

Friday Memo

June 12, 2015

This memo includes 18 attachments

Dear Board members,

Whew! Fun, exciting and lengthy days as we end the school year. Lots of great end of year celebrations. Thank you to board for your participation in the many graduation events. Lots of work to close out end of year decision making (see more below). Yesterday – my birthday – was one of the longest and most rewarding of my time in Seattle: two school visits, lots of meetings and three graduations! What life, energy and enthusiasm our young graduates bring to graduation! Many, many thanks to the staff who shepherd our students through 13 years of school, those very important final months, and the great celebrations for students, families and friends.

Visits this week: I was able to attend graduations for: Ingraham, World School, Rainier Beach, Cleveland, Interagency, and Garfield. And I did school visits at: South Lake, Center School, Cascade Partnership, Fairmount Park, John Stanford International, Hazel Wolf, Greenwood and Loyal Heights. I came awfully close to visiting every school in the district this year – well over 90%. Still just a few short of visiting each school to learn what they are proud of and challenged by and visit at least some of the classrooms.

Preschool: We believe that we have answers to the questions the board posed at the executive committee meeting last week and will bring those forward to a meeting of the executive committee next week. We do have spaces that will work at Old Van Asselt, New Van Asselt and Bailey Gatzert. This would add seats and guarantee sustainability for Gatzert after the grant runs out. The City has worked with us on the cost of the program to find workable solutions. The performance guarantee is the same idea that we have agreed to in our decades-long partnership in the Families and Education Levy. I am confident that SPS is better positioned to meet these guarantees than any of the other providers.

Middle College at **High Point:** Michael is scheduling meetings with each of you to review where we are with Middle College at High Point. Many of our comments seem to pertain to Middle College in its entirety. We have every intention of maintaining the Middle College model in the three locations where we have college partnerships. The High Point location has been problematic in several ways based on cost of the lease vs. declining enrollment AND lack of a college partnership which is an essential part of the model. Enrollment declined from 60 at the start of the year to 37 at mid-year. All but six of those students were 12th graders. This is an administrative program decision not a school closure decision or a program move. At this point, we no longer have classroom space available at the High Point location.

Alder Academy is the day time detention program that we operate in conjunction with King County. The County is rebuilding the Court House and has been asking the district to fund the facilities cost for the day time detention portion of the program (the County is paying for the cost of the overnight detention portion of the facility). The proposed cost has come down from \$3.5M to \$2M. After meeting with the County to review this issue, we determined that about half of the students were there by court order and the other half were not. I indicated that I would propose to you, the SPS board, that we split the \$2M cost (with the caveat that SPS will need small annual payments over several years). (See attached letter)

Field Trips: We have engaged Atty. Charles Leitch to give us a proposal for once again doing district wide training (at least at the high school level) to tighten – and insure compliance with – our procedures designed to protect student safety. We continue to have difficulty following the procedures which have been set in place.

Special Education: The review this week with OSPI and Federal representatives from Washington DC was much more positive than previous meetings. We continue to have work to do, however there is acknowledgement by all concerned that good efforts have gone into addressing the compliance issues. We have plans going forward in the MOU to address ongoing concerns and continue to work toward return of the \$3M withheld from this year's Federal funds. We will not have funds withheld for the coming year.

FYI: Please see attached “Implementing McLeary” letter from the Puget Sound ESD, for your information.

Larry

Deputy Superintendent Update: Attached please find Deputy Superintendent Charles Wright's update for this week.

Assistant Superintendent for Capital Update: Attached please find Assistant Superintendent for Capital, Facilities & Enrollment Planning Flip Herndon's update for this week.

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Update: Attached please find Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley's update for this week.

Assistant Superintendent for Operations Update: Attached please find Assistant Superintendent for Operations Pegi McEvoy's update for this week.

Department of Technology Services Update: Attached please find Chief Information Officer Carmen Rahm's update for this week.