

A passion for special education

By Sara Frederick



Scott Hare serves as director of student support services for Mankato Area Public Schools.

When Scott Hare saw an opening for the director of student support services at Mankato Area Public Schools, he knew he had to apply.

At the time, Hare was serving as the director of human resources for Shakopee school district. Although he enjoyed the opportunity to work in that position, he missed working in special education.

“It was the perfect opportunity to get back to my passion for special education and being an advocate for children,” Hare says.

Hare started his career in education as a high school social studies teacher. He decided to work with students who have special needs and then taught special education. He’s also served as a principal in middle and high schools before returning to special education at the director level.

His varied experiences give Hare a broader perspective on leading special services in Mankato. “I have a pretty wide lens,” he says. “I’m able to see things as a teacher, as a principal and from the district level, too. That really helps me navigate the world of special education and be creative in the way we look at things here.”

Hare can be contacted at 507-387-1818 or share1@isd77.org.

Special education services helping students be successful

Mankato Area Public Schools serves students with disabilities from birth through age 21. Federal and state laws guide the school district in identifying, evaluating and serving students with disabilities. A team of special educators, general educators and families work together to develop an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for students who meet the criteria for services. The team considers the student’s present level of performance, identifies educational needs and develops goals to meet those needs in the least restrictive setting.

Mankato Area Public Schools provides a continuum of services for students with disabilities. Special instruction and services are provided in: autism spectrum disorders, blind-visually impaired, deaf-blind, deaf and hard of hearing, developmental cognitive disabilities, developmental delay, emotional or behavioral disorders, other health disabilities, physically impaired, specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairments and traumatic brain injury.

Prior to age six, a child who needs special instruction and services because of a substantial delay or identifiable physical or mental condition that hinders normal development is considered a child with a disability. Most students receive special education in their neighborhood school. The district also has specialized programs for students who need more support.

For more information on identifying, evaluating and providing service to students with disabilities, contact your child’s school principal or student support services at 507-387-1818.

Students benefit from in-house resource team

By Edell Fiedler, public information

resources are available because every child needs support at some point in their lives.”

The emotional, social wellness and health of students and families continue to be a high priority because it’s center to student success.



Social Worker Molly Fox and Counselor Amanda Bomstad talk with a student.

Mankato Area Public Schools has an in-house team of social workers, psychologists, counselors and nurses who help students be successful. Social and emotional support is important while also serving as an important link to outside resources students may need. Molly Fox, named School Social Worker of the Year by the Minnesota School Workers Association, knows firsthand the positive impacts having a solid support system has on students.

“Having resources available to students at school is important because students are there most of the day,” Fox says. “If they can’t express themselves, are anxious, grieving, or need to work on social skills, it’s difficult to focus on learning.”

By being on the front lines with students, the team can help problem solve so students can grow socially and emotionally at a rate that’s best for them. Mankato Area Public Schools continues to look for ways to provide needed support.

Scott Hare, director of student support services, says, “As mental health support needs increase, it’s important to ensure

Annual pesticides, asbestos and air quality notification

Emergency preparedness, including detailed emergency crisis management plans, air quality, pest-free environments and asbestos monitoring are all items staff teams prioritize for school safety.

School year pesticide notice

In compliance with the Parents Right to Know Act of 2000, Mankato Area Public Schools has an integrated pest management plan designed to minimize the risk to human health and the environment as well as reduce use of chemical pesticides. Mankato Area Public Schools does not apply pesticides on school property unless all other measures have not worked. If insect control sprays and dusts need to be applied, it is done when students are not in the area during application and until product has dissipated. For questions, more information, or if there’s interest in being notified prior to an application, contact Scott Hogen, director of facilities, at 507-345-5311 or shogen1@isd77.org.

Asbestos notification

Mankato Area Public Schools, in accordance with the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), has a stringent inspection and management program for all asbestos containing building materials. The district strives to maintain a safe and healthful environment for students and staff. Every three years, all buildings owned and leased by the district are re-inspected by an U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) accredited inspector for asbestos content. All materials containing asbestos are surveyed every six months along with visual inspections to ensure a minimal level of health risks. Any materials needing repair or removal are done safely and responsibly under the district’s asbestos operation and maintenance program. Mankato Area Public Schools has a list of locations and types of asbestos containing materials found in its buildings. A copy of the asbestos management plan is available for review in the district’s facility office, 10 Civic Center Plaza. For questions or more information, contact Scott Hogen, director of facilities, at 507-345-5311 or shogen1@isd77.org.

Indoor air quality notification

Mankato Area Public Schools is committed to providing and maintaining good air quality. Schools follow EPA guidelines to improve Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) by being proactive. Throughout the year, air quality is regularly monitored and air handling systems are maintained to ensure good quality. District health and safety department staff follow-up on any reported items. Mankato Area Public Schools has agreed to administer an IAQ Management Plan, which includes taking a team leadership role, coordinating emergency response and serving as an information resource. For questions or more information, contact Scott Hogen, director of facilities, at 507-345-5311 or shogen1@isd77.org.

Right to know

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student who attends Mankato Area Public Schools have a right to know about the professional qualifications of the teachers who instruct their child(ren). The Every Student Succeeds Act provides the right to ask for the following information about each child’s classroom teachers:

- ◆ Whether the State of Minnesota has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- ◆ Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status by which state licensing criteria have been waived.

- ◆ The teacher’s college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and subject of the degrees.
- ◆ Whether any instructional aide or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

To receive any of the above information, contact Eric Hudspeth, director of human resources and organizational development at 507-387-3017.