

To: Dr. Steve Pegram, Superintendent
From: Mr. Michael Flax, Principal
Date: 5 September 2014
Re: September BOE Report

Fundraisers – We have begun the first of our fundraising activities for the year. The Red Wheel food sales kicked off this afternoon. We are hoping to offset the activity fund that we lost due to not hosting track meets last year. The concessions at track meets provide us with a fairly good amount of cash that we use for celebrations and activities. The eighth grade class will also do the same fundraiser in the spring. That pays for some of the Worlds of Fun costs. Additionally, I am asking for BOE approval for another smaller fundraiser this fall and winter. There would be no door-to-door solicitation in this event. It is the sale of the Titanium Sports braided necklaces. We would do those sales at our home ball games. The profit margin for those is about 60%. If the BOE approves that activity we will order our first inventory. I am not a huge fan of fundraisers, but I do believe this year they are more important in the partial financing of our building activities.

Enrollment – For the first time in several years the preliminary enrollment numbers are up from last year. Last year on this date we had 291 students in grades 5-8. As of today we are at 301 students enrolled for this year. Our largest class is sixth grade with 81 students. The complete breakdown by grade level is: Grade 5 – 71; Grade 6 – 81; Grade 7 – 73; and Grade 8 – 76. I am hopeful that we will be able to sustain at or above the 300 count for the rest of the year, and hopefully look forward to district growth in the next few years. I have no data to back that hope up, but am optimistic about it nonetheless.

Building Improvement Plan – We have been giving attention to our building improvement plan, particularly in our discussions on goal-setting. Teachers are collecting student data in their classrooms, and we will be tracking student progress throughout the year. It has been a challenge for the teachers at the junior high level who are now sharing grade levels. We have at least two teachers teaching the same subject material at the grade levels. They have been directed to make sure they are following the same scope and sequence, and that they should be teaching the same standards at or very near the same time. That is quite an adjustment for several of the teachers who have previously worked in quasi-isolation. I am glad that we have a true plan that directs us this school year. Building decisions are based on the best ways to meet these targets and ultimately the goals on the plan.

College Visits – We have the annual college visits planned for the students. This year we are taking all of those trips in the fall. Today the 8th grade students traveled to Topeka. They are visiting Washburn University for part of the day and Washburn Tech as well. The other dates are: Grade 6 – September 17 to KU; Grade 5 – September 29 to KSU; Grade 7 – September 30 to ESU and Osage County Law Enforcement Center. The visits have been well received by students, and several activities and conversations take place in classrooms as a follow-up. I am glad that the district supports the college visits for our students.

Drug Testing – We are submitting our roster of student numbers to the Psychomedics group to begin our drug testing in the building. Mr. Graham advised me about the best way to do this, and we are ready to get this underway. I have visited with a few parents about the new drug testing policy. Some are in favor, some are opposed, and some are on the fence about it. I am hopeful we will have zero students who test positive, but we are prepared to follow through if one does.

Activity Fees – We have done a fairly good job collecting the activity fee this year. As of today we have not received the payment in full from 28 students in our junior high. I did allow a few students to participate in activities this week provided the parents had made arrangements with me to pay the fee.

There was some reluctance on the part of a few parents, but when push came to shove they brought the fee in. I will be sending reminders to the parents who have not paid near the end of this sports season. And eighth grade parents will get those reminders often regarding participation in the end of year recognition ceremony.

Ryan Vaughn – Mr. Ryan Vaughn, a former teacher with Three-Lakes in our district, is working towards his license in building and district leadership. He worked with Dr. Pegram last year, and has asked to do his building-level field study here with the district principals. I am his lead mentor, and he is meeting with me at least every two weeks on his progress towards the requirements of the program. I am sure he will get the best training possible by working with the administrative team here at #434. He has been introduced to the staff at the opening day meetings, and greeted the students and staff at a recent morning assembly. Ryan did his regular education student teaching while I was the principal at SAC, and he taught in a resource room after that, also while I was at SAC. It is good to have him working with me again.

Staff Changes – We have welcomed several new members to our staff this year. Mrs. Courtnee Maichel is teaching 7th and 8th grade math. She is a graduate of SFT, and she comes to us from the staff at Shawnee Heights Middle School. Mrs. Arlene Mayes has returned to Carbondale, having taken a transfer from the high school to the middle school special education department. Mrs. Amy Potter has begun work here as our speech and language pathologist. She is part of the Three-Lakes team as well. We have hired four new paraprofessionals this fall. They are all working with the special education staff. Brianne McGonigle, Austin Reser, LouAnn Lucas, Dana Webber have all joined us this fall. We also have a student teacher and a new band assistant this fall. Ms. Jana Havens is student-teaching under the guidance of Mr. Lance Quilling. Also working with Mr. Quilling is Mr. Keith Mallory. These two are working side by side to provide assistance to Mr. Quilling and the band students. This makes for a lot of new faces in the building. So far everyone has been received well by the students and returning staff.

Submitted by Michael Flax