

DIRECTOR'S REPORT for the BOARD

Garden City Community School
November/December 2010 - January 24, 2011

ENROLLMENT: 122 TOTALS as of 1/18/11

Elizabeth's Kinder: 19, Marti 1/2- 16, Gina 1/2- 22, Wren 3/4 – 15, Ben 3/4- 15, Ryan 5/6 – 21, Brenda 7/8- 14

RECENT SCHOOL EVENTS

- **11/17 – 18/10: Student Led Conferences.** We had 91% families attend and the remaining families have all completed make-up sessions. Comment sheets (Required as part of the “exit ticket”) showed families appreciating and enjoying this event.
- **11/22-11/26/10 – Thanksgiving Break**
- **11/30/10: The Trey McIntyre Project visited our students.** They not only performed their contemporary dances for us, but also included our students in some dancing performances. Public Broadcasting System TV was filming them that day and we ended up being part of a documentary shown on national TV Dec. 15!
- **12/1/10: Snow Day.** City Hall Tree Lighting and our students singing program had to be cancelled. *NOTE: The board needs to acknowledge this cancelled school day” took place so an official form can be sent to the SDE adjusting our actual school hours.*
- **12/20/10-12/31/10: Winter Break**
- **Tues, 1/18/11: Idaho Charter School Networks’ Executive Board** held their meeting at our school.
- **Thursday, 1/13/11: GCCS’s Update to the Idaho Public Charter Commission,** This was a “state of the school” Update I prepare and present. President Laurel and business manager Michele joined me. As required, a notebook of extensive, detailed data and materials was delivered to the Charter Commission Dec. 15 and the PowerPoint delivered in hard copy packets Jan. 3. This same presentation will be given during the 1/24/11 board meeting. We received a letter of defect since our original charter said all students would have 95-100% on their high-stakes state tests (IRI & ISAT). The Commission acknowledged this was unrealistic, so our Corrective Action Plan just needs to have our score goals adjusted. We were highly commended for how our school is doing – in addition to our methods of helping students learn. I have been asked to give the same presentation to the Idaho Board of Education....which is very exciting for our school and education in general!
- **Thursday, 1/20/11: Family Fun Math Night 6:30-8:00PM** In order for parents to interact with their children with math games (sponsored through a grant from Micron), food and fun.

COMMUNITY CIRCLES *These take place every Wednesday morning at 9AM and everyone is invited to attend any of them! It's incredible how quickly students are mastering public speaking and performance skills!*

- **11/15/10 Marti's 1-2 class** shared songs they had been learning and eventually shared at the assisted living home.
- **12/8/10: Brenda's Lego Robotics Team presentation** – these 5-8 grade students applied to compete (via a grant Brenda received) in this competition that required students create a robot to complete certain requirements – in addition to developing a solution to a current challenge in the world. They took 8th out of 32 teams competing throughout the valley this year. Thanks to Brenda, Wren Nicks, Rorque Toye and Melissa Rupe for helping the team many nights after school! Their inventions were amazing and the entire school was impressed with the presentation!
- **12/15/10: Wren's 3-4 Class** presented a contemporary dance to music. The students wrote, choreographed and danced “The Life of a Salmon” using the information they’d learned from the Trey McIntyre Project visit. It was absolutely incredible!!! Marti's 1-2 students sang a thank you song to student teacher, Julynn Brinton who was completing her session with us.
- **1/5/11: Ryan's 5/6 class** gave a very mature, interesting presentation from their learning about Ancient Egypt. Students of all ages were intrigued!
- **1/12/11: Ben's 3-4 class** presented a game show they created from their studies of Idaho rivers and salmon titled “The Salmonly Feud”. It was hilarious and very informative.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CURRICULUM

- **Teacher Evaluations & Mentoring:** All teachers have been observed and filmed since the last board meeting. As part of their “Differentiated Strategies for All Students” class, they were required to create “Centers” for their students to teach a main concept. In order to help them learn more about their teaching, I decided to film them as I observed the 60-90 minute centers. These films have been placed on cd’s: one for the teacher to evaluate their own teaching and the other as documentation in my working files to help with final evaluations.
- **12/8/10: Differentiation class: RAFT** Assignments was the topic
- **1/5-6/11:** I attended **Idaho Superintendent Network** meetings and trainings in Boise.
- **1/19/11: Final Differentiation Class** for teachers to share RAFT assignments and learn Web Quests.
- **2/9/11: Assessment Module I: “Screening”**, by ICB coach, Joanie Peterson

ARTS INTEGRATION

All classes continue to integrate the arts to teach core subjects.

- **Arts Coordinator:** We are excited to be able to use some of our jobs stimulus funds* received to hire back **Rebecca (Harris) Weeks DeMerrit** as our “Arts Coordinator”. She will be working a maximum of 16.5 hours/week. This will include: 1) Art Studio - which will continue to include visual art, but will be changing to a music & drama focus soon 2) communicating and integrating community resources into the school and 3) overseeing our mid-May all-school performance which staff and students started to discuss and plan before break.

ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS

All classes have been using the wetlands a lot more this year. They’ve created some great core curriculum integration with the hike and resources there. The Boise Watershed is now shuttling our students free-of-charge to their facility for some great programs – in addition to joining many in their classrooms and wetland trips.

- Ben and Wren’s 3-4 classes have been participating in nature units at M-K Center.

FINANCES

- The budget is on track – as the Treasurer Tim and the finance committee will attest.
- **EXCITING NEWS!** The Albertson Foundation decided at their year-end meeting to give each existing charter school a **\$100,000 donation**. No grant writing or reports were required for this! I have returned their acknowledgement form and a thank you letter. Our students will also create some thank you cards to send. This money needs to stay in a “reserve fund” for now as we already are coping with this year’s budget. I will be recommending to the finance committee that we save it so we have some flexibility for any unforeseen budget cuts and to use towards a potential facility purchase and/or renovations.
- 12/3/10 - Michele Roth, business manager and I attended the **auction** of the closed Nampa Classical Academy. We spent about \$800 to purchase much needed files and cabinets along with various music and office supplies. We estimate it would have cost us at least \$20,000 to make these purchases normally.
- The **job stimulus funds*** we applied for finally came through! We have received about \$25,000 which can be used over two years. \$13,000 has been used to re-hire Rebecca DeMerrit as our Arts Coordinator on a 19.5 part-time basis. Her responsibilities will include teaching the Arts Studio and helping coordinate the All-School Performance in May.

BUILDING

- I have done drive-bys on the various properties which our realtor friends referred us to consider considering our budget and space needs. More details will be gathered now that the spaces have been viewed so we can narrow down any that should be considered seriously enough for the finance committee to tour and discuss further steps.

MARKETING

We have received official confirmation regarding our name change to DaVinci Charter School from both the Idaho Dept of Ed and the Idaho Charter School Commission. Plans are to use the new name in advertising to recruit new students, but the name will not be changed officially until the end of our fiscal year in June to keep our funding/finances from getting confused!

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Anna Gamel and I met 1/5/11 to set some priorities for student recruitment and name transitions. I am developing a PR committee to help with marketing development and timelines and have two graphic artist parents are working on new logo designs. Our first priority is to optimize our search engine for our website and to start making connections with the media and area businesses and groups in the arts. Contact will be made with pre-schools to promote our kindergarten, open house dates are being set prior to the lottery application deadline and advertising using the DaVinci name is being developed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Add Up the Fun Math Program** – throughout the next month, Ryan and Brenda’s 5-8 grade students will be participating in the “Add Up the Fun” math program sponsored by the Idaho Stampede basketball program and Micron.
- **Wed, 2/2/11: Charter School Day at the Capitol.** Schools and charter school stakeholders will attend some fun activities, eat and visit with legislators to show their support of charter schools. We plan to bus at least 3-8 graders and volunteers for the event. It should be very educational – as well as timely and effective!
- **Friday, 2/4/11: Training for Programmatic Audit Teams by the Idaho Charter School Network.** If you have been involved with charters for a few years and would like to be on a team which reviews other schools, let me know. It’s a great learning (and confirming!) experience. These usually last 2-3 days and we get some of the costs for our own programmatic audit lowered to compensate any team member’s time.
- **2/7-9/11: Michele and I will be attending various workshops during the combined Administrators/Technology Conference.**
- **2/16/11, (6-7PM): Brenda’s 7-8 grade class Artist’s Reception** at the Garden City Library featuring their latest study unit. The display will be shown throughout February, but this evening includes interactive activities, food and art the students have prepared. I encourage the board to attend - along
- **Friday, 2/18/11:**
 - **End of 2nd Trimester**
 - **No School for Students/Professional Development Day for staff**
 - **Charter Principals Lunch with Legislators Day**

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Hoovel, GCCS Director