Teaching and Learning Update June 2011

Testing/Assessment- EOC (end of course) assessment for math in grades 8-12 is completed and returned! Our students seemed to do well and feedback was positive. We'll know in August how they faired officially.

As I believe I shared at the board workshop, our high school HSPE scores were very good again this year. As in past years our reading and writing scores were in the high 80's and mid 90's respectively and our science scores went up almost 20%. I predicted that the science scores would go up, as this was the first year that those scores would count as a graduation requirement. The significance of the 20-point jump is that the statewide scores only rose 6%. I believe this is a testimony to the hard work by our high school science department to raise the cognitive demand in the classroom and the elementary and middle schools hard work over the last few years to improve science instruction. This was a team effort.

We also received our WLPPT scores back (English language learner- ELL) this last month and they we're very, very good. We transitioned some students out of program and almost all made significant progress toward that goal. Nice job, Sally Doss, Tina Moore and staff.

Curriculum/ Materials Adoption- I should have two textbook adoption approvals to you for the August board meeting. We are currently reviewing an AP statistics book and an anatomy physiology book; the teacher and parent/community members have reviewed both of these and our IMC (instructional materials committee) should be reviewing the choices right before your August meeting. Both of these texts are for new classes this coming year at the high school.

Professional Development- Summer schedule is finished and we're up and running. We have almost 40 teachers signed up for two book studies and 20 teachers from the Woodland school district are joining us. This should be a great opportunity to share some of our ideas and get some feedback from them on some of the initiatives we've instituted and how our learning model impacts the classroom.

We have 30 teachers and administrators signed up for an iPad class this summer. We have enough to fill an entire class so ESD staff will be teaching the class in our district.

There are over 50 staff members currently signed up for our 3rd summer institute on two different dates. This year we will be focusing on mastering our learning model as it is used to write learning objectives, create classroom activities and develop assessments around our evolving district core competencies.

We have 6 teachers who will be working on their national board certification, and lastly, we have over twenty teachers signed up for a Google doc's class that I will co-teach with Sharon Bussler in August.

CTE (career and technical education)- Welcome aboard to Jim Neiman as our new woods and metals shop teacher.

ELL- Our student count has dropped from 19 to 14. This is from a combination of students moving out of the district and transitioning out of the program based on their most recent assessment scores. Sally Doss did complete her leave of absence this spring and her teaching certificate. If she doesn't secure

employment as a teacher, she will be back as our ELL classified aide this next year.

Grants- As you will see in your board agenda packet, total grants for the 2011-12 school year are almost identical to this past year. Some went up and some went down but the total dollar amount remained the same. The missing ARRA grant was the federal stimulus money that is no longer available. I have the highly capable, ELL (English language learner), Perkins (vocational education grant) and the title II part A (teacher and principal professional development grant) grants basically finished and filed.

Community Linkage- I have a date set for September for our first community/parent informational workshop. Tammi Honeycutt from AWARE will be presenting their newest material on Internet safety/ sexting and teen sex trafficking. I will be holding volunteer training classes this year in August before school starts so that volunteers will be ready to start the day school opens. In addition, this will help Sheri Birgensmith with her D.O.G.S (dads of great students) volunteers.

Ad-Hoc committee to explore Boundary exceptions- the following is a repeat from last month-

I have done some work to look at the reasons and frequency with which students leave our district for "other" educational opportunities. I have observed for a couple of years with unrest as these numbers have grown. Many of the reasons, fire science or ROTC programs, are legitimate reasons that we cannot control, or want to. Others, on-line learning, math choice, etc. are things we may be able to impact.

I intend to have a late August or early September "summit" with parents of these boundary exceptions and any other community member or parent who is willing to participate. The goal would be to identify either supplemental programs or changes to existing programs that might enable us to maintain many of these students who currently feel there are better educational opportunities elsewhere.

I’m just including this to remind you that if you are interested or personally know a parent or community member that I should contact for inclusion, please let me know or encourage them to contact me.

Dave.