



Madrona Elementary School

Lise Van Brunt - Principal

Dayle Powell - Office Manager

Lori Garcia - Office Clerk

520 Detrick Drive

Grants Pass, OR 97527

(541) 476-6624

April 7, 2011

Dear Mr. Huber-Kantola and Board Members:

Here is an update on Madrona and Jerome Prairie Schools since I began in December. The first two months were a bit crazy as I tried to get my feet under me and organize my time with both schools. That is still a big challenge, but I recognize that should improve next year when I can set up when regular meetings occur in advance so there isn't so much overlap.

Madrona just finished our second big PBIS event of the year. Students can earn their way to our three big events through their appropriate behavior choices. We had a wonderful talent show. There were 13 acts with over 25 students participating. Students sang, danced, jumped rope, hula hooped and demonstrated high level martial arts skills all to music. We even had two girls playing our own African drums. They wrote their own music for this performance. We had groups performing from Kindergarten through fifth grades. We had three kids sing solos! One girl sang a song acappella! I can't imagine having that much confidence at 10 years of age. We also have a very talented first grader whose break dance is currently on UTube under "Bubba". This little guy is truly fun to watch! The house was packed and many parents and family members joined this great event showcasing the talents of our students.

We have also had the great blessing of having the OSU Extension grant program in nutrition again this year. We are the only TRSD school which has had this program in our schools for the last four years. We get licensed teachers who teach six week courses in nutrition. The curriculum directly dovetails with science, math and health curriculum and standards for all grades. This year our teacher is cooperating with our Master Garden teaching volunteer and the lessons are centered around our community garden. Students are learning how to plant and eat nutritious foods. We will be harvesting and eating lettuces, radishes, peas and some edible flowers in a few more weeks.

Our Artist in Residence this year will again be Laura Rich. Laura is returning for her third year at Madrona. She will be working with our Kindergarten through third grade students this year on using our African drums to learn how to convey the stories of

tribes of Africa. Laura also helps each class write their own folk tales which are then put to drum music. Art and costumes are incorporated in their lessons and performances at the culmination of the program in May.

Jerome Prairie is also rocking right along. We have faced many changes together. The staff has been wonderful. They are open and flexible about making the changes we needed to be able to finish the year successfully together. Last week, our Office Manager Paula Biles, who had been at JP for 27 years, retired. Our school community came together to send her off in style. This week we began a new page in our story by welcoming Jan Castillo to our family as our new office manager.

Our students are a well mannered, fun to work with group. They have recently enjoyed some special art instruction by artist Valerie Sloan. Mrs. Sloan has been working with all grades with projects that range from making special paper books, paper masks and batik wall hangings. The kids are experiencing excellent art content in form and style as well as various media. The masks are currently displayed in our library. They are beautiful!

We are also very proud to announce that Jerome Prairie has a student who qualified to travel to Salem recently to participate in the state National Geography Bee. Jonas Beachy qualified last year as well. He tells me he felt more prepared this year. We are all waiting anxiously to hear if he will go on to a higher level. He is a fifth grader at JP.

Both schools are working hard to provide great instructional opportunities for students during these last precious days of our school year. I am proud of both schools for maintaining their balance and focus on students through difficult negotiations, reduced administrative support or a new administrator, a huge reduction in teaching time and further cuts on the horizon. To their credit, the children are still at the center of their thoughts and actions. I applaud my staffs at both Madrona and Jerome Prairie. They inspire me.

Ever yours,

Lise Van Brunt
Principal
Jerome Prairie and Madrona Elementary Schools