



Plumas Lake Elementary School District Community Newsletter

March 18, 2011

Superintendent's Message

At the beginning of this year, I challenged our staff to join me on the first steps to moving our district from being **good to being great**. I am very proud of the work that we are doing to improve the instruction that your students receive every day.

As a District we have focused on instructional practices that research shows effect student learning. One of the major areas we have been working on is **actively engaging all students** throughout the lesson. We want to move away from the traditional teacher giving information to the class and then asking one student to answer a question. We want to see all students actively engaged in thinking about and participating in the learning. It is also important that at the beginning of a lesson students understand what they are going to learn about, why it is important, and how the teacher is going to know that the student has learned the skills.

The teacher leadership groups from each site and administration have worked together to assess our district on the *7 Disciplines for Improving Instruction* and came to the conclusion that we need to begin by developing a **widely shared vision of good instruction**, developing **well defined standards and assessments** for student work, improving **staff development**, and improving our **data systems**. The group will meet again later this month to begin to work on developing the shared vision of good instruction. I am proud of the work that our teachers are doing to become the greatest teachers possible.

I am also proud of our district as we continue to push to improve our relations with you as our community and providing enrichment opportunities for your students. We have focused time and attention in providing **Parent Universities**, community events, and communicating in multiple ways with you. I am excited about the presentations that we have brought to you about family literacy, bullying, drugs and alcohol awareness, and getting your student ready for college. I loved the Father/Daughter dance around Valentines Day (Even though my back was sore for 3 days after dancing with my 5 year old daughter all night) I am looking forward to the Mother/Daughter Tea being sponsored by our new Education Foundation. I also am happy that we can provide your children opportunities to take part in plays and the youth chorus.

PLESD is working hard to provide an education for your children that takes care of their **academic, social and emotional** needs. Thank you for letting us be part of your team.

-Jeff Roberts

Budget Update

- No new layoffs for 2011-12
- Most K-3 class sizes will stay at 20:1
- One more year of elementary P.E. teachers
- One more year of 3 hr. library clerks at each site.
- Band will continue at Riverside

Since our last newsletter several positive things have happened budget wise and some negative news has come about the future of education finance.



The Positives:

1. The State passed the budget with 3.85% more going to education in 2010-11 than the District planned for when we created our Budget in May. We have set this \$281,000 aside in case they cut it mid year or in case there are bigger cuts next year.
2. PLESD received \$221,000 from the Federal Government's Education Jobs Bill. This must be spent by September, 2012. The Board used it to hire back half time PE teachers for each elementary school, restore the library clerks to 3 hours a day at each site, to hire a Literacy Coach, and to hire an office clerk at Rio Del Oro.

The Negatives:

1. The Governor is looking to cut education \$330 a student if the tax propositions do not pass. This would be over \$330,000 cut to our District. In addition the \$281,000 that was unexpected this year could also be cut.
2. At the end of last year we had 1071 student enrolled, we dipped as low as having 1009 students in November and currently have 1026 students. This means that we are expecting \$132,000 less in ADA next year.

What It All Means:

1. The PLESD School Board has made over \$1.5 million in cuts since March of 2009. The decisions we have made over the past two years has allowed us to keep a reserve and balance our budget.
2. The Budget Committee and the School Board are willing to use one time reserves to absorb any cuts that come from the State for the 2011-2012 school year, hoping to see an economic turn around and/or more students before the 2012-13 school year.
3. The Board understands that this decision could bring about very large cuts next spring for the 2012-13 school year. Including all of the programs being paid for by the Federal Jobs Money, raising class size, eliminating some paraprofessional positions, cutting operational cost even more, and other possibilities created by the Budget Committee.

We will continue to keep you updated on the ever-changing budget crises

Upcoming Important Dates

April 18-22	Spring Break— No School
April 27-May 11	STAR Testing
May 30	Memorial Day— No School
June 2	Riverside Meadows Promotion
June 3	Last Day of School



Parent Universities

This year is our first year of offering Parent University evenings. One of the needs that has been expressed to the district is to help parents understand important topics that will help their students be successful in school and life. This year we have offered evenings on:

Family Literacy
Drug and Alcohol Awareness
Bullying in America's Schools
College Making it Happen

These are continuing to grow in attendance with over 50 parents and students attending the College Making it Happen earlier this month. There are two more sessions that will be offered this year. They are:

-Understanding the K-12 System (April)
-Dealing with Family Stress (May)

Jonell Stumpp Retires

Jonell Stumpp who had worked in PLESD for 20 years retired at the end of February. Jonell worked many jobs during her time in our district including library clerk, paraprofessional, secretary, office clerk, and cafeteria worker. CSEA (our union for the non-teacher or non-administration employees) threw a wonderful retirement party celebrating her time in the district. We wish Jonell the best of luck in her new life as a retiree!

Plumas Lake Education Foundation

Mother/Daughter Tea

"Rise Above"

Tuesday, April 5, 2011 at 4pm
Riverside Meadows Middle School

Plumas Lake Youth Chorus Spring Concert at Yuba College

April 29th at 7:30 p.m.

For more information contact Merrilee Leinweber
PLEFoundation@plused.org
755-PLEF

A group of concerned community members began the process of starting the Plumas Lake Education Foundation. The Foundation is being created to promote quality education for all students in Plumas Lake through Academics, Arts, Athletics and Technology.

Federal Education Jobs Money

Last Fall, the Federal Government passed a Federal Education Jobs Bill. This provided PLESD with \$221,000 that must be spent by September of 2012. The money can only be spent on funding new or eliminated jobs at school sites. The PLESD School Board chose to spend this money over 18 months, starting in January 2011 and ending in June 2012. With this money we have been able to:

1. Hire back two Elementary P.E. teachers for half time positions. Nell Mullaney has returned to the district and teaches at Rio Del Oro and we have hired Shelli Brevik for Cobblestone.
2. Hire a 3 hour a day Library Clerk at each of the three sites. We have hired Caroline McCullough at Rio Del Oro, Dawn Granata at Cobblestone and Jessica Corkery at Riverside Meadows
3. Hire a Literacy Coach to be used at all three sites. The teachers are using our Literacy Coach to help them plan lessons, to observe their lessons and give feedback, to model lessons for them, to observe other teachers while she whisper coaches in the back of the room, to assist in analyzing data, to team teach and access materials and research for them. Julie Rojo has moved from her Kindergarten position into the Literacy Coach position and Angela Blank has taken her spot as a Kindergarten teacher.
4. Hired a 3 hour office clerk at Rio Del Oro, Lovette Hernandez

All of these positions will be funded for the 2011-2012 school year but the Board will need to revisit these position for the 2012-13 budget.

2011-2012 School Calendar

The four districts in Yuba County, Plumas Lake, Wheatland High School, Wheatland School District, and Marysville, have worked hard to better align our School Calendars for the 2011-12 School Year.

The 3 South County School Districts all have the same start day and all of the same holidays. The only difference is that PLESD will have one staff development day in September and therefore the last of day of school will be Friday June 8, 2012. Marysville will begin two days before the South County School Districts and will have 2 staff development days that are not on the South County School Districts calendars.

Please see the PLESD website for a copy of the draft calendar. The School Board will officially adopt the calendar in April.

<http://www.plusd.org>

New Board Member

PLESD would like to welcome Dora Buck to the School Board. Dora was elected in November and took office in December. Also, reelected to the Board in November were David Villanueva and Derek Bratton. In the Board reorganization that occurs every December, David was elected President, Derek was elected Vice-president, and Dora was elected Clerk. The Board and PLESD would like to thank Craig Bommarito for his two years of service as Board President.