



October 4, 2013

**KFCS' District Newsletter**  
**A Full-Court Press for Student Achievement**  
By Paul Hillyer, KFCS' Superintendent

One of the most effective strategies in basketball is called a "full court press." This is when the defense has its players converge on the person with the basketball. It can be a very effective strategy when the pressured player is overwhelmed by the attention and the defense is able to cause him or her to make a mistake. The Klamath Falls City Schools will be utilizing a similar principle to improve student learning in the district.

This is being done by asking principals and their secretaries to operate very differently this year. In the past, principals were asked to drop everything they were doing whenever a parent, staff person, or community member asked to see them. The result of this practice was that principals were constantly pulled from their main focus: improving student achievement in their schools. Instead they were being asked to be fire fighters.

What do I mean by principals being fire fighters? It means constantly giving their full attention to the latest perceived crisis and concern that presents itself. This is a good practice for people hired to fight fires. It is terrible practice for anyone that is hired to improve learning. Constantly putting principals in the revolving door of unplanned interruptions has a direct impact on the learning in their buildings. Needless to say, this impact is not a positive one.

To solve this problem, I have directed principals this year to utilize their secretaries in scheduling visits from parents, staff, and community members. This means that I expect them to utilize their time more deliberately to be in the classrooms and hallways of their schools coaching and directing the instructional processes and interacting with staff and students in their work places. This is essential if we hope to accomplish our district vision of having all students ready for the next grade before they leave their current grade. It is also key in helping our district reach our district mission of 100% graduation.

What does this mean for the staff and the public? It means principals will still have an open-door policy; however, these open-door visits will need to be scheduled through the schools' secretaries. This way the principals will gain control of their calendars so they can be available to students and staff members in the environs of the school classrooms and passing areas. This also helps them concentrate while in their offices on all the local, state, and federal requirements they must fulfill for their schools.

Again, this change in operation will not set up a barrier between principals and those they serve. Instead, it will provide the time needed to direct their buildings' key instructional processes. It also helps them be more efficient in completing the countless operational requirements of their job. They still are happy to address the concerns and needs of all within the school community through an organized scheduling process similar to what heads of other large organizations use.

If you have any questions or concerns about this change, please feel free to give me a call or schedule an appointment. One of the ways we are putting a full-court press on improving student success is by making sure our principals can focus on their main role of instructional leader. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this approach to help maximize the effectiveness of our building heads.

#### **Other News:**

1. Information has been sent home with students on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant after-school programs that will begin in KU, Ponderosa, Pelican, Mills and Conger on November 12<sup>th</sup>. The program will also be hiring many people for 2.5 hours per day to help the program. If you are interested, please stop in at our Personnel Department at 1336 Avalon Street and fill out an application.
2. Special thanks and commendations to our local YMCA who is providing fitness activities, arts and crafts, and hands-on science projects for students in the after-school program. The "Y" is a tremendous partner for us.
3. Many thanks also goes to Sky Lakes Medical Center who is providing swimming lessons this year for all our district third-grade students at the Ella Redkey Pool. The "Y" is providing swimming lessons at their facility free of charge to all our second-grade students.
4. An SRO officer has been added to KU through a joint partnership between our school district and the City of Klamath Falls. Each entity is funding half of the position.
5. Citizens for Safe Schools, the Klamath Falls Police Department, the Klamath County Sheriff's Department and both City and County School districts announced today the launching of a Text a Tip Line, a service for students and/or their parents to anonymously submit tips through the Web, via text message, or from any Android or iPhone mobile device with the TipSubmit mobile app. The use of the tip line is a proactive effort to keep our students safe from bullying, violence, drugs and other threats.

The tip line technology allows the public to carry on a *completely anonymous* two-way conversation with law enforcement without requiring them to speak directly to an officer. The system is used in dozens of schools across the country.

"We believe in the power of information and know that students are often the very best source for what is happening in their schools. Students deserve a safe, anonymous way to report bullying, threats of violence, drug use, and other issues" said Citizens for Safe Schools Executive Director Debbie Vought.

In addition to encouraging the public to submit crime-related information using Web forms, mobile apps, and texting, users can submit videos or photographs using the text a tip mobile app.

Citizens are also encouraged to use the new text a tip line to report information about any non-urgent illegal activity, bullying, child abuse, cutting, cyber-bullying, dating violence, drugs, eating disorders, explosives, fighting, gangs, guns, knives, planned fights, planned parties, planned school attack, sexting, sexual assault, smoking, stealing, suicide threats, unsafe driving, vandalism, and anything else a student wanted to report.

Tips can be submitted by texting the word, "CRIMES" (274637) and then starting the text with the specific school's keyword. Each school's keyword will be advertised on posters and cards throughout your student's school. Students and parents should be proactive in learning the keyword for their school. If you have questions about the tip line please call Citizens for Safe Schools at 541-882-3198.

Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think might be interested in KFCS' news. If you are not a regular recipient of this free newsletter and would like to be, please respond to this email and let us know.