

August 2017
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Rockford Area Schools Piano Lessons...The Key To Success!

August 11, 2017

Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 a.m.
Grand Hall,
TIES Conference Center
St. Paul

August 18, 2017

Executive/Legislative Committee Meeting

7:30 a.m.
Lexington Room,
TIES Conference Center
St. Paul

September 8, 2017

Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 a.m.
Grand Hall,
TIES Conference Center
St. Paul

SAVE THE DATE

October 11, 2017

AMSD Annual Conference

8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Grand Hall,
TIES Conference Center
St. Paul

AMSD's Mission

To advocate for state education policy that enables metropolitan school districts to improve student learning.



Association of
Metropolitan School Districts

Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School (REAMS) takes arts education to the next level by integrating piano lessons into the regular school day. All third and fourth grade students have the opportunity to learn to play the piano or enhance their current piano skills in weekly piano lab group lessons during their school day.

Principal Brenda Nyhus stated, “We are absolutely thrilled to be offering piano lessons at Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School! We understand firsthand the role music plays in educating the whole student. We have selected an engaging curriculum that centers upon rhythm accuracy, keyboard geography and staff note reading proficiency. Our lesson time allows for group instruction and individual practice as well. We are excited to see students grow in this program and look forward to offering piano each day!”

Arts integration is a key factor to enhancing the learning of students at REAMS, and the staff is excited to provide this opportunity for all third and fourth grade students. Research shows that there are many beneficial attributes children acquire



A student prepares to play a piano piece at Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School.

Continued on page 2

From the Chair

Iwould like to thank AMSD board members for the opportunity to serve as chair over the past year. It has been an honor to work with AMSD's dedicated school board members, superintendents and staff to advocate for our common goals. The work we do together makes a huge difference for our students, our staffs and our communities.

This month's newsletter provides an overview of the recently released state ESSA plan, along with links to the full plan and other pertinent information. I encourage AMSD members to take advantage of the public comment period to share your feedback and ideas with Commissioner Cassellius and her staff. Your input will help develop a state plan that best serves the needs of our students and helps them reach their full potential.

Enjoy the remaining weeks of summer and best wishes for a great start to the new school year!

John Vento, school board member from Robbinsdale Area Schools, is chair of AMSD.

Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School Students Benefit From Weekly Piano Lessons

Continued from page 1

from learning to play the piano. Some of the most prevalent include: higher math scores, especially on problems dealing with ratios and fractions, enhanced memory, increased coordination, better self-discipline and improved concentration and focus. Skills acquired in piano also prepare them for future band experiences, as well as better understanding in a choral setting.

Students are learning techniques and skills in a piano lab with individual keyboards for each student. They also have access to practice opportunities throughout the day in classrooms, during recess and before and after school. Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School provides many performance opportunities for the students in piano to showcase their learning.



Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School

REAMS students have been benefitting from weekly piano lessons for the last four years. Fourth grade student Patience Cunningham shared that she loved piano lessons. She always looked forward to learning new songs and new skills and thought it helped her in her other classes as well. The students are learning a valuable skill that transfers to many subjects and positively impacts their learning.

For more information about the piano lesson program or the arts magnet program, contact Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School at 763-477-5837.

This month's member spotlight was submitted by Brenda Hyhus, principal at Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School, Rockford Area Schools.



Rockford Elementary Area Magnet School students participating in the piano lessons program.

Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan Released

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law by President Obama on December 10, 2015. ESSA serves as the federal education accountability law and replaces the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. Under the ESSA law, each state must develop a plan that addresses standards, assessments, school and district accountability, and support for students and educators. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) held more than 300 statewide meetings during the development of the state plan. Stakeholders identified several key priorities including: alignment with Minnesota’s World’s Best Workforce requirements, equity and a focus on every Minnesota student (pre-K through grade 12), a well-rounded education, support for schools and districts and transparency in reporting.

The MDE released the state plan draft on August 1, 2017 for public comment. The public comment period will allow education professionals, advocates, families and community members to weigh in on the proposed state plan via an online survey or in person at a regional meeting. The MDE recommends using the online form to submit feedback to ensure all details of your comments are recorded. The public comment period will end on August 31. The MDE will submit the final plan to the United States Department of Education on September 18, 2017. The plan will go through a peer review process and the Secretary of Education will have 120 days to approve the plan.

Summary of Notable Items in the Minnesota ESSA Draft Plan

(A full summary of the draft is available on the MDE web page)

Minnesota Goals

| Area | Goal |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Reading/Language Arts and Math | The state’s achievement rate will be 90 percent, with no student group below 85, by 2025. |
| Third Grade Reading/Language Arts | Reach a third grade reading/language arts achievement rate of 90 percent, with no student group below 85, by 2025. |
| Eighth Grade Math | Reach an eighth grade math achievement rate of 90 percent, with no student group below 85, by 2025. |
| Four-Year Graduation Rate | Four-year graduation rate will be 90 percent, with no student group below 85 percent, by 2020. |
| English Language Proficiency | The progress toward English language proficiency goal will be set this summer once this year’s ACCESS 2.0 results are in and a baseline can be calculated. |
| Attendance | Consistent attendance goal will be 95 percent overall, with no student group below 90 percent, by 2020. |

Assessment

- Under ESSA, Minnesota will continue to administer the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS). These assessments are aligned to the most recent version of Minnesota’s Academic Standards. Students will continue to take reading and math tests in grades 3-8 and once in high school, and the science test in grades 5 and 8 and once in high school.
- Beginning in 2018, Minnesota will provide translations of academic words throughout the math and science MCAs in Spanish, Somali and Hmong languages. The translations will be of academic words using a pop-up in the online test and a word list in the paper accommodation.
- ESSA requires that states factor test participation into their accountability systems. In Minnesota, students who do not take their grade level MCA will count similarly to students who are not proficient, although they will not be identified that way in state records or reporting to parents.

Accountability

- The proposed accountability system will be used to prioritize support for identified schools. The system emphasizes partnership and improvement instead of a limited set of consequences. Accountability indicators are publicly reported for all schools and disaggregated at the student level.

Continued on page 4

AMSD Members: Anoka-Hennepin School District, Bloomington Public Schools, Board of School Administrators (Associate Member), Brooklyn Center Community Schools, Burnsville-Eagan-Savage, Columbia Heights Public Schools, Eastern Carver County Schools, Eden Prairie Schools, Edina Public Schools, Elk River Area School District, Equity Alliance MN (Associate Member), Farmington Area Public Schools, Fridley Public Schools, Hopkins Public Schools, Intermediate School District 287, Intermediate School District 917 (Associate Member), Inver Grove Heights Schools, Lakeville Area Public Schools, Mahtomedi Public Schools, Metro ECSU (Associate Member), Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnetonka Public Schools, Mounds View Public Schools, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School District, Northeast Metro Intermediate School District 916, Northwest Suburban Integration District (Associate Member), Orono Schools, Osseo Area Schools, Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools, Richfield Public Schools, Robbinsdale Area Schools, Rochester Public Schools, Rockford Area Schools, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools, Roseville Area Schools, Shakopee Public Schools, South St. Paul Public Schools, South Washington County Schools, SouthWest Metro Intermediate District (Associate Member), Spring Lake Park Schools, St. Anthony-New Brighton Independent School District, St. Cloud Area Schools, St. Louis Park Public Schools, St. Paul Public Schools, Stillwater Area Public Schools, TIES (Associate Member), Wayzata Public Schools, West Metro Education Program, West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools and White Bear Lake Area Schools.

Academic Indicators Outlined

Continued from page 3

| Proposed Academic Indicators | |
|--|--|
| Indicator 1 Academic Achievement: all schools | An achievement rate using math and reading tests will give points for students in the “meets standards” or “exceeds standards” levels. Any student that does not participate in an assessment, with the exception of medically-exempt students, will count as “not proficient” in the academic achievement indicator calculation. |
| Indicator 2 Academic Progress: elementary and middle schools | A transition matrix using math and reading tests will award points for students increasing achievement levels (e.g. moving from “does not meet standards” to “partially meets standards”). |
| Indicator 3 Graduation Rate: high schools | The indicator will use a school’s four-year and seven-year graduation rates. Students who drop out after less than half an academic year at a school will be counted at the high school they attended the longest period of time. Four-, five-, six- and seven-year rates will be reported on the Minnesota Report Card. |
| Indicator 4 Progress Toward English Language Proficiency: all schools | A growth index will measure how each English learner scored relative to their individual growth-to-proficiency target on the ACCESS test. |
| Indicator 5 School Quality/Student Success: all schools | This new indicator will shift over time as more data becomes available. 2018: Consistent attendance will be used to identify schools. 2019/2020: Consistent attendance will be used to identify schools. Well-rounded education and career and college readiness data will be separately reported as available. 2021: Consistent attendance, well-rounded education, and career and college readiness data will be used to identify schools. A student will be determined to be chronically absent if their attendance rate is at or below 90 percent during the days they were enrolled at a school. A student must be enrolled for at least half an academic year to be included in a school’s calculation. The consistent attendance rate will be calculated by subtracting the percentage of chronically absent students from 100 percent. For example, if 3 percent of English learners at a school are chronically absent, the consistent attendance rate for English learners at that school would be 97 percent. |

Identification for Support and Improvement

- Elementary and middle schools will be identified through a funneling process in three stages. Stage 1 uses academic achievement in math and reading and progress toward English language proficiency (indicators 1 and 4). Stage 2 uses academic progress in math and reading (indicator 2). Stage 3 uses consistent attendance (indicator 5).
- High Schools will be identified through a similar funneling process in three stages. Stage 1 uses academic achievement in math and reading and progress toward English language proficiency (indicators 1 and 4). Stage 2 uses graduation rates, first looking at the four-year rate, then the seven- year rate (indicator 3). Stage 3 uses consistent attendance (indicator 5).

Different thresholds will be used for each indicator when identifying:

- The bottom 5 percent of schools receiving Title I funds.
 - Schools with any student group performing similarly to the bottom 5 percent of schools.
 - Schools where one or more groups are consistently underperforming.
- Under ESSA, any public high school in the state with a graduation rate below 67 percent overall or for any student group will be identified for support.
 - Identifications for comprehensive support and improvement will be made every three years, based on data since the previous identification.

School Improvement

- Primary supports for identified schools will be provided through onsite coaching, professional development and networking opportunities from Minnesota’s Regional Centers of Excellence.
- Schools will no longer be required to set aside 20 percent of Title I funds for school improvement, but districts will be required to demonstrate that schools’ support and improvement plans are adequately resourced.
- The state will not withhold 3 percent of the Title I, Part A allocation for grants to districts and charters to pay for direct student services, such as academic courses not offered at the school, credit recovery options and advanced or college credit bearing courses.

Continued on page 5

Public Comment Period Open Until August 31

Continued from page 4

Educator Quality

- Districts will be required to create and regularly update local plans for ensuring low-income students, students of color and American Indian students have equitable access to effective, experienced and in-field teachers, as well as to improve student access to teachers of color and American Indian teachers.
- The state will define “ineffective teacher” as a teacher who is not meeting professional teaching standards as defined in local teacher development and evaluation systems. Data may only be used locally to inform equitable access plans. The state will continue to collect data on teacher experience, licensure and assignment as part of state equitable access planning and public reporting.

English Learners

- When identifying schools for improvement, former English learners (EL) will be included in a school’s EL student group for four years after exiting EL status.
- Recently arrived English learners will be expected to take state academic tests during their first year of enrollment. That first year’s results will not be included in accountability calculations. In the student’s second year of enrollment, their score will be used when calculating academic progress, but not when calculating academic achievement. In the third year of enrollment, scores will be used when calculating both academic progress and academic achievement.

Future Work on State Plan

- MDE will continue work with stakeholders in the 2017-2018 school year to determine the process and measures to identify schools for success.
- MDE will consult with stakeholders in the 2017-18 school year to continue to develop shared priorities for data reporting and to determine how to present data in a useful way to empower families, communities and educators.
- A process will be established for the state to consider a nationally-recognized high school assessment in place of the high school MCAs.
- Considerations will be developed for Minnesota’s next assessment system.
- Statewide standardized procedures will be developed for identifying and exiting English learners from language instruction educational programs.

Resources

- ESSA page on MDE web page: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/>
- ESSA Public Comment Page with Draft Plan: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/dse/ESSA/StatePlanPublicComment/>
- Submit a Comment Via Online Survey: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3743085/Minnesota-Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-State-Plan-Public-Comment-Survey>
- Register for Regional Meetings: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3728223/ESSA-Regional-Meeting-Registration-August-2017>

| Minnesota ESSA State Plan Public Comment Events All meetings will be from 6-7:30 p.m. Additional meetings will take place in Mankato, Moorhead and Duluth. Visit the MDE page for details. | | |
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| Date | Location | Details |
| August 15, 2017 | St. Paul | Wilder Foundation Auditorium 451 Lexington Parkway North, St. Paul |
| August 16, 2017 | Rochester | John Marshall High School Auditorium 1510 14th Street Northwest, Rochester |
| August 22, 2017 | Sartell | Resource Training and Education, First Level Training Rooms 137 23rd Street South #201, Sartell |