



Klamath Falls City Schools

100% Graduation is Our Expectation!

December 16, 2014

KFCS' District Newsletter

By Paul Hillyer, KFCS' Superintendent

We Are Becoming AVID About Student Success

If you are a parent at Pelican, Ponderosa, or KU, you likely have heard about the AVID initiative. AVID is short for Advancement Via Individual Determination. What exactly does this mean and why is the Klamath Falls City Schools investing in it?

AVID is a national organization that was started about 30 years ago for two purposes: Help students become college ready and increase the effectiveness of classroom instruction.

It works on the first part by teaching students organizational skills that are necessary to succeed in college. Another strategy used by AVID schools is creating a college-going mindset. This is done by immersing the school environment in college reminders such as banners, pennants, posters, and diplomas that serve as constant reminders about post-secondary options. A second tactic is by running AVID elective classes for students who have academic potential but whose families do not have a history of college-going.

The second prong of the AVID mission, improving classroom instruction, is addressed by helping teachers create engaging and rigorous classroom learning environments through utilizing specific strategies in each lesson. These strategies include having writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading (WICOR) incorporated throughout the day. This helps classes to be more interesting and challenging. It also brings about higher levels of student learning.

Many people see the new Common Core State Standards as being the “what” in creating higher levels of learning and AVID strategies being the “how” to deliver these new requirements. Thus far, 22 teachers received extensive training in this instructional improvement system last summer. All teachers have received one or more days of training during this school year. This training is being paid from a \$309,000 training grant that the district was awarded last summer.

KFCS is really only on the first steps of this journey toward having this new system fully implemented throughout. Districts that have committed to this process have shown impressive change and improvement as a result. Teachers who are utilizing this system more and more deeply in KFCS are excited about the positive impact it is having on their students.

AVID is a comprehensive and ongoing system for learning improvement that also creates a culture that values seeking education beyond high school. It is a key component of the district plan to improve student-learning growth and increase graduation rates. KFCS is excited about the possibilities we will see as AVID becomes a system-wide approach to teaching and learning.

Other News:

1. The Klamath Promise Initiative has four work committees to increase high school graduation and college-going in our community. They are Early Childhood, Student Outreach and Improved Attendance, Community Outreach and Communication, and Career Pathways in High School. If you have an interest in helping in any of these areas, let us know.
2. Foundational groundwork has started on the KU bond project.
 - a. A design team is working with DLR Architects to put together final plans for the remodel. This team will begin meeting weekly starting in January. They will visit ten new or recently remodeled high schools in Oregon and Washington next month to get more ideas on possible design solutions. The team consists of parents, teachers, administrators and board members.
 - b. A contractor will be approved at the January board meeting. Contractor proposals are being reviewed and finalist interviews will take place on January 7th.
 - c. A Citizen Oversight Committee is being formed to review the expenditures and progress of the project once it is underway.
 - d. Bond sales for the project will take place in late February 2015.
3. Bond funds will also be used to improve the heating and ventilation systems at Pelican, Conger, and Mills. The planning for this work has already begun. This work will commence in Summer 2015.
4. The KFCS' Board of Directors approved a request by the Klamath County Health Department to pursue a planning grant for a school-based health clinic at KU. If successful in getting needed state funding, this clinic would be operational in the 2016-17 school year. The purpose of this clinic is to improve student attendance by making basic health services accessible and affordable for all students. Focus will be on the basic health needs that often keep students from school such as immunizations, care for minor injuries, and help with minor maladies such as ear infections, flu, and colds. High schools that have such services on site have seen dramatic improvements in student attendance resulting in improved student achievement and higher graduation rates.

Hiring News:

A new ongoing feature of our district newsletter will be employment opportunities in the district. One may apply for these positions on-line or at our Human Resource Office located at 1336 Avalon Street.

Here are this month's openings. Spread the word!

School Psychologist (Open until filled)

Relief Bus Drivers - Transportation Department (Open until filled)

Migrant-EL Call Back - licensed Teacher - 1 position - Spanish speaking (Open until filled)

Paraprofessional - one-on-one special education temporary - Conger Elementary School (Open until filled)

Paraprofessional - Bridge Classroom - Conger Elementary School (Open until filled)

Home-to-School Indian Education Liaison - (Open until filled)

Conger Elementary School - After School Academic Instructor - 4th/5th Grade (Open until filled)

Mills Elementary School - After-School Academic Instructor - 5th Grade (Open until filled)

Conger Elementary School - After-School Academic Instructor - 1st Grade (Open until filled)

Mills - Title 1 Paraprofessional - temporary (Open until filled)

Mills - Paraprofessional (Open until filled)

Elementary Technology and Assessment Specialist - Conger Elementary School (Open until filled)

Elementary Technology and Assessment Specialist - Mills Elementary School (Open until filled)

Elementary Technology and Assessment Specialist - Pelican Elementary School (Open until filled)

Elementary Technology and Assessment Specialist - Roosevelt Elementary School (Open until filled)

Merry Christmas from all of us with the Klamath Falls City Schools!