HAWK REPORT MAY 2011

Being the optimistic Aussie that I am, I am trying to put a positive spin on the dreary, wet weather that we have encountered over the last year. The silver lining is that students are generally behaving themselves and are still focused on learning. Spring fever has been doused; the budding new romances that occur in spring have not occurred and the colder temperatures have stopped the students from testing the dress code boundaries. Life is damp but it is still good. I thought that May would put the skids on the fastest year that I have had but it is not the case. By the time we meet at the next board meeting we will only have 17 days left. Wow!

The MSP went without a hitch. A big thank you to Jan Richards, the appointed mastermind of operations this year at our building. Jan's no fuss; detailed orientated approach made it an efficient and painless experience. I would also like to thank the MSP 'czar' Dave Holmes for his work with the on-line testing. I found it to be a very effective way to test the students and the students that I spoke to agreed. There were very few 'not exactly' moments during the entire testing period. One thing that I liked was that if a student missed the test we just slotted them into the next day's testing group so every 6th grade student completed the reading test by the end of the week. Now, all we need is another 100 computers in my building to make it work for all students. Dan?

The month of May means the Annual Talent Show.' I told the students who were participating in the talent show that they did not have to worry about being the worst act as I had that covered. In all, there were 18 different acts including a band, singing, piano playing, dancing and some funny skits. This year I donned a Lady Gaga wig and sang a song about torn pants to the tune of 'Bad Romance. It takes a lot of courage to perform in front of the entire student body and I appreciate the students' efforts. Thanks to Mrs. Slinkard for putting the talent show together.

This month I had to fulfill my end of the bargain in regards to Doernbecher. Hannah McNeal was the principal for the day and I had to follow her schedule. It is surprising how tired you get and it is something to think about when we plan our work with middle school students. I also had an opportunity to help out in Mrs. Burmeister's class and was so impressed by how well her students worked in stations with minimal support from her.

Once again, when students have choices and are challenged they can do amazing things.

As I write this report the track students are competing at the District championships. The LCMS track team has been a juggernaut this season. There are over 80 kids participating this year and most have stayed eligible throughout the season. We have been victorious in every meet but one so I am hoping we will have a few district champions by the end of the night. The one thing that I really appreciate about track is that there is always one activity that attracts new students to athletics. There are many students who do not try out for other sports but will give track a chance. Thanks to Coaches Broten, Austad and Slinkard for their efforts this season.

Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Cripe will be participating in the GK-12 end of year presentation at WSU Vancouver on May 24th. We appreciate the work of Sean Rooney and Josh Edmonds. Their experiences give a new perspective in the classroom and I know that Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Cripe learned so much from them as well as the students.

Late May and early June is a great opportunity to reflect on the work that the staff and students have done. I have just finished the staff evaluations and it is always rewarding to write these knowing that your staff have pushed themselves and have shown great strides in improving their practice. End of year evaluations are not an 'autopsy' but an opportunity for each staff member and I to reflect on their journey and for me to find ways with them to support them in their future endeavors. I enjoy listening to hearing about their excitement about their year and the plans that they are eager to start on for next year. It is not hard to get up in the morning and come to work here everyday.

I will also be surveying the students to assess the social and learning climates in our building. The inaugural learning climate survey was completed last year. After reviewing the results, I was able to predict that our math scores in the MSP would be high. It is also another way to celebrate our success and plan for areas that need improvement. The student climate survey has improved over the years. The key to continuing this improved culture is finding ways to keep the student climate high without having a leadership class next year. One of the areas that we are looking at to improve school climate is reviewing as a staff our advisory program at our next in-service.

At the end of this year, I will go back and review what I have written in all the reports to remind myself how much the staff and students have accomplished this year. It has been a great year so far and I am looking forward to a big finish.

Go Hawks,

David Cooke
Principal
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