



Date: May 4, 2020

From: Ann-Marie Foucault

RE: STMA Strategic Plan Progress Update FY2020

Strategic Direction A: Engage in Continuous Improvement of Teaching and Learning

Progress

1. Increase use of data within school culture.
 - All certified staff received Data Driven Dialogue (DDD) collaborative inquiry training which focused on establishing the knowledge base and routines necessary for effectively using and reviewing student data from common formative and summative assessments.
 - Professional Learning Community (PLC) facilitators and building administration took part in over six full days of training and instructional coaching in which they learned how to lead the process of collaborative inquiry with school-based data teams and to influence the culture of the schools to be one in which data are used continuously, collaboratively, and effectively to improve teaching and learning.
 - School-wide data teams, established in 2017, use DDD routines while evaluating school-wide student achievement data.
2. Implement a technology replacement cycle (computers, infrastructure, classroom).
 - Drafted a five-year replacement schedule to replace the previous ten-year cycle.
 - All of the projects listed below were completed in 2017-2018.
 - New servers
 - New network storage
 - New network switches at middle school west
 - 570 new computers at the high school
 - 960 Chromebooks district-wide replacing 8-11 year old computers
 - 35 laptops for high school science department
 - 31 laptops for new staff and replacing old computers
 - All of the projects listed below were completed in 2018-2019.
 - Smart Boards and computers were added to classroom additions at Albertville Primary and the high school
 - All technology (Smart Boards, sound amplification systems, and computers) were updated at Albertville Primary
 - Added multiple Chromebooks and iPads district-wide
 - Drafted plan for technology updates in 2019-2020.



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- Refresh classroom technology for grades one and two (SMART Board, sound system) at all three elementary buildings
 - Update network switches, firewalls, wireless controllers, and replace some chrome books/desktop computers
3. Align technology to meet district learning and operational needs.
- A Technology Infusion into Teaching and Learning work group was formed and met from February 2017 through May 2017. The work group, facilitated by Wayne Hoistad and Teri Johnson, was comprised of principals, technology staff, and members of the Teaching and Learning dept. The charge of the work group was:
 - Conduct an assessment of E-12 teaching and learning needs which may be met through the use of technology. Develop a realistic plan that include recommendations that increase student learning and augment the four Cs 21st century learning skills. Identify policy, budget, and staffing implications.
 - As a result of staff surveys and interviews the work group determined a need for a curriculum technology integration position to be added to the Department of Teaching and Learning (position hired in July 2017). The group also recommended modifying the responsibilities of district media specialists and building technology integration staff members to include working with the curriculum technology integration position.
 - Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on May 15, 2017.
4. Refine local E-12 testing and assessment framework.
- An E-12 Testing and Assessment work group, facilitated by Jonah Barten, met from February 2017 through January 2018 and was comprised of teachers, principals, technology staff, and preschool staff. The charge of the work group was:
 - Conduct a needs assessment of current E-12 testing and assessment framework. For each assessment identify its purpose, length, data provided, how data is used and by whom, and cost. Consider vertical alignment. Make recommendations for a comprehensive E-12 assessment system. Identify policy, budget, staffing, test time, technology, and training implications.
 - The work group presented to the school board recommendations to reduce a number of tests (DIBELS and NWEA in grades K-4; TS Gold in grade pre-k and k: eliminate grade 10 NWEA) and change the time of year for NWEA test administration from spring to winter for grades 5-9. The group also recommended adding the FAST assessment to grades pre-k-4. The school board approved all recommendations.



- Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on February 20, 2018.

Strategic Direction B: Engage in Continuous Improvement of Student Support Systems & Programs

Progress

1. Implement MN Transfer Credits at High School.
 - A MN Transfer Curriculum work group, facilitated by Teri Johnson and Steve Scherber, met from September 2017 through November 2017 and was comprised of teachers and principals. The charge of the work group was:
 - Learn about the MN Transfer Curriculum. Conduct an audit of current high school courses and teacher credentials. Develop an implementation plan and timeline. Identify policy, budget, staffing, and training implications.
 - After careful study, the work group recommended not to move forward with MnTC as it would lower the rigor of high school course work and they felt having a mix of AP and CIS classes was the best for STMA students. The school board accepted their recommendations.
 - Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on November 20, 2017.
2. Expand opportunities for high achieving students with an emphasis at the middle school.
 - An “Expand Math Opportunities for High Achieving Middle School Students” work group, facilitated by Jennie Kelly and Andy Merfeld, met from February 2017 through November 2017 and was comprised of teachers, principals, and the Teaching and Learning Director. The charge of the work group was:
 - Study single-grade and double-grade math acceleration for individual students and one to two cohorts of students. Propose programming recommendations with a timeline for modifications to the middle school program and implications for high school math programming. Identify policy, budget, staffing, and training implications.
 - The work group noted that STMA math curriculum is rigorous and is meeting the needs of the vast majority of students. They recommended to accelerate students on a case-by-case basis as is the current practice. The school board accepted their recommendations.
 - Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on November 20, 2017.
3. Continue to improve kindergarten readiness.



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- A “Kindergarten Readiness” work group, facilitated by John McDonald and Jane Helgestad, met from February 2017 through spring 2019. The group was comprised of kindergarten and preschool teachers. The charge of the work group was:
 - Conduct a needs assessment of current kindergarten readiness program. Develop plan to address pre-k curriculum development, pre-kindergarten-kindergarten curriculum alignment, parent education/outreach, community preschool outreach, and other identified areas of need. Identify policy, budget, staffing, and training implications.
 - The group drafted a plan for the transition of early childhood special education (ECSE) and preschool Bright Beginnings classes to move to Albertville Primary in the fall of 2018. The move happened in August 2018 and was successful.
 - Implemented an inclusive model for early childhood special education (ECSE) students to be included in Bright Beginnings classes with age appropriate peers.
 - Drafted curriculum maps aligned to kindergarten curriculum and early childhood standards. Prior to this pre-k curriculum maps were nonexistent.
 - Updated a Kindergarten Readiness brochure to communicate what students should know and be able to do by the time they enter kindergarten. The brochure was sent to all daycares and preschools in the STMA community. It was also shared with preschool parents.
 - Implemented “Kindergarten Readiness for Parents” seminars held each fall and spring.
 - Implemented “Get Ready for Kindergarten” seminar each February.
 - Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on March 18, 2019.
- 4. Refine mental health and social-emotional support system, structure, and practices.
 - A number of counselors to support regular education students were added:
 - .5 FTE counselor was added in 2017-2018 for each middle school (1.0 FTE total).
 - .5 FTE counselor for Big Woods Elementary and .5 FTE for Fieldstone Elementary was added in 2016-2017 (1.0 FTE total).
 - .2 FTE counselor was added in 2017-2018 for Albertville Primary and an additional .5 FTE was added (total .7 FTE) for 2018-2019.
 - .3 FTE counselor was added to St. Michael Elementary for 2018-2019.
 - A focus group of school social workers and counselors developed training



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- sessions focused on suicide prevention, which were delivered to all staff members in 2017-2018 (Note: The Minnesota Legislature requires all certified teachers have this training in order to meet the new teacher license renewal requirements).
- The district-wide Social-Emotional Development Leadership Team, comprised of the entire admin team as well as all district counselors and social workers, received monthly training from the SEARCH Institute in 2017-2018. The training focused on REACH, which is a relationship-based approach to improving student motivation that examines social and emotional factors such as Relationships, Effort, Aspirations, Cognition, and HearT along with other key variables that affect students' motivation and engagement.
 - Professional development on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) & Trauma-Informed Schools with school and district leaders (principals, deans, social workers, and counselors) occurred during the 2019-2020 school year. The training sessions focused on developing a deep understanding of the prevalence and impact of childhood trauma, engaging school-wide strategies for better supporting students who have experienced trauma, and supporting our capacity to be effective practitioners of trauma-responsive education.
 - The district-wide Social-Emotional Development Leadership Team trained staff on the REACH framework in their individual buildings in 2018-2019.
 - A "Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum Development" work group, facilitated by Teri Johnson and Shari Ledahl along with an admin rep from each level, began work in September 2018. Incorporating SEL helps students learn to be caring and civil, make healthy decisions, problem-solve effectively, value excellence, be respectful and responsible, be good citizens, and be empathic and ethical individuals. Competency in SEL standards are important for student success in school, work, and life, and it is critical to weave these competencies into the curriculum with the goal of being more intentional in addressing the needs of the whole child. Full curriculum implementation is expected in the fall of 2020.
 - The charge of the work group is:
 - Fully integrate social emotional learning into K-12 teaching and learning practices by using the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning's (CASEL) framework of five Social and Emotional Learning competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making).
5. Provide equitable educational opportunities to all students to eliminate racial and socioeconomic predictors of success.



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- During the initial stages of the planning process, this element of the strategic plan was integrated with the social-emotional support structures plan. In order to provide equitable educational opportunities for all, the district needs to ensure the basic framework for supporting the overall social-emotional health of all students and staff is being implemented throughout the district.
- Implemented Equity Leadership Team in 2018-2019 to guide the district's work in training staff in providing equitable education for all students.
- Facilitated equity training and book study for a group of approximately 75 district administrators and teacher leaders during the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years. The training equipped leaders with an array of tools to lead staff in building awareness and capacity in the area of equity and on leading courageous conversations.
- The Equity Leadership Team presented progress to the school board on May 6, 2019 and plans to share progress on FY2020 with the school board in late May/early June.

Strategic Direction C: Align People and Organizational Resources to Sustain District Success

Progress

1. Develop an organizational assessment plan for schools and departments.
 - Conducted school and department organizational assessments to assess effectiveness and efficiency. The following organizational assessments have been completed and shared at board meetings: elementary buildings (May 21, 2018), middle level (June 3, 2019), district office (October 15, 2018), technology (May 15, 2017), teaching and learning dept (November 4, 2019). Organizational assessments of community education, the high school, and Albertville Primary are underway and findings will be shared with board members in the summer/fall of 2020.
2. Reduce leaves and absenteeism.
 - Increased monitoring of staff leave by the HR department.
 - Researched best practices in other districts pertaining to monitoring unpaid leave.
 - Initiated extensive conversations with support staff, maintenance, and certified unions regarding shared expectations on the use of unpaid leave.
 - Drafted MOU with support staff union on unpaid leaves to develop shared expectations and increase transparency.
 - Discussed leave issues with administrative team and certified staff union representatives.



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- Increased communication with all staff when they requested unpaid leave requests.
 - Elevated monitoring the use of leave during certain “peak periods” of the year.
 - Implemented sick time audit where staff are asked to provide documentation for sick leave time requested in advance. Audits are generally one week in the fall and spring and are unannounced to staff.
3. Reduce legal/financial risks.
- Implemented district-wide training around core risk issues such as data and personnel privacy. ALL staff (support and certified) were trained in FERPA in the fall of 2018.
 - Implemented comprehensive on-boarding process for all staff. This includes certified staff, support staff, and all volunteer/booster coaches. There was not previously an on-boarding process for staff except teachers who started at the beginning of the year. This provides consistency for all job classifications, protects the district against legal risk, ensures staff understand district policies, job descriptions, etc. It also shows the district values new employees.
 - Collaborated with district legal counsel around reoccurring legal issues such as expulsions and student/staff disciplinary issues to streamline and update current forms and processes.
 - Elevated monitoring and documentation pertaining to key personnel risk areas (i.e. discrimination, unemployment insurance, work comp, ADA compliance, etc.).
4. Align employee contracts.
- District legal counsel conducted a legal review of existing contract language for certified staff, support staff, coordinators, and directors. As a result contract language for these groups was updated.
 - Researched best practices of districts with similar student and employee size.
5. Conduct biannual staff survey.
- Researched best practices in survey design and administration.
 - Researched and vetted vendors to conduct staff survey.
 - Met with administrative team to solicit input regarding the process and get feedback on survey questions.
 - Conducted survey October-November 2017 and results were shared with all staff in spring of 2018.
 - Numerous focus groups were conducted in winter 2018 across the district to delve deeper into survey results.
 - Action plans for each group were drafted and implemented in 2018-2019.



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6. Examine facility use.
 - Community Education Director Maryellen Barthel researched fee structures for the STMA Dome and updated STMA's facility fees. Suggested fee structures were presented to the school board and approved in February 2019.
7. Create a protocol for continuous update of school district policies.
 - Formed the Policy Review Committee. The committee started in 2017 and continued their work in FY2019 and FY2020. The committee ensures all policies are systematically reviewed and updated on an annual basis, are responsive to changing conditions (i.e. new issues, legislation, or court decision), and are based on state and federal laws. Policies that are vetted by this committee are reviewed by the superintendent and placed on a school board agenda for action.

Strategic Direction D: Cultivate Family and Community Connections and Increase Advocacy in Support of the District Mission

Progress

1. Expand community access to schools, facilities, and programs.
 - A "Community Access" work group, facilitated by Maryellen Barthel and Keith Cornell, started in February 2017 and met through spring 2019. The charge of the work group was:
 - Develop a plan to expand community access to schools, facilities, and programs. Identify policy, budget, and staffing implications.
 - The work group met to determine how to schedule the STMA Dome to maximize use and community access. The group visited numerous domes in the metro. They researched activities to promote community access such as striping the tennis courts to double as pickle ball courts. They also explored using inflatables in the domed-facility for preschool use.
 - Drafted dome rental fees and shared with the district finance advisory committee and approved by the school board.
 - Met with STMA youth organizations in 2017-2018 to offer rental times to them first, expanded to other STMA groups, and then non-STMA groups.
 - STMA Dome Open House was held on November 16, 2018 and many attended.
 - STMA Dome offers free walking to community members and approximately 80% of available space is rented.
 - Drafted guidelines and protocol for renting the Ice Arena Community Room.



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- New STMA Arena Open House was held on January 20, 2019 and many attended.
 - Findings and recommendations from the work group were presented to the school board on February 19, 2019.
2. Promote connections between families, the community, and the school district. Enhance communication methods and ease of access for students, families, and the community.
- Started a Superintendent's Student Forum in FY2020 by meeting with students at each of the eight buildings to help get a pulse of the district through a different lens, the lens of our students. The forum allowed the superintendent to get students' unique perspective on what they are seeing, hearing, and feeling at STMA and allow them to be involved and have a voice in the decision making process.
 - Superintendent visited 108 businesses in St. Michael and 83 business in Albertville (191 total) in the summer of 2019 to thank them for supporting students and schools. Each business was given a STMA brochure, window decal, and a note from the superintendent with the district's vision, mission, and strategic directions.
 - Implemented "Welcoming Wednesday" across the district. This involves all 19 district office and nine technology staff going out on Wednesdays to buildings to welcome students and staff. This increases visibility in buildings and connects district office/technology staff to students and staff.
 - Superintendent visits each classroom/space in the district three times per year.
 - Superintendent led all aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic for the district including forming a COVID-19 task force comprised of various school stakeholders including SROs and a representative from St. Michael Catholic School. The shift due to the pandemic included high quality distance learning, childcare for emergency and health care personnel, and daily meals to our students.
 - The superintendent communicated COVID-19 information successfully to all stakeholders including students, staff, parents, school board, and the community. Communication was frequent, comprehensive, and informative. Communication modes included email, video, Blackboard Connect messages, district web site, Facebook, and Twitter.
 - Created COVID-19 web page including FAQs for general questions, food service questions, childcare, and more. Also created a COVID-19 specific email so parents, staff, community members, and others didn't have to search for who to contact for help.



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- Organized STMA Spirit Week in March 2020 to provide hope and support for our students and community prior to the start of distance learning. Produced a video to advertise the event and sent it to families.
- Produced “We are Family” lip sync video in March 2020 featuring our admin team to send to students and families.
- Organized #BethelightSTMA event on April 13, 2020. This involved turning on the field lights at MW and the HS for 20 minutes at 8:20 p.m. as a sign of hope for students and the community and to also honor the class of 2020. Involved the city of Albertville, City of St. Michael, and our SROs in the event.
- Partnered with Northwest Family Counseling (Albertville) and Solutions Counseling (St. Michael) to provide therapy services for all staff including certified and support staff. Worked with Northwest Family Counseling to create a STMA-only support group to deal with anxiety and other feelings during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Superintendent testified twice in front of the Wright County Board of Commissioners in support of a Tobacco 21 (T21) ordinance. Wright County Public Health was proposing to change the age to purchase tobacco from 18 to 21. The ordinance passed and will help in our quest to reduce tobacco use with high school students.
- Superintendent annually read to students in St. Michael and Albertville parks as part of FYCCs Reading in the Park series. Also, read a book to students on FYCC’s Facebook Live page during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Revamped the STMA Safety Plan in 2019-2020. The Safety Plan was very outdated and many of the 33 procedures were obsolete and incomplete. The yearlong process was very collaborative involving numerous school stakeholders including our SROs and others from Wright County Sheriffs Office. Added a new procedure regarding how to keep visitors safe after hours and on weekends.
- Added blue strobe lights at the high school, both middle schools, and the Community Education building in FY2019 and FY2020. The blue strobe lights provide a much needed level of safety for these four buildings.
- Fully implemented the Raptor System at all buildings based on recommendations from Homeland Security, MN School Safety Center, Wright County Sheriff’s Office, and administrative team. This system requires all visitors to swipe a government issued ID during the school day. It checks the individual with a National Sex Offender database.
- Updated emergency buttons and protocol at all eight buildings to ensure consistency and maximize safety. The result is all buildings have the



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- same buttons (color and label) for lockdown drills, an actual lockdown, and tornado.
- Implemented a “Knights Pack” weekend food program to provide food to all students who are in need. To implement the program at no cost to the district, partnered with a local organization, The Sheridan Story. The Sheridan Story is a 501(c)(3) and organizes all the food, delivers it to us, and helps with whatever we need. During COVID-19 worked with staff and the Sheridan Story to continue the program and use our buses to deliver to families on Thursdays.
- Created a District Special Education Advisory Leadership Team. This group is comprised of parents, community members, special education cooperative staff, and school staff. Added two SB members to this advisory group this year (Members Dwinnell and Saville). The group has thus far drafted a vision, mission, and annual goals.
- Produced superintendent videos for families and the community to communicate district happenings (tell the district’s story) and highlight issues relevant to STMA taxpayers. This builds community support for district priorities by providing concise and factual information. This mode of communication maintains and nurtures a comprehensive system of effective communication with staff, parents, community members, and external stakeholders. The videos are posted on the district web site and sent to all parents and staff.
- Made “Superintendent Message” videos for staff after every board meeting to update staff on district happenings and keep them involved in what is happening in the district.
- Formed a partnership with Rivers of Hope. Rivers of Hope is a non-profit organization based in Monticello who work with victims of domestic violence. The partnership permits Rivers of Hope staff to work with children in our schools who are victims.
- Produced monthly video updates of construction projects during STMA Bond construction. Videos were posted on the district web site and on the district Facebook and Twitter accounts. Videos were also sent to all staff and the school board.
- Started the STMA Hall of Fame in 2018 to honor individuals who have made a significant impact on students and contributed to the district’s tradition of excellence.
- Facilitated the district getting a new web site to better communicate with stakeholders.
- Organized 50 Years of Excellence Celebration to celebrate STMA’s 50 years as a school district. Events included having a float in the



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Albertville Friendly City Days parade on June 10, 2018, having a float in the St. Michael Daze and Knights parade on August 11, 2018, a staff run/walk on August 31, 2018, a presentation for all staff at the back-to-school day on August 30, 2018, a 5K on October 13, 2018, Class of 1969 Recognition and superintendent video message at home football game on October 5, 2018, designed and sold t-shirts commemorating the celebration, and hosted an open house and gave tours of the high school on October 6, 2018.

- Maintained district Facebook and Twitter accounts. Tweeted and posted on a regular and frequent basis (almost daily).
 - Rebranded the district by working with a consultant and group of district stakeholders to create a common set of district logos, colors, fonts, letterhead, etc. to ensure consistency.
 - Created new key messages for the district in collaboration with administrative team to describe who the district is and what we are all about. Created a marketing brochure for community distribution that has key messages.
 - Created a new look for the *Knight View* newsletter by working with a consultant. This has been very well-received by the community.
 - Created one-pagers in collaboration with a graphic designer. The one-pagers highlight each school in the district. Each of the nine one-pagers are slightly different as they are based on each building (one for each building, Community Education, and Knight's Academy). They are included in the new enrollee folders that families receive at enrollment.
 - Facilitated the first annual STMA Scholarship Golf Tournament to raise money for the Foundation to distribute as scholarships to graduating seniors. The tournament is slated for June 20, 2019 at Cedar Creek.
 - Building staff development teams planned trainings, presentations, and events which include students, parents, community members, and community organizations working together to improve the entire STMA community as well as improving student achievement.
 - Along with memberships in the STMA Rotary and Lions Club, joined the I-94 West Chamber in late fall of 2017.
 - Participated in a community leadership discussion sponsored by Alleluia Church and partnered with them to implement numerous "Breakfast in the Playground" events in the summer of 2018 and 2019.
 - Partnered with Stellis Health to bring the Screenagers movie to STMA in the spring of 2017 and 2018.
3. Advocate for equitable school funding.



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- Superintendent served on the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) and Schools for Equity in Education (SEE) legislative committees that set the legislative platform for each individual organization. During these committee meetings, the superintendent advocated for equity in school funding.
 - Superintendent served on the SEE Executive Board to further STMA's mission and advocate for equity in school funding.
 - Superintendent chaired the legislative committee for the Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA), which is the superintendent professional organization with over 900 members. This allowed superintendent to advocate for equity in school funding.
 - Superintendent was named chair-elect for Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) for region six. Superintendent will serve as chair in FY2021. This allows superintendent to move forward issues such as funding to a large audience.
 - Superintendent served on the Resource Training and Solutions Superintendent Advisory Board. This allows STMA's voice to be heard across the region on issues pertinent to STMA such as funding.
 - Planned legislative forums in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 to host legislators representing over a dozen school districts. Strongly advocated to local legislators the importance for equity in school funding.
 - Superintendent traveled to the Capitol many times during legislative sessions in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. Regularly took groups of parents and school board members on visits to the Capitol.
 - Superintendent enlisted technical help from a STMA teacher to produce a video that highlights STMA's story regarding the inequity in school funding.
 - Superintendent drafted alerts (calls for action) by emailing all staff and posting on district web site, district Facebook, and district Twitter.
 - Formed parent legislative advocacy group in spring 2018.
 - Drafted annual STMA Legislative Platform that advocates for equity in school funding.
 - Redesigned the district web so it includes a "Legislative Advocacy" page with a link to an updated web page that includes "Bills We Are Watching," STMA Legislative Platform, contact lists, community alerts, etc. Posted a sample letter and suggestions for advocates so they could easily use if desired.
 - Nurtured relationships and enhanced communication with Senator Kiffmeyer and Representative Lucero.
4. Maintain fiscal responsibility.



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- Superintendent regularly met with Director of Business Services and district financial advisors, Ehlers, to ensure the district was in compliance with state statutes and federal requirements.
- Implemented new process for negotiating support staff, maintenance, and certified contracts to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Support staff and maintenance staff contracts were settled in 2016 and 2018 within the parameters set by the school board. Certified and principal contracts were settled in 2017 within the parameters set by the school board. The 2019 certified staff and principal contracts were settled slightly above board parameters.
- Completed an advance refunding of Series 2016A bonds in October 2016. This saved taxpayers \$5,444,487 or \$454,000 per year.
- After decades of being a member of the Sherburne and Northern Wright Special Education Cooperative STMA withdrew from the Coop. This was a very difficult decision as the Coop has served STMA students well. However, the disproportionate costs STMA pays (34%) is not fair to our students and taxpayers.
- Reorganized the business services department to realign roles and responsibilities to build capacity for the withdrawal from the Sherburne and Northern Wright Special Education Cooperative. The end result will maximize revenue and save taxpayer dollars.
- Strongly advocated for the SNW Coop to change their budget philosophy so STMA doesn't pay 34% of the costs. This is for FY2020 and FY2021. This resulted in cost savings of approximately \$121,000 for FY2020.
- Responded to significant monetary losses as a result of students taking online classes at other districts. Superintendent worked with Teaching and Learning and HR departments as well as high school team to draft STMA Online Learning proposal. This has the possibility to save STMA over \$100,000 per year.
- Successfully navigated a very challenging special education programming change at St. Michael Catholic School saving the district significant revenue.
- Implemented a Request for Proposals (RFP) process for various services (photographer, internet, counseling services, snow removal, etc.) as a way to save dollars. Director of Technology and Transportation did an RFP for internet service and the savings were significant. For one year, the district saved \$20,916. Over the life of the contract, \$62,748 will be saved.
- Worked with a consultant and Transportation Director on bus route alignment as the bus routes needed to be streamlined thus resulting in significant annual savings. This resulted in significant cost savings to the district (valued at \$46,000-\$51,000 in cost savings).



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- Reorganized the Bright Beginnings program. For the first time in years the program is not losing money.
- Increased homelessness funding streams. A grant in partnership with neighboring districts was awarded to address homelessness in the district (\$10,000 to the district).
- Worked with district auditors by providing information so they could conduct the annual audit. Met with auditors on multiple occasions to ensure they had necessary information. Formulated action plans to address concerns posed by auditors.
- Conducted an RFP for a new auditor for FY2020. Changing auditors regularly is best practice and allows a fresh set of eyes reviewing district finances.
- Held two to three district financial advisory committee meetings annually to gather feedback from stakeholders regarding the budget, staffing, long-term plans, etc. Ensured the committee had broad representation from school staff (teacher, support, and admin), community, school board, and city councils of both cities.
- Worked with district financial advisors, Ehlers, in 2016 to find the best strategy to structure the bond debt to lessen the tax impact for taxpayers.
- Drafted RFP for bond investment companies in spring 2017. Interviewed three bond investment companies and in conjunction with finance director and chose one to maximize bond proceeds.
- Drafted annual budgets that follow past practice and were conservative. Budgets followed advice from the district finance committee. Worked with administrative staff in the district to determine staffing needs that stayed within the confines of budgets and followed advice from the district finance advisory committee.
- Updated capital outlay process so it included a reserve provision for unexpected expenses. Collaborated with administrative team to cut approximately \$500,000 in 2016-2017, \$450,000 in 2017-2018, \$953,714 in 2018-2019, and \$502,281 in 2019-2020 from capital outlay budget while still meeting student needs and complying with safety requirements and state statutes.
- Superintendent worked with Manager of Special Services to assess and improve special education funding streams. The district's tuition billing process involving 1:1 paraprofessionals for open-enrolled special education was examined and improved, which resulted in additional revenue to the district.
- Superintendent worked with MDE and school staff on Career and Tech Education (CTE) funding in winter of 2018-2019 resulting in gaining approximately \$111,000.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT UPDATED 5/5/2020

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- Superintendent and Finance Director worked with Ehlers and Moodys twice in 2016-2017 to obtain a credit opinion to sell bonds. The district received favorable ratings both times despite challenging factors including our low tax capacity and high debt. Joel Sutter of Ehlers pointed out that the Moody's rater gave us a 'new' strength---"strong and conservative management team."