

Superintendent's Update

For the period: July 12, 2016 through August 9, 2016

Maintaining an Instructional Focus

- During the week of August 1- 5, we have been busy with our “Leadership Institute.” This is the time when we bring in members of the campuses’ instructional leadership teams for the purpose of instructional planning for the upcoming school year. Included among the goals for this week are creating instructional plans for all student groups, creating the campuses’ master schedules, planning extended Wednesdays professional development, and revisiting Teachscape to set up our walkthrough process and training.
- Jercy facilitated in two-day instructional coaching training during the week of August 8th to make certain that both coaches and administrators are clear on the role and focus of instructional coaching.
- On August 9-11, we will be holding our first-ever Robotics Camp. This exciting opportunity is open to students in grades 6-8 and is designed to guide students in learning coding through the construction and use of Lego robots.

Construction Progress

- Construction on the vocational technical building at the high school, the wrestling area, and the new locker room facilities continues. While construction appears to be on schedule, we are developing contingency plans in the event that the facilities are not ready for occupation when school starts.
- The BES boiler system is progressing as well.
- Demolition for K-3 playground project as well as the preparations for the William Buffalo Hide remodel project are underway.
- The next Facilities Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 11th at 5:00 pm.

MQEC Update

- Mr. Rouse will be attending another MQEC Board meeting in Helena on August 15th (The July meeting was cancelled) as this group continues to move forward with a lawsuit in response to the passage of SB 410 and the subsequent rules developed by the Montana Department of Revenue. Senate Bill 410 passed by the 2015 Legislature, established a tax credit for individuals wishing to contribute to K-12 public schools and K-12 private, non-parochial schools.

Negotiations

- The Union negotiations team has requested that our negotiations process move into mediation. The mediator has been assigned and our first meetings are scheduled for Monday, August 8th and Monday, August 22nd. You may recall that the Union offered a package proposal calling for salary increases in the amounts of 3%, 3%, and 4% with step increases along with a number of lane change requests and no change to the health insurance which would mean that the district would have to continue absorb an additional \$144 per month per employee to cover our costs for insurance. Using the figure of about \$416,000 for every 1% salary increase, their proposal would cost the school district an additional \$4.16 million over the term of the agreement.

- The administration rejected this proposal because the school district could simply not afford to fund it. We offered a compromise package proposal on behalf of the district that included salary increases and addressed the insurance funding issue. The administration's proposal included a \$0.42 per hour "across the board" increase for all classified workers as retro pay for 2015-16. That is about a 2.7% increase in their current salaries. For 2016-17, we offered an additional 5.53% increase in salary. Our intent was to provide enough of a salary increase so that no employee would lose income as the district sets a cap on its insurance contribution at \$950 per month for all employees. Capping the insurance contribution at \$950 would mean that the employees would have to contribute \$144 per month for health insurance coverage (currently for the entire family or single employee).

Upcoming Activities

- Mr. Rouse will be attending the MQEC meeting in Helena on August 15th and the K-12 Visioning Group meeting in Helena on August 18th.
- We have our final budget workshop scheduled for the Board on **August 9th** following our regular 5:00 pm board meeting.