



Dear D51 Colleagues and Families,

This week has been filled with celebrations as we took the time to recognize some of the amazing individuals who help our district run successfully. From our dedicated Assistant Principals who provide daily support and guidance to our students and staff, to our hardworking Librarians who foster a love for reading and learning in our school communities, and our Paraprofessionals who play a vital role in ensuring the success and well-being of our students every day. We are grateful for the passion, dedication, and tireless efforts of each and every one of you. The next time you see one of them, please thank them for everything they do. We couldn't do it without y'all!

This week, I started the final meetings of the year with my Superintendent Student Advisory Groups. Meeting with these groups, made up of students from each of our comprehensive high schools and R-5 High School, provides an opportunity for me to hear directly from students and gather valuable feedback from the student perspective. I met with my GJHS group yesterday, and we continued the conversation that I started with them the last time we met on technology use in schools and the impact phones and social media are having on students their age and younger. I was able to gain even more insight from them, and I look forward to hearing from my other Superintendent Student Advisory Groups in the weeks to come. This topic of tech and social media use in schools is one that I have mentioned in past letters, and it is one that we are seriously exploring as a district. We have been in a data gathering phase for the last couple of months, and now we are moving to an action phase that will have positive impacts on the school experience in D51 starting next school year. The next step will be to update our district policy on this topic, which hasn't been updated in 14 years. From there, we'll begin communicating out changes in the policy, what that will mean for our schools starting in the 2024-25 school year, and why we are looking to make necessary changes in policy and procedures.

Know that, whatever changes we make, the goal will be to better create sustained access to attention-fostering spaces and build spaces that maximize learning and thriving in our schools. Some schools have already started implementing and piloting changes in their buildings when it comes to tech use, and they are seeing great results. The limited hours that we have with your students during the school day are so valuable, and we want to keep them focused on teaching and learning and remove any barriers that impede student success...academically, socially, and emotionally. As we progress through the next steps on this topic, we will keep you updated, and I ask that you join us in ensuring our schools are spaces that maximize learning and thriving, as well. Together, we will be able to make a real impact on the lives of our students, and doing so in partnership will reinforce the importance of this work. More to come on this topic soon.

#### D51 FBLA Students Qualify for Nationals

This week, District 51 had FBLA students from across our four comprehensive high schools participate in the FBLA Colorado State Leadership Conference in Denver. Students earned this opportunity by securing one of the top 5 positions at the district competition in January or accomplishing a Business Achievement Award. Read more [here](#).

#### FIRST LEGO League Explore Festival

On Saturday, the D51 STEM Team will host its Annual FIRST LEGO League Explore Festival at Orchard Mesa Middle School. Read more [here](#).

#### CMU Promise Day

Students across our District 51 high schools participated in the CMU Promise Day today, a day dedicated to welcoming high school students to the Colorado Mesa University campus to discover more about the university and the CMU Promise opportunity. Read more [here](#).

#### Leadership D51

This week, we held the final class in this year's Leadership D51 course. Read more [here](#).

#### District 51 Foundation Hosts PTO/PTA Brunch and Learn

One focus area of District 51's Strategic Plan is *Engaged and Supportive Community Partners*. So much of what we do here at the district is done in collaboration with our community partners and advocates who support our district and public education. This week, the Action Team focused on the Strategic Plan Priority Area of having "Effective Community Partnerships to Advance Strategic Goals" hosted its first Brunch and Learn. Read more [here](#).

#### GJHS Farewell Tours

Tomorrow, April 6, Grand Junction High School and the GJHS Student Council will host the GJHS Farewell Tours. This event is an opportunity for our GJHS alumni, students, staff, and community members to bid farewell to the current GJHS building, celebrating its vibrant history while eagerly anticipating the exciting future of our new high school facility that opens this fall. The event will feature guided tours, historical interviews, yearbook viewings, and special presentations by featured speakers. Read more [here](#).

#### D51 Preschool Open Houses

Next week, District 51's Early Childhood Education Department will host Preschool Open Houses at our Preschool locations across the district. This is a fantastic opportunity for families to step into our classrooms, explore the learning environment, and discover more about our enriching preschool program. Read more [here](#).

#### Honoring D51 Seniors Choosing to Enlist

Each year, District 51 recognizes student athletes, student scholars, and countless others who have excelled both academically and in their extracurricular pursuits. We are also excited to celebrate our D51 high school students, along with countless others statewide, who've decided to enlist in our National Armed Forces. The Western Slope Blue Star Moms, alongside their partners in the Western Slope military community, invite all families of new recruits to join them on April 27 for a Military recognition event and family picnic. Together, we will recognize and honor the graduating seniors from across the Grand Valley who've chosen to bravely serve our nation. For more information about this event, click [here](#).

#### 25-Year Facility Master Plan

During Tuesday night's Board of Education meeting, we presented an overview of the 25-Year Facility Master Plan that was recently completed by Hord Coplan Macht (HCM). The facility master planning process was initiated last year, and with the help of a diverse committee made up of staff, families, and community partners, along with input from user groups, that process is now complete. Read more [here](#).

#### Board of Education Meeting Recap

On April 2, the Board of Education held a Work Session in the Harry Butler Board Room. For highlights from the meeting, click [here](#). To view a recording of the meeting, click [here](#).

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- FIRST LEGO League Explore Festival  
*April 6, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Orchard Mesa Middle School*
- Rocky Mountain Color Guard State Championship  
*April 6, 10:30 a.m. at the Ritchie Center - University of Denver*
  - Central High School 11:19 a.m.
  - Palisade High School 4:52 p.m.
- GJHS Farewell Tours  
*April 6, 2 - 5 p.m., at Grand Junction High School*  
The event will begin in the GJHS Auditorium at 2 p.m. with a 45-minute program that includes presentations from various current and past GJHS faculty. Tours of the school will begin at 3 p.m. in the Gymnasium lobby. The event will culminate with a "Final Walkout," where attendees can unite to sing the GJHS fight song as a tribute to the cherished memories and traditions of the old building.
- D51 Preschool Open Houses  
*April 11, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., various locations. See [flyer](#) for details.*
- Palisade High School IB Art Exhibition  
*April 19th, 6 - 9 p.m. at The Blue Pig Gallery*  
The IB Art students at Palisade High School are showing their works at The Blue Pig Art Gallery in Palisade! Stop by during the reception to get a free drink and snack and show your support for our art students!

For more events happening across the district, visit:

- [Spring Athletics Schedule](#)
- [District Upcoming Events](#)

If you have good news to share with us, we'd love to highlight your program, event, story, and more. Please share it with our communications department by emailing [communicate@d51schools.org](mailto:communicate@d51schools.org).

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