After an undoubtedly long and harsh winter, we were all looking forward to spring this year. Spring in Ankeny is synonymous with construction, and at Ankeny Schools we have large projects approaching.

First, construction of elementary 11 has kicked off, and we are excited to open this new building in 2020-2021 in the Prairie Trail development. Ankeny remains one of the fastest growing school districts in Iowa. This year, enrollment increased by approximately 428 students, as reported in the Certified Enrollment Report. In February 2018, our community approved a bond referendum for the construction of elementary 11 by 87.5 percent. This elementary will assist us in keeping class sizes reasonable, while continuing our tradition of academic excellence.

At this point in the process, the natural question everyone has is what will the district do with the boundary lines. The Ankeny Board of Education has determined, with direction from the district’s administration and demographer, that we will pursue boundary changes impacting the south-feeder only, with the intent of pursuing changes in the north-feeder boundaries with the construction of elementary 12.

That process will be as follows:

- **March-May 2019:** Committee drafts three boundary line options for the south-feeder.
- **May 20, 2019:** The Ankeny Board of Education reviews the options for the public’s consideration.
- **Summer 2019:** A public survey will gather input on the boundary line options for the south-feeder.
- **August 2019:** The district will host public forums to gain community input/support on the boundary scenarios.
- **October 2019:** The final boundary plan will go to the Board of Education.

While the boundary lines are determined, construction will continue on the new elementary. Furthermore, a committee of stakeholders will be working to name the building.
The construction will be broken up into four quadrants.

1. The student commons and gym
2. The office, kindergarten wing, and first grade wing
3. The mechanical work, fourth grade wing, fifth grade wing, and art
4. The media center, music room, second grade wing, and third grade wing.

Next fall, the principal for elementary 11 will be announced and following that time we will begin the process of filling the staff positions.

In addition to the elementary 11 construction, the district will be pursuing the following projects this summer:

**Parkview Renovation Phase 1:** HVAC updates, new ceiling tile, new cabinetry, classroom renovations, and LED lighting

**High School Additions:** design process begins, construction will commence next year

**Ashland Ridge:** paint and carpet

**Northeast:** new ceiling tiles and LED lighting

**Terrace and Southeast:** new roofs

**Ankeny Stadium:** construction on phases one and two will be completed in August 2019

**East, Northwest, Crocker, Ashland Ridge, and Westwood:** new projectors and voice amplifiers

I would like to thank the community for partnering with us in maintaining our current buildings and helping us plan for growth, which allows us to continue to provide an exceptional learning experience.

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**Press for 2020-2021 Elementary Schools**

**October 2019:**
The final boundary plan will go to the Ankeny Board of Education for approval. The process to identify the principal for elementary 11 will be finalized.

**August 2019:**
The district will host public forums to discuss the boundary options further with the public.

Dr. Bruce A. Kimpston
Throughout the year, we have been updating you on the implementation of the ALICE safety training program. Through these efforts, all staff have, or will be undergoing, a second round of training on the ALICE protocols. The next phase of the training involves student experiences. This student involvement in active shooter training is now required by state law.

We also provided a booklet to help guide parents through talking about ALICE safety training and related themes at home. This should compliment your student’s learning at school and give you resources to review together. In addition, the parent video answering questions about what the student experience will entail can be located on YouTube at https://youtu.be/LUF6KpDRm0K.

We want to give you an overview of what the student experiences will look like, as they are not dissimilar from our fire and tornado drills. Below please find overviews of what two ALICE drills may look like. Please keep in mind that each building is choosing specific details for carrying out these drills, so there may be slight variances from building to building.

**Example One: Lockdown and Counter**

1. Principal on the intercom announces the start of the lockdown drill.
2. What is ALICE? A set of strategies for us to use if there is ever a situation in the building, such as an intruder, and our staff and students need to stay safe.
3. Teachers may use one of the age appropriate videos provided to them through the district.
4. The first response when there is danger is to evacuate/get out, but sometimes evacuating is not immediately possible.
5. Teachers explain to students, using age appropriate language, what an enhanced lockdown looks like.
6. In past lockdown drills, doors were locked and everyone would sit out of view.
   - With an enhanced lockdown, the door will still be locked, but the class will also move items in front of the door to further secure the entry and make it more difficult for anyone to enter.
   - The class will scatter around the room but still sit out of view from the hallway.
   - Students should always listen to the teacher for directions.
7. While the class is in a lockdown state, the teacher will inform students of their options.
   - If there is information that it is safe to evacuate, the class will leave the room and go to the near-site location.
   - If the class is not able to evacuate, they will plan to counter.
   - Never open the door for anyone.
   - Only open the door if there is information that it is safe to evacuate.
8. While in the lockdown state, teachers will instruct the students how to counter. Countering is always the last resort and always a personal choice. Countering is not fighting. Countering is distracting, causing a disruption, yelling, throwing items, zigging and zagging, etc. The teacher will have a good idea what is in the room to use while countering.
9. While we hope to never have to use any of these strategies, it is important to practice to respond quickly if there is danger.

10. Teachers will write down questions and bring them back to a future staff meeting to process as a building.

11. Principal announces the conclusion of the lockdown drill.

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**Example Two: Evacuate**

1. Principal on the intercom announces the evacuation drill starting in XX minutes.

2. What is ALICE? A set of strategies for us to use if there is ever a situation in the building, such as an intruder, and our staff and students need to stay safe.

3. Teacher will discuss how to exit the building and the location of the evacuation site.

4. For this drill, there is no need to run. Evacuate the building, and go to the near site-location.

5. While at the near-site location, the teacher will take role to account for all students. If there are any missing students, the principal will be informed.

6. The class will then walk back to the building.

7. The teacher will discuss with the class and, depending on the emergency, evacuation may not be an option. If evacuation is not an option, the class will lockdown and prepare to counter.

8. If a student becomes detached from the class during an evacuation, the student should go to the near-site location if able.

9. Teachers will write down questions and bring them back to a future staff meeting to process as a building.

10. Principal announces the conclusion of the evacuation drill.
In 2017-2018, Ankeny Schools began the work of implementing a college and career readiness plan for the district. What this means is we not only want to prepare students to earn a high school diploma, but we truly want them to be prepared for a lifetime of personal success. This plan does not solely focus on high school students, but extends all the way to our elementary school students. The Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Bruce Kimpston, sits on the Junior Achievement Board and recommended JA BizTown for consideration in this important work.

One way elementary students begin the work of preparing for life after high school is through the Junior Achievement BizTown Program.

The JA BizTown program provides educators with lessons and resources to effectively integrate financial literacy and work and career readiness into the elementary school classroom. The program supports critical thinking skills and student engagement, and helps students connect the dots between what they learn in school and the real world.

Elementary school students are not old enough to drive, work, vote, or be the boss. But that does not stop them from operating banks, managing restaurants, writing checks, using debit cards, and voting for a mayor at JA BizTown, where students connect the dots between what they learn in school and the real world.

JA BizTown® | Kit Description

1. **JA BizTown Teacher Guide**
   Provides lesson plans and teaching tips for the teachers and volunteer

2. **JA BizTown Citizen Guide**
   An in-class and take-home reference tool for students to complete during each lesson

3. **JA BizTown Checkbooks**
   Designed for the on-site simulation activities

4. **Circular Flow Poster**
   Represents the community’s circular flow of economic activity; also available as a digital asset

5. **Check It Out! Poster**
   Demonstrates how to manage a checking account

6. **Assorted Activity Cards**
   Feature workplace skills, rights, responsibilities, and resources

7. **Family Newsletter**
   Includes activities for the students and their families to enjoy

8. **Bingo Card Pads**
   Enable students to play bingo to learn about services offered by banks and credit unions
JA BizTown consists of 12 in-class, teacher-led sessions prior to the simulation and one in-class session following the simulation, with a culminating 4–5 hour visit to a hands-on simulated community.

Elementary classrooms integrate the program into their social studies curriculum, covering financial literacy, community and economy, and work readiness. The students begin by learning how to write a check, use a deposit ticket, keep an account balance, and the differences in savings accounts, checking accounts, debit cards, and credit cards.

After establishing those foundations, students move on to learning how businesses are started, about public versus private goods, and the basics of how tax money is used. The final phase of learning is about work readiness. Students think about their strengths and interests, learn about the jobs available at JA BizTown, and go through an interview process to get a job. Before going to JA BizTown, they work in their business teams.

The learning culminates in an experience at the Junior Achievement BizTown in Des Moines. At JA BizTown, students are able to engage in civic duty and responsibilities including financial literacy, humanitarian learning, the election process, and how a community works. The experience has direct correlations to classroom learning and all students are able to reflect and use the learning well past the day of the experience.

Students leave the experience saying the highlights include paying off their business’ loan, finding out jobs can be fun, how many errands they accomplished on their breaks, paying their employees, and more. Sentiments many adults may not experience until well into their careers.

This year, seven elementary schools have or will be going through the JA BizTown experience. Next year, the curriculum will roll out to the remaining elementary schools and all Ankeny elementary schools will be participating in JA BizTown.

The work of college and career readiness cannot wait until a student enters high school. Through engaging in the JA BizTown program, we have bolstered our efforts to integrate college and career readiness throughout a student’s Ankeny experience. Through this intentional planning, our goal is that all students will be fully prepared for a lifetime of personal success beyond high school, regardless of their pathway after graduation.
In the recent Ankeny Advance, we covered the district’s three-year plan to implement Standards-Referenced Grading (SRG) practices in our middle and high schools. Some of you may have noticed additional information in Infinite Campus this year. Previously, information has been shared on how teachers provide additional information on student performance aligned to Grade Level Standards. In addition, they will give an overall letter grade for the course. This is one step toward reporting student progress using a Standards-Referenced approach.

Why are we changing the way we report out student learning?

Simply put, providing additional information regarding student progress on Grade Level Standards allows both the student and parent to see what areas of learning are strengths and what areas need additional support. A clear and accurate grade is the goal for Standards-Referenced Grading practices. Changing what we report to students and parents allows the conversation around learning to be more specific to what they know and what they do not yet know.

In Ankeny, we believe ALL students can learn at high levels. For far too long in our educational history, only those students who learned more quickly were rewarded in school. Success leads to more success so some students continued to excel while others lost confidence and did not meet their potential. If you learned at a different rate, you were not considered smart. We know better now. We know students learn at different rates; many students need to have multiple experiences and practice to understand complex content and/or skills. That is true when you are a student or even an adult learning new content or new skills. A Standards-Referenced approach emphasizes using multiple and varied teaching methods to help students learn.

Today’s learner needs to demonstrate more than being the fastest at finding the right answer. Today’s learner must demonstrate problem-solving that may result in several answers - to justify their thinking and provide evidence of their argument. Today’s learner must be able to be innovative, to collaborate with others on a team, to be able to work independently AND to be competitive academically in a global market. I have not met a parent that did not want their student to succeed; to be prepared for career or college. The mission of our schools is to prepare students for “a lifetime of personal success” - wherever that path may lead. Educators are still concerned with achievement, - and the best, most effective way to help students achieve at high levels - is to provide them the necessary foundation. We believe that foundation can be achieved through Standards-Referenced Grading practices.

One thing remains the same, letter grades will still be awarded and a GPA will be calculated so students can have a smooth transition with college entrance. We are committed to providing additional information to students and parents so the conversation around student learning can be more than just the letter grade on a report card. A Standards-Referenced approach positively changes how we talk to students about daily learning in the classroom. It changes how we communicate to parents regarding how their student is performing in the classroom. And it changes how we report out in Infinite Campus and on the report card.

Ankeny is in the second year of a three-year plan to implement a Standards-Referenced Grading approach. The ultimate goal is for teachers to communicate information about how well students are performing on each Grade Level Standard AND provide an overall letter grade. Some things will remain the same, while other traditional practices will change. You may start to notice some of those changes this year and into next year. No matter the changes, we are always open to your questions as you seek clarity and understanding. Because we care about your student’s success, Ankeny Schools will continue to provide information about Standards-Referenced Grading practices and how it will help us to change the conversation around student learning.
Ankeny Community School District’s fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget was approved by the Board of Education at their April 1 meeting, following a public hearing for budget adoption. The budget includes a 43-cent reduction in the current school tax rate. The budget levy of $17.52 per $1,000 taxable valuation is anticipated to minimally decrease taxes for a home owner $0.07 per month for a house valued at $250,000. For the ninth consecutive year, the school’s portion of the total tax rate has decreased, bringing the total reduction to $4.83 over that period. School districts are required by law to submit their budgets to the state by April 15.

“Ankeny Schools is committed to excellence. Part of that commitment is our continued financial responsibility to Ankeny taxpayers,” said Dr. Bruce A. Kimpston, Superintendent.

Several key highlights of the district’s budget include:

- Student enrollment growth continues to be a primary driving force in the district’s budget. Ankeny’s October 2018 certified student enrollment of 11,977.02 represents a growth of 428.31 students in one year. Ankeny is the sixth largest district in the state.
- The legislature has set 2.06% as the FY2020 Supplemental State Aid (or allowable growth) increase. The Ankeny regular program district cost per student for current FY2020 budget is $6,880.
- Student programming needs are being served without requiring budget cuts to the classroom.
- The school district is one of nine taxing entities in the Ankeny community. The school district’s current tax rate represents 44.4% of the total property tax bill, down from more than 53.5% several years ago.
- The district can legally request $9,666,489 in cash reserve for the FY2020 budget, it is requesting the full amount, which is an increase from the previous year of $5,909,673.
- At the end of Fiscal Year 2018, the district’s Financial Solvency Ratio was 12.3%.
- The FY2019 debt rate of $2.80 placed Ankeny 34th in the state of 330 school districts for debt rate. $4.05 is the statutory limit on debt for Iowa schools.
Ankeny School’s teachers are continually learning. Our district makes professional learning a priority. So what are teachers learning and why is it essential for students?

A key factor contributing to student success is quality teaching. Professional learning is what we use to ensure Ankeny’s educators continue to strengthen their practice. Research shows when educators learn; students learn more.

**Professional Learning Areas of Focus**

The Ankeny Community School District has identified six areas that pave the way for what teachers and administrators do each day. Those driving factors are called Standard Work in Ankeny.

**Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** - allows educators to judge the overall health of their educational system by examining data on the educational system as well as identifying students who need additional supports.

**Standards-Referenced Grading (SRG)** - measuring students’ proficiency in well-defined course objectives or standards.

**Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum** - “guaranteed” means that all students, regardless of teacher or school have access to the same content, knowledge, and skills across the district. “Viable” ensures the curriculum is realistic, developmentally appropriate, and challenging.

**Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)** - a schoolwide approach to make schools safer and improve student behavior.

**Professional Learning and Growth** - focuses on improving professional practices.

**Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** - groups to foster collaborative learning among colleagues within a particular area.

When Ankeny teachers engage in professional learning they focus on these six areas to ensure efforts are cohesive, aligned, efficient and effective, and system-wide. Topics for each building’s professional learning are varied and designed to provide deep and lasting change in instructional practices. This aligns with Ankeny Schools strategic plan to provide high-quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment in every classroom.

How do we know professional learning is effective and benefits students? There are six criteria that are evaluated in looking at the quality of professional learning: learning communities, leadership, data-driven, learning designs, implementation, and research-based.

Careful consideration is given to each of these areas. Scores are assigned based on specific criteria, and expectations and examples are cited, such as student work and assessments. Attention is also given to student data to ensure all students make progress. All of this work ultimately boils down to students. If we engage our staff in high-quality professional learning, then every learner will be prepared to achieve a lifetime of personal success.
In high school cross country, everyone runs the same race. When the finishers’ results are posted, one athlete wins first place and one places last. These numbers, however, are not a truly accurate picture of each competitor. Based on this ranking, we wouldn’t know about the runner who placed seventh but overcame an injury to finish with a personal best. Much like high school class rank, the number shows who finishes first in the class, but it doesn’t depict a student’s whole academic “story.”

Class ranking is a mathematical summary of a student’s academic record compared to those of other students in their class. Ankeny is one of a number of districts across the country discontinuing the use of class rank, allowing students to focus on their accomplishments without worrying where they fall into a hierarchy. When students are not concerned with class rank, they are encouraged to choose courses based on what’s best for them instead of selecting classes to bolster their ranking.

Ankeny has been in the process of phasing out class rank for several years beginning with the 2021 graduating class. Current juniors and seniors will be the last classes to receive the ranking. Recently, many colleges, including Iowa’s three state universities, decided to adjust to the increasing number of applications without class rank. The Iowa Regents currently use two formulas to calculate admissions scores. One using high school class rank and one without. Beginning with the summer 2020 semester, the Iowa Regents will use one formula, without class rank, to calculate admissions, which aligns with the work started in Ankeny in 2015.

With no class rank to consider, colleges and scholarship programs are forced to look deeper at a student’s whole academic story to determine their achievements.

Before and After School Registration

Registration for the 2019-2020 Before and After School Program is underway. The program serves students in kindergarten through fifth grade and provides a safe, quality, hands-on enrichment experience for students at all 10 elementary schools. Participants of the program may also take advantage of no school day camps and winter and spring break adventure camps.

August 10 is the registration deadline if you wish to begin the program on the first day of school. Registrations will continue to be accepted after August 11, however, those completed after that date will not be eligible to begin until after the first day of school. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

A non-refundable registration fee of $50, payable by debit or credit card, is due at the time of registration.

For complete program details, including monthly tuition rates, registration options, and online registration information, visit www.ankenyschools.org/basp.
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