

BCSD Supt. Scoop

December 1, 2015

We are quickly moving toward January 28th, the halfway point of the school year. This is a good time to stop and review the goals I made for myself and the district when I took on this challenge last June. The number one goal was to learn the job of superintendent. I'm not quite done learning yet, and can't imagine I ever will be. The width and depth of this position is truly amazing; it should be. We are talking about our children! The key is focusing on core convictions and avoiding distractions. There is a puzzle of opinions, perceptions and truths, all of which are different for so many of us. This is also what makes the job exciting and to say the least, challenging.

So, what do I know? The elementary school students are in great hands. Lisa Iverson, Nathan Williams, and the crew of Naples, Mount Hall and Valley View are solid. All staff members truly care for the children. The teams are strong; the focus is on the kids! Please be sure to follow the district and school websites. Monthly updates also appear in the Herald newspaper. Truly remarkable things are going on in each of our elementary schools.

Any middle school or junior high program around the world is full of wonder! Often the wonder is, "Why?" This age group is magical, as are the people who work with them. Principal David Miles has taken a strong program and improved it. The staff is dedicated and focused. Student achievement and participation are at an all-time high. Learning and laughter are easy to discover in the halls of BCMS.

High schools are hot beds in any community, and ours is no different. I started this article talking about the difficulty of the superintendent position, but I believe that of a high school principal is much more challenging. I do not envy Tim Gering in this position. I have enjoyed getting to know the staff and students. I look forward to learning more, as we face the challenges through communication, cooperation and change. Overall, the high school program is strong. All the pieces are in place; some fine tuning will take us where we need to go. A few highlights of the program:

- Advanced Opportunities: Did you know your child can start earning college credit beginning in the 8th grade? With the 8-in-6 program, students can begin as early as the summer after their 6th grade year taking advanced courses to set them on the path to earn an Associate degree the same time they earn their high school diploma! Scholarship prospects are great for the students in Boundary County. I encourage you to get in touch with the school counselors Kim Norwood, Laura Anderson or GearUp Director Jacob Garrison for more information.
- The Professional-Technical Education Program offers tremendous opportunities for career prospects such as FFA, welding, cabinet making, drafting, etc. In all areas, scholarship opportunities abound.
- Extra-curricular programs: athletics, drama, music, art, robotics, and much more.

The framework in Boundary County is strong and our future is bright! I see areas in which we need to improve: consistency, improved communication and higher academic/behavioral expectations. How do we do this? With continued community support, our children will be well informed and prepared for their future. All we need to do is work together and stay involved. The "we" includes the parents and teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, kitchen crew, the administration, the community, but primarily the students. They need to "buy-in"! If we work closely together and support each other in this most important challenge.....they will!

Tidbits:

- November total enrollment number is 1,411 students. This is up 58 students from last November.
- In appreciation of our local support, all school are collecting food items or lightly used clothing for needy members in the community over the winter season.
- GOODFELLOW BROS. INC., the contractor who has been working along the Kootenai River for the past 5 years for the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, has made a very kind contribution to our schools. The Senior Manager, Ron Jordan, told me they wanted to give back to our community for making them feel so welcome! They have graciously picked up the cost of the following three items:
 - BFHS Professional Technical Education (PTE) 2 x band saws \$1100 \$2,200
 - Youth Athletic Program \$1000 \$1,000
 - Smartboards Mt. Hall x 3 \$2,099 each \$6,297

Boundary County Middle School in partnership with the Ministerial Association served a free Thanksgiving Dinner to nearly 400 people on Sunday, November 22nd.

Thanks to all the community members who passed the levy last year, our academic field trips no longer need to be funded by the local school PTOs. This allows these special groups of involved parents to focus on other needs (like bleachers at VVES, maybe?)

Dare I say, we are blessed! Gary Pflueger, Supt. BCSD —