



Board of Education Column

By Rebecca Knutson, Fargo Board of Education President

Welcome Message

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year! I hope your first few days of school have gone well. There is much to celebrate as you welcome students into your buildings and classrooms – in person. I love to study the works of famous painters like Picasso, Renoir, Monet, and Klimt. The museums that house these fine pieces are huge, adorned by massive architectural columns. It is easy for me to get drawn in, as I endeavor to learn about the artist, the technique, and the era in which the piece was created.

While in the Board room at the District Office recently, I decided to study the artwork by Fargo Public Schools students and the large display of the Fargo Public Schools logo. I started to imagine, with the artwork displayed, the Board room taking on the function of a museum. The pieces by the high school students are good reminders that we are in school during a global pandemic. Most, if not all of them, weave in the theme of COVID-19 and mitigation procedures, including masking. The pieces depict caring for one another and each other – for students, staff, and the community.

For me, the artwork in the Board room serves as visual reminders that it is the Board's responsibility to enact policy and make decisions that help to create a safe and healthy learning environment for students and working environment for staff. This gets me to an important decision the Board of Education made at its August 10 meeting, which directed the District to follow the guidance of Fargo Cass Public Health regarding COVID-19 protocols during the 2021-22 school year. The decision the Board made is one that provides the District with great flexibility, because as the guidance from public health evolves, the District will have the ability to adjust to be in alignment with that changing guidance. With a few days of school under your belt, you know firsthand what this looks like, what is being asked of you and the students, and how it is going in the building where you work.



In closing, I'd like to share with you what I see in the Fargo Public Schools logo. The yellow rays, leading inward, represent every one of you, bringing your expertise, energy and enthusiasm into the students and colleagues you interact with. The rays also represent every member of our community—parents,

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administration, and the Fargo Board of Education, coming together to support you in the work you do to *educate and empower all students to succeed*. As a collective group, we celebrate successes and support each other through our challenges. When we do that, all students, as represented in the logo, will rise.

The Board of Education wishes you all a healthy and fulfilling school year.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Knutson
(she/her/hers)
Fargo Board of Education President

