Superintendent's Report

June 17th, 2010

LEARNING UPDATE

- **Lab Classroom Project** – We are very excited to have 57 teachers signed up for next year's Lab Classroom Project (LCP). That is double the number who were involved this school year. To me this is a clear signal that teachers see this method of professional development as having great value. Next year, we also anticipate having our first LCP team that goes across school building boundaries. If you recall, the LCP idea is an effort for teams of teachers to work together around a self-selected problem of practice. This idea erodes the barriers that isolate teachers from each other and thereby helps them improve their own practice. This erosion of the barriers will first occur between teachers within the same building (which is what we observed this year). Having the barriers between buildings broken through is the next step forward and is another signal that LCP is proving to be of great value.

BOARD UPDATE

- **Budget Update –** Brett and I continue to work on the budget for next year. As previously shared, I believe the we will once again need to plan for drawing into our reserves by about $200K to make everything balance out. With that said, we thought we would need to do the same for this current year and when the dust settles, I believe we will not need to draw into our reserves at all. Very good news, and I don't think this same scenario is out of the question for next year, but our conservative budgeting strategies (plan for the worst) is the best way to not find us in a huge problem down the road. More on this at the budget hearing prior to the board meeting.
- **Weekly Late Arrival Concept –** After our last conversation on this idea, we brought the idea back to staff for their discussion. What happened is that some staff were clearly ready while others were not. Our teachers created a task force with representatives from all three buildings to discuss this in greater detail. Our first meeting will be this week. With that said, I just don't know if this is something we can pull off for next year, but I will know more next week at the board meeting. FYI.
- **Negotiations Update –** The certificated staff collective bargaining agreement is essentially wrapped up. If the board approves the contract, we will just need to get the final document adjusted to align with the changes and get copies made.
- **Summer Maintenance Efforts** – There are many big summer projects that we are preparing to get underway now that school is out. Some examples of this work are:
  1) Repairing the gutter drains on the elementary school. The in-ground drainpipe was not replaced when the remodel was completed and could not be cleared this winter. A temporary system was put into place and we now need to address this with a permanent solution.
  2) Rebuild several portable ramps in the district to include steps for safety reasons in the event of the need for rapid egress.
  3) Repair broken concrete curbing at the high school parking lot.
  4) Install new windows on the west side of the district office building.
  5) Clean roofs of all buildings in the district.

6) Replace the siding on a couple of portables that need to be repaired.
7) All the general maintenance to the buildings including cleaning, painting, grounds maintenance, power washing, etc.

Certainly there is a lot of work to be done over the next couple of months to get ready for next school year.

- **Food Service Advisory & HS Government Class Student Project –** The food service advisory committee continues to work to develop strategies for improving our breakfast and lunch offerings for students. In addition to their efforts, Kathy Bound's Government class took on the challenge of completing a research project on what the issues are, possible solutions and a proposal on how to make desired changes to our food service program. Both of these efforts are great examples of positive stakeholder involvement in the process of continual improvement. At the student presentation, advisory members Josh Soske, Karen Kennedy and our food service supervisor Shirley Gleason were present. Dave Holmes and I also attended. They did an amazing job of turning a real world issue for them into an actionable plan to make suggestions and support improvements. Instead of just complaining, Kathy's students took action to interact with a bureaucracy. This is a great example of what the book ("Making Learning Whole") talked about as a "junior version" of the game to help students experience this process on an issue they care about. The strategies, ways of thinking and methods of organization are transferable when working with other bureaucracies of government. I was very impressed with what these students did and the efforts that Kathy Bounds did to create this experience for her students.
- **Board-City Council Linkage Meeting** – If you recall, this effort was a result from needs expressed by staff during the board-staff linkage meeting. To get this ball rolling, I presented the idea to the city council several weeks ago and they were very receptive. They directed the mayor to work with me to arrange this meeting. I have since met with Mayor Irish to discuss this linkage meeting and after thinking about all of this, I believe that in order for this meeting to be of the greatest value to all involved, there needs to be some training provided to the city council on what linkage meetings are about. As a board, you have become very good at operating from a policy perspective within the Policy Governance structure. In other words, you establish what you expect of the superintendent and the organization and provide boundaries and a structure for evaluation of performance. By contrast, the city council operates from a traditional governance perspective, which is to say that they are up to the eyeballs in the "Means" of running the city instead of focusing on the "Ends" and mayoral accountability. We definitely want this meeting to be successful, so I now am thinking I will need to attend a city council work session to help them understand our governance structure a bit more before a meeting can be arranged. I will keep you informed of how this work is progressing.

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

Mark