



Rim of the World USD

Superintendent Newsletter

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First Week Success

Despite the normal hiccups during the first week of school, sites are off to a great start. Thanks to your efforts we are close to our Spring projection of 3,286 students. Site office personnel, administration and transportation did a great job to get students to classrooms and home by smoothing out the first week challenges. Thank you ROWUSD team.

During my first two months I have meet individually with over 30 employees and have rapidly learned about how special the Rim family is.

Together We Can

Highlights from 2016/2017 that demonstrate our theme for this year:

Lake Arrowhead Elementary

With a student passing away, the staff pulled together to support the family with donations, cards, pictures, and counseling

Transportation

Drivers and dispatch worked together to transport students during a medical emergency

District Office

Donated a basket to the teachers of Northpark Elementary

Charles Hoffman Elementary

With the passing away of a father, the PTA and staff arranged babysitting, rides, and donations

Mary Putnam Henck Intermediate

Staff planned and help 1st annual PBIS student talent showcase

“You quietly get the job done, and you do so with incredible dedication, perseverance, and dignity in an environment of steadily diminishing resources and escalating criticism of schools. Why do you do it? I believe the answer is very simple. You love children. You want to help give children the best possible start in life.”

-Nancy Kennan



Mary Putnam Henck Intermediate Back to School Night View

Please feel free to email examples as they happen this school year that demonstrate our theme: Together We Can! I will include them in future newsletters. Thank you.

Every Day Counts: Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow!

Research says that “regular school attendance is an important factor in school success” (Rothman, 2001). Not only is it important for students to be in school to learn, but it also impacts the district budget in a positive way. We would like to reward students that regularly attend school. Students that meet the program goals during a grading period (elementary=95% above attendance and secondary= 95% and above attendance, positive behavior and no D’s or F’s) will receive 3 things: a snack, 30 minutes out of class at a fun activity, and a paper certificate. Students meeting the goals all year long will receive a medal at the end of the school year. Thank you for making student attendance a priority as you work with our students and their families.

<https://www.rimsd.k12.ca.us/Page/1549>

Fiscal Update

For the past several years, the District has been faced with a growing financial crisis. There are several causes for this situation; declining student enrollment, changes in how the State funds public schools, and increased costs for employee benefits and other operating costs. The result is that the District has been faced with expenses that are greater than our income forcing us to “dip” into our reserves. This is like in our personal home budgets dipping into our savings accounts each month just to keep all our bills paid. The District is required by State law to present an annual budget in June of each year to the County Superintendent of Schools that shows that the District can meet its financial obligations in the current year and at least two years into the future. Last June, our budget was disapproved by the County Office as it did not meet the requirements for financial solvency. In the County’s notification, they stated that reductions were necessary in district programs, operating expenses, and employee related expenses. They identified that a reduction of \$2.4 million would be needed for the District to be financially solvent this year and moving into the future. Beginning last June, The Board of Trustees and District staff have been working aggressively to make budget reductions to fix this crisis. Last year, we made staffing reductions by not filling positions that were made vacant by retirements and resignations. During the summer weeks, the Board and staff reviewed contracts for services and either canceled or did not renew those that were not critical to student success. When I started in July as the Superintendent, I began working with the Board of Trustees to develop a Fiscal Recovery Plan. This fall the District will be making recommendations for further reductions in staffing. The District is currently in negotiation talks with both teachers and classified employees looking at areas for further reduction of expenses. With these ongoing efforts and working closely with the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools office, we will be working to build a responsible, financially sound district budget plan that allows us to provide the best academic programs our students deserve, attract and retain the best teachers and staff for our schools, provide safe and well-maintained facilities for students and staff, and meet all of our financial obligations moving into the future.

Quake Catcher Network

Sunnylands is located in Rancho Mirage, CA and often used by U.S. Presidents for meetings with dignitaries. In my previous role I was working with them on 2 projects – the Quake Catcher Network and the Shake Alert pilot program. They are going to continue their work with me and add ROWUSD as a participating school district. This means that free seismic monitors will be installed on all 5 campuses, free professional development for teachers, and access to the earthquake data from around the world to our students. The monitors will be installed in the Fall. For the Shake Alert pilot we will be one of a few school districts in the state participating in a pilot for an early warning system for earthquakes giving students 5 – 60 seconds notice to drop, cover and hold in the event of seismic activity. Teachers, if you would like to be considered to receive this free Science training when they have the network software up and running, please let me know.

Well Wishes

I would like wish Larry King the best of luck in his new Superintendent position as he has provided leadership in ROWUSD for the last 2 years. I would like to “Thank” the SBCSS as they have offered to extend and continue to pay half of Mike Whisenand contract as the Interim Associate Superintendent of Personnel Services. Restructuring of Personnel Services will result in a net savings of nearly \$100,000.