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## **Dr. Tammy Champa**

*June 2026*

With our transition into summer, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the many staff members who helped make graduation a memorable and successful celebration. From the countless hours of planning and preparation to the behind-the-scenes work on the day of the ceremony, I'm grateful for all who came together to provide our graduates and their families with an outstanding experience. And, perhaps most impressively, the weather decided to cooperate—proof that even Mother Nature recognizes the importance of graduation day!

I also want to wish all of our students and families a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable summer. I hope the few weeks ahead provide opportunities for rest, new experiences, and time with family and friends before we welcome everyone back for another exciting school year.

While summer offers a change of pace, it is also an important season for district planning and continuous improvement. Our administrative team has been focused on updating the district's crisis response manual to ensure our procedures remain current and aligned with best practices. We are also refining our Strategic Plan and developing a district Vision Card that will serve as a simple, routine reflection tool to keep our key priorities at the forefront of our daily work and decision-making.

One of the highlights of the early summer has been the opportunity to meet with one of our groups of new teachers. Spending time with educators who are just beginning their journey in our district is always energizing. Their enthusiasm, fresh perspectives, and commitment to students are inspiring and serve as a wonderful reminder of the positive impact we can have together.

Thank you for your continued support of our students, staff, and community. I look forward to the important work ahead as we prepare for another successful school year.

### Upcoming Dates:

- July 7: “Thinking of Running for School Board?” Learning Session, 6:00 p.m., District Office
- July 13: School Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Charles S Crandall Center
- July 14-28: School Board Candidate Filing Dates

## **Human Resources**

*Chris Picha, Director*

- We have hired 16 new teachers and 2 new district leaders to-date for the 26/27 school year. We have several support staff positions to fill and 2 certified staff positions to fill that we are working hard to get those filled by July 1, 2026.
- Closing 25/26 employee evaluations and rolling over to 26/27
- Group Orientation for new hires begin 6/22/26
- Policy committee work
- Employee Relations issues
- PELSB Licensure Applications
- 2 Teacher Apprentices approved for ABS program; 2 apprentices moving to year 2 in EBD/ASD program
- GYO MDE reports
- LEAP Grant drafted and submitted

## **Roosevelt/Community Ed**

*Deb McDermott-Johnson, Director*

- Summer Programming is in full-mode for School Age Care and Youth Enrichment. Programs are full and operating smoothly. For the first time ever (to our knowledge), not a single youth enrichment class has been canceled so far this summer for lack of enrollment. Participation remains enthusiastic! The youth theatre experiences have been particularly well attended.
- The Adult Learning Center is serving a targeted group of students this summer. Morning classes are split between small group tutoring and diagnostics for advancing stalled progress and whole-group, hybrid instruction. A student teacher working on her TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) credential is interning with us for our 6-week summer program.
- Planning and priority setting for the new program year will commence shortly. The fall program marketing goes into production by mid-July.

## **Teaching and Learning**

*Julie Sullivan, Director*

There is a different pace to the early summer months, allowing people to take a little time off to relax after a year on the go. However, the T&L Department uses the summer months to do work to prepare for the upcoming school year. Instead of key dates, I will cover some of our big tasks for the summer months:

- Attended the MEP Conference at Tri-City, a great day of learning

- Attended the COMPASS Institute in St. Paul, a free conference featuring keynotes and breakout sessions focused on ways to support the MTSS system in schools. A big focus of this year's conference was on math instruction with an outstanding keynote speaker.
- K-5 math standards work and pacing guides for Illustrative Math for this upcoming school year
- Wendy Eggermont is busy creating the pacing guides for math instruction at the elementary level for this upcoming year. Her document links everything teachers need to align standards to key links within the new resource.
- Kelly Kruger is doing the same with the LA pacing guides for Wit & Wisdom.
- Kenneth Griswold is busy preparing the testing calendar for 26-27 while continuing to work on the transition to eduClimber.
- We have done considerable work on our MTSS alignment, including creating an intervention plan K-12. This next year, our 6-9 students will access Lexia PowerUP in English classes; this is the program OMS piloted this past spring. Our elementary will receive PD on intensification of Functional Phonics at the K-2 grades. In addition, we are looking at piloting 1-2 other literacy interventions. All of this work comes with close progress monitoring to ensure what we are doing is working for students.
- The elementary principals and instructional coaches along with Kelly Kruger and myself are reading *MTSS for Reading Improvement* and will be doing a book study together throughout this next school year.
- Justin Lang and I are investigating different models for summer school, a program we have paused for this summer while we work to form a new model that helps students close the gap on their learning in math and reading.
- Our 6-12 Language Arts teachers are spending time on Phase 2 of the READ Act this summer as they work through the first three modules of STRIVE.
- Three teachers will be registered for Phase 1 READ Act training with CORE after July 1.
- Throughout the summer, we will be solidifying the new staff induction week and fall workshop schedule.
- Migrant Education programming begins after July 4 and runs through the first week of August. Our new EL and Equity Coordinator, Nicole Thompson, will be overseeing this work.
- In August, our K-5 teachers, aside from the early adopters from this past year, will receive PD on the new math resource, IM. In addition, the 6-8 math teachers will continue their work on standards and fully implementing the paid version of IM for the 26-27 school year.

As you can see, we stay busy! Summer is a time for my team to get ready for the work that will occur in the upcoming school year.

### **Special Services**

*Shari Mensink, Principal*

Department goals have been met:

- High Quality Teaching & Learning/Equity

- Our goal is to identify strengths & gaps in our English and math interventions, E-12, with the long-term goal to provide approved research-based interventions.
- High Quality Teaching & Learning/21st Century Learners
  - Through our identified action steps & accountability processes, we will update our departmental procedures and streamline staff access, moving key procedures to a SharePoint site.
- Safe & Caring Community/Equity
  - Through our identified action steps & accountability processes, we will create clarity around Conscious Discipline, Ukeru, Safety Care, LSCI & PTS, and assist buildings with implementation.

FY26 goals have been met; FY27 goals will align with district priorities, building on the current year's departmental foundation.

- We are welcoming Assistant Director Marie Kennedy to our team on July 1st, while wishing Jill Petersen well on her next journey.
- Summer training logistics are set for restrictive procedures and curriculum interventions.
- Extended School Year will take place in July.
- Special Services MDE Fiscal Audit resulted in no findings; the next audit is scheduled for FY31.

## **Lincoln Elementary**

*Justin Lang, Principal*

### **Important Dates**

- 6/1 All City Track
- 6/2 Lincoln Leader Assembly, Senior Send Off
- 6/3 5th Grade Graduation
- 6/4 Last day of school, 5th grade to Nickelodeon Universe
- 6/5 Teacher Work Day (2 hours)
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### **Lincoln Updates**

- Lincoln athletes did well at the All City Track Meet. There were a few Lincoln Records broken.
- We celebrated our 5th grade graduates with a ceremony and speeches from Mr. Lang and the classroom teachers. Student made videos to share with future Lincoln students about their favorite parts of Lincoln.
- At our final Lincoln Leader Assembly, students were working to earn enough Lincoln Leader Slips to “unlock” some events during the assembly. They achieved all of their goals, including staff inflatable races, pieing a few teachers in the face, coloring Mr.

Wolfe's head and turning Mr. Lang into a Sundae. They covered him with whip topping, chocolate syrup, sprinkles and of course, a cherry (or jar) on top!

- Our Lincoln 5th graders got to go to Nickelodeon Universe on the last day of school thanks to our PTO!
- We want to take the opportunity to thank Karen Lindenbaum, Becky Arndt and Lisa Revier for their contributions to Lincoln and the Owatonna Public Schools. We wish them all the best in retirement!
- We also want to thank those who are leaving us: Mallory Olson, Christopher "CW" Wolfe, Sam Husting and Justice Caballero. We wish them the best in their future.
- We should be starting our casement (cabinetry work) this coming Monday 6/22). The majority of rooms will have new cabinets coming into the 26-27 school year.
- Currently Mr. Lang is working on getting ready for the upcoming 2026-27 school year and preparing for our summer K Camp program. The dates and times for that are July 20th-23rd and July 27th-30th from 8:00-12:00 at McKinley Elementary.

## **McKinley Elementary**

*Justin Kiel, Principal*

We wrapped up another great year! A few highlights:

- End of Year Stations - A McKinley "tradition" is to open the building to our end of the year stations. Our students get to move throughout the building and do various stations - open gym, face painting, dance party, just to name a few. It's always a highlight of the year!
- We celebrated our 5th graders in a "new way" this year - with a trip to a local park to enjoy lunch, some play, and Kona Ice. We ended the day with the traditional 5th grade tunnel out of the building to honor our graduating 5th graders!
- June was busy with new hires. We are excited to share we have some new staff joining our team:
  - Megan Schulz - School Social Worker
  - Steph Hager - Kindergarten Teacher
  - Devon Murray - 2nd Grade Teacher
  - Eric Thorsteinson - Elementary Orchestra Teacher

It was great to take some time to honor, celebrate, and have fun as we closed out the 25-26 school year!

## Washington Elementary

*Libby Zeman, Principal*

### Washington Updates:

- Washington students continued the tradition and enjoyed an all school celebration with kickball and Kona Ice on the last day of school!
- Our staff reflected on data and progress. Some key themes of growth were in writing, vocabulary and math thinking.
- In our 1:1 interviews with students, these themes emerged: students feel they belong at school, value their positive relationships with other students and staff and can see the growth in their academics too!

## Owatonna Middle School

*Christina Mattson, Principal*

- We had a great end of the school year at OMS culminating with the Kyle DeKam Leadership Ceremony where we honored two award recipients, Cassidy Justice and Kendall Harguth, and our Husky PRIDE Day celebration.
- Despite return travel cancellations and challenges, the group of students who traveled to Washington DC with OMS teachers, Erin Klecker and Nicole Rhodes, had a wonderful experience in our nation's capital city early in June.
- As summer continues, our work at OMS revolves around scheduling and planning for the upcoming school year. As we navigate those items, our building is undergoing some pretty extensive asbestos abatement and we are looking forward to new, asbestos-free, flooring in several classrooms and office spaces in the older part of our building.

## Owatonna Online

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

- Owatonna Online continues to show positive growth in student success. During the 2025–2026 school year, student attendance increased from **90.48% to 91.27%**, reflecting continued efforts to improve student engagement and connection.
- Academic achievement also improved, with the percentage of students passing all classes increasing from **70% to 74%**, a 4% gain over the previous year.
- These results demonstrate the impact of targeted student support, strong staff commitment, and ongoing efforts to help all students succeed in a flexible learning environment.

## **Area Learning Center**

*Martina Wagner, Principal*

The Area Learning Center successfully completed its Summer Credit Recovery Program from **June 10–25**. This summer, the program served students from Owatonna High School, the ALC, Medford, and Owatonna Online.

Enrollment included:

- **61 students** from OHS, ALC, and Medford
- **73 students** from Owatonna Online
- **134 total students served**
- The summer program provided students with an additional opportunity to recover credits, stay on track for graduation, and receive academic support in both in-person and virtual learning environments.
- Additionally, the Area Learning Center celebrated a successful 2025–2026 school year by graduating **36 seniors**, supporting students as they completed graduation requirements and prepared for their next steps after high school.