



Superintendent's Report August 22, 2007

Dear Board Members,

Greetings!

I am excited to welcome you back to a new school year, one that I trust will be filled with inspired learning for students and exciting opportunities for you and our staff. As we gear up for fall, I would like to personally thank each of you on behalf of our staff for your commitment to our schools. Your work has meaning and will provide necessary leadership as we continue to position GRCS for the next generation of students. Our revised strategic plan will be our roadmap, God will be our guide, and the coming year's journey will take us down important paths.

This month's meeting will be our annual retreat. Much of the time will be dedicated to your review of the strategic plan that has been enclosed for your review. The plan was developed from the priorities that clearly surfaced at the strategic planning retreat in June at Calvin College. It is provided to you in draft form. I anticipate working through each section and offering plenty of opportunity for discussion in each area. I hope to leave the retreat with the

board's approval of the initiatives, recognizing the board's discussions may result in revisions to the initiatives that are approved. I am looking forward to hearing your thoughts!

Until then, enjoy your week and remainder of your summer season. This is a great time of year. God's glory certainly has been reflected throughout His creation. I am thankful that we may also see His glory in the eyes of the students He has called us to serve in the coming year.

MONTHLY UPDATE

Below are a number of updates of various items since we last met.

Personnel Matter

Thanks to those of you who were able to attend the August 6 board-level grievance hearing. I know that this kind of meeting can be uncomfortable for some, and I appreciate your careful review of the circumstances surrounding the grievance itself. The teacher has received notice of her assignment, though several issues remain that I hope to be able to finalize by our retreat. We can discuss further at that time, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Staffing

There have been several staff changes that occurred over the summer. They are summarized below:

Ben Boerkoel – Congratulations to Ben, Director of Instructional Services, on being appointed to the position of ... at Kent Intermediate School District (KISD). Ben has been very involved in county and state curriculum initiatives for many years and has provided leadership in the development

of GRCS curriculum for many years. He has also chaired many county and state curriculum organizations, led our work on the integration of Christian worldview throughout the curriculum, and spearheaded all of our Champions of Diversity efforts. Ben has worked for GRCS for 31 years and has left a permanent mark on our schools. He will be deeply missed by all.

Sue Vogel – Sue was scheduled to job share at Oakdale this fall, transferring from a preschool position at Creston. Sue’s job share partner, Liz Kingma, will return to full time.

Marlyce Snyder – Marlyce will return to work at Oakdale following her tragic accident last March. You may recall that she and her husband were traveling to Chicago when they had an accident, which resulted in her husband’s death. Marlyce has recuperated from her own serious injuries and is looking forward to her return.

Enrollment

Eric has included an enrollment summary for your information. We anticipate a number of additional enrollments being confirmed between now and the start of school but it is very possible that we will not meet our K-12 enrollment projections. We have been working very closely with unenrolled and prospective student parents. Eric has done a wonderful job personally meeting with and introducing students to our schools and he will continue to personally represent GRCS very well as we approach the start of the year.

Finance and Operations will meet in a special meeting on August 23 to review potential revenue shortfalls and make recommendations on potential expense reductions.

TRIP Office

We anticipate a change in staff at the TRIP office this year. Diane McLaughlin and Bonnie Whitten have managed TRIP for a number of years and have informed me that they will step down some time in the next several months. I have asked Jay to work with Diane in developing a transition plan (attached) and have asked that the position descriptions be reviewed and subsequent vacancy(ies) posted externally. Given the changes, a board will be established to oversee the TRIP office; Jim McClurg has agreed to be a Board of Trustee representative on that board.

ESS Fee

Over the summer, we received nearly \$70,000 in charitable gifts from area church collections and from designated gifts on the enrollment forms (summary attached). As a result of this generous support, I was pleased to be able to notify the families impacted by the ESS fee that it will not be necessary to assess them the fee this year (letter attached).

My thanks to the churches and to the many families who designated a gift for this purpose. I met with Pastors Peter Jonker and Mike Abma (Woodlawn CRC) to acknowledge their positive support over the past several months. In addition, we continued our discussion about how to best strengthen our relationship with area churches, proposing an area-wide church service some time next year. I look forward to continuing this discussion in the fall.

Other Enrollment Form Gifts

In addition to the ESS gifts designated on the enrollment forms, we have received gifts totaling nearly \$163,000 for the Annual Fund, Capital Fund, and Foundation. That is an increase over last year and we are very thankful to the 250+ families who elected to pay the requested vs. required tuition

amounts for the coming school year. That represents nearly 17% of the total number of families with children in the system.

Looking Ahead

- Aug. 14 First day for Evergreen
- Aug. 22 Board Retreat – 8:00 a.m.
@ Calvin College Prince
Center President’s Room
- Aug. 23 Finance and Operations
Committee Meeting –
7:30 a.m. @ GRCS
- Aug. 28-30 Staffs return for
professional development
- Sept. 4 First day for remaining
elementary schools and
GRCMS
- Sept. 5 First day for GRCHS
- Sept. 10 Executive Committee
Meeting – 11:30 a.m. @
GRCS
- Sept. 13 Finance and Operations
Committee Meeting –
7:30 a.m. @ GRCS
- Sept. 17 Board of Trustees’
Meeting – 7:00 p.m. @
GRCS