

# NRHEG Public School

Independent School District No. 2168



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June 2016

## Reflecting on the past; planning for the future

by Dale Carlson, NRHEG Public School Superintendent

### Our Mission

*Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.*

### Our Vision

*To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.*

I had the privilege of participating in Graduation 2016 as we recognized 63 seniors graduating from the NRHEG Public Schools after meeting the academic graduation requirements. Throughout my 31 years in public education, graduation continues to be an annual highlight as it is a time to celebrate together the accomplishments of our graduates, but also the many contributions and support of parents, families, staff, and the communities.

As part of my comments, I shared the following with the Class of 2016.

*Nelson Mandela said that "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Today, you have achieved what may be the most significant goal so far in your lifetime, and have positioned yourself to change the world. While today we celebrate together your accomplishments of the past that have culminated in your graduation today from NRHEG; today also represents the next step in your life journey.*

*Your class motto, "Together, we have experienced life. Separately, we will pursue our dreams. Forever, our memories will remain" speaks to all of us here today. For most of you, you have grown up together; shared your life experiences together in and out of school, and come together today filled with memories that will be with you forever. Graduates . . . take with you the many memories you have from your past as you move forward in pursuing your dreams.*

*As you look ahead, take from your past the many experiences that have made you who you are today and change the world. Respect and love your families, cherish your friendships, and serve others, so that you make every community in which you live a better place.*

*In the words of Steve Jobs, "Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice, and most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary."*

**Dale N. Carlson, Superintendent**

**David A. Bunn, High School Principal**

**Douglas A. Anderson, Elementary Principal**

*My hope for you is that you will follow your heart and intuition. Trust in yourself as you reach out to those around you. Explore the many doors already opened for you, and open doors that appear to be closed. Believe in yourself. In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt . . . "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."*

*So go for your dreams! Lead! As a graduate of NRHEG, you are well prepared to face the new challenges that await you. We are proud of you. Thank you for the many contributions you have made to your school and to your community. We wish you the best in the future. Celebrate today as you reflect on your past and plan for your future. Congratulations. Job well done!*

As we say goodbye to the Class of 2016, we also recognize those staff members who are retiring or have retired from the school district in the past year. As with our graduates, our retirees are moving onto their next stage of their life journey. District staff had an opportunity to celebrate the service of our retirees at a reception on June 3. Retirees recognized were teachers Joanne Phillips (11 years), Jill Schlaak (24 years), and Bonnie Jacobson (24 years); bus drivers Martin Nelson (23 years), and Chuck Crabtree (23 years); and Food Service Cook Sue Hill (25 years). Thank you to each of them for their service to students!

As I reflect on the past school year, there are numerous accomplishments and successes experienced by our students and staff in which you should be proud of as a key member and supporter of our school community. Students have excelled at the regional, state and/or national level in numerous co-curricular competitions. Our athletic programs continue to provide our students with opportunities to enhance and grow critical life skills as they work to better themselves and their teammates. Countless hours are invested by our students, coaches, instructors, advisors, volunteers, and parents so that our students experience both personal success and also the success that comes from working with others. Thank you to our students for their dedication and commitment to their activity, team, school, and community. Thank you to our coaches and advisors who devote time beyond their primary responsibilities to make sure our students enjoy and learn from the successes and challenges experienced in practice and competition.

With the many accomplishments and successes experienced by our students, our work as a school community continues. The list of opportunities or improvement is extensive as we move forward in the coming months and throughout the next school year. While our primary focus and purpose will continue to be student learning and achievement as identified in the District's Strategic Plan, there are a number of specific initiatives we are already working on to make sure we *empower students with the knowledge and skills to succeed*. School safety, student assessment, staff development, fiscal sustainability, facility planning, communication, and technology continue to be areas of emphasis and focus for our ongoing work within our Strategic Plan Focus Areas, so that our students continue to receive a quality education.

At the staff recognition program on June 3, I encouraged staff to reflect on their many contributions that have made it possible for our students to come to school every day and learn. Their gifts and talents enable the NRHEG School District to provide a quality educational program for students. Teaching is the most important and rewarding profession, but also the most challenging. Our staff members are in the business of changing the lives of students for the better, which is not easy to do, as it takes individuals who have the courage to take risks, face criticism, continually demonstrate patience and understanding, and remain focused on the mission of serving students. Your support for our staff is critical to the overall success of our students.

At the center of any thriving and prosperous community is a progressive school district that is dedicated to growing, developing, and educating children. The support you provide as a parent, guardian,

employee, volunteer, business, and/or taxpayer makes a difference in the lives of many students. It is your support that allows the children of our community to grow and flourish in their learning and achievement. Together, we will be *a school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities!* Thank you for all you do for the children of our communities!

A reminder that the School Board conducts its regular monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month. The location of the meeting is rotated monthly between the NRHEG Secondary School Media Center in New Richland and the NRHEG Elementary School Media Center in Ellendale. The July 18, 2016, School Board meeting will be at the Elementary School beginning at 6:30 pm, and the August 15, 2016 School Board meeting will be at the Secondary School beginning at 6:30 pm.

Enjoy the summer!

Dale N. Carlson