

## **Reflections at the end of the school year**

*By Superintendent Jeff Elstad*

Tests are over, desks and lockers are cleared out, and graduates have walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. We have so much to be grateful for as we end this school year! A special congratulations to the Class of 2023 as they embark on the next leg of their life journey.

I want to recognize our scholarship recipients, hard-working teachers, retirees, student artists, student athletes, and every student and staff person who bring their own unique contributions to our district. If you see an Owatonna Public Schools student or staff member on the street, please take a moment to congratulate or thank them for a great year.

This year has special significance for me, personally, as our household graduates the last of four proud OHS graduates. I cannot be more grateful for our caring staff and community that have supported and nurtured my children and given them a great foundation of learning, activities, and memories to last a lifetime.

As we end this school year, we also close a chapter on the current Owatonna High School. This building has been home to generations of students and has served our community well. As this era ends, we begin an exciting adventure at the new high school.

I have to imagine that the pioneers in 1921 experienced some of the same feelings and challenges with change in a community. Our new high school will provide for the needs of many generations to come and will be our new home to love and cherish. I look forward to our grand opening on September 23, 2023 to share our new home with the entire community.

I am grateful to live and work in a community that strongly values our young people and their education. Whatever future challenges come our way, I know we can join together to do our best for the children and youth entrusted to our care.