

Community Update from Superintendent Hlasko

November 7, 2014

Every other week I look back at events and items of interest at Cory-Rawson Schools and try to pare down the list of great things to offer the community a quick glimpse of what is going on in the school. This week, though, my update is related to an epiphany I had after the polls closed this week and I had an opportunity to review statistics on school-related issues across the state and in our own county. While results were mixed across the state, some of our county struggled with school bond issues. My commentary is not, though, intended to focus on their success or failure; rather my comments below are intended to celebrate our own successes as a community, which reach far beyond a school levy or bond issue.

In the not-too-distant past our community rallied together to pass a bond issue to build a new PK-6th grade school building to replace a century old landmark which had more than served its purpose. The passage of this bond issue meant sacrifices for our community in terms of cost and also in inconveniences through the duration of the construction. Nonetheless, the community came together and gave a resource to our district – to our students – just as those from a century ago gave to the many generations who passed through the doors of the Rawson building. The new school has state-of-the-art features throughout but far more important than those features are what the sacrifice means to our students, staff, and community. It is a symbol of your desire for a great education and great opportunities for our children. It is a statement that our community values our children and, just as important, that they value each other for many of those who voted “yes” did so without having any children in school. The building of a new school building became a symbol for our community.

Our community pride does not end there, though. In fact, everywhere you look you can find pride and support for our school. I am constantly amazed at what our S.O.S. and booster organizations do for our students. Many of you who donate your time or resources to these groups may see it only as helping specific groups of students but, in reality, it is an amazing asset to the district. Over the handful of years I have served as superintendent, the booster groups and S.O.S. have filled a gap for the district when we were recovering from financial issues. They provided resources for our students and athletes when we could not. Even today, with our finances in good order, these groups provide and allow us to focus our resources on other needs. The time and resources you provide to these organizations have a far greater impact on more than just the students you see before you.

Our school is reflective of the values and morals our community exhibits and desires. Groups such as Student Council give back to the community with such activities as “Rake a Difference” or FFA who instills leadership in our students and gives back to our community in many ways, or FCCLA who take time to read to our elementary students and serve as role models. Students who participate in the Mentor Program with the Hancock County Children’s Mentoring Connection and Good Shepherd Church learn that there are people outside their families who care and are willing to give of their time and talents. Our school and students are also the beneficiary of the efforts of one community member who saw a need and spear-headed a “Backpack Fridays” meal program with our school and the United Way to help send food home with those in need. It might sound trite, but one person really can make a difference. Because of these efforts students can have one less stress in their life and, hopefully, put their focus on being a kid and being as successful as possible in school.

I know I’ve missed countless groups and innumerable examples of how our community and school have worked to make Cory-Rawson a better place. To be sure, it’s not always “all roses” and we individually and collectively face challenging issues. Underlying any challenges we may face is a community who

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cares about our school and the students and wants to continue to see those things represent all that is good about our community. We do, indeed, have many issues facing us – uncertainty about the future direction of education and who will control it, improving academics at a local level, and ensuring we remain in sound financial shape despite an uncertain funding structure, to name a few. I am confident that our school and our community will tackle those issues and keep our eyes on the prize – providing the best education and opportunities possible for our students.

Thank you for being an amazing community!

On behalf of Cory-Rawson Local Schools,

Bob Hlasko