

# Dunkerton Community School

Empowering students to be life-long learners and caring, responsible citizens

## Board of Directors

Kirby Marquart, President  
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## Administration

Jim Stanton, Superintendent  
Justin Urbanek, Secondary Principal  
Patrick Carlin, Elementary Principal  
Amy Morley, Business Manager  
Jason Yessak, Activities Coordinator  
Ashley Sires, Special Education Coordinator

April 22, 2016

I want to send an update to you on behalf of our Board. After careful thought and deliberation, the Board has determined that they will pursue an operational sharing agreement with Wapsie Valley Community Schools for the position of Superintendent; the agreement will be for one year, 2016 – 2017, and will be reviewed by each Board over the course of the coming school year before any determination is made regarding the length of an agreement beyond the first year.

Several factors lead to the decision to share the position of Superintendent:

- Uncertain increases in school finance at the State level have impacted many schools across the state. Increases of 1.25% and 2.25% in the past two years, coupled with decreasing enrollment here, have resulted in the need for districts to find ways to reduce costs and increase revenues. Sharing staff members between districts reduces costs and the State provides financial incentives/revenue for districts that share certain positions, one of which is superintendent.
- Many Iowa districts are currently sharing superintendents, or have superintendents who also serve as building principal, for example. Large districts like Clear Lake and Mason City shared a superintendent for several years, and local districts like Nashua-Plainfield and Clarksville, Sumner-Fredericksburg and West Central, and Tripoli and Starmont and North Tama and Gladbrook-Reinbeck share (or will be sharing) a superintendent. There are multiple examples for districts to follow across the state.
- Districts can share superintendents and still maintain a unique identity. This doesn't mean that we will become more like Wapsie Valley, or that Wapsie Valley will be expected to do what we do at Dunkerton. We can share good ideas and best practice, but sharing a superintendent **does not** mean that two districts are merging. On the contrary, both Boards feel it is an important step in maintaining their Districts identity without the threat of consolidation. Both Boards appreciate that about the sharing agreement.
- The availability of a neighboring District. From a geographic standpoint it makes the most sense as transportation can be minimized, and time can be maximized.

Although sharing leadership will be a process, the School Boards, Administrative Teams, and I are committed to doing the work that will help this agreement be a success for kids and staff in both districts. Will there be changes that accompany this new structure? Yes, of course, but with good people in the right positions, we are confident this can be a productive agreement for both districts. As more information becomes available, the Board will pass that along to staff members and to the community as well. Dunkerton is also looking at other positions within the system to operationally share so that they can take advantage of the shared workload and the financial incentives the State offers. For more information on operational sharing please feel free to contact me, or go to the Department of Education website ([www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov)).

