



Superintendent's Report - Board of Education Meeting – December 15, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

Ambitious Instruction – *Classes are academically demanding and engage students by emphasizing the application of knowledge.*

- Our [Return to School Plan](#) is the epitome of the 'Ambitious Instruction' category as our school community has engaged in simultaneous in-person and remote learning settings for our PK-8th students since Aug. 21st
- Our English Learner Program serves the individual needs of nearly 80 students that represent 32 different native languages spoken in Gower ([Appendix A](#))
- Our 8th grade students participated in a [Science Behind Drugs](#) program on 11/20 and led by [Candor Health](#)
- Winter [NWEA MAP testing](#), [FastBridge Screening](#), and [ACCESS testing](#) are scheduled for Jan. 11-Feb. 12
- The District's Annual STEM Night is scheduled for Feb 11th as a virtual family STEM activity; the annual Science Showcase and Brookfield Zoo Science Fair will be postponed until the 2021-2022 school year

Supportive Environment – *The school environment is safe, clean and conducive to student learning. Teachers have high expectations for students. Students have the support of their teachers as well as their peers.*

- Year to Date attendance rates (*Previous Year*): 96.1% (96.6%) for our 899 (885) students; 94.5% (96.5%) for our 88 (83) Certified Staff and 96.1% (97.4%) for our 50 (61) Non-Certified Staff. Goal = 97%+
- Required staff training on 12/8 and 12/9 was completed by school social workers on Mental Health Issue Identification and Course of Action
- On 11/24, staff participated in a training and survey regarding the Student Online Personal Protection Act ([SOPPA](#)), which goes into effect in July 2021; [Board Policy 7:345](#) was adopted in Sept. 2020 as a result
- Facilities Update: An [updated timeline](#) has been shared with the Board of Education and is also posted on our [Campus Projects & Referendum](#) webpage - updates will continue to be posted throughout the project

Involved Families and Community – *Strong relationships are built across the community to support learning.*

- The annual [5-Essentials Survey](#) will open on Feb. 3rd and we encourage all Gower parents to participate. Our standing goal is 35% parent participation and need your help to meet it!
- The [Gower PTO](#) and Gower 62 ELL Team are co-sponsoring a multicultural cookbook to celebrate our diversity in place of this year's Multicultural Night. More details to come!
- The [Gower Foundation](#) continues to support our school community and is currently running a seasonal fundraiser to help support a variety of school programs
- With Winter Break upon us, please continue to do YOUR part so we can continue to do OUR part ([Be sure to watch for more information](#) regarding [COVID-19 testing](#) at our schools during the week of Dec 28th)

Collaborative Teachers & Staff – *The staff is committed to the school, receives strong professional development, & works together to improve.*

- District Committee work continues and most recently involved our Physical Education, Tech Team, ELL, and K-8 English Language Arts teachers
- Our School Nurses have been instrumental in helping launch and sustain our voluntary, [COVID-19 testing program](#) which includes two forms of antigen tests, an antibody test and an at-home saliva-based PCR test
- Our GM P.E. Teachers are working on their [IAHPERD](#) Blue Ribbon application, which is due on Feb. 1st
- The District Calendar Committee has revised the [2020-2021 school calendar](#) to include additional eLearning days on alternating Fridays between winter break and spring break
- Gower has been able to accommodate Hinsdale HS student interns & Elmhurst College practicum students

Effective Leaders – *School leaders work with staff to implement a clear and strategic vision for school success.*

- Our [on-site, COVID-19 testing program](#) has been expanded to Gower Families through the use of an at-home saliva based PCR test, a second rapid antigen test (Abbott BinaxNow) has been added at no charge to the district - Further expansion is underway to include local police departments and Gower graduates
- Gower administrators submitted the [Title III Language Instruction Educational Program Grant](#) which was subsequently approved by ISBE for an additional \$6,460 to support our English Learners
- Gower administrators have applied for and have been accepted into a grant-funded [microcredential](#) program through the Illinois State University/BloomBoard partnership, [Leadership for Equity/Certification Program](#)
- Gower administrators have recommended adding a section of 2nd grade to reduce the class size (from 25-27 to 20-21) to accommodate this grade level that has continued to grow since the beginning of the school year
- Gower led a [webinar hosted by the IL Assoc. of School Administrators](#) on 12/7/20 to share our locally developed COVID-19 testing program to help other school districts interested in building one of their own