Teaching and Learning Update July 2012

Testing/Assessment- We are patiently waiting for the release of state wide and district test scores. We should see them in August. As always this will be a good "dipstick" check on our progress toward meeting state learning standards for all students. The state of Washington just received a waiver (one of 23 states nation wide) from the NCLB (no child left behind) AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) requirements. We are waiting to see what the specifics of this waiver will be and how that will impact us here. We do know that as part of the waiver we will no longer have to set aside a specific portion of our Title I funds for federally designated uses. This will give us some increased flexibility in this area.

Curriculum/ Materials Adoption- Our group of K-8 writing teachers are currently working over the summer to evaluate our current writing curriculum against the newly adopted state core standards for writing at each grade level. At the conclusion they will work together in cross-grade teams to establish a scope and sequence for K-8 writing and identify any missing instructional materials in our current adoption necessary to meet the core standards.

Professional Development- We are about 2 weeks away from wrapping up our two summer book studies on "Making Thinking Visible" and "Teach Like a Champion". In addition we are just beginning another book study for the high school staff entitled "Schools Where Everyone Belongs". As I explained in my email invitation to you previously, this will be the conversation starter for developing a year-long plan to take advantage of our Phoenix program participants as building environment leaders.

ELL- I just received approval on our ELL grant application for next year and the total funds for next year remain basically unchanged.

Grants- After much hand wringing it seems we may have a final resolution and conclusion to our program audit that began back in February. For our CTE program, in order to keep our small Perkins grant, we will be required to create a class that can mirror a beginning class at Clark College in which students will be able to gain credit through Clark. Jim Neiman and I have the Clark class's learning objectives and requirements and we will be working toward that end.

Under our Title IIA grant, we have two teachers for whom we will be required to work out plans which will allow them to be considered "highly qualified" for every class they teach. We already believe they meet the state standards based on the application of the state's own publications. That said this will not be a difficult process and should be completed within the year.

Dave.