



## Superintendent's Report November 20, 2006

Dear Board Members,

The past several weeks have been filled with many mixed emotions in our school community. Excitement over the closing ceremony of the athletic stadium, thankfulness for the generous outpouring of gifts and pledges for Get Healthy and Bright Hope, energy for the exciting news of our partnership with Calvin College at Rockford Christian Middle School, passion for the work of spiritual formation, and deep sadness for the VandenBerge family in the loss of their dear son, Lucas.

Each of these emotions is a gift from God and each directs our attention to Him. Our school community has been blessed in countless ways; God's love and faithfulness is evident in the lives of our staff, students, and parents every day and I am honored and humbled to serve Him in this capacity.

Thank you for your prayers on behalf of our schools. Thank you for generously giving your time to assist in our mission. Thank you for entrusting your own children to our care. With God as our guide, I am confident He will bless our efforts.

See you Monday night, November 20, at the **GRCS office** – we meet at 7:00 p.m. in Room 7.

## MONTHLY UPDATE

### Positioning for Growth

#### *Strategic Marketing*

Survey – Our parent satisfaction survey “went live” on Wednesday, November 8; I am sure each of your families have had an opportunity to review it and perhaps yours has already been submitted. Over 200 were returned in the first two days; SureVista tells me that is an excellent rate of return. Slightly less than 300 families for whom we do not have an email address on file received the attached letter. We have been very careful to ensure all families are represented and will make a paper copy of the survey available to anyone who cannot gain access to the Internet.

## ***Integrating Diversity***

Champions – Jay, Ric, Mark Krommendyk, and I met this week to review the action steps of the Strategic Plan relating to board and staff leadership and diversity training. You recall that one area of our integration of diversity is the participation of board members in either an *Institute for Healing Racism* or *Dialogue* series. Ric will report more at this month's board meeting; Sara will keep a master schedule of training dates and opportunities.

African American Focus Groups – Marilyn Booker and Ben Boerkoel are hosting African American student and parent focus groups on November 10 and 17. These groups relate to strategies found in our Strategic Plan and are designed to gain an understanding of the students' and parents' perspectives about and personal experiences at GRCHS.

Attached are final drafts of the questions guiding the group discussions. Marilyn and Ben will summarize the findings and recommendations will be generated for Champions to review.

## **Exploring New Partnerships**

Shared Time Update – Last month, board members received a letter from a parent who expressed concerns and questions about current shared time arrangements with GRPS. I met with the individual in October and have been reviewing shared time legislation and practices. The GRCS Education Committee reviewed current shared time arrangements at its October meeting and has been asked to discuss shared time with their building education committees and district boards and report back to the GRCS Education Committee in November.

I will provide a summary of shared time programs at our November meeting and will be prepared to make a recommendation about whether or not to continue our shared time participation to the Board in December. For your review, I have attached a summary of our current shared time staffing and will provide additional explanation at our meeting.

## **Ensuring Stabilization**

Get Healthy – Attached is a calendar summarizing all major milestones relative to Get Healthy for your information. A great deal of work and planning has gone into this initiative and I thought it would be helpful to have a "bird's eye view" of where things stand to date.

## **Other**

### ***Spiritual Formation Task Force Update***

Focus Groups – As a part of its study, the task force is conducting student focus groups at GRCHS for the purpose of assessing the spiritual climate at the high school. Listening teams comprised of spiritually mature students from Calvin College will facilitate the groups. Five groups of students have been formed, representing various groups within the high school community, and the facilitators will listen for common themes and report back to the task force when all are completed.

Task Force Goals – Attached to this month’s report is a draft summary of the Spiritual Formation Task Force’s essential elements and proposed goals for your review. These documents represent many hours of work and dialogue; hats off to Candace for her excellent leadership as the group forges ahead. Candace will provide an overview of the committee’s work at our meeting this month.

Attached is a letter from Jim Primus, which explains the purpose of the focus groups and invites student participation for your information. Thanks to Gayle for assisting in the development of this process and task force member Clare DeGraaf for his leadership.

### ***Parent Advisory Council***

I have contacted the presidents of the schools’ district boards and parent organizations to meet to discuss the role and function of a Parent Advisory Council, a committee I wish to establish in order to facilitate open communication between local schools and the GRCS office on issues of system wide nature. I have attached a Parent Advisory Council overview, which provides further explanation of the committee’s purpose.

### **Looking Ahead**

#### ***November***

- 13 Executive Committee Meeting @ 11:30 a.m. – GRCS Office
- 16 Foundation Luncheon @ 12:00 noon – Penn Club
- 20 Spiritual Formation Task Force @ 12:30 p.m. – GRCS Office
- 23-24 Thanksgiving Break

#### ***December***

- 1 Personnel Committee Meeting @ 1:00 p.m. – GRCS Office
- 4 Spiritual Formation Task Force @ 12:30 p.m. – GRCS Office
- 5 Middle School Band Concert @ 7:30 p.m. – CAW
- 7 Live Nativity @ 6:00 p.m. – Rockford Christian
- 9 Holiday Pops Concert @ 8:00 p.m. – CAW
- 10 Symphonic Band Concert @ 8:00 p.m. – CAW
- 11 Executive Committee Meeting @ 11:30 a.m. – GRCS Office
- 11 Middle School Choir Concert @ 7:30 p.m. – CAW
- 14 GRCHS Band and Orchestra Concert @ 8:00 p.m. – CAW
- 18 Spiritual Formation Task Force Meeting @ 12:30 p.m. – GRCS Office
- 18 Board of Trustees Meeting @ 7:00 p.m. – Rockford Christian
- 18 GRCHS Choir Concert @ 8:00 p.m. – CAW
- 19 Middle School Orchestra Concert @ 7:30 p.m. – CAW

### **Also attached for your information and review this month:**

Press releases:

- Closing ceremony
- Calvin partnership

Energy memo

November and December GRCS calendar