



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues:

I hope y'all had a safe and wonderful Labor Day weekend and you were able to get out and enjoy some time with family and friends. The 2022-23 school year is in full swing, and there are so many great things happening within our District 51 schools. There are also great things happening outside of the school day as our fall sports teams have stepped onto fields, courts, and trails across the state to represent District 51. I've enjoyed watching our student athletes compete this year, and I'd encourage you to make it out to an event soon to cheer on our hard working kiddos! You can find all of our fall sports schedules [here](#). Shoutout to all of our D51 Athletic Directors and coaches for pouring your time and energy into our student athletes.

Our high school marching bands have also been working hard throughout the summer and into the fall to prepare for competition season. I'm encouraging y'all to come out and enjoy some great performances on Sept. 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the Grand Valley Marching Band Extravaganza. This event is free and will be held at Stocker Stadium. Thanks to our Band Directors for the countless hours y'all have put in so that our students have the opportunity to perform and compete.

As I continue to visit our schools across the district in my first 100 days, I am amazed at the great work happening within our school buildings. And, as I'm out in the community meeting with our partners and stakeholders, I'm also amazed at the support and gratitude we receive from our engaged & supportive community partners. It is an exciting time of year, and I hope y'all get out and take part in the many opportunities available to support our D51 family.

Remembering 9/11

As we approach the anniversary of the attacks on 9/11, we as a district want to honor the sacrifices of our brave men and women who were first responders on September 11, 2001. Our D51 Board of Education shared a proclamation at Tuesday's Board Work Session that you can read [here](#). Many of our schools held ceremonies to honor the sacrifices of 9/11, and I was able to attend one such ceremony at Orchard Mesa Middle School as they hosted a Patriotic Assembly this morning. Thank you to Dr. Birdsey and the OMMS students and staff for putting together such a great program.

Safety and Security in District 51

Last week I shared that our award winning Safety and Security team would be presenting a comprehensive overview of our Safety & Security protocols & procedures at the Board of Education Work Session this week. Tim Leon, our D51 Director of Safety & Security, and Jason Talley, our Crisis Response Coordinator, were joined by representatives from Fruita PD, Grand Junction PD, Palisade PD, and the Mesa County Sheriff's Department during the presentation. The presentation included a history of the creation of the Safety & Security Department, an overview of the number of Safety & Security Officers we employ and the amount of School Resource Officers our partner agencies employ and where they are stationed, along with an overview of safety drills and hardening of schools (additional keyless locks, vestibules, radios, cameras, upgraded PA systems, fencing, etc.). The presentation also included information on how we as a district respond to a crisis, how we handle Safe2Tell tips, and how we assess risks and threats. The presentation was a lengthy yet necessary & informative one, and I encourage everyone to view the recording of the meeting if you are curious to learn more about how we keep our students, staff, and families safe within our district facilities. For more details on the presentation you can access the [video](#) from the meeting.

CMAS & PSAT/SAT Data

As we work to ensure academic success for all of our D51 students, we must keep data at the forefront of every decision that we make. At the Board Work Session on Tuesday, Jennifer Marsh, D51 Chief Academic Officer, and Curry Newton, D51 Director of Assessment, presented an update to the Board on our latest results from last year's CMAS & PSAT/SAT testing. We have a lot to celebrate when looking at the data while also acknowledging that we have additional work to do to help all of our students perform at or above grade level. When comparing D51 test results to the state and districts with similar student size and demographics, we were the only district to show academic growth trends in CMAS ELA & Math. This is due in large part to the hard work of our teachers, staff, and students throughout the pandemic and the support from our Central Office staff to help facilitate Data Informed Instruction in all of our schools. We are focused on continuous improvement as a district and will work towards the academic success goals we've identified in the Strategic Plan over the next three years. To view the data update that was presented to the Board, you can view it [here](#) at around the 3-hour mark.

Strategic Plan Follow Up

As we continue to operationalize our 2022-25 Board-Adopted Strategic Plan, The Colorado Education Initiative is working with our staff to facilitate Focus Area Action Teams tied to the three Focus Areas of the Strategic Plan (Prepared and Supported Students, Prepared and Supported Staff, & Engaged and Supportive Community Partners). Throughout the year, these teams will come together to set clear milestones and be able to track the progress that is made towards the goals tied to the Key Performance Indicators under each Strategic Priority Area. The teams will be presenting to the Board of Education monthly on their progress, to share updates, and to field questions. I am excited by the commitment of the members of our district and community to bring our Strategic Plan to life for each and every student and staff member in our D51 family. To learn more about the D51 Strategic Plan, you can visit our [website](#). You can also view an update from CEI at this week's Board Work Session [here](#). It starts around the 3-hour 20-minute mark.

Clifton Community Campus Groundbreaking

On Thursday I was honored to participate in the ground breaking event for the new Clifton Community Campus, along with students and staff from Rocky Mountain Elementary. Mesa County is breaking ground on the Clifton Community Campus to meet the needs and better serve the residents of Clifton through accessible services and resources. The campus will include an early childhood education center and training hub, a town hall, a childcare center, and a new Clifton Library Branch. The partnership between the Mesa County Commissioners, their staff, and the many community organizations who were present is a great example of having Engaged & Supportive Community Partners. We are excited for our D51 students, families, and staff in the Clifton community, and I want to thank Mesa County for having a vision and for backing up that vision with the necessary resources and support.

Grand Junction High School Update

Because of the support of our D51 Family and community, the new Grand Junction High School bond project is starting off on a firm foundation. Your bond dollars are hard at work, building a new future for the students of Grand Junction High School. We will be periodically sending out video updates to show the progress being made at the build site. Please take a moment to view the [latest video](#) highlighting the foundation on which this school is being built. You can also check in through our Facebook Page as we highlight the weekly changes taking place. We are excited about the future Grand Junction High School opening in Fall 2024.

Listening Sessions

I have enjoyed getting out into the community and hearing from our many stakeholders during the Superintendent Listening Tour. Listening sessions will continue to take place across the valley this next week. I hope to have the chance to meet more of you as these events take place. Here is the list of upcoming sessions for the week.

- Monday, Sept. 12 - Mt. Garfield Middle School, 3475 Front St., 4-5 p.m. (snacks provided)
- Tuesday, Sept. 13 - Career Center, 2935 North Ave., 12-1 p.m. (lunch provided)
- Thursday, Sept. 15 - Basil T. Knight, 596 N. Westgate, 7-8 p.m. (in Spanish, following Multilingual Family Engagement Night - snacks provided)
- Friday, Sept. 16 - Kiln Coffee Bar, 326 Main St., 8-9 a.m. (coffee donated)

Leadership D51 Reminder

We are still accepting applications in our brand new Leadership D51 program for community members interested in learning more about District 51. Thank you to those who have already submitted an application. If you are someone who wants to have a more in-depth understanding of D51, and wants to be an ambassador for our district, I encourage you to apply to be a part of the first cohort of Leadership D51. The application deadline is September 21. You can find more information and submit your application [here](#).

Brian Hill

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SENIOR LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Tammy Eret

General Counsel

Career Background
Mesa County District Attorney (12 years); Counsel with Hoskin Farina and Kampf (10 years).

Alma Mater
Colorado State University and Creighton Law School

Why did you want to work in K-12 education?
As a career prosecutor, I focused on giving a voice to children in a time of need. Though these times were difficult, I loved seeing their hope, energy and perseverance. You can't help but smile when you walk into our schools and see the great things children can, and will, do. I couldn't think of a better way to continue my career.

What's your favorite thing about D51?
The students and working with so many exceptional people. I have 5 children, 4 currently in the District, and I truly believe we have phenomenal teachers and staff!

What are you looking to accomplish this year in your role?
I'm excited to be a part of this team and am so thankful I'm able to provide support and guidance as the District and Dr. Hill advance their vision for the future of our students.

Fun Fact
I was born in Bitburg (West) Germany. My parents, both born in Europe, immigrated to the United States and English was their second language. Though I speak some German, I understand more than people think. My parents learned this lesson the hard way when discussing Christmas presents in front of me!





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