

# Superintendent's Report

December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## **BOARD UPDATE**

### **This Week's Crazy Weather**

– Wow! Has this been a crazy week or what with all the weather issues? I am sure there has been a wetter week before this one here in La Center, but during my tenure I cannot recall one that produced as much rain in such a short time. Beyond the rain, the flooded roads, blocked highways, lightning, hail and even a tornado thrown in for good measure produced a very active week.

I am very proud of our staff and students for making all the necessary adjustments and handling the challenges the week brought so well. I especially want to thank our bus drivers and transportation folks who did such a great job given the conditions.



**Very Proud of Our District Leadership Team** – We have a tremendous administrative team in our district. They are always going above and beyond to serve our students. Many administrators I know and have worked for over the years often get isolated from students and forget they are really teachers first, with administrative responsibilities. Our administrators and program directors do a terrific job of not losing sight of why we are here. As an example of this, when I came back from Australia, I was on the K-8 campus and saw Mr.

Lincoln outside working with students on some sort of project in front of the school. I learned he was working to support a group of students who wanted to plant tulip bulbs in the beds next to the school building. I observed him teaching and supporting his students as a facilitator with them owning the project and the learning opportunity. Kudos to Mr. Lincoln and all of our district leadership team for all they do for students, especially the things so many never learn about. Thank you!



**Energy Savings Rebate** – Believe it or not, we have been working for several years (maybe four or five years) on an effort to install, pay for and collect rebates for the energy savings that resulted from these upgrades. Last week I received an email from Clark Public Utilities letting us know that our application has finally been approved by the BPA (Bonneville Power Administration). This means that Clark Public Utilities is ready to pay us \$7,969.38 as our incentive for doing this project. Good news for sure, but wow that took a really long time!

**Reimbursement with the City for Track Paving** – We have paid for the first part of the track project (paving portion) and will paying for the surfacing of the track in the spring. With the paving costing more than \$250,000, or roughly 2/3rds of the entire project, we are working diligently to obtain reimbursement from the city using state funding from the Department of Commerce grant. This grant, along with the reimbursement process, is new to all of us (both the folks at the city and ourselves) so we are in a learning mode on how to get this done. Hopefully it will occur quickly so as to not have that much of our reserve tied up in the process.

**Fiscal Officer Transition** – Laurie and I are continuing our work to make the transition into running our fiscal department. She is doing a terrific job of learning the technical side of the work and I am working on getting the overarching systems side of the operation into my head. We have learned a lot during the process. We started with how we are handling cash within the district with a new lens on really understanding the details of the daily practice our staff use to get the work done. What we've learned is that staff really do a great job of responsibly fulfilling their roles in being good stewards of the public's money.

We have changed a few things here and there in our process to make the work more efficient and more uniform. We have also begun transporting funds ourselves to the bank several times a week instead of using an increasingly inconsistent shuttle service. Additionally, we've learned that our current bank (Umpqua, formerly Sterling, formerly First Independent) is about to charge us significant fees for banking with them. Therefore, we have begun a process of considering moving banks in order to save costs. More on this if our research shows we can reduce our banking fees.

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

*Mark*