



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues:

It has been a short but eventful week in D51. We started off the week celebrating President's Day and ended the week with a 2-hour snow delay. Delays are never an easy call, but we will always put the safety of our students, staff, and families first and err on the side of caution. We realize delays or cancellations cause a disruption to everyone's schedule, but a lot goes into these decisions, and we try to make them as early as possible. We serve a large area in Mesa County, so while the weather may not seem as bad in one area, roads can be very dangerous in another area at the same time. We have to make decisions based on the safety of our entire District, and it's a large area to account for. Today, for instance, roads in Glade Park, Fruita/Loma/Mack, and Palisade were hit worse than others. With buses traveling all across the valley, staff commuting to work all across the valley, and families and student-drivers (many of whom travel across the valley on School of Choice or Transfer), we have to take everyone's safety into account. A delay allows more time for our partners at the County and the different cities/towns we serve to plow the roads for safer travel. Thanks to the D51 Snow Team for being on the roads early in the morning and coordinating with our local agencies to help make the call, and thank you to our D51 Family for your understanding when these decisions have to be made.

We had a lengthy and important Board Meeting on Tuesday night as we continued discussions on the topic of enrollment declines, the impact that is having on finances and the staffing of unfunded positions at schools, and the possibility of school closures/consolidations. We value public comment from our community, and the Board of Education displayed that value by extending the comment period in order to allow for everyone to speak who was in attendance. It's always great to hear how passionate our students, families, staff, and community are about our schools. Tuesday's Board Meeting also allowed an opportunity for our demographer to present his findings to the Board and explain the rationale behind his recommendation of which schools to potentially close/consolidate. That presentation can be viewed on our Facebook page [here](#), and his slides are available [here](#).

We know this is a topic that is a difficult one for everyone in the district. A decision to close/consolidate schools in one that is never taken lightly. The speed at which this process is moving is admittedly faster than we normally would prefer, but the timeframe between when we received the latest enrollment data/projections in late November to now (which is bumping up to the latest we would want to make a decision for next school year, if that were to happen) has been short. No decision has been made at this time, and the Board and D51 Admin need additional time to discuss this important topic before moving forward. The Board will hold a Special Meeting on Feb. 27 to continue this discussion. No decision will be made at that meeting. There will not be public comment or an opportunity to interact with the Board at the meeting, so we are encouraging everyone to tune into the livestream of the meeting as the Board Room can only accommodate so many people. The link for the livestream can be found [here](#).

While there may be differing opinions about the topic of school closures/consolidations, something that we can all agree on is that our D51 Family is strong. We have amazing things happening in our buildings each and every day, and we want to continue to celebrate the great things our students and staff are doing. Please enjoy some of those highlights below.

#### ALL CONFERENCE WRESTLING

District 51 wrestlers wrapped up their season at the State Wrestling Championships in Denver this past weekend. Every one of our high schools, including our D51 Phoenix Women's Wrestling Team, participated in the State Tournament. We want to congratulate all of the wrestling teams and those who placed as well as those who made the All Conference Wrestling Teams. Read more about it [here](#).

#### NATIONAL MERIT FINALISTS

District 51 is proud to announce that we have five students who have all been named as National Merit Scholarship Finalist. From Palisade: Emma Aubert, Hudson Seeman, and Maya Znamenack. From Grand Junction High School: Cailan McKim and from Fruita Monument High School: Autumn Lloyd. Read more about it [here](#).

#### M.E.S.A CLUB AND D51 STEM EVENT

Wednesday was the second M.E.S.A Club event for 2023! It was held at Redlands Middle School and was a great success. Read more about it [here](#).

#### STUDENT OF THE QUARTER LUNCHEON

On Wednesday, I had the privilege of attending our Student of the Quarter Luncheon. This is an opportunity to celebrate and recognize D51 8th-grade and 12th-grade students who are going above and beyond and showing great leadership & character on their campuses. Read more [here](#).

#### PHS PERSONAL PROJECT EXPO

Last week I had the pleasure of attending the Palisade High School Personal Projects Expo. Read more [here](#).

#### WCCC INDUCTION

February is Career and Technical Education month and we have been highlighting our awesome CTE programs and students all month. This week, Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) hosted its National Technical Honor Society Induction. Read more [here](#).

#### HEALTH OCCUPATION STUDENTS OF AMERICA

This past week, the Career Center HOSA (Future Health Professionals) team competed at the state leadership conference in Denver. For results at the State Conference, click [here](#).

#### HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE RESOURCE OPEN HOUSE

In March and thanks to the passing of the 2017 Mill, our Board of Education will consider a recommendation to adopt new High School Science curricular resources for courses in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. On the evening of March 1, members of the community are welcome to view the materials and give feedback to the teacher team charged with making the recommendation. To learn more, please see [this flyer](#).

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

On February 21 the Board of Education held a business meeting in the Harry Butler Board Room. For highlights from the meeting, click [here](#).

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