

5/9/14

Greetings Governing Board Members:

Here is my weekly update to try to keep you informed of district happenings...

**Teacher Merit Awards:** Through the generosity of **Mingus Connection**, three teachers annually receive **merit awards** from the **Northern AZ Fund**. This year, the committee (process and selection criteria are outlined by donors) could not narrow it to three, so **four teachers** were **recognized for exceptional work** this year. Each also receives **\$1,000** from the foundation. Congratulations to **Mike Boysen, Craig Mai, Jason Teague, and Mike Westcott!**

**Scholarships:** The current total for **scholarships being awarded to the MUHS class of 2014** is nearly **\$2.2 million!** Last year's total was about \$1.8 million, so we continue to reach higher levels through the great merits of our students.

**School Funding – Higher Ed:** A new report released by the **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities** shows **Arizona** had the **nation's steepest per-student cuts in state aid to higher education** and the **highest rates of tuition increases from 2008 to 2014**. State support for higher education in **AZ fell 48.3%** and **tuition rose 80.6%**. Both numbers were adjusted for inflation and both were tops among states. These cuts parallel the cuts we've experienced with state funding for K-12 education. However, K-12 lacks the ability to adjust "tuition" rates or recover funding from other sources other than budget overrides.

**Capital Needs:** Kirk and I presented an **overview of capital overrides** and solicited staff input into **prioritization of identified capital needs**. We will also be meeting with the **Site Council** next week, with intent to bring the findings to the **Board** on **May 27<sup>th</sup>**.

**Land:** I have received **ten-year trend data** on **local real estate transactions** and although most indicators are improving, including the volume of transactions for vacant land, the **median sale price for vacant land continues to decrease** (current median of **\$22,500** – compared with about **\$156,000** in 2006 and 2007). This data supports the advice we have received thus far indicating that it is not a good time to sell land.

**Verde Valley Regional Chamber Annual Meeting:** The annual **Verde Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce** meeting is being held on **June 24<sup>th</sup>** at **6 PM** at the **Blazin' M Ranch**. This **coincides with the June Board meeting**. As some of you may usually attend this event (I also went last year), I wanted to bring that to your attention in case you want to **move the June meeting** to a different date. We can discuss this at the May meeting.

**School Facilities Board:** The **School Facilities Board** approved funding for our **ball field drainage project** (up to **\$28,000**). We will move forward with getting the project scheduled for this summer. We are still trying to get funding for **HVAC units** and **tennis court resurfacing**.

**Yavapai Library Network Grant:** We have received a **grant** to cover **start up and migration expenses to join the Yavapai Library Network**. This will greatly **enhance our collection** through access to this large network of collections. **Kudos to Jennifer Chilton** for pursuing this!

**Better Business Bureau Award:** One of our students, **Phoebe Chilton**, won the **BBB of Greater AZ Laws of Life Essay Contest (first place in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade category)**. She was recognized earlier this week.

Please let me know if you have any questions/concerns, but please **do not *reply to all***. Have a great weekend!

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- **Scholarship & Academic Honors Night:** May 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM in the Auditorium
- **Last Day of School:** May 22<sup>nd</sup>
- **Graduation:** May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 PM on the Football Field
- **Memorial Day:** May 26<sup>th</sup> – District Closed
- **Regular Board Meeting:** May 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in the MUHS Cafeteria