



Navarro ISD

District Update & Board Notes

from Mandy D. Epley, Superintendent

December 2023

Navarro ISD Board of Trustees



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Navarro ISD Superintendent



Mandy Epley

Superintendent Message

Panther Family,

As we close out 2023, we often are caught in the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations and it is important to take time to reflect on the year and what we have learned. Each day we get the privilege of listening and learning with our students and supporting growth in our community. This past week, I watched several Senior Symposium projects where students defended their positions for change in the areas of instruction and policy. Some of these topics are continuing to be discussed and will be presented to the school board through the Student Advisory recommendations. I am proud of our students and their ability to research and articulate their ideas. The feedback from the students as well as our families, and staff, has been instrumental in shaping communication, facilities planning, curriculum and driving conversations about student engagement.

As part of that engagement, we will be developing intentional initiatives to engage both students and parents along the Navarro educational journey. First, I have tasked Academic Services and the campus principals to consider the readiness standards for entry to the first level experience on their campuses. The onboarding of students and families to the PK/K, 6th, and 9th grade experiences is critical to success and we want to better articulate expectations, supports, resources, communication tools and strategies for students and families. We are calling this initiative **Navarro Ready**. Students and parents will be able to access a checklist of standards for success that are needed prior to the grade level and links to supports, personnel and processes for students who may need extra help or for parents who have questions as their student transitions to the next level. We will continue to build the standards for all levels so parents and students can use the resource as a guide to assess progress in academic pursuits, college, career, or military planning, and social/emotional expectations.

The next platform will be to articulate all the activities and opportunities that students have access to while at Navarro ISD PK-12. We call this **Navarro Engaged**. Parents and students will have access to the opportunities guide where they can see what activities and opportunities are available by grade level for their students to participate in before, during, and after school. We will have the contact information for sponsors, or community partners, and the information regarding times, locations, and any fees. Research shows that the more connected students are with adults and opportunities for learning with co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, the more likely they are to be successful academically and socially.

Our **Navarro Prepared** initiative will address concerns we heard from parents and students in both Collaborative Visioning and Student Advisory that the students were not prepared with information on college testing, essays, applications, and overall awareness of next steps to be prepared for their post-graduation plan. In conjunction with coursework, CTE industry-based certifications, military lunch visits, and future ready workshops, Navarro Prepared will provide resources for students and parents to access earlier in the education process to prepare for post-graduation. We will work on a timeline to help guide parents and students through the 4-year planning process aligned with when and where students should be seeking information and applying for post-secondary opportunities.

We believe this intentional alignment will strengthen communication, provide clear pathways for student connection and achievement, and provide support for all families to be successful while in Navarro and beyond. We are also working with our counselors and social worker to continue to develop and provide a platform of support for students and parents that offers resources to assist with relevant issues and information mandated to be sent to parents from the Texas School Safety Center and TEA. That site and initiative is Navarro Aware. <https://www.nisd.us/page/aware-family-information-center>

We are excited to align our goals and priorities and work together with all our stakeholders to continue to improve our work for better student outcomes and ensure both new and established Navarro families are connected to the processes and information they need to maximize their Navarro ISD experience.

I wish you the happiest of holidays and a joyous and prosperous new year! May you be blessed with time to reflect with your loved ones and have a safe and wonderful break. We are excited to continue making memories when we return January 8.

Mandy D. Epley
Superintendent of Schools
Navarro ISD

Long-Range Master Planning

The district has been conducting meetings with a group of volunteers who have agreed to serve on the Long-Range Master Planning Committee. This committee, made up of faculty, staff, students, parents, and community members met four times so far, and discussed future facilities and priority projects. The committee will meet again as a group in January, and then will present to the Board of Trustees their recommendations to address current and future growth needs for the District.

The Board saw a presentation recapping all of the interactive feedback opportunities the committee has participated in to help us gain a closer understanding of priorities, design vision, and cost.





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Recognitions

Navarro High School Volleyball Team

- Overall Record: 33-11
- District Record: 8-4 (placing 3rd out of 7 teams)
- Tournament Champions (Hondo Varsity Tournament), Consolation Champions: Bastrop Tournament
- Multiple individual student recognitions



Navarro Thespians

Recently several of the Navarro High School Thespians attended the Texas Thespian Festival in Grapevine, TX.

- Addison Grienke and Kenzie Koenig competed in the Duet Musical Theatre Competition. They received Superior ratings from all judges and have qualified to compete at Nationals this summer.
- Jaden Schnepel competed in the Solo Musical Theatre Competition. She received Superior ratings from all judges and has qualified to compete at Nationals this summer.
- Kyle Nored competed in the Prop Design Competition creating 14 foot wide working wings for the musical "Wicked" and placed in the top 8 in the state.

Panthers Feeding Panthers

- Navarro High School Key Club members currently assemble 40 snack bags per week to be distributed on Fridays by counselors.
- This year for Thanksgiving break, 20 families were selected to receive a box of pantry food items donated by high school staff, the Navarro Intermediate campus Food Drive and Turkey Bowl that collected food items and monetary donations for both Panthers Feeding Panthers and the Christian Cupboard and also from local community members, who organized a raffle with items donated from local businesses where proceeds went to support the program. Thank you to those businesses that participated in the raffle.



Navarro Varsity Football

- Overall Record: 9-4
- Bi-District Champions
- Area Champions
- Multiple individual student recognitions

Coach Harborth

- On Friday, December 1, our Head Women's Basketball Coach, Darrell Harborth, achieved a momentous milestone by securing his 600th victory as the coach of the Navarro Runnin' Lady Panthers Basketball program.



To view the full list of names and accomplishments recognized, please visit <https://qrcodedynamic.com/Dec23Recognitions/>.

Safety & Security Update

The School Safety and Security Committee is a group of diverse individuals that serves the members of its school district by helping create and maintain a safe and secure school climate and culture for staff and students. Safety and Security Committee December Meeting Updates:

- Welcomed new members
- Viewed semester safety door audits
- Reviewed old business, safety upgrades and conducted a semester recap
- Viewed open grants available to the district

Important Upcoming Dates:

- March 11th, 2024 - Full scale emergency exercise with the county
- April 25th, 2024 - Safety and Security Committee Meeting



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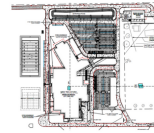
Sept 2023



Dec 2023



Rendering



Actual Site



The new high school building footprint is visible. Excavation of the building pad, and build back at the two story classroom portion continues, and the french drain is more than halfway complete. Spoils have been used to build up landscaping and parking areas. Manholes and sewer line installation on the south side of the property line and west side of the building have passed inspections and been backfilled. Crews are now working on sewer lines on the east side of the future building. Storm drains and water mains are coming up. Dirt work is expected to continue over the holidays, however the utility subs will be offsite. The Board approved a resolution for GVEC easements on the school property to begin design on rerouting of the service at the main entry, and moving the current overhead power serving the Puls Farm to underground.

Visit <https://www.agcm.com/navarro/> to stay up-to-date on Bond progress!

Transportation Update

This month, the Transportation Department presented the process to become a Bus Driver as well as an update on the size of our routes, student ridership accountability, camera systems, fleet maintenance tracking, and our white fleet. To be a driver, multiple steps that must be completed and passed including skills tests in all areas of school bus vehicle operations, TEA School Bus Certification Courses (20 hours), passing DPS skills test to obtain CDL, practice with school bus operations including loading and unloading the bus, and demonstrating proficiency in operations before you are officially a school bus driver. This process takes 6-8 weeks for each potential new driver to complete. We are continuing to run newspaper ads, and attend job fairs to recruit new drivers to start the certification process.

The new ridership accountability program will begin as a pilot program in January with one bus that will test the system. This program will have riders scanning as they get on and off the bus to help parents and staff account for students. The plan is for this program to expand to all buses in the fleet once we finish the pilot program.

The Board was presented with a recommendation to upgrade the fleet to a new camera system that would address technical and visibility concerns. The Board unanimously voted to approve the purchase of the new camera system during the meeting.

Audit Report

In accordance with state law, we discussed School First at the Monday, December 18 meeting. Kimberly Roach, CPA, a partner in our external audit firm of Armstrong, Vaughan, PC presented a summary of information on the audited financial statements for the year ended on Aug 31, 2023. We received a clean opinion. There were no material or significant findings. They noted that the Child Nutrition fund balance is considered in excess of the amount allowed by Texas Department of Agriculture and management has a plan to reduce this. The NISD Board approved the Audited Financial Statement presented as required under state law which states we must complete and submit to the Texas Education Agency within 180 days of the district's fiscal year end.

Other Action Items

To view the agenda or attachments for the information presented at this board meeting, please visit:
<https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Agenda/1383?meeting=586574>

To watch the recording of the meeting please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/@NavarroPantherEvents/streams>

Next Special Board Meeting:

Mon, January 22, 2024 at 5:30 pm in the Intermediate Cafeteria

Next Regular Board Meeting:

Mon, January 22, 2024 at 7:00 pm in the Intermediate Cafeteria



Navarro Independent School District
6450 N State HWY 113
Seguin, TX 78155
830-372-1930

For a list of upcoming events and activities throughout the district, please visit <https://www.nisd.us/events>