

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 196
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools
Educating our students to reach their full potential

Parent Leaders Meeting
9:30 a.m., Tuesday, May 19, 2009
District Office

UPDATES

Introduction of Jane Berenz

Superintendent John Currie introduced Jane Berenz who will become superintendent upon John's retirement on June 30. Jane has been a part of District 196 since her kindergarten days at Rosemount Elementary School. She went on to attend Westview and Northview elementary schools, Valley Middle School, and Rosemount and Apple Valley High Schools. After graduation from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Jane taught in Colorado Springs, CO before returning to begin her career in District 196 at Apple Valley High School. In her 22 years in District 196, Jane has taught special education and been a regular classroom teacher, she's been an elementary TOSA, principal at Parkview Elementary, principal on special assignment, director of elementary education and, for the last five years, director of teaching and learning. John is currently introducing Jane to various councils and committees, both inside and outside of the district, and is confident that the district will experience a smooth transition after his retirement.

Future of Parent Leaders

Jane asked parent leaders if they thought the time they spend attending parent leaders meetings was time well spent. Parent leaders seem to value the connections they have made with the superintendent and among each other. They felt it was a good way to dispel misconceptions and receive information from the source. John admitted that several initiatives began with suggestions or questions from the parent leaders. Jane acknowledged that some type of communication with parents is very valuable and will decide soon whether or not to continue meeting with parents in this format.

Class of 2009 Graduates

The Class of 2009 has 2,174 graduates. All diplomas that will be awarded in District 196 come from one of the district's four comprehensive high schools (SES students receive a diploma from their "home" school). The estimated diploma count is 519 from Apple Valley High, 617 from Eagan High, 605 from Eastview High and 433 from Rosemount High. Those high school totals include 174 graduates from SES, 61 from the Area Learning Center, 38 from Transition Plus and Pathway, 14 from Dakota Ridge School and 99 adult learners who are graduating from Community Education's Adult Basic Education (ABE) program.

Legislative Wrap-up

The Minnesota Legislature adjourned yesterday and it appears E-12 education will receive flat funding for the next couple of years. District 196 is in a relatively good position since flat funding is what we based the budget on.

Students taking the GRAD (Graduate-Required Assessment for Diploma) test (imbedded in the MCA-II) will be allowed to retake the test two times and do remedial work in order to graduate. Previously, students who did not pass the GRAD portion of the MCA-II would not be allowed to graduate.

Elementary School Birthday Celebrations

Elementary school principals initiated a change to the practice of allowing students to bring food or small gifts to share with classmates on their birthdays. We have heard from a very small number of parents who are upset by this change, but we have also had positive feedback from parents and teachers in the four schools which have had

this policy in place for a year or more. The lack of classroom disruption is appreciated and teachers have found creative ways to make students feel special on their birthdays.

QUESTIONS

Q: Do many schools have booster clubs? Should the school and staff be involved in running the booster club?

A: Booster clubs have more latitude than schools do in how they can spend money. Schools have to follow strict guidelines (see [704AR](#), Appropriate Expenditures) for the disbursement of district funds. More information about booster clubs can be found in [801.3AR](#), Booster Clubs and Booster Organizations. School staff are not supposed to be involved in how booster clubs are organized or run, or in how they raise or disburse their funds. The organization for which the booster club operates might solicit for certain items or purposes, but the booster club is under no obligation to fulfill the request.

Q: What is the best time for booster clubs or PTAs/PTOs to meet?

A: There seemed to be no consistent answer for this question. Some groups meet in the morning before school, some meet right after school or in the evening. At least one school meets in the evening, but they alternate days of the week to give more people the opportunity to attend. Offering child care boosted attendance at one school. Combining child care with a movie in the media center proved popular with parents.

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