Hawk Report: April 2013

The Spring Break is always a welcom event for the students and staff as it allows all of us to find balance in our lives for at least one week. I am proud to say that I did absolutely nothing that week except have fun with my wife and kids. Fortunately vacation calories don't count as my ability to avoid goodies was low. However, I am raring and ready to go as we hit the home stretch with our kids.

This week I am attending a meeting in Renton as a board member for Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. The goal of this group is focusing on the whole child and I feel that we are achieving this goal at La Center. Here are the beliefs of WSASCD and what were are doing this month to meet these goals.

Let's ensure all our children are engaged
Let's ensure schools and communities where our children are challenged

The big event this month is the MSP. We begin our testing on April 22nd. I appreciate the attitude that our staff takes with the MSP. They expose the MSP to the testing criteria into their curriculum without making their lessons all about passing a test. I am proud that our staff see the big picture of education which is focussing on the whole child and making sure that when they leave our schools that they are strong, independent thinkers. I appreciate how seriously the students take the test. Many students work well after the set time. The MSP is one assessment of quality teaching. By ensuring that quality teaching is going on, strong MSP results are just one of the many benefits of the La Center Learning Model.

At the end of the month the High School staff will continue their work of helping our 8th graders transition there by completing a tour of the school. Two groups will spend a half day viewing classrooms and teachers in action as well as hearing from older students the experience and culture of LCHS.

Let's ensure all our children are safe
Let's ensure all our children are supported

On April 17th the staff and students were riveted by a group from the Oregon's Children Theatre with performed the production 'Texting the Sun'. The message from the play was that we must be aware of the factors surrounding our students before it is too late. The key elements addressed in the play were the overstimulation and stress caused by the relentless inundation of electronic media whether it is the television, internet or other social networks. Students can no longer communicate with people and isolate themselves. This was a message that more students should see. After the play, staff met in their advisory group to allow students to share what they learned from the play and their own experiences. It was interesting to listen to how the students are impacted by electronic media. Teachers were offering good advice on how to avoid the compulsion of being connected to electronic media and most importantly spread

the message that they need to communicate (through actual talking) with teachers if they are struggling.

On April 15th a number of community members, parents and staff met with Sean Chavez who is the Prevention Specialist Coordinator for ESD 112 to begin launching our community coalition to support our students making good decisions regarding drugs and alcohol.

Let's ensure all our children are healthy

Track has started again and there are almost ninety kids participating. This has been a highly successful extra curricular activity and it continues to grow every year. I appreciate Coaches Broten, Slinkard, Dykes and Rice for their work with the kids. I have no doubt that there are days with so many middle school kids that it is like 'herding cats' but this herd does a great job representing our school.

Go Hawks

David Cooke
Principal
La Center Middle School