

Ethan Ebenstein reflects on his time as superintendent

I feel fortunate to have been a part of many special programs and projects in the past 10 years in Comstock Park. I think the implementation of The Leader in Me program at Pine Island Elementary has had a profound impact on building culture. It has been very positive for both students and staff, and I have confidence that under Principal Stacy Reehl's passion for this program it will have a corresponding impact on academic achievement.

I take pride that the high school received recognition multiple times from U.S. News and World Report as a top Michigan high school. The Career Academy there has been instrumental in not only helping students regain lost credit toward graduation, but also learn valuable workplace and life skills that they will use for years to come.

I also take great joy in that I was able to be part of a community initiative to upgrade, improve and add new facilities for our students and residents. The 2011 construction bonds allowed us to enhance buildings and their learning environments, create safer building entrances, integrate technology, modernize much of our bus fleet, construct a fine arts and athletic center, and renovate an athletic stadium complex into one of the most beautiful in Michigan you will find for a school our size.

I am also pleased that despite many challenges financially created by declining enrollment, we have been able to work collaboratively with employee association leadership to maintain a level of financial stability. When I started in 2008, we had a 2.5 percent fund balance. For the past several years we maintained between 7 and 15 percent.

The new superintendent is going to discover we have an amazing staff, an experienced Board of Education and an incredibly supportive community.

We have a unique and active organization in Comstock Park Community Outreach that works hard to help find area resources to match local community needs. Our Downtown Development Authority is working diligently to make the downtown area an aesthetically pleasing and vibrant economic destination.

Our community in the time I have been here has also renewed our capital improvement (sinking fund) millage, a county enhancement millage and an operating millage renewal. Our community and school system enjoy a strong, symbiotic relationship and we each take pride in each other. This is evidenced by the crowd support at events, parades and community expos, and is shown by our students in their successes in the classroom, athletics and fine arts.