

Peru Central

Cross-Campus Web-based Update

HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD ACTION THIS MONTH

At the regular monthly meeting of **Tuesday, October 13, 2009** the Board of Education:

- A.** Hosted a brief ceremony to dedicate the commemorative plaques for voter-authorized capital project work completed in recent years, and now used by students and staff day-to-day. That capital project work enabled Peru Central to provide new and renovated program spaces for the residents of this rural school district. The project work earlier this decade included updated boilers at each school, enlarged elementary grades cafeterias, a middle school wing attached to the high school, an expanded library media center for the combined middle-high school facility, a primary school gymnasium, a renovated high school lobby, our community room, replacement floors for various intermediate school classrooms, modernized security systems, and various other key elements to help prolong the usable life of the school buildings. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by various officers of the **Peru Fire Department**. Brief remarks were offered by Board President **Rod Driscoll** and this region's BOCES District Superintendent **Craig King**. Those attending were favored with two performances by the **Peru CSD Staff Chorus**, followed by a photo opportunity. A brief reception followed, offering current and former Board members an opportunity to engage in conversation with district residents and the various officials who participated. Staff chorus members included **Alexis Agnew, Kathy Bellows, Catherine Butts, Kathleen Caron, Jennifer Cartier, Mary Clackler, Lisa Crain, Bette Crowningshield, Heather Darrah, Beth Dubay, Tracey Howard, Stacy LaChapelle, Connie Lalonde, Pam Lavin, Nicole Morse, Grace Novelli, Colleen O'Brien, Kim O'Leary, Jodie Osborne, Laura Peterson, Meghan Reilly, Rachel Romanowicz and Margaret Sheldon**, led by conductor/ accompanist **Jennifer Moore**.
- B.** Met and greeted this school year's high school exchange students and 'host' families: **Pannaporn Sriwattanopong** of Thailand and host parents Henry & Michele Vincent; and **Sven Hecken** of Germany and host parents Felix & Elizabeth Morrow.
- C.** Received the October 2009 student president report on extra-curricular activities, leadership development and service from **Robert Wilkins**, President of the Junior Class.
- D.** Offered public recognition for decades of distinctive public service by **Edna L. Hutchinson**, who was employed at Peru CSD as a school nurse teacher from the mid-1940's through her 1980 retirement from active service. She served on campus with her husband **James E. Hutchinson**, long time Superintendent of Schools at Peru CSD.
- E.** Established a winter bid phase and a spring 2010 launch of the construction phase for the voter-approved EXCEL capital project. EXCEL Stands for Expanding Children's Education and Learning Aid.

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FROM A. PAUL SCOTT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

- F. Received the ninth annual set of public briefings on grade span goals for collective focus this school year.
- G. Established one additional Intermediate School physical education class section [0.2 FTE] for this school year associated with grade four, based on class size, safety and logistics.
- H. Authorized the school district pilot an additional high school cafeteria monitor position for the 2009-2010 school year, at an anticipated cost of \$5,750. This action follows a recent examination of staffing levels at the high school cafeteria. There will be a winter/spring analysis of the impact of that additional high school cafeteria monitor position, to determine whether or not that pilot position warrants being sustained beyond this school year or not.
- I. Accepted the audit report from the independent auditor.
- J. Established school board representation at the NYSED North Country Community Forum on the Statewide Educational Technology Plan, hosted by Peru Central School District on Monday, November 2, 2009 from 3 PM until 5 PM in the Peru High School's cafeteria.
- K. Scheduled an October 26, 2009 meeting of the finance committee, to launch discussion of a draft fall 2009 multi-year finance plan update, for school board consideration and discussion next month, as part of twice-annual updating of the school board's multi-year finance plan.
- L. Set the January 12, 2010 regular monthly meeting for the audit committee of the school board to meet again. Agenda will include monitoring implementation of the internal auditor's recommendations, a discussion of this school year's internal auditing priority areas, and a review of the independent auditor's fall 2009 independent audit report.

Attached are **highlights** of this month's **Superintendent's Report** to the Board of Education, which was discussed at the Board meeting during public session.

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CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS IS JOB #1

Our mission is honorable and durable: Provide a solid public education to the children of this rural school community. That mission calls upon each of us employed by Peru CSD to make each day of school as safe, successful and productive as possible. Success in 21st Century public education is more frequently identified as continued improvement annually by each child, each student; coupled with raising graduation rates, meeting unprecedented levels of fiscal accountability and performance indicators, bolstering professional practice year-to-year and responding to emerging community expectations for 21st Century public service.

Public service is generally associated with fundamental services for citizens, such as public education, fire service, water service, law enforcement, military and public transportation. Public service, in the context of public education, places prime focus on preparing America's next generation of citizens with the knowledge, skills and tools to be productive, thoughtful citizens.

For public schools, Job #1 for the years ahead will most frequently be identified as continued improvement of student achievement and success. Indicators for such success, currently, are almost exclusively associated with state accountability tests in grades 3-8, coupled with Regents exams in grades 8-12.

STAYING THE COURSE ON JOB #1 REGARDLESS OF THE RECESSION AND ITS IMPACT

Job #1 is reflected on our payroll. The largest category of employment at Peru CSD is that of faculty member. That category includes teachers, counselors, school psychologists, school nurses and teaching assistants. Those are the 'front line' state-certified employees who plan and deliver instructional programs to our community's children.

Job #1 is reflected in national and statewide reports. It's generally acknowledged that having the next generation of American children receive a solid public education and earn a high school diploma has never been more important to the future of our nation, our standard of living, and the American workforce.

Job #1 must not be sidetracked by a troubled economy. A September 30, 2009 briefing paper published by the Washington D.C.-based Economic Policy Institute, entitled **Economic Scarring: The Long-Term Impacts of the Recession** details the anticipated longer-term impacts of the recession. Those impacts include economic damage such as higher unemployment, lower wages and incomes than would otherwise have been obtained, and a longer-term drag on the economy that will prevent a prompt, full economic recovery.

The report states that in a recession, families face financial hardships, poverty rises, posing added challenges to child nutrition, health services, after-school programs and housing dislocations.

Those of us in public service, particularly those of us in public education, can help mitigate such impacts on children, through our day-to-day efforts to 'go beyond' what is required, in many and varied ways, such as we've seen across our campus in recent years. Continued improvement of student achievement and success will be a catalyst for examining what we do, examining why we do it, and determining if sustaining particular practices of the past will be in the interests of public service and/or increasing student success.

I predict that 'when the state aid money stops flowing' in continuously greater amounts each year, public service and public education will enter a dynamic period of time. Leadership practices at the governing team level, the administrative level, the bargaining unit level and the team level can help or hinder the process. That's where public service can be a compass that helps us 'keep our bearings'.

As we've done throughout this decade, Peru CSD will engage at each level to sustain and promote 'Job #1'.

CURRICULUM AUDIT OF GRADES 3 & 4 SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAMS

The curriculum audit team for grades 3 & 4 social studies programs was announced October 1st. Veteran faculty members Bette Crowningshield, Johnna Hill, Holley Christiansen and Karen Irwin will serve as the curriculum audit team for our fall 2009 curriculum audit. That curriculum audit team has already begun detailing the process, protocols, timetable and communications associated with the grades 3 & 4 curriculum audit, set to launch later this month. The curriculum audit team will schedule a time to engage in conversation with the grades 3 & 4 classroom teacher teams, too.

PERU CSD MOVED AHEAD SEPTEMBER 2009 WITH ARRA 'STIMULUS' REPORTING

Peru CSD moved ahead last month with federal and state mandatory reporting of how our school district intends to use 'stimulus' monies associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 [ARRA]. Mid-September 2009, Peru CSD submitted an electronic report via the State Education Department's Web portal on how Peru CSD is using the \$1.67M of our 2009-2010 school year's general operating aid identified by Governor Paterson as 'Deficit Reduction Restoration Aid'.

In exchange for that \$1.67M of 'Deficit Reduction Restoration Aid' monies via the Governor's Office, Peru Central was obligated to identify \$1.67M of positions, programs and services funded via that \$1.67M. All school districts across the state are required to provide such information for their share of 'Deficit Reduction Restoration Aid' monies. A copy of that report to the State is included within the October 2009 ARRA monthly report to the Board.

PERU CSD CLOSELY MONITORING ONSET OF INFLUENZA SEASON

Precautionary measures associated with H1N1 influenza continue. Our school nurse team gathers absenteeism data across campus on a daily basis. We forward key data elements each day to the Clinton County Health Department, as part of county-wide monitoring that engages each of the county's public school districts.

Maintenance teams are well underway with deploying sanitizer gel dispensing stations in school nurse stations, gymnasium areas, cafeterias, computer labs, library media centers that do not have sinks. Custodial teams continue to 'step up' the frequency of checking soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers and gel dispensers across campus.

I'll continue to authorize expanded hours for particular custodial team & maintenance team functions, if necessary, to implement these extraordinary actions.

REMINDER REGARDING PERFECT ATTENDANCE AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

At the September 2009 regular monthly meeting, it was announced that Peru CSD will suspend the customary 'perfect attendance' awards & recognitions – this school year only – in response to NYSDOH and NYSED guidance recommending examination of such school practices.

I will be requesting Peru CSD Principals and Directors make this known to parents, teachers and students.