

Superintendent's Board Report

July 20, 2017, Board Meeting

Staff who are..

Positive * Professional * Passionate

Focused on ...

Relationships * Morale * Improvement of Instruction



Dear Board Members, Staff Members, Students, Families, and Community Members,

It is with great excitement that I begin working for you as the superintendent of this great district! Each morning I rise with a smile on my face and thankfulness in my heart knowing that I am blessed to serve this wonderful community. To you all I owe a debt of gratitude for this opportunity. Thank you! It is with great anticipation that I look forward to working with you collaboratively in providing an excellent education to our students so that they may pursue their dreams.

You should expect me to model the high expectations that I have for myself and every staff member in our district of being **positive, professional, and passionate**. A positive mind anticipates happiness, joy, and a successful outcome of every situation and action. Whatever the mind expects, it finds. Professionalism is the pride we have for the Hoopston Area School District demonstrated through our words, our deeds, and our appearance. And, passion! We are never wavering, never losing faith, and continually trying new approaches until the miracle of learning happens! These words exemplify the high bar of excellence we hold for one another.

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, I would like to express thanks to our buildings and grounds department and summer crew for their hard work and dedication this summer in creating safe and orderly environments that are foundational to the learning experiences of our students. Our outstanding facilities create a positive climate that promotes learning. I don't believe there was a single piece of furniture in this district that wasn't moved and cleaned this summer. The floors are absolutely sparkling and the grounds are neat and orderly. When our students return, they will be greeted into facilities that exemplify Cornjerker Pride. Thank you!

Finally, we are continuing to monitor what has turned from a state **budget** crisis into a state **school funding** crisis. This issue began with the introduction of an Evidence-Based Funding Model, a much needed reform intended to provide more equity in the way that schools are funded across the state. The heart of this issue now is that the state legislature passed a budget that states that money to our schools will be distributed using this new Evidence-Based Funding Model, referencing school code that does not yet exist. We have a budget that specifies a funding method that has not been approved! Therefore, the state board is unable to access and release to our district more than half of the money in the budget, money that we use to operate our school for such expenses as employee salaries. We also have not yet been notified as to how much money our district should expect from this new funding model. For you and I, this would be similar to our boss saying, "I'm not sure how much money you are going to make this year, and I can't access my accounts, so until I figure this out, you won't be receiving a paycheck." How would we, as families, function? This is the scenario that our state government has created for our school district.

We are waiting for our lawmakers and Governor to agree on a funding plan so that the money the Hoopston Area School District needs for our students to be educated is provided. Now is the time for concerned community members to become engaged. Please contact your elected officials, Senator Jason Barickman at jason@jasonbarickman.org, and Rep. Tom Bennett at bennett@ilhousegop.emailnb.com. In the meantime, please know that the school board and I continue to advocate for our district with the expectation that our state governing body will set politics aside and focus on what is best for the students of our community and the entire state of Illinois.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this great district! Please do not hesitate to contact me through email, phone, or meeting. I look forward to serving you for the benefit of our children and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzette Hesser".

Suzette Hesser

Superintendent, Hoopston Area School District