



**BELLEVUE COMETS**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Comet Highlights from the Board of Education Meeting on  
October 12, 2020**

**"Face Coverings, Social Distancing, Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizing"**

October 16	Bellevue Comet Marching Band Performance at Halftime of the Football Game
October 16	Football at home vs East Buchanan
October 19	District Volleyball at home vs Northeast
October 23	End of 1st Quarter
October 28	Professional Learning - Two-Hour Early Dismissal
November 9	Regular Board of Education Meeting
November 11	Professional Learning - Two-Hour Early Dismissal
November 18-19	IASB Virtual Conference
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Break
December 9	Professional Learning - Two-Hour Early Dismissal
December 23-January 4	Winter Break (Semester Ends on December 22)

**Regular COVID-19 Updates for the Bellevue CSD**

[www.bellevue.k12.ia.us](http://www.bellevue.k12.ia.us)

**Board Notes for the October 12 Board of Education Meeting**

**Consent Agenda - APPROVED**

**Approve Open Enrollment Requests**

- Abigale Dee Bunker - 4-year old preschool - Andrew to Bellevue
- Rylee Mae Schwager - 4-year old preschool - Andrew to Bellevue
- Sawyer James Brokus - PM - Dubuque to Bellevue

**Approve Resignations**

- Barb Eggers - Substitute Cook
- Todd Felderman - Assistant Boys Basketball

**Approve Recommendations to Hire**

- Josh Kueter - Assistant Girls Basketball - While Josh resigned this position, he has reconsidered on the basis of the head coach speaking with him to encourage him to continue and lack of other applicants.

**Nursing Staffing**

In addition to this, the district has added a substitute/assistant for the school health services office (school nurse Kelley Humphrey). The days for the nurse have been consumed with COVID-19, along with getting everything else completed. She is also working on weekends, contacting parents after hours (and them contacting her), and other such jobs.

### Recognize any Visitors

The principals joined the meeting via Zoom.

### Comet Curriculum Presentation - COVID-19 Updates

#### General Information Sharing

#### Quarantine and Masks

Quarantine - The state of Iowa in the last few weeks updated information on quarantine and the impact of masks. Below are some information and good visuals that I believe are worth sharing again for clarification.

Masks - Even with these changes, I do **not** believe we need to require masks to be work at **all times** for our students since we are 6-feet apart. Many students also wear them most of the day as well. The District Leadership Team met on Tuesday, October 6 and some general perceptions included the following:

1. Students are doing a good job overall of wearing masks.
  - a. Elementary students likely do a better job than MS/HS students, but the ones that need to be reminded often are the same students overall.
2. Some students keep them on in class all of the time regardless. Some students need to be reminded to put them on if they leave their desk and go to a different area of the classroom.
3. Our case numbers have not been terrible, and as a whole we believe the cases have not been a result of our practices within school and the classrooms but instead outside of school. This includes quarantine where they have been from team sports and situations with families or contact outside of school as friends, etc.
4. Changing our procedures may not have much of an impact, if any at all, and may cause more resistance in some cases.

Mr. Recker did send the following email to all students on Tuesday, as we continue to encourage and promote masks and social distancing both in-school and out-of-school:

*Students,*

*Thank you for all of your flexibility, cooperation and dedication so far this year. Things have gone well and we have been able to stay in school!*

*I wanted to share the most up to date information from the state of Iowa on quarantine guidance. Please see the attached document from the State. As you can see if both people have a mask on and it's worn properly, quarantining is not necessary. Your best bet to avoid quarantine is to wear a mask and stay six feet*

apart if you are not wearing a mask (recognize that the school system is still enforcing social distancing in classes, etc. whenever possible through classroom seating structures). This would be true for your time in school and out of school.

When staff members ask you to wear your mask correctly, they are looking out for your health, safety and want you to be able to stay in school. Please be respectful of our policy and our staff members. If you have any questions please let me know.

I have also promoted this in the "Weekly Comet", videos, social media, the newspaper, etc. I believe this must be promoted/marketed continuously, and it has to be to students, parents, and other community members.

## COVID-19 Response: When to Quarantine For Business, Education, and Child Care Settings


For non-healthcare, non-residential settings, quarantine is no longer recommended if a potential exposure occurs while both the infectious individual and the close contacts are wearing face coverings consistently and correctly.

- In all scenarios below, an individual is considered a **close contact** when they have been within **6 feet of the COVID-19 positive individual for 15 minutes.**
- Individuals who are a **close contact due to exposure to a household member are required to quarantine for at least 14 days.** Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others.
- **Individuals who have COVID-19 must isolate for at least 10 days.** Isolation keeps someone who is infected with the virus away from others, even in their home.

**Everyone Masked**


When a masked individual tests positive and close contacts were wearing masks...

**ISOLATE**



**COVID Positive**

**SELF-MONITOR**




**Close Contacts**

**Close Contacts Masked**


When an unmasked individual tests positive and close contacts were wearing masks...

**ISOLATE**



**COVID Positive**

**QUARANTINE**




**Close Contacts**

**Some Close Contacts Masked**


When a masked individual tests positive and SOME close contacts were wearing masks...

**ISOLATE**




**COVID Positive**

**QUARANTINE**




**SELF-MONITOR**



**No One Masked**


When an unmasked individual tests positive and close contacts were NOT wearing masks...

**ISOLATE**



**COVID Positive**

**QUARANTINE**



**Close Contacts**

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

<b>DO choose masks that</b>	<b>DO NOT choose masks that</b>
 <p>Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric</p>	 <p>Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl</p>
 <p>Completely cover your nose and mouth</p>	 <p>Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape</p>
 <p>Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps</p>	 <p>Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks</p>

<b>Caution: Gaiters &amp; Face Shields</b>	
	<p>Evaluation is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time</p>
	<p>Evaluation is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time</p>
<b>Special Situations: Glasses</b>	
	<p>If you wear glasses, find a mask that fits closely over your nose or one that has a nose wire to limit fogging</p>

Additionally, see the information about the change from the Governor's Office...

## Governor's Press Conference 9.29.20

- Announced new recommendations regarding quarantine due to exposure in school setting (also business and childcare)
- If masks are worn consistently and correctly, exposure to COVID positive does not require quarantine, but does require self-monitoring for symptoms.
- Governor explained this is guidance, not a mandate, so schools can still require quarantine
- Dr. Pedati explained that this recommendation comes from study of 4 districts in Sioux County. Use of masks protected against spread. In the schools without masks, infections were from 30% and 130% higher.
- Continue the effort of Step Up Mask Up, but this ability to avoid quarantine should help create an incentive to consistently and correctly wear masks in schools.
- Dr. Pedati acknowledged that this is in conflict with current CDC guidance, but is based on other states (NE), study of disease spread in schools with and without masks, and that no policy is completely without risk.

This guidance follows the actions in both the states of Nebraska and Wyoming, but as stated, does not follow CDC guidelines. The district is planning on following this at this time.

### Sharing of Information

Below is this week's update as of today (Thursday) on quarantined students (along with the last few week's), positive tests, etc. I am sharing these in the Weekly Comet each week or on our website in some manner.

<b>September 24</b>	<b><u>Building</u></b>	<b><u>Quarantined</u></b>	<b><u>Positive Tests</u></b>	<b><u>Absent Rate</u></b>
	Bellevue Elem	10	<6	10 (1.7%)
	Bellevue MS/HS.	49*	10*	6 (3.7%)
	District Total.	59	—	(2.7%)
<i>*Two of these students were at the MS level; Zero students quarantined were at the MS level.</i>				
<b>October 2</b>	Bellevue Elem	13	<6	
	Bellevue MS/HS	14*	12	
	District Total	27	—	Estimate 3.1%
<b>October 8</b> (AM of 8th)	Bellevue Elem	11	<6	
	Bellevue MS/HS	7	13	

### Jackson County Positivity Rate

- September 24 - 13.1% (21st highest in the state - out of 99 counties)
- October 2 - 13.0% (18th highest in the state; it has been in this area all week)
- October 7 - 12.3% (21st highest in the state)
- October 12 - 12.7%

*The Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Department of Public Health have shared that school districts are not recommended to share school data when the data includes 5 or fewer cases within the school building in order to protect the confidentiality of students in the school building. Therefore, "<6" indicates there are case(s) in the building, but less than a total of six.*

### Academics

Students in quarantine are required to attend online classroom sessions during the normal school day following the daily school schedule. I have had good input as a whole on this. What have you heard or experienced?

### Transportation and Bus Drivers

- Multiple Buses - We have typically been taking multiple buses to events for activities (volleyball, football, XC, etc.) to allow for more spacing and not needing to have masks on all the time. But, in the last couple of weeks we were short on drivers for some activities (volleyball and football) based on illness, doctor appointments, and quarantine impact. As a result, we took one bus to a MS football game and grouped volleyball in one less bus than normal. Students wore masks on the bus, and we tried to have everyone in their own seat as much as possible along with any family members sitting by each other.
- Need for Masks by Drivers - The requirement for bus drivers in our district (and a large majority of districts in the state and area) is that drivers are to wear masks. Some reasonings for this:
  1. All students are wearing masks, why would our driver not wear one?
  2. The bus is a "confined area" where there is limited air flow, and 30-50 kids on it (more than a classroom). While the bus may have windows open now, they will not soon based on weather. Opening the door up to let students on every 5-minutes or so is not enough air flow, and masking is even more impactful now with a potential positive test.
  3. I recognize the 6-foot rule and other staff members can take them off IF they are 6-feet away, but some of the the rooms are larger. Yet, many teachers keep them on the entire team with "breaks" for themselves as well. I am not opposed to the driver to taking a "breather" from their mask, but this should be **brief**.
  4. Safety is our concern, and buses need to have drivers who are modeling what we expect from our students. **It is the requirement.**

## Statewide Closures

Below is a chart (from the week of September 28) that was shared in regard to the small amount of schools/districts that have been forced to adjust their learning frameworks to all-remote learning.

# Status of School Requests to Start o

<https://educateiowa.gov/requests-move-remote-learning-school-building-or-dist>

The following is a list of school districts and nonpublic schools that have submitted requests and have been either granted or denied to temporarily move to 100 percent remote learning for a school building or district. Approvals are issued for two weeks at a time.

Application Date	School District or Nonpublic School	Request Application	Supporting Documentation	Response and Date
9-24-20	Fremont-Mills	<a href="#">9-24-20 Fremont-Mills Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 9-24-20 Fremont-Mills Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Granted on 9-27-20</a>
9-23-20	Lynnvile-Sully	<a href="#">9-23-20 Lynnvile-Sully Remote Learning Request</a>		<a href="#">Granted on 9-25-20</a>
9-18-20	North Iowa	<a href="#">9-18-20 North Iowa Remote Learning Request</a>		<a href="#">Granted on 9-18-20</a>
9-17-20	North Scott	<a href="#">9-17-20 North Scott Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 9-17-20 North Scott Remote Learning Request</a>	District's decision did not require a request.
9-13-20	West Des Moines	<a href="#">9-13-20 West Des Moines Remote Learning Request</a>		District withdrew its request on 9/15/20.
9-9-20	Iowa City	<a href="#">9-9-20 Iowa City Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 9-9-20 Iowa City Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Granted on 9-10-20</a>
8-31-20	Ames	<a href="#">8-31-20 Ames Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 8-31-20 Ames Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Granted on 9-1-20</a>
8-26-20	Iowa City	<a href="#">8-26-20 Iowa City Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 8-26-20 Iowa City Remote Learning Request</a> <a href="#">Support Document 2 for 8-26-20 Iowa City Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Granted on 8-26-20</a>
8-24-20	Twin Cedars	<a href="#">8-24-20 Twin Cedars Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 8-24-20 Twin Cedars Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Granted on 8-25-20</a>
8-18-20	Des Moines	<a href="#">8-18-20 Des Moines Independent Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 8-18-20 Des Moines Independent Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Denied on 8-20-20</a>
8-17-20	Ames	<a href="#">8-17-20 Ames Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Support Document 1 for 8-17-20 Ames Remote Learning Request</a>	<a href="#">Denied on 8-19-20</a>
8-3-20	Iowa City			<a href="#">Denied on 8-5-20</a>

## Confidentiality

I shared the following information with staff members on Thursday in regard to confidentiality. While this has not been a huge issue, it has been brought up. Regardless of Covid-19 or not, this is imperative for the privacy of our students, parents, staff, etc.

*Confidentiality refers to your obligation not to disclose or transmit information to unauthorized parties. ... In schools, districts, or state **education** agencies...limiting access to information about other students or their families is a requirement.*

*All aspects of case investigation and contact tracing must be confidential.*

*Onsite administrators/employers/employees who already know confidential information regarding a client or contacts can be asked to respect confidentiality, even if they are not legally bound to do so.*

Legal and ethical concerns for privacy and confidentiality extend beyond COVID-19. All personal information regarding any COVID-19 clients and contacts should be afforded the same protections. This includes any and all patient records.

## SUMMARY:

### INFORMATION SHARING ON COVID-19 CASES FOR SCHOOLS AND LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH

Given the need to notify potentially exposed individuals timely, and given the public's expectation of ongoing information, the following guidance is meant to assist schools in information sharing. Below, we provide summary guidance and considerations for sharing case information related to school settings.

#### SCHOOLS AND LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH - INTERNAL SHARING OF INFORMATION

- State and local public health staff are authorized to disclose the name of a COVID-positive student, teacher, or other staff member to the person's school if disclosure is necessary to conduct the disease investigation and institute control measures.
- Schools are authorized to disclose the names of a COVID-19 positive student, teacher, other staff member, and case contacts to state and local public health officials.
- Please see the attached legal memo that will provide more extensive detail and legal analysis. <https://bit.ly/3hwwOMY>

#### SCHOOLS AND LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH - SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC

- Federal and state laws generally prohibit public health and school officials from disclosing identifying information about positive COVID-19 cases in a public manner.
- Local public health officials should not release information to the public about cases at school settings, similar to how they do not release this information for outbreaks at businesses. See confidentiality provisions in [Iowa Code Section 139A.3\(2\)](#).
- Schools should work to notify the school community experiencing cases in order to protect students' health, and should follow long-standing requirements for infectious disease notifications.
- If schools choose to share case information further with the public, such as via public dashboards, they should make considerations to protect the confidentiality of students in the school setting:
  - Release case counts only when there are 100 or more total students in the student population at a location
  - Schools that have no cases can report zero cases
  - Schools with counts of 6 or more cases can release specific case counts
  - Schools with 5 or fewer cases should not provide a specific count, but can confirm there are cases within the school population
  - No other demographic identifiers should be included in the school-level release
- Local public health and school officials should contact their legal counsel in determining the nature and scope of information to provide in order to find the appropriate balance of protecting the public while protecting the privacy of individual students and staff, as well as the health of the educational community as a whole.

***Basic Summary: You may be told/asked things in regard to a student with COVID-19 (or potentially having COVID-19); This is confidential information and not for other teachers, family members, community members, etc.***

***"Gossip" is not a part of maintaining confidentiality.***

***Asking others "for the latest information" is also not working to respect confidentiality.***

### Comet School Finance

#### Enrollment

Our official "Count Day" was on October 1, and we are now working with multiple other districts to confirm open enrollments for funding and accountability. This is due on October 15, and I will have official numbers on that day or the day after.



Meyer shared some general information on enrollment and trends, along with some more specific information.



Resident student enrollment decreased to 577 this year, from 583 last year, while Open Enrollment In also decreased from 93 to 88 this year (based on graduation and moves of families). This does not take into account the Open Enrollment students to other districts from Bellevue that we count in our enrollment, nor the impact of homeschooling this school year due to COVID-19 (we have 12 students in homeschooling this year, with 11 of them attending classes in the district last school year). The district does "count" students in our online program, Edgenuity, as students since we pay for this online enrollment for this semester.

#### Financial Information from the last Fiscal Year

I am sharing some information on school finances, and the multiple areas that impact school finances. It is important to recognize that this school year is adding costs in areas where we have not in the past (4 extra associates for supervision and teacher coverage, PPE, cleaning staff, etc.). Please review the information and let me know if you have any questions. I will highlight some of the areas, but not the entire packet (This is an excerpt from a 50+ page document, and only includes some of the major areas from my perspective).

#### Revenue Purpose Statement and Bonding

Also, Penny and I were recently sent information about our current bonds and potential payoff or refinancing (rates are lower now than they were). Discussion took place about future bond issues and facility improvements. A Core Facilities Team meeting will take place in the future.

#### Revenue Purpose Statement Explanation

*Iowa schools have previously passed multiple times a R.P.S. question over the past 20 years within their districts. Those prior voted authorizations will all expires on 1/1/2031 as a result of legislation that went into effect 7/1/2019 which extended the sales tax until 1/1/2051 and also placed an absolute expiration date on all prior R.P.S.*

*Thus, each school will need to have another R.P.S. election at some point to put in place the authority for their school board to spend (including borrowing, if desired) the revenue from the sales tax in the period beyond 1/1/2031. The R.P.S. is not increasing or decreasing anyone's taxes and it is not extending or shortening the period during which we will pay the penny tax; it is simply setting out in writing those purposes that the local school board will have the authority to spend the revenues.*

*\*\*If a school has no need to borrow against the SAVE with bond repayment that extends beyond 1/1/2031 there is no immediate hurry to renew the R.P.S. as the board already has the authority to spend/borrow up to that 1/1/2031 expiration. The renewal election could be completed any time between now and 1/1/2031.*

#### Possible Election Dates in Future Years:

##### ODD YEARS

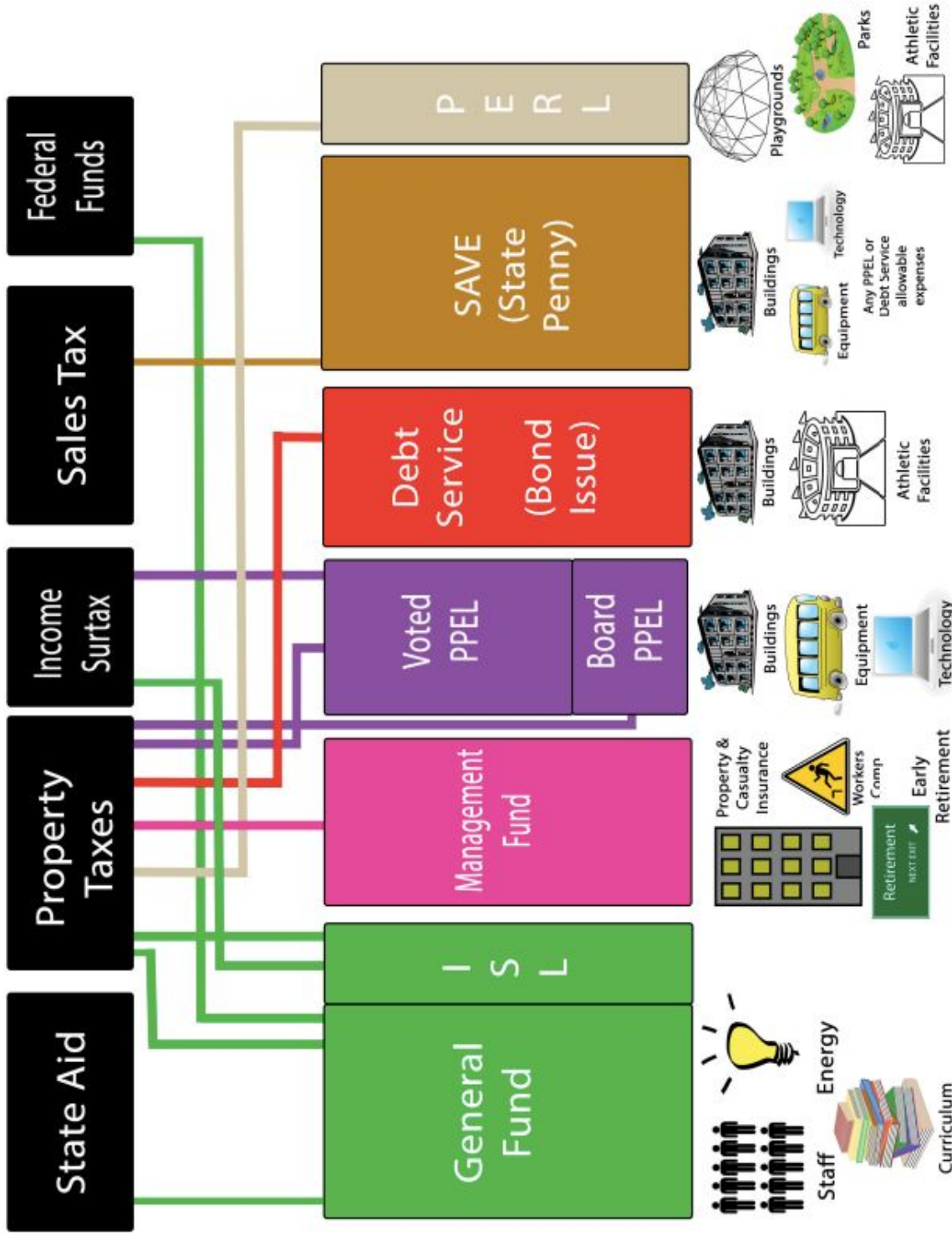
- 1st Tuesday of March

- 2nd Tuesday of September
- 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday of November

EVEN YEARS

- 1st Tuesday in March
- 2nd Tuesday of September

Additionally, I believe the following is a good graphic to explain how the different "funds" for schools can be utilized.



## Coaching/Staffing

Note the information below on PAID assistant coaches in schools in the River Valley Conference and some other area schools (this does not include volunteers for schools). You will see a comparison among the schools, and how we are staffed in relation to them.

It important to recognize the *number of participants is a key in determining staffing as well*. The amount of students determines the number of "levels" in programs (FS/JV/V, etc.). The amount of students participating usually dictates the number of assistants. However, each sport can be different based on multiple factors.

We are having issues finding coaches for our positions, and I believe the biggest reason is the "time" of practices and games and how that does not connect with the work schedules of many. There may be other reasons also, but that is one of the reasons. Pay may be another, but pay will not be the main reason for most people as coaching entails long hours in many cases where the pay is not equivalent for the time in nearly all sports.

	FB	VB	XC	GBB	BBB	SB	BB	Wrst	GTr	BTr
<b>Bellevue</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Anamosa	4	3	2	4	4	3-4	3-4	2	2.25	2.25
Cal-Wheat	X	2	2	2	2	2	2	X	1	1
Cascade	6	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
DeWitt	7	4	2	4	4	4	5	3	4	4
Durant	5	3	2	2	3	2-3	3-4	2	1.5	1.5
Maquoketa	5	4	1	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
Mid-Prair.	5	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	2	2
Monticello	5	4	2	3	4	3	3	2	2	2
North Ced.	4	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2
Northeast	4	4	2	3	3	3	3	2	2.5	2.5
Tipton	6	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	2.5	2.5
West Brnch	4	3	NA	3	3	3	3	2	2.5	2.5
Average	4.9	3.2	2	2.8	3.3	2.8	2.9	2.3	2.13	2.13

## Athletic Boosters and Finances

The Bellevue Athletic Boosters are "connected" to the school, but they are also their own entity in many ways. Their finances do not impact the district directly, but...their struggles do impact our extracurricular sports in one way or another with jerseys, etc.

As a result, a change is taking place from Pepsi to Coca-Cola, and some reasons for this from both a financial and customer service perspective. Below is information on the reasonings for this change:

*The Athletic Boosters have been meeting with both Pepsi and Coke in the last month or so. After several conversations that they have been involved with (along with Dave Wright, Jeff Recker, and myself) the decision is to move forward with*



3. Customer Service - Pepsi has not provided quality customer service in the last several months, let alone any free products for us. They have charged us over \$3 a case more than their current proposal, and have provided no free items or updated items (menu boards are old, we buy our own ice chest coolers, water/gatorade jugs and bottles, and many other items that Coca-Cola can offer us).
4. Expansion of Products - Coca-Cola will offer some different products, while also taking away Pepsi products. This is great for the new products such as Body Armor and some other things, but it will eliminate Pepsi products such as Mountain Dew. The removal of Mountain Dew may be an issue for some, but this is what the situation means. Similar to going to the stand to buy a candy bar that is not available, most people (at least myself) will pick a different candy bar or sweet.

Overall, I believe this is a good thing for our district. It will "change things up a little bit" and add some different items. While the boosters are mainly involved with this, it does impact our school overall as it means we can only sell Coca-Cola products in our staff pop machines, vending machine (which is off currently), and any other areas where items are sold.

### Jackson/Clinton County Regional Center

There continues to be discussions from the Eastern Iowa Community College District, with the Jackson and Clinton County Superintendents, about the Regional Center. While I think this is a good idea for our students and their learning, the distance is an issue from my perspective. I do not believe at this time it is a good idea to commit to "seats" with money for our students whether we utilize the seats or not. The cost is not finalized yet, but at one time it was discussed about being ½ of the money we get for each student. Therefore, that would be about \$3500/student.

The three locations are in a graphic below, with two in Clinton and one in DeWitt. The DeWitt location would be better than those in Clinton for distance, but still roughly 45 minutes.

	<b>EICC/CCC Clinton Location</b>	<b>Lincolnway Industrial Rail and Air Park</b>	<b>DeWitt - Crossroads Business Park</b>
5 acres and beyond	Yes - beyond 20	Yes - up to 10	Yes - combined lots equal area greater than 5
Utilities	Yes Located in street	Need to be extended, generally available	Yes Located in street
Own, purchase, or gift	Owned by EICC/CCC No purchase price	Owned by CRDC Board vote to gift	Owned by DCDC Low or no cost option Board vote
Availability	immediately	immediately	immediately
Other	Adjacent to classrooms and student services Smaller footprint for building Non instructional spaces less necessary	Strong Support Business adjacent Growth adjacent Opportunities to mentor	Strong Support Central location Growing area Business adjacent



Maquoketa is still going to offer welding for our students in the future, including some programming that will be starting up in the next few weeks for some certifications both at Maquoketa and virtually. This may also expand into 2nd semester. While this is different than the normal procedure and certifications, it will work for our students who are interested. The cost will be \$375/student for the semester, with about 4-7 students expected to participate.

EICCD is looking to have a bond referendum in March for over \$35 million over the five counties in the district. This would be about a \$0.25 bond levy and would not raise the current levy that is set to expire soon. The locations for new construction or additions would include the one in the Clinton or DeWitt area, along with...

- Muscatine CC Campus
- North Scott Ag Center
- Scott County Blong Center (Eldridge area)
- Scott County Belmont Campus

My question that I have asked repeatedly is what is going to be offered for Jackson County students, specifically students in Bellevue. EICC currently has a site in Maquoketa that I would either like expanded or at a minimum funded for redesign or some new programming for students in our area. Maquoketa agrees with my statement, while Easton Valley does to a point but is also willing to drive to the other locations mentioned above based on their location. The point is that for our students to go to the locations in Clinton is 60 minutes approximately, on roads that are not the ideal roads for students to be traveling on from my perspective.

Some of the programming areas that may be offered are of potential need in our society as indicated below:

- Agriculture
- Welding
- Building Trades
- Health Services
- Culinary Arts/Cuisine
- Auto
- Electrical/Plumbing/etc.
- Computer Science

In addition:

- We offer computer science with Mrs. Weber, along with some college courses.
- We can take welding in Maquoketa in the future, and we are starting a night certification program this week for interested students.
- We are working to develop electricity courses through EICC and have this already planned for our campus.
- We offer online courses (more "traditional" college courses) for students where students enroll in these regularly; These are a cost to the district, but worthwhile

**APPROVED - Modified Allowable Growth - School Budget Review Committee**

Each year which we are eligible we apply to the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) for "spending authority" for new students into our district who continue school in their previous district or choose to go to another public school district. I am not sure currently how many students this will include, but it gives us spending authority as needed. The spending authority allows us authority to "spend", as we must pay the other district for the student this year even though we do not get the funding until next school year.

**Comet Reading and Reflection**

The following is some legality information from the attorney at the School Administrators of Iowa. I found it interesting to potentially share with others as some of these questions arise.



## So, how public are public schools?

I can't tell you how many calls I have received over the years in which an administrator has shared a comment from a community member that goes something like this: "I'm a taxpayer, and this is public property, so I can do \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank as you wish) if I want." They may even throw in: "And you can't stop me, it's my right."

Like you, I am greatly appreciative of taxpayers, as well as the support most lowans show our schools. I am also a firm believer in our Constitution and the many rights it bestows on our residents. However, most individuals do not fully understand the difference between someplace such as a public sidewalk or a public park, as opposed to a public school.

To the best of my knowledge, Terrace Hill, which serves as the governor's residence, is also public property. Perhaps you might ask those who make the "public property" comment if they believe they may wander into the kitchen at Terrace Hill and make themselves a ham and cheese sandwich. Well, don't really make such a comment, but I'm at least able to use this example in my column. I trust you get the point. The fact that a political subdivision, such as a school district, may own property does not mean that taxpayers are able to do whatever they please.

Remember from your school law days that schools may adopt reasonable policies or rules to govern their own operation. These policies or rules may restrict who or when individuals may visit your school or attend school activities. They also may limit or prohibit certain behavior or activities, as long as those limitations or prohibition do not unduly infringe upon an individual's Constitutional rights, or violate state or federal law. It has been my experience that the lack of understanding by certain community members often revolves around a lack of knowledge of when a public forum has been created to express speech, as well as skewed thinking that publicly owned property means that the public may do what they want there, as I alluded to above.

I will cover some common scenarios that have arisen over the years. In many instances, the behavior or actions of the community member would not be illegal if it occurred in another setting.

### **Does an individual, business, or organization have a right to hand out leaflets as individuals enter the football game or leave such handouts underneath windshield wipers in the school parking lot?**

Assuming the entrance to the football field is on school property and not a public sidewalk, then individuals may not hand out leaflets, unless the school district has permitted that limited public forum. You may allow them to do so, but remember that permitting that individual or group to hand something out would permit a similarly situated individual or group to hand things out in the future. I am not suggesting that allowing the local Lions Club to hand out literature means that you need to allow someone else to hand out literature that promotes hate or encourages violence, but it would likely mean that you would need to allow other clubs to hand out literature if they are not expressing hate or encouraging violence or illegal activity. You would go through this same analysis when considering whether someone may leave handouts underneath windshield wipers. If you don't want to go down this slippery slope, then you may restrict such distribution by community members altogether. I'm not recommending one path or the other, but instead attempting to share what authority you have in each situation and how decisions may impact the ability to restrict others in the future.

**Does a community member have a right to wear a jacket with a large Confederate flag on the back to your commencement ceremony or any other school activity?**

No. While the community member would likely be able to wear the jacket as he walks around town, and he undoubtedly would be able to wear it while doing yard work at his home, it is my opinion that the school district may restrict the display or wearing of the Confederate flag on school property, just as you would not need to permit the display of a swastika. In each instance, regardless of what the symbol may subjectively mean to the individual wearing it, it is widely associated with a message of dehumanization and hate. The district may restrict such speech on public property.

**May the school district require a visitor to wear a mask at the volleyball game?**

While community members may have their own opinions regarding the wearing of masks and may voice those opinions to their elected officials, school administrators have authority to require the wearing of masks or the implementation of other safety or mitigation measures for those who are attending athletic or other school events. You would need to make accommodation for visitors with disabilities, and should give thought to providing a religious exemption after discussing the matter with your district's legal counsel.

**May the district prohibit the capturing of video, audio, or photos on school property?**

Yes. I have encouraged administrators for many years to adopt a policy limiting the ability of students and visitors to capture video, audio, or photos unless it meets a specified exception in the policy, or they have obtained permission from a school administrator or school employee referenced in the policy. This issue used to come up more frequently regarding individuals using high-powered lenses at athletic events, which were making some students and parents uncomfortable. I now hear of more instances

when community members start to take a video of students misbehaving at school activities, and those community members later upload the video to a social media account. In either situation, while they may have paid to go to a game, and that game may occur on public property, the ticket they purchased to attend is only a limited license and may come with reasonable restrictions.

Hopefully, this column will better prepare you for the next occasion when a community member argues about their "rights on public property." For you nonpublic administrators out there, while you may not be dealing with the public property argument, please be reassured that your school likewise has the authority to adopt the policies, rules, and restrictions I mentioned in this column. If you are still in doubt, don't hesitate to contact your school's legal counsel or get in touch with me at SAI.

Stay healthy and stay strong! Oh, and go Cubs!

### Information Items

#### Parent-Teacher Conference

Meyer provided an overview of how things went for conferences overall, along with the two principals. As I mentioned last week, the administration and several staff members worked on some new ideas for parent-teacher conferences on October 7 & 8 based on the pandemic. Some details are below:

Elementary - Normal conferences will be held, with the following modifications:

- There will be scheduled time between conferences with families for staff to wipe down chairs, etc. and to also allow parents to have limited contact with families waiting for their conference time.
- The "splitting" between the days will be more evenly split to not have as many people attend on the first day (which is often the case).

- A Zoom electronic meeting will be an option for any family if they do not want to physically attend the conference at school.
- Parents are encouraged to NOT bring their students to play on the playground while they are attending conferences.

Middle/High School - Normal conferences will be held, with the following modifications:

- Face-to-Face conferences will be held from 3:30-8:00 on Wednesday, and from 3:30-6:00 on Thursday.
- Zoom electronic conferences will be held for families from 6:30-8:00 on Thursday (and other times as needed).

In both buildings, social distancing was emphasized and along with the requirement for parents and staff members to wear a mask at all times in the building.

Additionally, parents were encouraged to leave after their conference(s), and to not gather inside or outside of the school.

Some school systems are only doing Zoom meetings, while some are doing everything the same way as normal...with a lot of districts doing something in-between. Ultimately, it comes down to working to fit what our parents and community want (which is what we try to do regardless).

Parents can have more access to their student work than ever before this year with Seesaw at the elementary and the regular communication. Parents also have access (which we may need to remind them again) through Google Classroom to check on what is happening, along with the grades on JMC. We need to make sure that our parents are aware of how to do this, and encourage them to do this as well.

### Activities Updates and Staffing

#### Concerts

- Districts are doing a variety of things to allow concerts for MS/HS...from involving family members only to only livestreaming to a combination of the two. Elementary concerts in nearly all districts are going to be limited to recording these and allowing parents and others to view them, while still maintaining legal actions with this. We legally cannot livestream via Facebook Live due to copyright issues, but can put on an internal recording for those to watch the pre-recorded concert on the "concert night". I can explain more later at the meeting, but...
- I met with the music teachers last week, along with Mr. Recker, and Mrs. Hartung-Schroeder. We have also involved Mr. Wright in these discussions. Some thoughts are the following:
  - We do not see any logical way to have the elementary concert. As a result, we will likely record each classroom singing the songs and post for parents and others to view.
  - Choir associations across the state and nation are encouraging masks to be worn, along with significant distancing. All-State music has been canceled as a result of safety concerns of the "aerosol" spraying when people sing. Wearing masks to sing is challenging to

say the least, and the most we could do is have a concert and have families sit in pods 6-feet+ away from other families.

- Band is slightly different than choir. While there are concerns, they are not as significant as choir with the direct "aerosol" output from students. We would need to socially distance on the stage, along with our parents socially distancing similar to what was described for the choir.
- We can have volleyball games inside, and other sports, why not a concert? That is a valid question some will ask, but...We can talk about that.
- The music staff and administration will be meeting again once information is released by the athletic associations in regard to attendance and general safety recommendations (if they provide any).

## Basketball

- There is some conversation about limiting attendance at basketball games by the River Valley Conference. Crowds are typically larger at basketball games than volleyball games, and some schools have concerns about social distancing, mask usage (EVEN WHEN IT IS REQUIRED), and the general safety of the athletes and spectators.

## Facility Usage

- The administration is also discussing how we will be allowing youth teams to utilize facilities this fall and winter. A key component will be to only allow our students access to the facilities (predominantly the gyms). Additionally, any siblings, etc. will not be allowed to "roam around" the buildings and are encouraged to stay home.
- As mentioned earlier, a decision will be made once information is released by the athletic associations in regard to attendance and general safety recommendations (if they provide any).

## Technology Update

- We are moving on with some changes for the MS/HS building, which will positively impact both the elementary and the middle/high school. Cost also includes service for the future in this for basic troubleshooting and repairs. It is with the same company that works with the city, where we get our internet feed from for the district.

## IASB Convention Attendance

- From IASB: The 75th iteration of this member favorite will be immersive, innovative and inspiring—and completely digital. The Annual Convention kicks off on Nov. 10 with an in-depth evening equity workshop, followed by Delegate Assembly on the evening of Nov. 17. On Nov. 18-19, our luminary keynoters, Liz Murray and Consuelo Castillo Kickbusch, will fill your leadership cup and you'll choose from multiple education sessions, networking time and innovative learning opportunities with your peers.

The shift away from a face-to-face event was well-researched and vetted, with your health and safety top of mind. We know you want to stay connected and learn with and from your peers across the state, which is why we have been innovating during the pandemic to continue to offer you meaningful and relevant learning opportunities. Now, more than ever, it's important to prioritize learning together and strengthening your social connections.

#### School District Survey

- Meyer will be developing and sending a survey to all of our parents (and students potentially) about our work during COVID-19. From experiences when quarantined (if quarantined), safety step taken by the schools, etc. Thoughts? I believe we may need some feedback on this at this time. It could also include some other areas if wanted. We can talk about this at the meeting.

#### West Gym

- Some new graphics were added to the West Gym this week. The board looked at these after the meeting.

#### **Comments from Building Principals, Superintendent, and Board Members**

#### **Adjourn**

Next meeting is on Monday, November 9 at 6:30