



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

March 30, 2023

Red Carpet Affair Junior-Senior Prom this Saturday Evening

The Columbus Grove Prom, *Red Carpet Affair*, will be held this Saturday in the elementary school gymnasium. Prom attendees will arrive between 7:00-7:30 p.m. The dance, with music by Mike Mitchell's DJ Service, will be from 8:30-10:30 p.m. Post-prom will be held in the high school gym from 11:30 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. The elementary gym will be open Saturday, April 1, from 10:00-11:00 a.m. for anyone wishing to view the decorations.

Staffing Reductions through Attrition Made for 2023-2024 School Year

Columbus Grove Schools will conduct some staff restructuring for the 2023-2024 school year. The main driver for this change is due to trend of decreasing student enrollment over the last few years. Here are a few questions and answers regarding these changes, along with the rationale for behind these staffing changes.

What positions are being eliminated?

- One High School Math Teaching Position
- One Elementary Teaching Position
- One Secretarial Position

All three of these positions are being reduced through attrition. Dave Bremer (HS Math), Jayne Bair (2nd Grade), and Deb Barto (Elementary Secretary) are all retiring at the conclusion of this school year. Therefore, no staff layoffs will occur as a result of these reductions.

How will the district restructure with its current staff for next school year?

- High School Math- Current High School Math Teachers Brian Schroeder and Kari Weisenburger will assume duties for most of the high school math courses next year, including a new Quantitative Reasoning course and two College Credit Math courses.

Although Mr. Bremer is retiring from his fulltime position at the conclusion this year, he has agreed to come back to teach two AP courses for next year. This will allow for a smoother transition that will take place in our high school math department over the next two years.

- Elementary Teaching Position- The second and third grade teaching staff has been reconfigured to fill the void left with Mrs. Bair's retirement. The elementary class schedule has been restructured as well. Projected 2023-2024 student teacher ratios for these two grade levels are 17:1 in second grade and 21:1 in third grade (but 14:1 in Reading/Language Arts). These student teacher ratios are comparable to the student teacher ratios for these grade levels in the 2014-2015 school year.
- Secretarial Position- There are currently five secretarial positions in the district. The duties of these five positions will be redistributed to the remaining four secretaries. Our secretaries have met and determined how these additional duties will be distributed.

You say the district has experienced a drop-in student enrollment. How much of a decrease has there been?

The district's K-12 enrollment in 2013 was 907 students. For 2023 it stands at 784 K-12 students, for a decrease of 13.6%. The average class size for each grade level (counting St. Anthony's students, as most of these students come over to the high school after 8th grade) from 2010-2022 was 76.1 students. The average class size for the years 2023-2035 (our current K-12 classes) is 66.3 students (12.9% decrease). The 2023-2035 projected sizes of classes includes current St. Anthony's students.

What is the reason for this decrease in student enrollment?

In analyzing the data, the prevailing reason for this enrollment decline is clear. The district has had smaller incoming kindergarten classes replacing the outgoing graduating classes. Last year was a prime example of this. The CGHS Class of 2022 had 85 graduates.

This past year's incoming kindergarten class had a total of 46 students, creating a decrease of 40 students. Not surprisingly, the district's overall K-12 enrollment went from 828 students in 2022 to 784 students in 2023. St. Anthony's kindergarten class has 17 students this year. When combining this with the current CG kindergarten class of 46 students, we have a total class size of 63, which is consistent with the class sizes we are experiencing with the projected graduating classes of 2027-2035.

In terms of open enrollment, Columbus Grove Schools has a net loss of seven students this year (52 open enrolled into the district/59 open enrolled out of the district). This has been pretty consistent over the last five years. Prior to 2018, the district usually had an open enrollment net loss closer to 20-30 students.

The Board has the money in its carryover to fill these positions that are being reduced through attrition. Shouldn't they just go ahead and fill these positions and then reduce them when the money is no longer there?

- The Board is rightsizing staffing due to the decline in number of students. Even with these staffing reductions, student teacher ratios in classes are very similar to 2015 student teacher ratios.
- This approach is proactive in protecting the district's financial reserves, allowing the Board to prolong the length of time before having to go to the community for additional operating dollars.
- Waiting until the money is no longer there does not allow the Board to make reductions through attrition, as this approach maximizes cost savings and minimizes the number of positions being reduced.

Won't this reduction in teaching staff have a negative impact on student learning?

While there will be an adjustment period with restructuring teaching staff, as mentioned previously, the student teacher ratios in these areas impacted will be very similar to the ratios we had back in 2015. Additionally, at the high school level, the increase in students attending Apollo, in addition to an increased number of students taking College Credit Plus Courses online or off campus has decreased class sizes.

Has the district reduced staff before?

Yes. Administration always keeps a close watch on multiple variables when making staffing decisions with both certified and classified staff. Here are a few other staff reductions that have been made over the last decade:

- 2015- Reduced one 5th grade teacher from the 5th/6th teaching model to emulate the existing 7th/8th grade model (did hire a part-time tutor in place of this teaching position).
- 2016- Reduced one Physical Education teacher, going from three to two PE teachers. Reduced one Library Technician, going from two to one technician.
- 2017- Did not replace Jerry Hoersten's Elementary Dean of Students position when he retired.
- 2021- Did not replace a part-time French teacher position when Nancy Schortgen retired. Did not replace Jan Harper's High School Dean of Students position when he retired.

If you have any questions regarding these reductions for the 2023-2024 school year, please feel free to reach out to me by phone at 419-659-4301 or email at cg_verhoff@cg.noacsc.org.

61st Annual Band Calendar Sale Underway

You can now order your 2023-2024 band calendar by either filling out the form on the back of the March or April page of your current band calendar or you can print off an order form from the school district's website (<http://cg.noacsc.org/>). Calendars are \$10 each and come with one free listing. Addition listings are still just 0.25 cents each. Listing types include (B) birthday, (A) Anniversary, (E) Meeting, (S) Military Service, (M) Memory, or (N) Band Member Birthday. Payment is required at the time of the order (due by June 1). Checks should be made payable to "CG Band Boosters" and can be dropped off at the high school or mailed to 201 W. Cross St. 45830. Many thanks for your support and to our businesses for supporting this successful fundraiser.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, March 30th

JH Track @ Ottawa-Glandorf – 4:30 p.m.
Varsity Baseball @ Liberty-Benton – 5:00 p.m.
Varsity Softball vs. Lima Senior – 5:00 p.m.

Friday, March 31st

JH Baseball @ Ottawa – Glandorf (8th gr.) – 5:00 p.m.
JV Baseball @ Findlay (9th gr.) – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 1st

Varsity Baseball vs. Cory Rawson – 11:00 a.m.

Monday, April 3rd

JH Baseball vs. Allen East – 5:00 p.m.
Varsity Softball @ Ayersville – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, April 4th

JH Track @ Riverdale Invitational – 4:30 p.m.
Varsity Track vs. Allen East – 4:30 p.m.
JH Baseball vs. Bluffton (7th gr.) – 5:00 p.m.
JH Softball vs. Lincolnview – 5:00 p.m.
Varsity Baseball @ Ottoville – 5:00 p.m.
Varsity Baseball @ Ottoville – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 5th

JV Baseball vs. Lincolnview – 5:00 p.m.
JV Softball vs. Continental – 5:00 p.m.