



# HOWARD LAKE • WAVERLY • WINSTED

**NATE WALBRUCH, SUPERINTENDENT**

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1/6/25

Board Members,

As part of the evaluation process of the Superintendent, I am to provide a mid-year check in on my goals for the 24-25 school year. This document is intended to serve as an update on my established goals.

## **Goal # 1: Instructional teams improve their PLCs processes, with 50% of teams completing a 15-Day challenge by the end of 2024 - 2025**

I have provided five professional development sessions relating to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). We began during workshop week resetting expectations and understandings of PLCs and their impact on student learning. Slides 1-39 from [PLCs Revisited](#) provided the guidance and structure for the first day. Slides 40-45 gave direction to the three big ideas of PLC; a focus on learning, results orientation and collaboration.

During the workshop day on 10/16/25, I led staff on analyzing how to determine what is most essential for students to learn. [THESE SLIDES](#) allowed staff to view videos, connect with each other and eventually work on determining essential outcomes for the classes. I also worked with teachers who are the lone instructors for their area support using [THIS INFORMATION](#).

During the most recent work session on 12/13 we covered [COMMON FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS](#). We also set the framework for staff to begin designing their 15-day challenges. I did have one team report they have completed one of these challenges already.

Next Step: During the next training day on January 20th collaborative teams will be charged with setting their plans for 15 day challenges. I will work to include the principals so they can provide observations and guidance as well.

**Goal #2: Identify/create a framework to establish expectations, instruction and support for student sense of belonging across the district**

I have researched some professional journals and consulted professional educator resources to identify best practices for promoting and increasing student sense of belonging across a district. After I compiled a lengthy list of resources, I used AI to assist in analyzing suggestions and approaches and I feel the following are the best practices for us to implement:

- 1) Fostering of POSITIVE staff-student relationships- with an emphasis on staff being overwhelmingly positive with students
- 2) Create/enhance opportunities for student voice- there are some examples of student groups and leadership across the district. I do feel their influence is cursory and ineffectual.
- 3) Promotion of Extracurricular engagement- Also, highlighting all of the different ways students spend their time outside of school
- 4) Engagement of families & communities- increasing our capacity to communicate effectively along with partnerships across the community promotes belonging to both schools and the communities they live in
- 5) Ensure a safe and inclusive school environment- Talk through safety procedures, and provide inclusive activities and conversations throughout the school program

Next Step: Principals and I will be working with leadership team to identify the essential outcomes (i.e. what do we want students to achieve)

**Goal #3: Lead change to remove structural budget deficits (e.g. imbalanced staff structure at elementary schools)**

Our extensive work throughout the Fall in communicating, analyzing and gathering information related to the grade-level building proposal falls into this goal. Below are a number of artifacts related to that work:

[Letter to staff](#)- providing opportunities for feedback and input into the proposal

[Letter to the community](#)- outlining the proposal and inviting members to a series of listening sessions



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[Proposal presentation](#)- provided information to listening sessions and website visitors regarding the proposal

[Alternative plans](#)- options and budget impacts of various plans

[Interviews of similar school districts](#)- notes from superintendents experienced with transitions to grade-level orientations

Next Step: I will be working with leadership teams to identify “Transition Team” processes; including, number of participants, frequency of meetings, input gathering protocols and benchmark dates for decisions

### **Goal #4: Create and implement a district-wide communication plan that enhances collaboration and community between the school and community**

I have connected with a number of communication professionals to understand the nature of their work and glean knowledge from their practices and standards. I have collected a number of samples, branding style guides and communication guidebooks. After looking through these resources, the following are generally considered best practices for district communication:

- 1) **Consistent Branding and Logos:** Ensure all communication materials include the official district logo and adhere to branding standards. Avoid altering logos in any way to maintain consistency and professionalism.
- 2) **Multi-Channel Communication:** Use diverse communication platforms, such as websites, email, social media, and push notifications, to reach various audiences effectively.
- 3) **Regular Updates:** Maintain consistent communication schedules, such as weekly newsletters and daily social media updates, to keep stakeholders informed.
- 4) **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Ensure all digital and printed materials are accessible, including compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and providing translations for non-English-speaking families.

- 5) Emergency Communication Protocols: Develop clear guidelines for emergency notifications, using tools like Robo-calls, text messages, and push notifications for timely updates.
- 6) Family Engagement: Encourage two-way communication with families through platforms like ParentSquare and by providing opportunities for feedback and participation in school events.
- 7) Content Approval Process: Centralize the approval of communication materials (e.g., flyers, newsletters, and social media posts) through the Communications Office to ensure alignment with district standards.
- 8) Professional Communication Etiquette: Train staff on professional communication practices, including email etiquette, timely responses, and maintaining a professional tone in all interactions.
- 9) Event and Good News Sharing: Celebrate and share positive news stories, events, and student achievements through district websites, social media, and newsletters to foster community pride.
- 10) Metrics and Analytics: Use tools like Google Analytics and Facebook Insights to monitor the effectiveness of communication strategies and adjust approaches based on data.
- 11) Crisis Communication Plan: Implement a detailed crisis communication plan to handle emergencies efficiently and keep stakeholders informed.
- 12) Unified Messaging: Align district-level communication with school-level messaging to ensure a cohesive narrative and avoid conflicting information

Next Step: I will be working with leadership teams to identify which of these practices should be our “must-haves” on the path towards building a communication plan for our district.