

**January 4, 2013**  
**Klamath Falls City Schools**

**District Newsletter**  
**Volume 2; Issue 12**  
**Looking for a New Year's Resolution?**

By Paul Hillyer, KFCS Superintendent

Are you a parent of a KFCS student? Have you been trying to figure out a new year's resolution? If the answer to both questions is yes, this writer has a suggestion for you. How about setting plans to help your children experience greater school success in 2013? Here are a few research-proven ways to do so as explained by Patte Barth, Director of the Center for Public Education, in an article that appeared recently in a National School Boards Association report:

1. Monitor your students' school work. One way to do this is to have them check in with you after school and share how their day went. A good opening question to help them communicate about this is to ask, "What did you learn in school today?" If you get a vague answer, follow-up by asking them about specific subjects such as math, reading, or science. Another important way to monitor their work is to have them share any corrected school papers they brought home with them and discuss them with your children. You can further monitor by checking on their homework. While parents should never do homework for their young people, it is sound practice to help them if they are struggling, check it over for them once they are finished, and require them to re-do their work if it is done poorly.
2. Make sure your children get to school. Likely many of you responded to this suggestion with a "duh." However, you would be surprised how many people do not realize the importance of attendance in a student's success. This may be no surprise; however, a recent study verifies what we all would have assumed: The more students are in school, the higher their achievement. Children cannot learn if they are not in school. In addition, poor attendance causes students to get behind in their learning and catching up can be very difficult when they return. In fact, poor attendance is often the first step to school failure and eventual dropping out of school.
3. Reward their efforts. Rewarding students for high grades is not as effective as rewarding them for their effort. The ability with which they are born is out of their control. The effort they put in to develop it is. Therefore, the best way to motivate further effort is to notice it, to praise it, and to reward it.
4. Talk up the idea of going to college. This should start at a very young age. It is no longer adequate for a person to have a high school diploma if one wants to attain a middle class existence. Now, entering middle class in almost all cases requires a minimum of a two-year degree. Having students set higher education as a target early in their lives will help them set ambitious goals for their academic progress as they proceed through school.

How important is parent involvement in their children's education? Study after study shows that it may be the top factor leading to student success. Two children with equal ability can achieve very differently in school. The main reason for the difference likely will be the concern of their parents for their school progress. If children's academic growth and

future adult success is important to a parent, the suggestions above form the basis for a great new year's resolution.

**Other News:**

1. The Mills' Auditorium project was completed in late December. The local firms ZCS and DCI designed and completed the \$1.4 million project. The end result could not have been much better. The structure looks almost new. It was funded through a successful state seismic improvement grant written by KU principal, Jeff Bullock, and Mills principal, Mike Herron. The project made the building structurally safe in case of an earthquake and updated the interior in the process. A grand opening is being planned for sometime within the next two months. In the meantime, feel free to stop in to the Mills office and someone will be happy to show you the completed work.
2. If you visit one of our schools, make sure and sign in at the school office and receive a visitor badge so that staff and students know you are visiting on approved business.
3. First semester ends on January 24. Please make sure your students have completed all first-semester requirements as that date approaches.
4. The Graduation Rate Improvement Committee is formulating plans in various sectors of our community to increase awareness about the importance of high school graduation and ways groups can help our youth attain their diplomas. The different sectors involved include churches, businesses, city government, colleges, media, K-12 districts, businesses, and service organizations. It is exciting to see this effort start to take shape. There is a great deal of excitement around the idea of seeing all students graduate from high school. The impact this improvement could have on the community could be transformational.