# *Superintendent's Report*

December 10th, 2010

## LEARNING UPDATE

- **Visits from other districts in our region -** On Tuesday, December 7th, we had seven members of the White Salmon Valley School District visit our district and participate in learning walks. Their visit not only was designed to help them, but it served as a great learning opportunity for us to test our ideas with other educators, in our own setting and with their fresh minds. Since we are focused on our own practice and tapping into the expertise within our own district, a concern we have is that our perspectives might become slanted without new points of view. We are very appreciative of the feedback we received from them and I am confident what they learned will have a positive impact on their practice and the learning environments they create for their students. Additionally, we have upcoming visits from Woodland, Ridgefield, Tenino and Camas school districts to do learning walks in our schools. Also, David Cooke and I will be traveling to White Salmon next month to visit their school district. All these efforts are wonderful examples of us testing our thinking, exploring new partnerships and measuring our progress toward meeting the Board's Ends.
- **Learning Conditions Mini-Grant Meeting** – As you may remember, this year we started another learning initiative to work together to create stronger professional learning teams. This program is called Learning Conditions Mini-Grant (LCMG) and is supported by Title II grant funding. I am part of a team of ten educators working to learn how we can create higher cognitive demand elementary learning environments. Their work has been very impressive. We are beginning to see changes in their professional practice and their willingness to try new ideas to enhance the internal motivation of our students is very exciting to witness. Their own internal motivation to self-reflect on their practice has been very enjoyable to watch. Without question, I am very proud of their work.

## BOARD UPDATE

- **State Budget Update** – We have learned the legislature has agreed to hold a special session on Saturday, December 11th to pass a supplemental budget to fill the state's current $1.1 billion dollar budget gap for the current fiscal year. More information is needed before we know exactly how much these cutbacks will change our current budget, but it looks as though the impact on our district could be much less than what the Governor's proposal projected. We should know more by the board meeting, but the impact should be closer to $100K reduction in revenue rather than the $200K we were anticipating. However, until we know for sure I will continue to plan for the worst and hope for the best. Regardless of the final amount, the impact is definitely real and I am convinced that it is only the beginning of what will be the most significant state budget cutbacks I have seen during my time in education. Furthermore, I remain convinced that what money is

ultimately cut will not be returning as we head for a "new normal" in educational funding in our state.

- **All Day, Every Day Kindergarten** – Despite the bad fiscal news coming from Olympia, I remain committed to realigning resources to create all-day, every day kindergarten for the next school year. I don't know exactly how we will make this happen at this point in time, but I remain confident that we will develop a strategy to make this happen. FYI.

Because we just had the last board meeting on November 30th, there is not much more to let you know about at this time. Please give me a call if you have any questions. Talk with you later.

Mark