

Inter-School Teacher Council December 14, 2016

Dr. Simon welcomed everyone and began the meeting with updates on work being done in the district.

New website – We received many RFP (request for proposal). The final selection was narrowed to four and the interviews will be held right after winter break. The goal is to have the website running by the end of the school year. There will be some work that will continue into the summer. Each school will have a home landing page which will be consistent with the districts home page. The new website will be user and mobile friendly.

P.D. Task Force – The group has been hard at work putting together recommendations to bring forward. Two recommendations will be brought forward. Financial feasibility will be considered when reviewing recommendations. The group was told to dream big and do what we can to improve p.d. and the calendar. The group is not looking at content of p.d. but rather structure for the district and buildings.

Community Advisory Council – Over 70 applications are being reviewed. It will be hard to narrow to the group to twenty but Dr. Simon hopes to have completed the task by winter break.

Reorganization – Dr. Simon did a small reorganization in the fall with the Director of Strategic Partnerships and College and Career Readiness position. There will be some reorganization at the district level and school level. She will meet with the board in January for further discussion on this topic. The reorganization will happen in two phases which will allow her to review instruction and fine tune year two. The building level reorganization will look at some positions in the buildings that were created with budget cuts and put more focus on early literacy.

Strategic Plan – The steering and core planning groups are off to a great start. We have an amazing group of 58 people in the core planning team. There has been great discussion and feedback. The three student representatives and stellar and great to work with. The group is working through the process of putting together a mission, vision and core values. There will be a community wide survey distributed after winter break. We will have digital and paper surveys to reach those that might not have technical capabilities. There will include a few questions on college and career readiness. Dr. Simon would like to get information regarding students who have graduated and returned to Rapid City or where are they beginning their careers and did they feel they were equipped to enter college.

Communication – We continue to work on improving communication. We are receiving great feedback on weekly updates and monthly newsletter. Concern expressed on duplicate emails and phone calls that staff receive from communication office. Working to get positive stories out and appreciate district staff that let's know what is happening in their buildings. Those attending asked if we might have a space on the new website similar to Pinterest only it be District Pinterest. Let us know what is happening in the buildings, things they are doing in their classrooms so that others can try ideas or have tips to share with parents. Below are pictures of magnets that NMS shared with parents. Great tips for them. Suggestion made to partner with the Journal on doing a school spotlight.



Questions from the group: (These notes may not be grammatically correct – typed during the meeting).

Will we continue to have Professional Learning Communities next year?

Yes, we will – will they look exactly the same – likely not given the p.d. recommendations – PLC at h.s - not meeting the needs of teachers – don't want people wasting their time – have talked to Curriculum coordinator – next area to look at once p.d. task force completed – relevant to students then it is important – don't feel effective building to building – not getting time to look at student data

Do you have a plan to have mentors for first and second year teachers?

No she doesn't – it is on her radar – conversations at the state level and mentoring program – like to see the money come to the districts – every district has different plans etc- don't think robust plan for next – on her to-do list – good mentoring is time intensive

Where is the conversation in regards to teacher's salary and compensation for levels of education? Also, what might teachers anticipate teachers who are at or above the 50K mark?

All subject to negotiation process – suspect it will be a topic at negotiations

The calendar for next year is being determined (I know the start date) but would like to know if they could ask teachers about Parent/Teacher conference nights (lots of teachers don't like Tuesday nights because the week gets long). Concern: having one night so late in November isn't really helpful at either elementary or secondary because it's so late that what's being reported to parents is totally different. Not having any during the day makes it difficult for parents who work nights. Plus, for semester classes at the high school, having both of the conferences in November make it really hard on a student who is failing. They don't have enough time left to turn their grade around. Perhaps, one in October and one in November would work better.

Concern with p-t conferences so late in quarters and grading windows – these are on our slt meeting agenda for Friday – conference scheduling – open house – grading window

Report card work day for elementary: does little good to have the report card work date the day report cards are due to the secretary. It would be nice if principals had the discretion to choose what day/days it would be best for their school rather than it being mandated from the district level. Report card work day should be at least 1 week prior to report card due date w/ secretary. I really appreciate having the semester work day to get grades done but I don't know how that effects the elementary schools or schools who are on a trimester schedule. Also, there use to be around 5 days after the mid-term or quarter ended to complete grades. I don't think that is currently happening.

On SLT agenda for Friday and discussions will continue.

Lack of communication in regards to elementary report card changes. Notification should have been done long before the last week of October. How can we improve communication between the groups?

Curriculum/instruction and the teachers – so nice to have comments – spreadsheet – blanket statements are not always accurate in every instance – get feedback to building report card person – talk to Luis – concerns raised and have him put communication out - Jan 30 report card committee meets.

With the new federal law going into effect how will that effect the teacher work day?

Overtime law only impacts who make under 47000 - federal judge issued injunction

Do you have any plans for a talented/gifted program?

Couple thoughts – I would use the word accelerated – many models and different approach – programming – area is concerned about at all levels increasing the rigor and more opportunities – beginning to take a look at it - may put things in place for next year but don't know yet

Do you plan on reevaluating a raise in pay for paraprofessionals?

That area has been discussed – few different things – brainstorming – upcoming negotiation process – know that our paras can go to fast food and get the same salary – as rewarding – no – but we have to be real about that – look at salary structure within that job – some jobs are extremely demanding and challenging

They wanted to know if the existing policy of removing non-renewed teachers from classrooms and replacing them with subs for the last few weeks of the school year through the end of their contract would continue under our new leader, and what her thoughts are on the fairness and financial responsibility of this policy.

Shocked to learn that took place unless significant issue of student safety – unless there are extreme circumstances – see no need – will be reviewed in future.

On Tuesday, 13 December 2016, Pinedale Elementary School held their annual Christmas performances at the Historic Theater inside RCHS during school hours. Next week, Wilson Elementary School will hold its performances at RCHS as well.

Question: Is this the best place to hold these performances?

Comments/concerns:

This is the second year that elementary school performances have been held inside RCHS during school hours. These performances are very disruptive to the students and staff at RCHS when held during school hours. First, there is very limited parking at this downtown high school to begin with. Having a school performance here during normal school hours creates a parking nightmare along with all the safety issues of getting young children in and out of buses and cars combined with the mix of teenage drivers all competing for the limited parking spaces. Today I've watched this parking zoo unfold all day long. I've seen parents park where they shouldn't park. I've seen elderly grandparents walk blocks through the bitterly cold weather. We lease about a dozen parking spaces to the public library in the corner of the RCHS parking lot. Those spaces were parked in by parents today. They also parked in the private lots around the school. Your staff may hear some comments from local businesses about that. Parents also parked in the small drop-off point in front of RCHS that the buses wanted to use, but couldn't, thereby parking on Columbus street to off load their students and blocking traffic.

I'm concerned about the image and safety issues created by RCHS students smoking on public sidewalks around the school as elementary school students, parents, and grandparents are arriving. In some cases, individuals arriving had to leave the public sidewalks to navigate around the students to get to RCHS. I'm also concerned about the mixing of high school and elementary students during passing periods while these performances are also arriving/departing, both inside and outside of the school building. In addition is the elevated noise level caused by moving elementary students and parents into and out of this building several times during the day while

high school classes are going on. This seriously affects the 1st and 2nd floors which contain offices and classrooms.

Maybe you could survey the Pinedale parents who attended today for their thoughts about using this facility during school hours. Also survey the students and staff at RCHS for their thoughts, comments, and/or concerns.

Response from Mr. Janak: The renovation of the historic theater in part was funded by RCAS to allow elementary schools that no longer had a stage or a very limited space on the stage or parking to use this facility for performances. Timing of the programs is to be arranged with the school. I know Wilson no longer has a stage and has no parking for parents, Pinedale has a very small stage, with limited parking for parents.

Student attendance plummeted because students can't park – temporary solution will be discussed.

Next meeting will be February 8 at 4:00 PM – CSAC 1st Floor Community Room. Deadline for questions is February 6th at Noon!!

Happy Holidays,

Shirley Fletcher
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Superintendent Office