



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues:

Every day, our schools do amazing work, and we have exceptional employees with big hearts who dedicate their time and passion to serving our students. Obviously, there has been a lot going on in our district lately. As your Superintendent, I want to balance acknowledging the impact of difficult decisions while also sharing the great work happening throughout our district through these Friday Updates. I want to celebrate all the excellent work happening in our buildings across the district and all the amazing students and staff who continue to move the needle in a positive direction in D51. We hope these letters provide a small glimpse of all of the work and success going on throughout our district.

Like last week, I had the privilege to meet with a few more of my Superintendent Student Advisory Groups, including my R-5 High School, Grand Junction High School, and Palisade High School Superintendent Student Advisory Groups. As the school year unfolds, I use these meetings to ground myself in our work and our commitment to continuous improvement. These meetings always provide me with valuable insight that I can bring back to our Senior Leadership Team, and I enjoy giving students the opportunity and space to share their experiences and current environments with me. I appreciate them bringing me in and allowing me to celebrate their successes and listen to their challenges. As always, the meetings motivate me to continue the work of continuous improvement we have going on in District 51 to make our district the best it can be, but I can only do that with the voices of our students. So, thank you students for sharing your time, thoughts, and experiences with me!

I also got to attend two fun events at the elementary level. I had the opportunity to sit on a panel as part of a Project Based Learning (PBL) event at New Emerson. Students presented prototypes of sculptures that highlighted health and wellness and will end up turning into a real sculpture created by CMU art faculty and students. Shoutout to Principal Schmalz, her team, and the students for all of your hard work! I also got to attend the Starbooks Cafe at Orchard Avenue Elementary. Families got to hear their students share research they conducted on a chosen animal through non-fiction books they wrote. Shoutout to Principal Richards and the Orchard Avenue students and staff for a great event!

#### ENROLLMENT AND SCHOOL CLOSURE UPDATE

Last night, the District 51 Board of Education held a Special Meeting to discuss potential school consolidations within our district. Ultimately, the Board of Education voted to close East Middle School at the end of this school year. Read the remarks I shared at the meeting [here](#).

#### NATIONAL WOMEN IN HISTORY MONTH

Every year, March is designated Women's History Month by presidential proclamation. The month is dedicated to reflecting on, celebrating, and commemorating the contributions of women in American history. As an organization, we are lucky to have such strong, talented, and amazing women leaders in our schools and buildings - doing the hard, amazing work it takes to make a school district successful. I was raised by a strong, single-parent teenage mother, and I'm married to a strong and amazing wife. I feel fortunate to have been raised by a strong woman, married to a strong woman, and get to work with strong women all throughout D51. Let's celebrate the amazing women leaders in our lives and in our district. Thank you for what you do, today and every day!

#### SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER WEEK

This week is National School Social Worker Week. D51 celebrates our School Social Workers and recognizes their vital contributions to helping our students achieve academic success. Help us honor our social workers! Read more [here](#).

#### DIA EVENT

The DIA program at Bookcliff Middle School held its first La Siembra Conference this week, and it was great to be able to attend the event and celebrate with our D51 Family. Read more [here](#).

#### CHATFIELD ELEMENTARY EARNS BRIGHT SPOT AWARD FOR MATH IMPROVEMENT

I'm excited to recognize Chatfield Elementary for earning a second Governor's Bright Spot Award this year and celebrate them for a job well-done! Chatfield Elementary School has been selected to receive a Governor's Math Bright Spot Award for their school's growth in math achievement based on state math assessments since 2019. 1 of only 12 schools in the state! Read more about the award [here](#).

#### GJHS TAKES FIRST AND SECOND AT THE STATE QUIZ BOWL

I'm so proud to shout out the latest D51 achievement via the Grand Junction High School Academic Team! They, once again, came home with the Quiz Bowl State title - their third, to be exact. Read more [here](#).

#### CLIFTON CAREER FAIR

As a district, we strive to provide our students with meaningful experiences that will enhance their career readiness by providing them with the tools and pathways for their future. Read more [here](#).

#### SCHOOL TO WORK ALLIANCE PROGRAM

It's that time of year again! Job fairs are in full swing, and we've got a great event coming up between D51 and the School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP). Don't miss it! Read more [here](#).

#### MARCH EDITION OF THE GRAND JUNCTION HIGH SCHOOL ORANGE & BLACK

The newest edition of the GJHS student-run newspaper - the Orange & Black - is out and ready for browsing! This 24-page edition is incredible, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading the articles and listening to our student's voices through their research and story-telling. Read more [here](#).

#### GET OUT AND SUPPORT YOUR FELLOW D51 STUDENTS!

- **CHS Musical Performance: *Disney's Newsies: the Broadway Musical***  
*March 10, 7 p.m., March 11, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.*  
This musical is a not-to-be-missed high-energy musical based on the 1992 musical film Newsies, inspired by the real-life Newsboys Strike of 1899 in New York City. Purchase tickets [here](#).
- **GJHS Musical Performance: *Treasure Island***  
*March 10 and 11, 7 p.m., March 11, 1 p.m.*  
The GJHS Theatre program has its spring musical coming up this weekend! Adapted from the novel by Robert Stevenson, *Treasure Island* tells the adventures of Jim Hawkins and his search for buried treasure and an evil pirate. Purchase tickets [here](#).
- **D51 Athletics**  
**Tennis, Lacrosse, and Soccer** are also happening throughout the weekend. Click [here](#) for the D51 athletic calendar.
- **2023 Bill Fanning Classic (baseball)** is this weekend at both Suplizio Field and Canyon View Park. Click [here](#) for the schedule.

#### STATE ASSESSMENT REMINDER

Our state assessments begin in early April. Grades 3-11 participate in either CMAS, PSAT, or SAT. On testing days, please ensure your students are well rested, have a good breakfast, and are on time for school. If your student brings their Chromebook home, please send it fully charged with your child on the days of testing. Thank you for avoiding making doctor, dentist, or other appointments during testing hours. Please check with your school for specific testing dates. This [short video](#) shares the purpose behind these assessments and some important additional information.

#### BOARD UPDATE

On March 7, the Board of Education held a work session in the Harry Butler Board Room. For highlights from the meeting, click [here](#).

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