



Dear Families and Colleagues,

It has been a full week of activities around our district. I had the pleasure of watching all four of our high school bands perform Tuesday night at the Marching Band Extravaganza, and from what I saw, these bands are ready to rock it at the [Colorado West Marching Festival](#) next Saturday, September 24 at Stocker Stadium. This will be the regional competition in preparation for the state competition. I would like to give a huge shoutout to Kathy Joseph, Director of Music for D51, for leading an outstanding team of high school band directors and for putting on a great event with her team. Good luck to band directors Ryan Crabtree (FMHS), Isaac Lavadie (GJHS), Hans Snell (CHS), and Jeff Mason (PHS) and all of our bands in the upcoming festival. You represent the district and our community well, and we're proud to have you as part of the D51 Family.

Homecoming in District 51

Central High School kicked off our first of four homecoming weeks in District 51. Their HOCO parade (I was informed that this is what they are called, now...I'm no longer cool enough to know the terminology) was Wednesday night on Main Street. I attended with my family, and it was great to see the pride and spirit shown by our high school students as they celebrated their school. Thanks to all of the families and community members for lining the street to support the Warriors, as well. Tonight the Warriors will take on Durango at Stocker Stadium. Below is the lineup for our other Homecoming parades and games. You can also check out all sporting events by visiting our [athletic calendar](#).

GJHS

- Parade , Wednesday, September 21 @ 6:30 p.m. on Main Street in Grand Junction
- Football game, Friday, September 23 vs. Overland @ 8:00 p.m. at Stocker Stadium

FMHS

- Parade, Saturday, September 24 @ 10:00 a.m. in downtown Fruita
- Football game, Friday, September 30 vs. Heritage @ 6:00 p.m. at Stocker Stadium

PHS

- Parade, Friday, October 7 @ 1:00 p.m. in downtown Palisade
- Football game, Friday, October 7 vs. Eagle Valley @ 7:00 p.m. at Stocker Stadium

Hispanic Heritage Month

Yesterday marked the kickoff of Hispanic Heritage Month. The observation began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988. The theme for 2022 is "**Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation.**" We want to celebrate the diversity that exists in our district, and Hispanic Heritage Month is one way to do so. At our last Board of Education meeting, the Board read a Proclamation in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month. You can read that Proclamation [here](#).

We are teaming up with the Latino Chamber to honor D51 students who have contributed to the visual & performing arts opportunities at the Hispanic Heritage Month [kick off event](#) at CMU Plaza on campus on September 24. The event is free and open to the public.

Also, last week "*The Voice of D51*" aired for the first time on KAFM, and we had the opportunity to spotlight our D51 CLDE (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education) department. You can access that podcast [here](#).

Lions Club Donation

On Tuesday morning, Board President Haitz, Board Vice President Jones, and I met with representatives from the local Lions Clubs ([see here](#)) to receive boxes full of pocket U.S. Constitutions that will be distributed to all eighth-graders in District 51 following the formal Constitution Day celebration on Saturday, September 17. The booklets will enhance and enrich students' studies of The Constitution, which is a focus of 8th-grade civics in Colorado. I would like to thank the Clifton Lions Club, Fruita Lions Club, Orchard Mesa Lions Club, Palisade Lions Club, Redlands Lions Club, and the Grand Junction Lions Club for their generous donation to our District and our students. Thanks for being engaged and supportive community partners.

Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction Students of the Month

I had the opportunity to attend a Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction meeting on Thursday as they honored D51 students for the Student of the Month celebration. It was great to see hard working students from each of our D51 high schools recognized for "Not only a commitment to their education, but also a commitment to their communities." Congrats to Jordan, Ella, Aidan, and Mariah for receiving this award, and thanks to the Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction for being an engaged and supportive community partner with D51!

Opioid Awareness

This week Fruita Monument High School hosted Opioid Awareness Week. We would like to thank the members of Western Colorado Area Health Education Center, Youth Strong, and Rise Above Colorado for helping make this week meaningful and educational for our students. The events included outreach tables for students and teachers, Not Prescribed Presentations and a DOA Presentation on Wednesday to educate our students on the effects of opioids. The opioid epidemic is real, and we want to help our D51 students know about the dangers of using opioids. For more information on bringing awareness to the dangers of opioids please visit www.voicesforawareness.com

Panorama Survey

Data-driven decision making will continue to be a focus in D51 moving forward. Our Strategic Plan includes a Priority Area focused on Student Wellness, and we use data to assess how our students are doing in order to make data-informed decisions. The District is currently administering the Panorama survey to all students in grades 3-12. The questions on the survey ask about a student's sense of well-being & belonging. The results are kept confidential and used by trained staff to better support all of our students. You can see all of the questions on the survey on our [website](#). As we mentioned in my letter in August, if you would like to [opt your child out](#) of this survey, please visit the D51 website (under the Parents tab, click on Assessment Information).

Listening Sessions

I've enjoyed multiple opportunities to hear from our families and community members this week as we continue the Superintendent Listening Tour. I had the pleasure of connecting with folks at Mount Garfield Middle School on Tuesday, lunch with a packed house at the Fresh Side Cafe at the Career Center on Wednesday, a Spanish Listening Session on Thursday night at BTK, and wrapped up the week with a Listening Session at Kiln Coffee on Main Street this morning.

We are engaging in meaningful conversations and hearing great suggestions from y'all on the topic of what the Strategic Plan means to you and ways we can have more prepared and supported students and staff and engaged and supportive community partners.

The listening sessions will wrap up in the next two week with two virtual sessions for those who have not been able to make it out to the other sessions.

- Wednesday, Sept. 21 - [Zoom meeting in English](#), 6-7 p.m.
- Monday, Sept. 26 - [Zoom meeting in Spanish](#), 6-7 p.m.

Leadership D51

September 21 is the final day to get your application in for Leadership D51. This course is an entry point that offers established and emerging business and community members a unique opportunity to come together to:

- Learn more about District 51 through balanced and open discussion.
- Deepen community relationships in order to support student career exploration, mental health and family partnerships.
- Recruit and secure new partners and team members to support the efforts of District 51 and its Strategic Plan.

Community members interested in learning more about District 51 and want to help be an ambassador for our district are encouraged to apply to be a part of the first cohort of Leadership D51. There will be four meetings throughout the school year, plus a graduation ceremony at the end of the program. This is a great way to learn about your district and make connections with leaders in the community. Visit d51schools.org or [click here](#) to apply before the Sept. 21 deadline. If you are a D51 staff member, please encourage your friends and family to apply.

Brian Hill

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SENIOR LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Marsh Chief Academic Officer

Career Background

I have spent 24 years in education serving as a SPED teacher, assistant principal, SPED coordinator, principal, Executive Director of Curriculum and now Chief Academic Officer.

Alma Mater

Colorado Mesa University and University of Northern Colorado

Why did you want to work in K-12 education?

I am inspired by our students and staff. My husband and I were both D51 students; as were our children. I love our community and the area we live in.

What's your favorite thing about D51?

Our people! The passion and dedication in our district for our students is second to none.

What are you looking to accomplish this year in your role?

I'm looking forward to continuing to build on the growth our students accomplished last year. Champion our Strategic Plan while working to ensure our systems, supports, and practices are efficient, evident and clear to all those I serve.

Fun Fact

I was a student in the first freshman class at CHS, in 1984!



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