

AMANA CHURCH SOCIETY NEWS

The Early Service will be in the Middle Church Sunday, February 19, 2023, starting 8:30 A.M. with Sw. Kristie Yoder presiding.

Opening Hymn: "Jesus, komm doch selbst sure mir" No. 526 Seite 524

Testimony: Gleim, Ronneburg, May 18, 1715
Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:6-15

Psalm: 116:1-13

Closing Hymn: "Ich will dich lieben" No. 490 Seite 486

The Late Service will start at 10:00 A.M. with the following hymns:

Opening Hymn: "Jesus Savior come to Me" No. 5

Closing Hymn: "Thee will I Love, My Strength, My Tower" No. 46

The Wednesday Evening Prayer (Nachtgebet) meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. in Middle.

Visitors are welcome to join us in worship at all Amana Church Services. Childcare is available during Sunday's 10:00 A.M. Service.

Links to services posted online may be found at: <https://amanachurch.com/category/podcast/>

AMANA SOCIETY 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS

The Amana Society Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the Amana Society will be awarding up to three \$1000.00 scholarships to graduating high school seniors attending an accredited college, university or trade school in 2023.

Applicants must be either currently employed by the Amana Society, a child or grandchild of a current full-time Amana Society employee, or a child or grandchild of an Amana Society stockholder.

Application forms are available at the Amana Society Main Office front desk or by contacting Bruce Trumpold directly at 319-622-7526/ btrumpold@amanas.net. Forms may also be downloaded at www.amanasociety.com.

Thank you.
Amana Society, Inc.

FEATHERS IN THE WIND

I was thinking about Valentine's Day and how we always would decorate paper bags or shoe boxes for school so that classmates could put their Valentines in these gaily decorated containers.

It seemed so special if one of our classmates had someone from another class drop off a Valentine. Obviously that meant the person was very special.

I always longed for someone to drop off a Valentine for me from another class, but I was doomed for perpetual disappointment.

Those little candy hearts looked so good, but frankly tasted like chalk (corn syrup/starch, sugar, gelatin & food coloring) Then again beggars can't be choosers and each year I would buy a bag, put it in a bowl and think I had decorated for Valentines. Secretly I hoped Charlemagne would eat the hearts before they got so old I had to throw them away.

The best Valentine I got was in the sixth grade and my grandfather brought a big red Valentine heart shape box full of chocolate.

First he gave me a box and I was thrilled, but then being greedy, I thought that such a big box must mean I had to share with my sister.

Knowing how she operated she would "touch" all the candy before finally selecting a piece. (Who know where those fingers had been) Then she might break the chocolate shell to see what the center was. Ugh! This was not going to go right, but I HAD to SHARE! Who came up with this stupid rule anyway?

Feathers continues on page 2

AMANA NEWS AND NOTES

Public Meeting About Amana Elementary Feb. 21

With questions being raised by Amana parents about the busing of Amana 5th graders to the Oak Hill Elementary School in Tiffin and the news that planning is underway to make Amana Elementary a magnet K-4 school with a fine arts and financial literacy feature, Dr. Corey Seymour is planning to meet with the public at the Amana Elementary School on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 6 p.m. A second meeting will be held on March 27.

This is in response to the reaction to a Clear Creek Amana School District facilities plan released January 30 that calls for busing all CCA 5th graders, making the Amana Elementary School a magnet school, and changes in the other buildings including moving the Tiffin preschool and kindergarten locations.

To read the plan in full go to the CCA website and look for the CCA Plans for the 2023-24 School Year. The address is <https://www.ccaschools.org/Page/5742>.

Here's some background information. CCA has seven schools:

- CCA High School in Tiffin has 727 students 9 – 12
- CCA Middle School in Tiffin has 615 students 6 – 8
- Tiffin Elementary in Tiffin has 400 students preschool, kindergarten – 3
- Amana Elementary in Middle has 159 preschool, kindergarten – 5
- North Bend Elementary in North Liberty has 385 students preschool, kindergarten – 3
- Clear Creek Elementary in Oxford has 356 students preschool, kindergarten – 5
- Oak Hill Elementary in Tiffin has 325 students 4 – 5.

A group of Amana parents met Feb. 4 and Feb. 10 in Amana to make a list of their questions and to pool information some of them had gleaned from attending the CCA school board meeting in January and watching the YouTube video of the December CCA school board meeting.

Worried that the busing of the 5th grade is a preamble to closing the Amana Elementary, these parents want to be proactive and receive answers to their questions, as two of them explained to this reporter this week.

Meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 7 with Dr. Corey Seymour at the CCA District Office on Highway 6 near Oxford, this reporter sat down for a long interview.

Dr. Seymour emphasized that "The Amana Elementary is not closing. Please print that."

He went on to say that the district's intention is to strengthen the school, improve learning for students and increase enrollment there.

"Give me two years and I know we can make this happen at Amana Elementary," he said.

To that end the plan calls for:

- Seeking to make the Amana Elementary a fine arts/financial literacy magnet K-4 school with a K-4 curriculum that incorporates the fine arts and financial literacy. "Amana is known for its arts, its crafts and Amana has so much to offer in its community by way of its business, small business background. Those are strengths that we can use to improve our school," he said. Adding parents from outside the Colonies could chose to send their kids to Amana Elementary, as well he is hopeful that the school would attract open enrollment.

- Dr. Seymour is looking at adding foreign language teaching for Amana K-4. "Imagine having a curriculum that includes foreign language learning starting in kindergarten and continuing through 4th grade. That will be a draw," he said.

The district plans to apply for funding through the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) a federal program, Dr. Seymour explained. How

ever, if the grants are not received, the plan will move forward.

"The district is committed, financially committed to this," he said. "I am looking at this from a broader perspective, not just next fall or next year, but what's good for Amana, for the school down the road, in the long term. I know this can work, as I have done this before."

Dr. Seymour described how in a previous school system where he worked, a very large school district with over 250,000 students, it had one small school in a rural setting that had a declining enrollment. "We made it a magnet school and that changed everything for that school and that neighborhood. We can do that in Amana. I believe that."

Declining enrollment in Amana while the east side of the district is growing is one issue, so is the budget. Amana's per student cost is higher than that of the other elementary schools – because of its size.

According to the plan released January 30, test scores from Amana Elementary have to be considered as another reason, Dr. Seymour said.

The facilities plan reported that while Oak Hill 4th and 5th graders tested in 2022 had core proficiency (that means they are "proficient" as measured by the State of Iowa skills and achievement tests) in math of 75 percent and in reading/language arts (called ELA) of 78 percent. In other words 75 percent of Oak Hill 4th and 5th graders are proficient in math and 78 are proficient in reading/language arts. At Amana Elementary 63 percent of 4 – 5th graders are proficient in ELE and 61 percent in math. The Amana 5th graders had scores in the 55 percent for ELE and 50 percent for math. Scores from the other elementary schools weren't noted in the plan.

However, as two parents told me, the Amana 5th grade has a high percentage of at-risk students who are working to improve and those kids have made great progress since first grade. By not including the test scores for Oxford parents felt that Amana Elementary was being singled out, one parent told us. "And watching the YouTube video of the December board meeting made me wonder," she added.

Why weren't Oxford's test scores included in the January 30 plan? Because they aren't a factor in the decision Dr. Seymour explains.

Stating that this is not "calling out Amana" or any school or any educator, because tests are imperfect, and this is post-Covid, but having said that, improving proficiency has to be a goal and

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Feathers from page 1

Well naturally as I was thinking of how to share the candy without screaming at her first she appeared like a mouse who had sniffed some cheese.

Good old Opa, brought out a second box for her too!

First I was relieved, then I had to check if it was the same size and finally I had to plan where to hide my chocolate just in case she ate all her chocolate first.

She didn't - instead she liked to linger over her chocolate and be sort of gloat that she still had candy and I didn't.

Now that I think about it she did that with ice cream cones too. I'm even the one who shouldn't eat ice cream because I'm lactose intolerant so it was doubly fun for my little sister to gloat.

B.S.H.

CHILI & SOUP COOK OFF
Sunday Feb. 19th @ 4:00 PM
Clover Ridge Church
Walford Iowa,
\$1 admission
Vote for your favorite with \$\$\$



Photo of the seven young men from West Amana taken between 1920 and 1930. From left: Philip Griess, Philip Mittelbach, Richard Graesser, Carl Flick, Emil Graesser. Remaining two, believed to be in the Ehrmann, Kellenberger or Miller families. Any positive identification, contact RC 622-3908.

FOR SALE

Amana Society, Inc. New Class A Common Stock.
 Please call 515-991-6671

WANTED/WANTED TO BUY

BUYING All ANTIQUES; Toys, signs, Furniture, Crocks, Paintings, textiles, automotive, oddities and the unusual. Any condition. Fair cash prices paid. Call or text 319-270-1251/Jack Cirkl.

FOR RENT

Room w/shared bath & common area South Amana. No smoking, references, background check. Call Larry at 319-540-9351

**Amana Area Fellowship
 Night of Worship**

Please join us for an evening of food, fellowship, song and a message from the Bible.

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Amana Performing Arts Center

Potluck 6:00-6:30 Music and Message 6:45

Continuing series: The Road to the Cross

March 9th – It Is Finished

April 13th – Easter Message

visit us at www.amanaareafellowship.org

News and Notes from page 1

test scores, as they are a way to measure, do matter, Dr. Seymour explained.

He disagreed with the idea that Amana had a higher percentage of "at risk" kids at the time of testing noting that every school has kids that are at-risk of achieving proficiency or find it hard to take tests.

Dr. Seymour said, "Don't we want more than 50 percent of our kids in any classroom to be proficient? I do." Adding that the CCA board and staff really wants to see those numbers in the 80s. "As a parent I want my kid, every kid, to be proficient, so that's what we are trying to do. Give every kid the best shot."

To that end moving all the 5th graders in the entire district to one building on the east side of Tiffin, Oak Hill Elementary, is the district's plan to improve learning for all 5th graders. "Fifth grade is a crucial time. We don't want to lose them. We want them to do as well as they can," he said.

He said that in those schools where there is one teacher in the building teaching his or her grade level, without peer support, does not help. "We want to give the teachers of 5th grade all the support we can," he said.

Questioned why this model of education, grouping all classrooms for one grade in one building, won't someday be applied to kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th, Dr. Seymour's response was, "Amana will be a preschool through 4th grade elementary," he stressed. "That's not changing."

He did share numbers that show that the Amana School is more expensive because it's smaller and the cost per student to educate is higher than in the other CCA elementary schools, so that's another reason why getting more kids in the door at Amana is important. "We need to focus resources on making the school better. And that starts really with the inside out - improving the facility itself. When I walked through Amana Elementary I saw areas of the building that need improvement, I said, hey, this is not ok. We have to do better."

So he is proposing some renovations to the Amana school. "We are making an investment in the building, as well as the curriculum." He said that he is in contact with the University of Iowa School of Education for assistance in planning the Amana magnet school and he is beginning to reach out to area businesses for assistance in bringing in volunteer support or curriculum support for Amana students to build up the financial literacy area of the concept.

He stressed that the plan was in development

and that it will take a couple of years to make Amana a magnet school.

He praised Amana Elementary Principal Ben Macumber, stating that he is looking to Macumber to lead. "I have asked Principal Ben Macumber 'What do you need here to make your school better?' This is an exciting time for the school and the Amana community but we are going to work together, staff, teacher, parent." He explained that it will be rolled out over a period of several school years beginning in kindergarten.

When asked why parents didn't know sooner, he agreed that the timing of the release of the facility report including the magnet school plan for Amana may have surprised many, but he had hoped that his December 1 meet and greet in Amana would have broken the ice and begun the conversation with parents. He said that parents in Oxford and Tiffin (where classrooms are moving too) are also expressing their views.

"We could have done this better, I agree. I could have done a better job," he said. "But we have to start now to get things in place for the future."

Questioned about bus ride time for 5th grade students, especially those living in West or South Amana, he said he relied on the CCA transportation director for this part of the plan and that it's about a 15 - 20 minute ride from South Amana to Tiffin, though this varies with stops and traffic.

Questioned why the facility plan starts by emphasizing cost savings and asked what the cost of busing the 5th graders was as opposed to sending resource teachers to the school buildings, Dr. Seymour said that yes, busing is expensive, but this plan for the 5th graders was the best way to give the 5th graders and their teachers the face to face support they need.

He added that the socialization for 5th graders was a factor in their thinking. He said this will help them transition to middle school as they would have more opportunity to make friends among their peers in readiness for middle school.

Parents Write and Circulate Petition

Amana parents concerned about the future of the Amana Elementary School have written a petition which they are circulating as they seek signatures from Clear Creek Amana School District residents.

They plan to present the petition with their concerns to the Clear Creek Amana District Board of Directors.

Danita Day Simmons, Dawn Phelps Bell and others have met to gather information and write the petition. They have a copy of the petition

available at the Amana Pharmacy for reading/signing and will take it to the public meeting on February 21 at the Amana Elementary School at 6 p.m.

Simmons explained that any adult resident of the Clear Creek Amana School district may sign. Those who open enroll their children into the district are urged to write letters of support and/ or contact the CCA Board of Directors should they wish to express their views regarding the future of the Amana Elementary School.

As Bell and Simmons explained they want to keep the 5th grade classes in Amana and Oxford if they can, stress that communication with parents needs to improve now, open dialogue about the future of the curriculum at the Amana Elementary in terms of the "magnet school" concept and ensure that Amana Elementary stays a preschool through elementary grade school. They also want the CCA District to bring students to Amana rather than remove them.

"Highway 6 runs both ways. If 10 and 11 year old kids can be bused to Tiffin then kids can be bused to Amana too. If the thing is that Amana is expensive because it's not being used by more kids, then yes, by all means, let's bring more kids here. This is a great school, a great building. We have great teachers and this is a resource with our pool and playground, our community, let's use it," said Simmons. "Let's keep this school open."

She said that people may phone or text 319-310-7526 if they wish to sign the petition and need a volunteer to bring it to them.

Here is the petition content: We, the undersigned residents of Amana who reside in the Clear Creek Amana School District, petition for the Amana Elementary building to continue to serve students in the current elementary school format from at least grades Pre K through 5th.

Additionally, if planning for the proposed "magnet school" moves forward it would be clearly outlined in those plans that the elementary element of the school would be retained in at least its present format in addition to any new classes or programs being offered therein. We propose that consideration be made for adding grades to Amana elementary or busing children from other schools to Amana to reportion students within the district as capacity limits of other school buildings are met.

Community input within the Amana Elementary School boundary is expected concerning any future planning/proposed changes concerning the use of the Amana Elementary building.