

# monday update

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A weekly report to Pinellas County Schools employees

July 11, 2011



## **Coming up this week in the district**

School Board workshop 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday, Cabinet Conference Room of the Administration Building

On the agenda:

- Dr. Janssen and the finance team will present an update on the budget.
- Fred Matz, Chief Financial Officer, and Michael Bessette, Associate Superintendent Facilities, Operations, Safety and Security, will present capital outlay projects proposed in rank order.
- The board and the Superintendent will present their thoughts regarding the present organization of the Office of General Counsel.
- Board members will discuss a process to follow when proposing changes to policy agenda items.
- Dr. Janssen will present for discussion her plan for the district's communications department.
- Dr. Janssen and staff will present a timeline for the 2012-13 student assignment process.
- A subcommittee of board members and Research & Accountability staff will present the proposed instrument and timeline for the Superintendent's evaluation process.

## **Important message for instructional staff regarding referendum supplement**

Once again, Pinellas property taxes have decreased, which means another decrease in referendum funding that supports instructional salaries. While the tax roll did not decrease as much as the Pinellas County property appraiser originally forecasted, the 2011-12 supplement is \$2,983, or \$88 less than last year. Instructional personnel on 11.5- and 12-month contracts will see a slight difference in their paychecks this month. Ten-month instructional personnel will see the difference in August. Chief Financial Officer Fred Matz reports that the established process was followed in communicating the reduction to union leaders, starting in May with presentation of a preliminary referendum supplement amount to the Employee Well Being and Satisfaction committee. That same information was shared with the Bargaining Leadership Team May 9. The property appraiser provided the estimated tax roll numbers the last week of May, and Mr. Matz certified the supplemental amount to BLT May 31. Union leadership had asked if the School Board could cover the shortage, thus negating any decrease in instructional salary, but district leadership concluded that it is unable to offset what would amount to \$720,000.

## **Planning for Envision under way**

A cross-functional team will meet Tuesday to begin fleshing out details for this year's back-to-school event for district and school leadership. As previously reported, Envision is scheduled for Aug. 8 and 10. The tentative location is Pinellas Park High School; hours will be 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Dr. Janssen will be sending invitations soon.

## **Student Assignment reaches out to families**

The Student Assignment Office successfully reached 1,603 families last week who have reserved a seat at an elementary, middle, or high school for 2011-12 but have not yet completed the registration process. The families were instructed via a Connect ED message to follow through at their assigned schools by July 19. Elementary and middle school families must bring reservation documents to the Largo Administration Building to assure that their child will be included in transportation planning. The office will offer extended hours on July 14 and July 18 to accommodate their schedules.

## **District's HR Department offers new service to schools**

In an effort to expand the district's applicant pool, particularly in critical shortage subject areas and high need schools, the Human Resources Department is now posting all teaching vacancies on teachers-teachers.com, a website and database used by teachers searching for jobs nationwide. Kim Swartzel, Senior Human Resources Specialist, reports that

the state pays for this service, which is available to all Florida school districts. Pinellas has used it for the past several years to find qualified candidates for hard-to-fill subject areas but is posting all vacancies there for the first time this year. Human Resources will forward any viable candidates to the schools for their consideration, but principals are not obligated to interview any of them.

### **Second reading of student code scheduled**

School Board members are scheduled to take a second reading of the Code of Student Conduct at their next board meeting on July 26. Specifically, they will be looking at changes made since the first reading, which Dr. Janssen has summarized for board members as follows:

- **5500 – Lines 17-23:**

This part of the policy, which was formerly known as the Philosophy of Discipline, contains changes in the second paragraph. A concern was raised over why the reference to staff member behavior is included in the Code of Student Conduct. This portion was re-written to clarify its intent of how district employees model what is expected of our students. They will be doing so with the district core values in mind. As indicated at the school board meeting, it was recommended by the Code of Conduct Committee to include the actual core values.

- **5500.03 – Line 44**

The word “help” was added.

- **5500.04 – Lines 20- 40**

It was suggested that we clearly specify not only the consequences for the new statute as it pertains to the dress code but make reference to the statute itself. We also included another separate phrase stating that the student dress code violation must be corrected prior to the student returning to the regular school environment. The word “designee” was added to sections A, B, and C.

### **New federal data shed light on education disparities**

Many students nationwide lack equal access to a rigorous education, experienced teachers, early education, and school counselors, according to federal statistics released June 30. The U.S. Department of Education used information culled from more than 70,000 schools in the 7,000 American districts with more than 3,000 students to determine equity within districts and across states. Among the findings:

- Some 3,000 schools serving about 500,000 high school students weren’t offering Algebra II classes last school year, and more than 2 million students in 7,300 schools did not offer calculus.
- At schools where the majority of students were African-American, teachers were twice as likely to have only one or two years of experience compared with schools within the same district that had a majority-white student body.
- Less than one-fourth of school districts reported that they ran prekindergarten programs for children from poor families.
- Girls were underrepresented in physics, while boys were underrepresented in Algebra II.
- Just 2 percent of students with disabilities were taking at least one Advanced Placement class.
- While students learning English accounted for 6 percent of the total high school population, they accounted for 15 percent of the students for whom algebra was the highest-level math course taken by the end of high school.

Similar data has been aggregated since 1968 under the heading “Civil Rights Data Collection” for use by the USDOE’s Office for Civil Rights, other DOE offices, policymakers and researchers. The data collection provides information about students in public elementary and secondary schools on a variety of indicators, including enrollment, access to educational programs or services, and academic proficiency results broken out by factors such as race, ethnicity, gender and disability. You’ll find the most recent report at <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/>.

### **Articles you might find interesting**

Program targets college preparation for disadvantaged fifth-graders,

[http://articles.boston.com/2011-07-07/news/29748137\\_1\\_students-aim-steppingstone-academy-graders](http://articles.boston.com/2011-07-07/news/29748137_1_students-aim-steppingstone-academy-graders)

Atlanta schools to implement changes after cheating scandal,

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hYJweQ-TmfVdX8RuZLsGMnJ--i3g?docId=2813f7afbb4f4ef1a3681fadfb9e0c52>

NEA delegates take swipe at Teach for America,

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2011/07/nea\\_delegates\\_take\\_swipe\\_at\\_te.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2011/07/nea_delegates_take_swipe_at_te.html)