are seeing the openings when PLT is requested, and are using the app or other feature associated with it. Our biggest problem to date is a very small pool of subs. One is filling in for a maternity leave, and the others are hard to schedule. We are working on getting more subs.

The time tracker portion is working for the "accrual" staff as well. That part seems to be going well. Ultimately, there are a lot of kinks to work out but assuming we can add a few subs, it has a lot of potential.

### Read Act PD

CORE is the professional development platform that we have chosen. After starting out way behind as we didn't receive our enrollment information until September 9th (which is when the first module was supposed to be open/available) we now have the 17 staff members taking the course set up. This includes a pacing guide, a series of calendar invites, and a syllabus with course descriptions if you are interested.

### VPK

The Voluntary Pre-K here is a note for us to have an exploratory discussion. This would allow us to designate spots for a certain number of pre-k 4 year olds that would be covered by the state at a 0.6 FTE for funding. It would require having a licensed Early Childhood SPED teacher on staff. Given the changing local dynamics in early childhood education, we may need to make this move in the next 2 years. It would also create a new level of consistency in the CH classrooms.

### Strategic Planning 2025

Meghan and Henry met with Gail from MSBA and had an initial discussion about timelines and participation. Our initial plan includes forgoing the normal school family and staff surveys in lieu of her information gathering surveys. We may collaborate on some additional questions to help with school data collection that would normally occur with our surveys.

The surveys will precede the listening sessions by about 3 weeks. There will be 5 groups of listening sessions: students, parents, Board, staff, and admin. The planning committee itself will be anywhere from 12-30 people. We will decide that as a group, then will develop a list of folks to recruit/invite. All board members are expected to take part. More to come as it develops.

#### NED Grant work

Through the NED grant, we were able to offer all available staff training in Catalyst (Whole Group Classroom Leadership Support). This took place 8/21 and 8/22. We also offered all staff a flex day, either 8/22 or 8/30 to come in with their teams and work on the materials from Catalyst. Overall the training days appear to have been well received and deemed a good use of time.

#### MnMTSS grant

The leadership team attended session 1 of 9 for this year, the focus of which is going to be drafting our BMS MnMTSS Handbook. Sherry and Henry met with our Southeast Service Co-op MnMTSS partner on 9/11 to discuss where we are in the process, and how we plan to move forward.

#### Bus/parking lot

#### Parking Lot Traffic

Buses are now running through the fire lane, allowing families more space in the parking lot. Many parents have offered positive feedback as it has been a work in progress. The leads (Kris, Amy, and Hailey) and the others that are out at pick up ensuring student safety are working well together. It did require a sidewalk addition, and will require a little more work to make it function better. Additional concrete beyond the peace circle and an automatic fire lane gate by the Mall are being examined.

#### Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) visit

HSEM visited Bluffview for a 2 and half hour walkthrough on 7/24/24. In tonight's folder, is the follow up email from the individual that conducted the site visit along with the brochure that is referenced for parents in the event that we chose to replicate it. This is a separate line item in Additional Business as it may be a source of changes to how we plan for emergency management-notably the terminology changes listed and the "[I Love You Guys](#)" platform reference. See the verbage under "SRP is Action Based." This is just a note to guide your review of that information before our meeting.

#### Public Purpose Test

We discussed what the public purpose test regarding expenditures really is-here is the answer from the schools attorney:

*It is well settled law that for a school district's expenditure to be valid, it must be (1) for a public purpose; and (2) expressly or impliedly authorized by statute.*

*The concept of “public purpose” is expanding and dynamic. Minnesota courts have held that the “public purpose” doctrine should be broadly construed to comport with the changes of modern life. There is no bright line rule. In general, a school district expenditure serves a public purpose if it: (1) benefits the community as a whole; (2) is directly related to the functions of the school district; and (3) does not have as its primary objective the benefit of a private interest. Once we get past the general rules, all we have for guidance are Attorney General opinions and court rulings that have trickled down over time (when something gets challenged or questioned).*

*Thus, I can’t point you to a specific resource for figuring out if an expenditure meets the public purpose test. You need to first figure out if it seems to fit within the general rules. If it is something questionable, a case law review can be conducted to see if it is similar to an issue that the courts have already reviewed and ruled on (or if the AG has given an opinion about it). If not, then it will involve a judgment call.*

#### Staff going offsite during lunch/work hours

We also discussed staff going off site during work and/or lunch hours relative to a passage in the handbook. I posed the questions to our insurance Risk Advisor and he sent the following from the underwriter:

- If an employee is taking a break or lunch on premise and were to be injured, the claim would likely be covered regardless if they are salaried or hourly, due to case law surrounding the comfort doctrine.
- If the employee is taking a break or lunch off premise and were to be injured, the claim would likely not be compensable. This is because it’s outside of the employers control.

Here’s a snippet out of the MN Work Comp Deskbook giving further context into the comfort doctrine:

*“The Injuries that occur on the premises during working time while the employee is attending to personal needs or comforts are within the course of employment.....Activities that fall within this doctrine include getting a drink of water, smoking, going to the washroom, and various other brief break activities to relieve personal discomfort. The principle underlying this doctrine is that the statute should compel compensation for risks incident to the whole employment process. Activities related to personal comfort are part of the employment environment as a whole since employees cannot reasonably be expected to spend every working minute working.”*

Our recommendation is to report the claim and let the claim rep do a thorough investigation to make a compensability determination.

