

BOARD OF EDUCATION

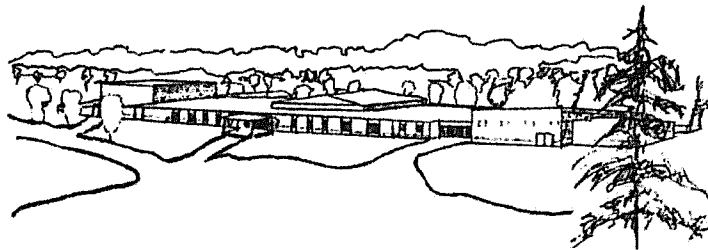
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"Teaching Students to be Productive Citizens"

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May 25, 2021

Representative Rob Swearingen
Room 123 West
PO Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative Swearingen,

I would like to thank you for your diligence in working with our northern rural school districts. Your efforts in Madison are very much appreciated. I would like to respectfully share some of the highlights from this past 2020-2021 school year here in Three Lakes School District.

The pandemic hit all of our citizens, businesses and school hard, but I can say with much pride that we kept school operating at a high standard. It took our educators, support staff, bus drivers, families and students working together to accomplish this endeavor. We conducted in-person, on-site learning five days a week for the entire school year. We were also sensitive to the impact the pandemic had posing multiple implications for our students and their families. We developed additional learning opportunities for those who were not able to attend in person full time. The counselors and teachers cared for these students with the same degree of support as if they were in the building full time. Not only did our academic programming go forward, our students participated in seasonal activities with much success especially in volleyball. Our girls basketball team brought home the silver ball in the WIAA divisional championship, with a cumulative grade point average of 3.96. This school and community is very proud of our students. These accomplishments came out of hard work and determination to meet the intent of what our public school experience is meant to be.

The financial impact has been costly. We proactively upgraded our HVAC and ionization systems without the certainty of COVID relief funding but knew it was what we needed to do to improve our learning environment. Additional cleaning and mitigation procedures were implemented. We also continued to provide food service to the students who chose off-site learning and this added manpower hours but well worth the extra costs. Technology needs including purchase of hotspots and data packages for our families were necessary to help with the challenging internet services experience in the Northwoods.

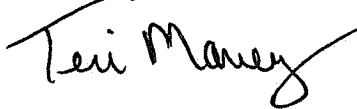
I am certain that you are fully aware that the Three Lakes School District relies heavily on referendum dollars, provided by our citizens' support. The funding that we receive from the state budget is stretched to the fullest. It is my hope that you can support the funding budgeted for education, especially as we are affected in the smaller rural districts. Please consider:

- Supporting the increase of special education aid to reimburse 50% of the aidable costs by the end of the 2021-2023 biennium.
- Supporting the High-Cost Transportation proposal being advanced by Senator Felzkowski and Representative Mursau, lowering the aid threshold in the program from 145% of the statewide average per pupil transportation cost to the statewide average of 100%.
- Supporting sparsity aid.
- Supporting the investment in rural broadband internet services as this barrier is a concern reaching into equity of those students in the state who have access and those who do not.

These are just a few of the concerns superintendents in the Northwoods are thinking about each day as we plan and prepare for the delivery of high quality instruction in our schools. Again, I thank you for your work within our legislature while realizing education is only one of many areas you must focus on in your consideration of state budgeting. I firmly believe that investing in our children of the Northwoods is among the most important actions that can be taken.

Thank you for your consideration and time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Teri Maney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Teri Maney
District Administrator
Three Lakes School District