Superintendent's Report

March 23rd, 2012

LEARNING UPDATE

- **WASA Regional Community of Practice Meeting –** Today (3/23) I am leading a regional discussion at the ESD about learning environments and determining if they are Compliance based or whether they are Learning based. Using our learning model as one example, I will be working with area school leaders to sort through this issue. I see this meeting as a great way to get a sense of how school leaders in our region see learning environments. Attached to this report are the documents that I will be using for this meeting so you can give this some thought as well. At Tuesday's board meeting, Dave will be leading a process using some of these tools. It should be a fun day of learning at this WASA event.
- **Teacher-Principal Evaluation Pilot (TPEP) –** We continue to move forward with TPEP work. As you might remember, I am serving as chair for a statewide WASA committee on TPEP and what we are learning/wrestling with in regards to the pending changes with teacher and principal evaluations in the coming years. As a Board, you need to be aware that the changes in the law most likely will cause issues and concerns. The positive about all these pending changes is, for the first time in my career we are at least talking about these issues all across the state. With this motivation to discuss changing evaluations, I think the conversations as described in the item above become even more impactful. Are our evaluations about "Compliance" or about "Learning"? We have been working for many years in our district to move from a compliance focus towards a learning focus, which I believe position us as a team to move through these changes in the law with much less stress. With that said, we need to be aware that even though we are in a great position to have these deeper discussions, it will require much work (and patience) to move through this opportunity well. In the end, I believe these changes in state law will help us become even more learning focused in the service of our students. Stay tuned, as this will be an interesting ride over the next couple of years, within the district and across the state.

BOARD UPDATE

- **State Budget Update –** If you have been following the news, there is no new news to report. The legislature and the Governor continue to negotiate in an attempt to solve the budget issues. The good news is that so far, further significant cuts to education seem to be off the table. I just wish they would decide so we could formulate our budget with greater confidence they won't surprise us at the 11th hour. With that said, we are moving forward with our base budget planning and so far I am feeling cautiously optimistic that we can put a budget together that will help us to continue to move forward. More on this as the legislature's work progresses.
- **Crazy Winter Weather in our So-called "SPRING" –** Wow has it been an interesting start to "spring". As you know, we have had some crazy weather. Two of the most interesting days occurred when we had HSPE (High School Proficiency Exam) testing at the high school and on an early release day for parent-teacher conferences for K-8 students. We were able to get the day recorded by modifying our regular process, but it definitely caused some issues for us. On the first day I mentioned where we had the HSPE, trying to keep the testing routine smooth for students and staff was our challenge. On this day, I decided to only have a one-hour late start to address the issue. This was during the week following the change to daylight savings and we just needed that extra hour of sunlight on the roads to let the conditions improve. That extra hour really helped,

however the one-hour was a change for us as an organization and required some quick thinking/adjustments by our staff. Everyone did a great job, but we probably will not be using the one-hour late start too often. The second interesting day occurred on a day with an early dismissal for K-8 students for conferences. I saw no real value to have all of our K-8 students come in to school for only an hour just to load them back up on the bus to take them home. Therefore, we only ran the high school on a two-hour late start, which allowed us to count the day. Sounds simple, right? Well, not exactly. Once again, because this was new we had lots of good questions and issues that in the end everyone got ironed out. I guess that is what makes this effort called "school" so interesting. We are a people business and people like routines. When times require us to "go out side of the lines" some people get nervous. I look at these experiences as opportunities to not only try some different solutions, but to also test our ability to adjust. Even though we had questions and a small amount of worry, I am proud of our team, our students and parents for their adaptability.

- **Energy Improvement Grant –** We have submitted the grant to OSPI and should hear something back within the next couple of weeks. If we receive the grant, I will let you know right away as we will need to move forward quickly and start the design and bid process within the next couple of months. My goal would be to have all these projects done by the time school starts this fall.
- **Old House on the School Property at Bolen and 14th –** I just want to let you know that I will be beginning a conversation with a firm to look at removing the old house that is on the new school property. You may remember that in the past we have worked (Thanks to Walter Hansen and Marc Chord) to clean up the old property. The house is the only remaining structure left and even though we have not had any issues, I have learned about a company that Ridgefield used recently and KWRL is in the process of contracting with to remove old homes. This is more of an FYI bit of information as if I can get a reasonable bid for the removal I will bring it forward for your approval.
- **High School Athletic Field Fence Project –** The La Center Education Foundation has been working to raise funds to complete a HS stadium for many years. They feel that in order for them to jump start this project there needs to be some sort of visible signal that progress is being made. I was able to put them in touch with our architects and together they have produced several ideas for projects in different phases. The initial phase of this work (that is affordable) is to put up the fence around the football field. When this idea first came to me on tackling the fence first, I thought that maybe the city might be interested in participating since they technically own the lower parking lot and therefore may be willing to pay for the fence along that property line. Attached is a sample drawing with the proposed fence line. I just wanted to make sure you are aware of this project and that it would not cost the district anything to get completed. FYI.

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

Mark