

Superintendent's Report

April 27th, 2015

BOARD UPDATE

- **More Construction Projects Occurring on the High School Track** – Our crew of volunteers continue to move forward with a wide variety of projects on the high school field project. The long jump pit is complete as well as the discus ring. They also have put up the flagpole near the scoreboard, which looks very nice. Additionally, they have built a set of stairs out of wood from the bleachers down to the concessions trailer until such time as they can raise the funds to build them out of concrete. I continue to be amazed by this tireless group of volunteers. A huge thanks goes out to them for all they do and have done for our students.



- **2015-16 Budget Process** – As you know, the legislature's regular 105-day session ended without the development of a biannual budget. This means that we remain in the dark as to what we will be receiving for revenue for the upcoming school year. That said, there are proposed operating budgets from the Governor, the House and the Senate. With the Governor not being particularly involved in the process, the House and the Senate budgets is where I believe we can focus our attention. In particular, in my experience the House typically is closer to where the budget ends up when the dust settles. My hunch with a much



stronger Senate this session I am thinking it might be more in-between the two houses of the legislature this time around.

Without getting too far into the weeds on both budget proposals, both show enhanced revenue coming into the district for the upcoming school year. The initial questions really are how much new money will arrive and how many strings will be attached? The Senate budget has less money for class size reduction in K-3, but they fund full-day kindergarten this year instead of the following year as is in the House budget. The Senate also provides more in MSOC (Materials, Supplies and Operating Costs) than the House budget does. In contrast, the House provides more for special education and for COLAs to teachers and classified staff than the Senate budget.

Thoroughly confused yet? Well you are not alone. The bottom line is that both budgets look similar, but as they said the “devil is in the details”. As this is not frustrating enough, there is a move in the legislature to have a significant shift in how schools are funded in what is called a “levy swap”. This potential 11th hour realignment could greatly reduce our flexible funding (levy money) that we use to even out the changes the legislature sends our way each year. So to announce the obvious, things are up in the air at this point in the process and only time will tell how it will all shake out. In the mean time, we are doing our best to plan for the needs of our students and the corresponding staff adjustments for the upcoming school year as best we can. More on the budget as the legislature works through its process.

- **Special Education Program Review Process Continues** – We continue to make progress towards transitioning to our own program. It has been only four weeks (including a spring break week) since we made this announcement and to date we have hired six certificated teachers, two school psychologists and a speech and language pathologist. Additionally we have identified the program administrator and interviewed and hired our new special education secretary (a very key role in this new program). We have also tested nearly twenty people for our open para-educator positions that we need to fill for the new school year. Over the next week or so, we will be interviewing for these positions and solidifying our program for the 2015-16 school year. There are more staff to hire in order to provide the needed staffing, but we have certainly come a long way in a short period of time.

Beyond the staffing part of getting this program off the ground, we are working to make facility changes so as to support our new program and the changes in staff we need to make. As a result of this need, all three schools will have some changes in facility usage to be made in order to better support our special needs students. To say the least, we are excited about these changes and the fact that they are being made to help students better meet the Board’s Ends policies. I am very proud of our current staff and our newly hired staff (many of whom have served our students for many years if not decades). The work they are doing is absolutely mission critical. In particular, I would like to give a huge thank you to Connie Majors for her work in human resources as we work through the hiring process with all our new staff. She is doing a terrific job (as well as the other district office staff) to help make this process as smooth and effective as possible. I am very proud of them all.

- **La Center 1-2-3 Grow and Learn** – This is a new program that will be starting this fall to help our future Wildcats get a boost in learning before they officially enroll in school (see attached flyer). A big thank you goes to the Casino Charitable Fund for their generous support of this exciting new program. I would also like to give a huge thank you to Jennifer Blechschmidt for all her hard work and leadership in bringing this program to La Center. It is another effort connected to our Family and Community Resource Centers (FCRCs) that is helping our families enhance the learning assets they bring to school. Kudos to Jennifer for making our FCRCs even better.

I think that is all for now. Please give me a call if you have any questions. Talk with you later.

Mark

Introducing...

1-2-3 Grow & Learn Groups

Get ready to observe, wonder,
and learn with your child!



At Grow & Learn groups you will:

- » Help your child learn – with focused parent-child time
- » Help your child socialize – meet other families
- » Help your child grow – with school readiness activities and healthy snacks
- » Have fun and play with your child

Drop in Program

NO Registration Required

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PLEASE CALL: JULIE JACOBSON

360.952.3378

**You are your child's first
and most important teacher.**

Join us for free!

Families with children birth - 5 years old

La Center Elementary

700 E. 4th St., La Center, WA

In the Family- Community Resource Center

Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

**Beginning September 16, 2015 through
June 8, 2016**



Programming support provided by the La Center Casinos Charitable Fund.