Superintendent's Report

June 7th, 2013

BOARD UPDATE

- **Learner Competencies** – As you are aware, TPEP took a huge amount of our time this year in the transition to the new state model. More work is needed to fully implement this change, but I wanted to remind you that we are still moving forward with our work with Learner Competencies (see attached copy). These competencies are an expression of what we feel are key skills and abilities life-long learners need to maximize their opportunities in life. We will continue our work to integrate these into our practice and weave them into the new evaluation system. I just wanted to make sure you knew we were continuing this work even though it may have seemed this had fallen off the radar screen. FYI.

- **Technology Update** – We continue to work on our technology advance for next year. The goal is to continue to move towards some sort of one-to-one model in the next couple of years. With the work with the mathematics adoption and a move to the digital textbook, math appears to be leading the way in making this transition. Our grades 4-5 team is working hard to try and create a 3-to-1 or 2-to-1 ratio in their learning teams and we are hoping to support them in this work as well. We are also in the process of eliminating the fixed computer lab adjacent to the K-8 library and create additional iCarts or classroom sets to offset this reconfiguration. Participation and usage as dropped off with the rollout of the iCarts last fall. More on this as it occurs.

- **FCRC Implementation** – We continue to move forward with the implementation of the Family/Community Resource Center (FCRC) on the K-8 campus for this fall. Sherri Birgensmith has been contracted with to serve as an FCRC Facilitator for us through the end of the calendar year to help us get this off the ground. We will soon be posting for a permanent FCRC Coordinator to lead this effort. The plan is to have the FCRC home be in the current K-8 library classroom (also used for ASK) and move the library classroom over to the K-8 computer lab, which we anticipate being decommissioned (with the move to a more mobile technology environment via the iCarts).

  The goal of the FCRC is to serve as a point of entry and resource center for families and the community; both upon enrollment and throughout the school year as needs arise. This family engagement is now falling on the "plates" of the principals, office staff, teachers and most certainly counselors (or not being picked up by anyone in some cases). This work pulls staff away from the focus of instruction, but failing to do so without question impacts student learning. This is a model that has proven highly successful in an urban setting where poverty is significant (i.e. Vancouver School District).

  Our goal is to implement this model here to support those in need, but also to do this work under the umbrella of S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). One of the greatest aspects of this concept is to rethink our after school programs (e.g. ASK, Community Education classes and our Talented and Gifted offerings) and put them under the label of FCRC. This way, we can pull together paid participation programs such as ASK and Community Education, with state funding for Talented and Gifted, Learning Assistance

Program and levy funds to provide extended learning options for all students within the 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm time frame. This will be done using the S.T.E.A.M model so the offerings will serve all kids not just "those kids" who are poor. All kids can learn and all kids can think. We just need to provide the opportunity for them to learn within and this strategy is aimed at filling this need.

- **Bicycles in La Center** – I know you will probably find this odd, but I have some ideas that I want to share with you. These ideas involve bringing bicycling to our students both as part of our regular PE classes in grades 5 and 6, but also as an option within the FCRC model and regular Community Education classes. I have a three-phase plan to bring this vision to reality and I want to share it with you.

  Phase one would be to integrate bicycling into our grades 5 and 6 PE classes through the acquisition of a bicycle fleet. I have full confidence that we can fund this purchase through grants and/or donations. The challenge to do this is where do we store them and how do we maintain them. With the buses going to the new KWRL Junction site this fall, I want to take one of the bays in our new maintenance barn and construct a loft to be used as storage for classroom items (i.e. desks, chairs, etc.). Having this storage loft will reduce the chance of what I call "storage creep". Just look at the average home garage and you will know exactly what I mean by this. Having a loft will confine this space and create a usable space below for bicycle storage and a maintenance area. We can also use the asphalt area in front of the barn and paint a bicycle safety course on it permanently and close it off during the day when in use. The maintenance of the bicycles can be done in part by our maintenance staff (Tom Rice used to be a bicycle mechanic) with the help of volunteers. I believe this phase can be accomplished by next spring and hope to make this a reality ASAP.

  Phase Two involves extending the use of the bicycle fleet into FCRC and Community Education classes. These classes can be either bicycle safety, riding or maintenance. They can be for students or for adults. There are many opportunities for using these bicycles and phase-two is exploring all these through these two programs.

  Phase Three is more aggressive, but none-the-less exciting (at least for me). I think we can obtain a trailer to haul bicycles and the kids can go in vans or a bus to area trails such as the Klineline or Burnt Bridge Creek trails. Students can use a fleet bicycle or bring their own and go on these bicycling field trips. These offerings can also be run through Community Education to include further travel to longer trails including the Banks-Vernonia or the Scenic Columbia River Highway.

  I also have a few ideas about starting a bicycling club at the high school as an extension of our bicycling in PE offerings. This could include bicycle touring as a summer offering. John Parsons was part of the Battle Ground High School Bicycling Club when he was in school and I imagine if we can get something like this off the ground he could be a great resource. I also know someone who rode a bicycle across America who might be interested in helping start such a program. Either way, we have people who have a passion for bicycling in our community and based on the student response at our recent Bicycle Fair I am more convinced than ever that there is a strong energy building around bringing bicycling into our learning environments to a greater degree. FYI.

- **Damaged Van** – As we thought, the van was totaled from the recent accident. Again, thankfully no one was hurt in the incident. We are working with the insurance company (ours and the one representing the semi truck) to determine the reimbursement. I am thinking it should be somewhere between $5,000 and $7,000 based on its age and mileage. Hopefully is won't be less than that. Regardless, we will work to maximize this reimbursement.

- **District Van Fleet** – As I have expressed a couple of times over the years, we need to be considering an upgrade to our van fleet given the age and mileage of the four vans we own. Eight years ago when I arrived, we only had two vans (both purchased in 2002) so we purchased two more vans in 2005. I believe these vans have served us well, but we have really stretched the limits on these vehicles. Now that we are down to three vans, the urgency to upgrade our fleet is even greater as these vehicles are used quite regularly. I have asked Brett to get quotes for two new vans to determine the cost of replacement. My recommendation would be to purchase two vans rather than just one as a replacement. On most days, two vans would work so we could send out our newest vans first and use the three older vans as backups. This way we can stretch the life of our vans out farther by putting most of the mileage on our new vans. I will keep you informed of these bids as they come in. FYI.

- **Summer Maintenance** – Our maintenance team has a very busy agenda for this summer. Beyond the normal summer maintenance of cleaning, painting, gym floors refinishing and minor repairs, Rob and his crew will be tackling several major projects.

  Some of the major projects we have on our radar screen this summer is striping all of the parking lots, repairing/replacing and painting the exterior of at least two of our portables on the K-8 campus as well as to finish the boiler and water heater work at the high school (part of our energy grant efforts). There are lots of projects to tackle that involve power washing, painting, sealing, cleaning and repairing across the district. Our maintenance and custodial crew do a great job so my hat goes off to them!

Please give me a call if you have any questions. Talk with you later.

Mark