



Eye of the Tiger

District 879 Newsletter December 2019-January 2020

At a glance

Page 2

Roeser joins board
Staff member honors

Page 3

Budget breakdown
Audit summary

Page 4

Triple A winners

Dates to remember

December

24-31.....Winter break

January

1-3.....Winter break

13.....HS registration
conferences, 5 p.m.

13.....HS PIE meeting, 6 p.m.

14.....ES PIE meeting, 7 p.m.

15.....Two-hour late start

16.....HS registration
conferences, 5 p.m.

17.....DIS Semester 1 party

20.....MLK Day, no school

20.....ES conferences and
book fair, noon-8 p.m.

20.....IS conferences, noon-6 p.m.

21.....IS conferences, 3:30-7 p.m.

23.....ES conferences and
book fair, 4-8 p.m.

23.....HS one act play, 6:30 p.m.

24.....End of HS Quarter 2
and DIS Semester 1



Sue Roeser has filled an open seat on the school board. See Page 2.



Students in Jessica Bahe's AP Biology class measure the growth of their bean plants on Monday, Dec. 16. Delano has made the AP Honor Roll four out of the last five years.

Delano on AP Honor Roll

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

When the College Board released its 10th annual AP Honor Roll on Thursday, Dec. 5, Delano High School stood alone as the only Minnesota school to qualify.

Only 250 schools in the United States and Canada earned the honor by simultaneously increasing access to Advanced Placement courses

and increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher (out of a possible 5).

"Honor roll districts defy the expectation that expanding access automatically results in a decline in the percentage of exams earning scores of 3 or better," said Andy Hought of the College Board.

See AP Honor
Page 2

Late starts and the 2020-21 calendar

By Matthew Schoen
Superintendent

We have facilitated four late starts since the beginning of the school year in connection with the district's literacy initiative. As you all know from previous articles in district newsletters, the teaching staff and administration have been working diligently with Dr.

Bonnie Houck to implement new research-based best practices in PreK-12 literacy instruction.

The time afforded to our teaching staff as a result of these late starts has been extremely valuable. It has allowed increased collaboration and the opportunity to learn

See Schoen
Page 4



Delano School Board

Roeser appointed to fill open seat

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

Susan Roeser is the newest member of the Delano School Board. She emerged from a field of 14 applicants and was sworn in on Oct. 28 to fill the seat vacated by Mark Larson, who moved out of state.

Roeser will serve until Dec. 31, 2020, and a two-year position will be on the November 2020 ballot to complete the remainder of Larson's term.

Roeser has more than 20 years of experience in human resources leadership roles, and currently works at Hennepin Healthcare (Hennepin County Medical Center) as the Director of HR Shared Services.

"My experience has allowed me to oversee and be a part of many different teams, developing policies and procedures, negotiating significant contracts — including collective bargaining agreements — and collaborating on organization-wide projects to achieve desired outcomes," said Roeser.

Along with her husband,



Sue Roeser joined the school board in October.

Alex, Roeser has two children who have been students in the Delano school district from their earliest years. They are now in seventh grade and fifth grade.

Roeser said she has appreciated the welcome she has received in her new position, and said she was interested in joining the board as a way to help ensure a quality education for her children and their peers.

"Being a school board member is truly a way that I can contribute, given the value the public school system has had in my kids' education to date," Roeser said.

Since taking her position, Roeser has participated in a variety of orientation and training opportunities, and is learning about the many responsibilities that serving on the board entails.

"The first two meetings I've attended have been very informative," Roeser said. "I was lucky enough to hear an overview of each school/program's annual goals, accomplishments and future opportunities at the first meeting, providing a foundation of where the district is and what it wants to become."

As for objectives, Roeser said she aims to be a dedicated and active representative.

"At this point, my goals are to use my career experience, and experience as a parent with two children in the district, to provide input and assist the district wherever needed," she said.

AP Honor

from Page 1

2019 marks the fourth time in the last five years that Delano has qualified for the AP Honor Roll, a distinction that is particularly difficult to achieve as a result of the requirements to increase both participation and performance.

"This is just another example of the excellent work that our teachers, students and administrators do to maintain a high level of academic excellence in our high school," said Delano Superintendent Matt Schoen.

"To be the only high school in the state is quite an achievement. We continue to work hard on growing our college-level courses in the high school. The willingness of our students to challenge themselves in the classroom is an example of the strong support of our family community, along with the high level of expectations for our schools in Delano."

• See the district website, www.delano.k12.mn.us, for the full article about Delano on the AP Honor Roll.

Leaders in Educational Excellence honored

Four staff members from Delano Public Schools received Leaders in Educational Excellence Awards during a ceremony at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud on Wednesday, Oct. 23.

Those honored were DHS media center specialist Monica Kunkel, DES Title 1 teacher Karla Vieau, sixth-grade teacher Sara Potter, and DHS Spanish teacher John Fitzer.

Fitzer is the 2018-19 Delano Teacher of the Year and attended the banquet in that capacity. He is in his 30th year of teaching at Delano and 34th overall.

"I'm very passionate about what I do. I love what I do. I can't imagine doing anything else," said Fitzer in a Teacher of the Year interview last year. "I



John Fitzer



Monica Kunkel



Sara Potter



Karla Vieau

don't consider this a job. It's not work to me. I just love being with the kids and seeing their eyes open to new things."

The nomination statement for Kunkel's award cited her active leadership among her colleagues, both on the district technology committee and as the current president of the Delano Teachers Association.

"Monica is constantly looking for new and innovative ways to help our students

achieve excellence in all aspects of their lives," said the nomination. "She is a strong leader in her building and throughout the district."

Potter is in her 10th year of teaching, including her third in Delano. She is the science facilitator for Delano Intermediate School.

"I got into education to help others and to foster students' curiosity and love of science," she said. "Some of my favorite

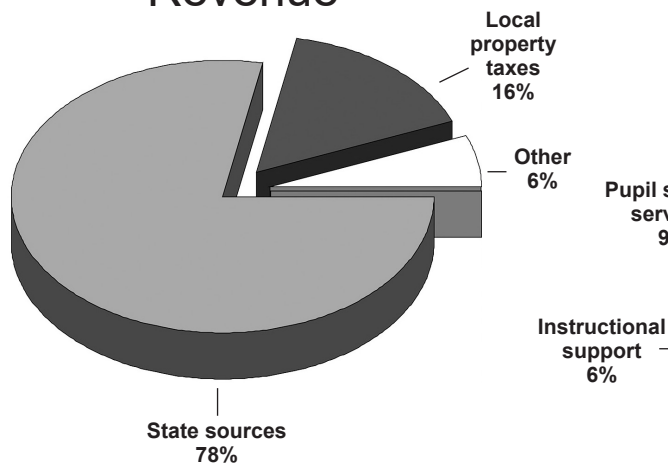
aspects of teaching are helping students discover their own talents, watching students learn something exciting for the first time, and the relationships I build with my students."

Vieau has been an educator for 33 years, including 22 in Delano. A fellow staff member who nominated Vieau for the award cited her "unwavering belief that all students, especially those with the greatest challenges, deserve the opportunity to reach their potential."

"She inspires me and others to strive for rigor, relevance, and relationships," said the nomination. "Former students hug her 10 years later because they know that she believed in them."

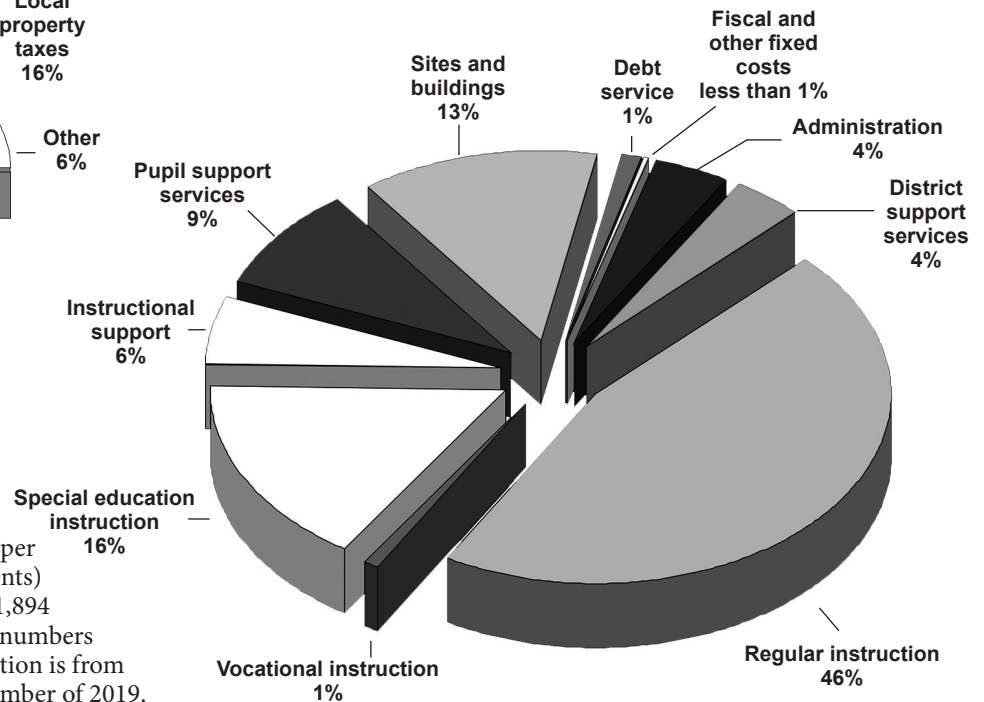
Sources of funding and uses

2019 General Fund
Revenue



In 2019 Delano Public Schools collected \$28.9 million in revenue and expended \$28.7 million. Revenue from property taxes per average daily membership (number of students) was \$1,587 compared to a state average of \$1,894 in 2018, the most recent year that statewide numbers were available for comparison. This information is from the district's annual audit presented in November of 2019.

2019 General Fund
Expenditures



Board receives positive report from auditors

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

Delano School Board members heard a positive report from auditor Matt Mayer of BerganKDV during their meeting on Monday, Nov. 25.

Mayer outlined revenues and expenditures, and said that in terms of whether or not the district had a successful financial year, it outperformed its budget.

Notable observations

In addition to the information presented in the pie charts above, Mayer shared a number of other notable observations.

- “The disparities in funding from the state are really apparent in a district such as yours,” he said, explaining that Delano receives about \$1,600 less in state funding per student than the average district.

Much of that is due to less special education aid (“You’re

not a high special ed. district compared to your peer group,” Mayer said) and less compensatory aid, which is based on poverty levels.

- Though Delano receives less aid, it also spends about \$2,000 less per student than the average district in the state.

“Your district has been fairly conservative on spending,” Mayer said.

- About 63 percent of the district’s budget goes directly to the classroom for regular instruction, vocational instruction and special education.

“That’s a very solid number, when almost two-thirds of the dollars coming in actually get directly to the classroom,” said Mayer.

The next largest areas of expenditure are for facilities at 13 percent, and pupil support (transportation) at nine percent.

- Mayer observed that the distribution of spending has

been similar in recent years, a sign of good management.

“What is kind of remarkable is that those numbers are pretty much identical from year to year,” Mayer said.

**‘As auditors,
that’s something
we’re excited
about. We like to
see that
consistency.’**

Matt Mayer
BerganKDV

“That indicates to us that you, as a board, have a good plan on where you want the dollars to be spent on a year-to-year basis. It’s consistent, you hand that plan off to administration and you’re able to execute on

that plan on a consistent basis. So as auditors, that’s something we’re excited about. We like to see that consistency.”

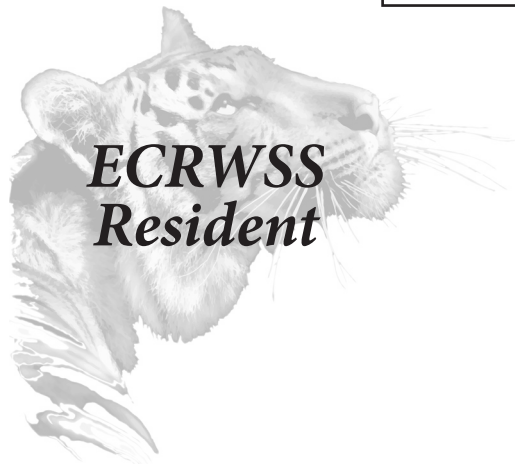
- In another indicator of successful financial management, Mayer said the district has been able to maintain its goal of keeping at least 12 percent in the unassigned fund balance.

“That number is at and over 12 percent, so again, from a financial health standpoint, you as a board can look at your district and say that you’re meeting your goals and you’re meeting your expectations for financial health,” said Mayer.

- Although overall enrollment has declined slightly, Mayer said it has generally been stable, and Delano remains a destination district in terms of open enrollment.

Delano School District
700 Elm Avenue East
Delano, MN 55328

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Delano, MN 55328
Permit #13



Schoen

from Page 1

more about critical instructional practices that will improve student achievement and increase test scores on multiple assessments, both state and local.

During late starts the entire teaching staff is split into two groups: the elementary teachers (PreK-6), and the secondary teachers (7-12). Dr. Houck, along with other teacher leaders in the district, facilitate professional development opportunities that are specifically focused for the elementary group and the secondary group.

The time afforded to our teaching staff as a result of these late starts has been extremely valuable.

We are currently at a time when leaders in each group are assessing the effectiveness of the training. It is vitally important that we evaluate this initiative on multiple fronts. We want to track the implementation of these strategies in the classroom and make adjustments based on feedback from our teaching staff.

Later on in the school year I will provide you more information regarding this all-important initiative that is designed to improve student achievement in many academic areas.

2020-21 calendar

We are in the beginning stages of planning the 2020-21 school calendar. Our calendar committee will begin meeting in January.

One major problem we have is that Labor Day is on Sept. 7 next year. This creates interesting challenges for the calendar committee due to how late the school year would start. I have asked our legislators to pass a law that will allow school districts to start before Labor Day next school year.

While it will take time to see what response comes from the Legislature as a whole, the district must move forward in developing its school calendar. It is very possible that the calendar committee will create two versions of the 2020-21 school year. One version would have school begin Tuesday, Sept. 8, and another version would have school start the week before Labor Day. It is very possible that the calendar committee will recommend both versions to the school board for approval no later than March of 2020 in order to cover both possibilities.

If the Legislature passes a law early in its session that allows school districts to start before Labor Day, however, the calendar committee could simply present one version of the calendar to the school board. I will keep you all posted as our process continues, and as we await Legislative action.

In closing, I would like to wish the entire Delano Public Schools community happy holidays!

Delano Public Schools Vision

Systemic growth toward educational excellence for every learner.

2019 Board of Education

Lisa Seguin, Acting Chair
Corey Black, Clerk
Amy Johnson, Treasurer
Al Briesemeister, Director
Rachel Depa, Director
Jennie Rosenow, Director
Susan Roeser, Director

Eye of the Tiger is published by Delano Public Schools, 700 Elm Avenue East, Delano, MN, 55328. Editor, Paul Downer, Communications Coordinator, 763.972.3365, ext. 1911, paul.downer@delanoschools.org

Follow us online at:



Maria Molitor



Jon Kraus

Molitor, Kraus named Triple A Award winners

Delano High School seniors Maria Molitor and Jon Kraus were named the school's Triple A Award winners on Monday, Dec. 16. The Minnesota State High School League award honors students who excel in the arts, academics and athletics.

Molitor is active in choir and drama, and is a captain for the tennis and track teams. She is also enrolled in several Advanced Placement and College in the Schools courses.

Kraus is active in band, choir and robotics. He plays on the soccer team and helps manage the boys hockey team. Kraus also participates in AP courses.

Both students will now represent Delano at the regional level as candidates to advance for the state-level award.