

Challenges for 2006

The challenges we face in 2006 are not all that different from those we have faced in each of the past few years. There is an old saying that tells us that the only way to accurately predict the future is to create it. This year we have the ability to once again create our preferred future.

With new families moving into our district at a constant rate, we find ourselves out of classroom space. Our technology needs upgrading and we must continue to purchase replacement buses to insure the continued safety of our students. The best solution to our lack of space is to build a new middle school and renovate our elementary buildings. Fortunately, the rather significant cost of a new school and other improvements can be met with an extremely modest millage rate increase. Our community will learn more about the details of that plan in the coming months, but it must also be pointed out in this State of the Schools document that passage of the bond proposal in May is the most significant challenge for our community during 2006.

The top five challenges for the upcoming year are outlined below.

- ✓ Supporting the bond proposal for technology, space, buses and safety
- ✓ Increasing state funding to insure that we can maintain quality educational programs
- ✓ Ensuring that every graduating senior can successfully compete in college, advanced training, or the world of work
- ✓ Providing fair and equitable wages and benefits to employees within the limits of a tight budget
- ✓ Meeting the needs of every child by aligning our curriculum and providing professional development opportunities for our staff



Report Card

Curriculum	A	English, Language Arts, and Reading studies are underway with new curriculum expected next year.
Finances	A	Employees have reduced benefit levels and accepted modest pay increases for the third year in a row to help the district.
Test Results	A	High MEAP test scores assured full state accreditation in all schools.
Facilities	A	Enrollment growth dictates need for additional classrooms. Administration Building opens with 3 classrooms.
Fund Balance	A	Fund balance remains healthy, assuring good bond rates should voters approve the bond issue in the May election.
State Funding	D	First increase in four years accompanied by increase in state retirement expense. Legislators threaten funding of Young 5s program.

Looking Ahead

With every school building in the district at capacity, a bond issue election is set for May 2. Approval on May 2 will pave the way for a new middle school and renovations in each elementary school. The plan will assure adequate classroom space, upgrades in technology, new buses as well as addressing safety concerns.

Because the state school aide fund appears more healthy than at any time in the past four years, we must urge our elected officials to support increases for the state's lowest funded schools. We will see many funding proposals as the two political parties prepare for the governor's race in November. We have learned from experience that state aide increases are often offset by rate hikes from the state in retirement costs and from the skyrocketing health insurance increases.

New state requirements for graduation are quite likely, and we must work to make sure that our students do not lose opportunities to participate in the skills center classes, art, band, choir, or any other elective classes. The district has maintained its pledge to keep its curriculum current in all subject areas over the past seven years. A new cycle is now underway and once again we promise to review and revise all curriculum areas beginning with Language Arts, English and Reading next year.

"We inspire all students to embrace a life-long love of learning, to achieve their goals, and to become compassionate citizens who contribute to the global community."

Our Mission



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of the past four years to create it.

room space. Our district has continued to improve and renovate classrooms and other improvements throughout the district. The details of these improvements are documented in the district's annual report during 2006.

training, or the

budget development





Who We Are 2006 State of the Schools

Coopersville Area Public Schools

Submitted to the Board of Education, February 20, 2006
Dr. Kevin R. O'Neill, Superintendent

Looking Back 2005

In many ways, the State of the Schools can be measured by who we are. "We" are the students, staff, parents, and community members who work together throughout the school year striving to make our schools the best.

We are much of what makes the Coopersville community vibrant and strong. We have our problems and our challenges. However, by constantly seeking to improve, we grow stronger each year. With the backdrop of increasing academic demands and severe financial pressures from the state that have spanned four years, we can be proud of our accomplishments in 2005.

As you read these highlights, you will notice that our successes are the result of many people working together for the benefit of our children. That speaks volumes about our greater community, and is probably why so many families are discovering that Coopersville is the perfect place to live and raise a family.

It has been said that the quality of K-12 schools along with quality of life factors are becoming increasingly important in attracting and retaining talent within a community. We believe that the Coopersville community has both of those elements. We can all be proud of our accomplishments and excited about the promise the future holds for our children.

Take a few minutes to review the following pages which highlight some of the activities and accomplishments that were achieved during the past twelve months. We think you will be pleased with the many ways that our students embrace a life-long love of learning, achieve their goals, and are compassionate citizens who contribute to the global community.





Highlights 2005 - the many ways that we work together to achieve

Community

- ✓ A veterans project brought together vets from the last 65 years. Students recorded the vet's oral histories. Later, each vet was invited back and given a beautiful framed picture created by our art students.
- ✓ The city and school district worked together on many projects. Snow plowing, community recreation, and Summer Fest, are just a few of the ongoing collaborative activities.
- ✓ The need for quality child care is apparent as our early childhood programs provided the highest quality care for over 400 children. There are 57 families currently on the waiting list.

Curriculum

- ✓ Studies this year encompass wellness and language arts (including Reading and English).
- ✓ The high school Jazz Band took 1st place in the national Smokey Mountain Music Festival Jazz Competition.
- ✓ Art and Pep Clubs were added as extra curricular activities at the high school.
- ✓ Technology classes were reinstated at the Junior High School.
- ✓ FFA members received recognition at state and national competitions.
- ✓ Dual enrollment (college credit) at Kendall was added to our established community colleges and GVSU offerings.



Facilities

- ✓ A new administration building was constructed to replace the old one that had been destroyed by water damage from a frozen water pipe. Three classrooms were added to help with overcrowding in the elementary schools.
- ✓ Improvements to the athletic stadium were completed and included a new running track and synthetic turf.

Finances

- ✓ Enrollment increases of 84 students in the fall helped the district maintain its fund balance.
- ✓ District employees accepted minimal increases in pay and decreased benefits to help the district through the tough financial times.
- ✓ Refunding of a portion of the 1999 bonds to take advantage of the low interest rates saved our taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars.

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Achieve our goals

Students

A new academic mentoring program, which matches upper class students with freshmen, achieving success in core classes.

A new choir was added for 6th grade students.

Hurricane relief efforts in each school netted more than \$30,000 campus-wide.

9 special education students successfully completed all requirements and earned high school diplomas.

4 special education students were declassified when it was determined that they no longer required those services.

77% of students taking the Advanced Placement US History test passed (national average is 50%).

Art from the Heart of CAPS marked its 5th successful year in recognizing young artists.

Last November's high school play at CentreStage Theater, "A Christmas Carol," featured students from each of our schools.

Almost every high school student maintains an on-line Educational Development Plan which assists students in selecting courses during their high school careers.

Athletics

6 senior athletes earned scholar-athlete recognition by earning a 3.5 or higher gpa. Teams awarded Academic All State were girls soccer, softball, boys tennis and girls basketball. Honorable mention was earned by the football team.

The varsity baseball team repeated as OK Blue conference champions and won districts in 2005.

The varsity football team posted its 6th conference championship since 1999, and qualified for playoffs for the 7th consecutive year.

HS hosted district or regional tournaments in wrestling, basketball, volleyball, competitive cheer, softball, and baseball.

Boys golf won their first-ever conference championship.

Boys tennis qualified for state for the 4th time in 5 years.

