Elementary Board Report

A Paws-itive Learning Community Striving to Meet the Individual Needs of Each Student as a Whole Child

Our theme for the month of January is self-reflection. The following shares some of our reflections.

Elementary Board Showcase

We are looking forward to sharing during Tuesday's elementary showcase at the Board meeting. Given our many learning community changes this school year, we thought it would be nice to learn a little more about some of our new faces and how they are adding to our learning community. Jessica Bodell (counselor), Mindi Payne (FCRC), Tammy Lichliter (head secretary), Joyce Hantho (assistant secretary, teaming together with Tammy), Holly Cole (PTO president), and Greg Hall (4th/5th blend teacher) will be joining us. As they say light-heartedly, we will be sharing in a "speed dating" format. Each will be in one of five stations. A Board member (and interested audience members) will spend four minutes at each station. In that time, each of our presenters will speak about their role and history, what they have learned in this first half of the school year, and how they have had an impact on our students. When the big band music plays (somewhat like the Academy Awards music to move on), the speaker will need to finish up so that Board members may move on to the next station. We hope you enjoy the experience and get to know some of our newer "movers and shakers" and how they are adding to our learning community.

Transportation Changes

Our recent campus transportation changes have been great for learning experiences. Our students, staff, and families have helped out a great deal.

Much has gone well with the transportation changes. Students are doing a wonderful job of getting from the buses to where they need to be in the morning. They are also working well with staff to get out to their buses after school. Oftentimes they have helped the buses to be ready to depart five minutes earlier than prior to the changes. Community members are striving to work with Deena in the horseshoe and parking areas to efficiently merge and exit the campus on 4th Street.

As is often the case with larger changes, we still have some work to do. Colf Construction has recently finished the retaining wall work at our 4th Street driveway. With the help of dry weather, our maintenance team will be able to paint lane stripes to help guide community vehicles. They recently painted more parking spaces for our staff at the back of our campus where buses used to had parked previously. We have been given estimates and hope to widen the sidewalk near the bell at the football field so as to give better space for student transitions.

Students have also shared that they believe having student crossing guards at the cafeteria crossing and near the round building (crossing to/from the playground) would help make student movement safer. Jessica Bodell has been working with our fifth grade Bobcat Ambassadors and we will have our first official student crossing guards starting on Tuesday. This will also free up Tammy Swanson to supervise, communicate, and guide at the Ivy side bus area before and after school.

How can community members help out? Many are already doing a great deal that we need to continue. We need to continue giving space for our students after school on the sidewalks near

the football field. Around 500-600 students move through this area in a span of about five to ten minutes. We ask that vehicles do not go past the crosswalk next to the cafeteria at any point before or during the school day. Students use that and the round building cross walk a great deal. We want to keep them safe. We need to use the vehicle lane nearest sidewalks to pick students up or drop off right away and move on. When vehicles park and wait longer periods of time, traffic backs up. Any students crossing into the second lane also take the chance of being hit by moving vehicles. We need families to consider having students walk, ride bikes, or take the bus rather than travel by car or truck. We have found that vehicle movement does best when the number of vehicles stays under 200. At 200 and over traffic turning left onto 4th starts to back up (We have learned that about 75% of vehicles leaving campus turn left.). Middle school has also started to experiment with having vehicles joining from the east of campus entering the upper entrance and those coming from the west entering from the lower entrance.

We do appreciate all the support in making our transportation changes successful. We look forward to experiencing further improvements.

Community Member of Mystery

This new segment will run monthly in our newsletter. I thought you might also enjoy. We will share information about a member of our learning community, a teacher, parent, student, or community member, who has had a positive impact on our students and learning community. Your job is to try and figure out who the Community Member of Mystery is. We will publish the answer, along with a picture, in the following month's newsletter and Board report.

Our first Community Member of Mystery has worked at our school these past four years, but has only become an official member of our staff for the 2013-2014 school year. He and his family live in La Center. His wife has taught a Lego community ed class. He has a daughter who attends Clark College, a son in middle school, a fourth grade daughter, and a three year old daughter. This mystery person enjoys coaching middle school girls and boys basketball, as well as his daughter's community ed basketball team. You might guess that he is an avid sports fan and you would be correct. He also loves to bass fish. This person also has an identical twin brother. Our mystery person has impacted our students through using some of his strengths for differentiating learning, sharing his fun-loving spirit, and challenging students to higher level thinking.

Who do you think is our January Community Member of Mystery?

What's Coming Up in the Next Elementary Board Report?

-What would you like to learn more about? As you know, we have many great things going on in our learning community. I strive to include topics I believe you would like to read about. I would love to hear from you what you would like to know more about. Please feel free to share and I will do my best to include what you like in upcoming elementary Board reports.