Teaching and Learning Update
October 2010

Volunteers- I have now lost count as to how many volunteer classes I have taught. My number of attendees now exceeds 150 since the beginning of the year and there is still a waiting list. I believe if I schedule another night class I can catch back up with that list. I will continue to hold them as long as there is a need. I feel really good about the connections we are making with the community through these classes. In addition to the mandatory annual training checklist I am able to cover AYP (annual yearly progress) and the La Center learning model. As I tell them, I hope to create an army of community ambassadors that will be conduits in the community for information that is accurate concerning our schools.

Thursday, October 21st I will be holding my first math tutor volunteer training in the K-8 Library during 3rd period. (10:30-11:30) At the beginning of the year Mr. Cooke sent out emails asking for parents that would be willing to help in the classroom as volunteers. He received back about a dozen responses that I then invited to this training. I was able to get about half of those to commit to coming in for the training in preparation to serve in the classroom. Since there was obviously space available beyond 6, I sent out a district wide email inviting any parent who would like to either volunteer or would just like to gain some tools to help their own student study at home. I got a great response from parents interested in pursuing one or both goals. I now have a whole library full for Thursday. The goal of this class is to give parents both skills and confidence to help tutor in our math classrooms first in the middle school and then in the elementary. In preparation for this class I was able to videotape one of Mr. Holland's 8th grade student math tutors complete with a wireless microphone. These 8th graders are superstars! I will be editing down this footage to present to parents along with other learning opportunities so that they can fill these support roles on a broader basis.

Substitutes- The second substitute seminar is scheduled for Monday October 25th, from 5-8 pm in the high school library. We will continue to work on creating or maintaining learning environments that meet the district's learning model. In addition the attendee's will create their own evaluation tool for teachers to evaluate the substitutes' work in their classroom, in their absence. The substitutes will also create an evaluation tool to give feedback to teachers on the lesson plans they were left along with the successes and challenges that they encountered during the day.

Math- We are nearing completion of negotiations to buy software that will allow us to connect students to "Success Maker" (the program we currently use in LAP math) via the internet at home, outside of normal school hours. We believe this program will be highly effective and beneficial to all of our students. We are currently piloting another web-based math program called "aleks" that we believe may be an option for our highly capable students that again, can access from home outside of the normal school day.

Lab Classroom Project- All of the groups are up and running, I mean learning!

Grants- We have completed and awarded the first round of "learning conditions mini-grants". We had 7 different groups apply and a committee made up of teacher's peers and a community member awarded a total of $5000 to 4 different groups. This work is now up and running as well.

The drug and alcohol parent informational night is in the books and was fairly well attended with 65 people representing 32 student homes in attendance. The law enforcement officers did a very nice job of presenting valuable information. Thank you to David Cooke for his attendance and lending valuable insight to parents concerning issues at the middle school. Next up is the "internet safety" parent informational night scheduled for November 18th from 6:30-8:00 pm.

We had our first CTE (formally known as vocational ed.) parent advisory meeting on Wednesday night the 19th. We talked about developing new criteria for expending our Perkins grant funds. Staff will be writing and submitting "mini-grant" applications to the parent advisory group. The advisory group with oversight from myself will award the Perkins grant dollars based on those grant applications. The goal is to have the money awarded by our December meeting so that we can get those dollars working for our students ASAP. The other big goal for the year is to create better pathways for students in CTE that will lead to either a certification or training opportunities post LCHS. This will be the main focus of the group and the departments work for this year.

Curriculum adoption- Nothing new, we will be finalizing the work in social studies that was started last year, evaluating and adopting K-8 health, evaluating and adopting K-12 Fitness and PE and continuing our work with the technology for learning task force. (TLTF) The current district adoption schedule is on-line (under curriculum) if anyone wants to see a broader view of both the windshield and the rear view mirror.

Dave.