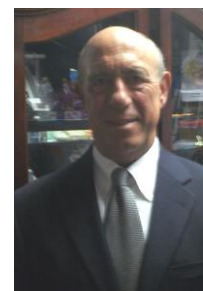


Volume VII- Farmington/ Middleton School District

Superintendent's Message November ~ December 2011



Pulling the System Together... Synergy for School Improvement

Henry Wilson Memorial School

Goal 1: Eighty-five percent (85%) of students will meet mastery in reading, writing and math within three years (2014)

Goal 2: Determine areas of focus and develop systemic changes that lead to improved culture and climate.

Farmington Senior High School

Goal 1: Eighty-five percent (85%) of students will meet mastery in reading and writing and sixty-eight percent (68%) of students will meet mastery in math within three years (2014).

Goal 2: Determine areas of focus and develop systemic changes that lead to improved culture and climate at the Farmington Senior High School.

As a result of achieving our goals, we collectively should see elevated achievement of all students. Close the achievement gap between groups of students, an increase in our graduation rates, and a decrease in our drop out rate.

In my years as both a teacher and administrator, I have found that communication is the critical component of making strong connections between a school, district and its community residents. While I strongly believe this still remains true, a recent review of educational research has clarified a more significant role for an effective communication program. According to current research released over the past few years, communication to boost parental involvement and develop a better understanding of what schools do, is critical to student achievement and will be noted in our rollout to our community about our school improvement initiative.

The research leaves no doubt that well planned and effective, ongoing communication from schools makes a significant impact on student achievement and parents and community involvement. Parents and family can make a huge difference in student achievement when schools and homes are working together through collaboration and competent well executed communication.

In addition, there are a number of performance issues linked to school communication and parent involvement. These performance issues include, but are not limited to the following:

- High grade point averages and scores on standardized tests.
- More classes passed by students.
- Higher enrollment in more challenging academic classes.
- Better attendance by students.
- Improved behavior at home and school.

Because of these links, we can no longer view communication by schools as an option or a luxury. It needs to be seen as a critical function of every district – large and small. An organized plan to develop strong and positive relationships between the district, parents, and community residents needs to become a common theme for our district.

With our work related to improving teaching and learning with Great Schools and Southeast Regional Educational Services (SERESC), now is the time to send our message home. Some things we can do together to bring our community closer together would comprise of the following strategies:

- Develop a communication plan. Lay out your objectives and then develop strategies to meet each objective.
- Identify and seek out opinion leaders. There are people in every community who are able to influence others.
- Explain reasons behind decisions. It is to communicate the decision or issue. We must help people understand the reasons behind a decision and process taken to arrive at the decision.
- Make communication and building relationships part of everyone's job. No one person can do this alone.

Communication from schools must be seen as an investment in the greater success of students. This is not an option, but an integral part of every high-functioning school district.

Have a very happy, safe, holiday season.

Educationally yours,

Dr. Frank L. Mellaci
Superintendent SAU 61

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