

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

DECEMBER 19, 2023



Dear CPU Parents, Staff, and Community Members:

It just seemed like it was early July when I was sending out my first superintendent's communication to all stakeholders, yet the past (near) six months have flown by. As Winter Break fast approaches, I wanted to end this 2023 year with a review and focus on the continual progress the district continues to strive towards living our mission **"...to develop successful, life-long learners by providing a safe and caring environment, a stimulating curriculum, and a dedicated staff working with supportive parents in a friendly, small-town atmosphere."**

Since pre-service, leaderships' effort have focused on a **unified vision** with staff, families, and the community to ensure **all students learn at high levels**. This begins with maintaining **safe and secure schools**, building a **healthy culture**, and **aligning our systems** for efficient and effective operations.

On **Page 2** of this newsletter is something I have previously shared before as part of my entry plan as the superintendent that I developed. I call this the **"Fishbone"** as the purpose is to highlight both the strengths/successes of the district while also being aware of its challenges/growth areas. The goal is to **"keep doing"** what makes CPU great while also focusing on what we need to **"start doing"** in order to overcome obstacles, etc.

The **"Driving Forces"** that support that our mission are evident daily; as a person who weekly visits every building and frequently engages with staff, I can testify that **CPU staff are second to none** in being **caring and dedicated** as they all focus on **student achievement (learning)**. For example, high school instructor Ms. James' passion for science was evident when she and her Advanced Biology student recently visited Kirkwood Community College's cadaver lab. This is just but one of over 100 (or more) examples I could cite of staff who are **committed to excellence**.

Most importantly, our **community supports** our district in a multitude of ways—through donations, attendance at events, and/or pride, as it's almost impossible when traveling in the greater Cedar Rapids corridor to NOT see a CPU logo on a vehicle or clothing.

We are also focusing on our **"Challenges and Obstacles"** with a **priority on communicating and being transparent** with all stakeholders. Leadership, also continually endeavors to build not just their own capacity, but also for those they lead. We are also **committed to improving the culture and climate for staff and students** and rather than just talking about it, every 7 weeks or so, engage in a "Check-Up Survey" to examine "what's going well?" and also "what do we need to improve upon?" The mindset behind these frequent check-ups is to **continually make progress to achieve success**.

Last, but certainly not least, is a **focus on our facilities** (and finances). I am pleased to announce that since I assumed the role as superintendent, I began working on developing a 2-5 year Facility plan for capital projects and improvements with a *****draft***** due in December (that I recently shared with the school board). Such that, last night at the School Board Meeting, a **Work Session** with the purpose to **review this Facilities Roadmap** was scheduled for **Thursday, January 11, 2024**, beginning at 5:30 pm in the HS Library. I encourage all stakeholders to attend this Facilities Work Session as the Board both reviews the plan and engages with our architect as we all look towards the future of CPU!

Thank you for your support of our students, staff, and schools. Enjoy Winter Break!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John W. Elkin".

John W. Elkin, Superintendent

#CPUNation

Relentlessly Pursue Excellence for the Desired State

The Fishbone Process will be used as the structured analysis process to identify factors, root causes, and elements of organizational success and growth areas of the Center Point-Urbana Community School District as identified by CPU Stakeholder Survey in March of 2023 along with internal knowledge of the district. The core root of each Driving Forces/Strengths & Successes (“keep doing”) along with the Preventing Forces/Challenges & Obstacles (“start doing”) will be investigated as the focus of the Current State and how to achieve the Desired State.

