Teaching and Learning Update March 2014

Curriculum/ Materials Adoption- You will find in this month's board packet a memorandum detailing the instructional materials that I am asking approval for. The list includes the K-12 math materials, 9-12 world languages books and a new text for the business department. This list represents a lot or careful and tedious work by many stakeholders to ensure that our students and community have the best possible instructional materials available to help them meet the many learning goals in these subjects at all grade levels. I am anxious for you to grant your final approval so that I can begin negotiating with publishers on costs and delivery.

Professional Development- Our professional development over the next six months will focus almost exclusively on math. With new materials at all grade levels it is imperative that we create multiple opportunities for staff to familiarize themselves with the new instructional materials, create lesson plans using those materials that support our learning model and allow them time to meet both within and across grade bands.

ELL- WELPA testing has been completed. A big thank you to Melissa Flatt who in her first year, completed this task flawlessly and on time with minimum interruptions to learning. We will get our results back in early summer at which time I will share them with you.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)- Our second CTE parent advisory meeting for the year was last Wednesday, February 26th. The committee talked about expenditure of Perkin's Grant funds (part of which will be used to purchase the new business books on your list), an articulation agreement with Clark College or Lower Columbia College in computer applications, forming of a student leadership organization (likely FFA or Skills USA) and the upcoming STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) tour to Columbia Machine which is being organized by ESD112. Thank you to community members Dave Kaufman, Duane Neiman and Ray De Long for their time serving on this committee.

Title I/LAP- Next up, planning for K-12 summer school opportunities. I'm really excited about the opportunity to polish and improve the programs that we began last summer and expand those opportunities to more students with this year's enhanced LAP budget. We are currently planning for a four week summer school from July 28th through August 21st. Students would go full days, Monday through Thursday. I'm very excited that it looks like we will have the budget capacity this year to provide transportation for students.

From a program offering perspective, we will continue "Hawks Landing" for the incoming 6th grade and then expand to serve 7th and 8th grade students in reading and math within a structure called "Hawks Landing II". We will be expanding the 9th grade program that we ran last year in math to also encompass transition issues into the high school and call it "Wildcats Landing". We will have our same kindergarten program that we ran last year and we will be creating a very intense reading support program for all struggling incoming 3rd grade students. These are just the programs that we have solidified for now and others may be added over the next few weeks.

Highly Capable- we are currently in the process of collecting nominations for the highly capable program for testing and evaluation. As I mentioned before, with the changes to the highly capable program we will be assessing K-2 grade students this year for the first time.

Congratulations to our 5th grade "Math is Cool" team which won the Clark County championships a couple of weeks ago. They will be going to Moses Lake in the middle of May to compete in the state championships. You will get to meet them at the board meeting!

Testing/Assessment- At this time we are in the midst of the high school HSPE. Timm DeStefano and the HS staff have done a wonderful job as usual, making this as stress free for students as possible and going out of the their way to make sure the students have every opportunity to be successful.

Home School Academy- Bonnie Poffenroth was able to attend the state ALE (Alternative Learning Experience) conference last week. This conference had many valuable workshops that related to our home school program. Bonnie brought back some valuable insights into documentation, paperwork and keeping the state auditors happy! We will begin promotion and recruiting for next year when we return from spring break in April.

Dave.