

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT for the BOARD

Garden City Community School/DaVinci Charter School, #459

February 28, 2011

## ENROLLMENT: 131 TOTALS as of 2/21/11

Elizabeth's Kinder - 19, Marti 1/2- 19, Gina 1/2- 22, Wren 3/4 - 15, Ben 3/4- 16, Ryan 5/6 - 23, Brenda 7/8- 17

## RECENT EVENTS

- **Add Up the Fun Math Program** – throughout the month, Ryan and Brenda's 5-8 grade students will be participated in the "Add Up the Fun" math program sponsored by the Idaho Stampede basketball program and Micron. This included actually being on the playground with basketball games!
- **January 20, 2011: Family Fun Math Night** – about 175 students, families, staff and volunteers enjoyed the evening with food and fun math games spread throughout the school. Thanks to our staff and Micron for sponsoring this event to encourage parents to be interactive with their children – even to learn math!
- **1/27/11: Healthy School Display in Capitol Rotunda** – we were one of the Idaho schools asked to present our Healthy Schools Program. The display was monitored by teacher Elizabeth, our Healthy Schools Coordinator, & Director Cindy .
- **Wed, 2/2/11: Charter School Day at the Capitol** – we took two busses of 3-8 grade students, teachers and volunteers (about 100 total) to spend the morning in educational sessions, a rally on the Capitol steps and the afternoon touring the Capitol. Our students impressed the Charter Family Coalition who initiated and covered costs for the event and our students were shown at the rally on the front page of the Idaho Press Tribune (Nampa).
- **2/3/11 – Stakeholder Surveys** Idaho Building Capacity mentor, Joanie Peterson, confidentially gave staff their annual survey which will be tabulated and graphed by the Center for Effective Education. This is part of the IBC grant and will be our third year gathering consistent data used to improve our school. Students grades 5-6 were also surveyed and parents will receive their surveys during the March Student Led Conferences.
- **2/4/11: Training for Programmatic Audit Teams by the Idaho Charter School Network.** Michele Roth & Director Cindy attended. Each of us will help with one audit which will cut our own school's audit costs since they credit our audit team time back.
- **2/16/11: Brenda's 7-8 class Artists' Reception of their Immigrant** \*unit at the GC library was wonderful! The students wrote and read their stories they created from different viewpoints of an immigrant, shared food they cooked from recipes they'd researched and displayed their very creative representational artwork.
- **2/17/11: Presentation to the Board of Education.** Director Cindy was asked by the Idaho Public Charter Commission to be part of their annual presentation to the Idaho Board of Education. My main points of the presentation about our school were our creative budgeting ideas and our unique performance-based learning, assessment and documentation. It's virtually unheard of to be allowed to present to this prestigious group – especially during the legislative season - so tremendous kudos to our staff and board that the Charter Commission asked us to share a bit of our story. Tom Luna was sitting near me during the presentation and complimented us on our good work and thanked us for the presentation – a rare "positive" during their meetings!. (Sometimes I wish I could bottle these events to share with everyone else!)
- **2/18/11:**
  - **End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester**
  - **No School for Students/Professional Development Day for staff**
  - **Charter Principals Lunch with Legislators Day:** Director Cindy attended and presented our budgeting and performance-based learning philosophies at this event with charter school principals and their legislators.
- **2/22 & 23/11: Compass Charter School Programmatic Audit** – Cindy was on the team analyzing the school. (We will receive monetary credit towards the cost of our own audit from her doing this.)

**COMMUNITY CIRCLES** *These take place every Wednesday morning at 9AM and everyone is invited to attend any of them!*

- **1/26/11: Marti's 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade Reading Group** facilitated the CC and performed three Readers Theaters to express fables they have been reading.
- **2/9/11: Elizabeth's Kindergartners** were in charge. Their presentation was a performance (including costumes they'd made themselves) about the solar system – their requested subject to study! I commend student teacher/aide, Shana Freedman, for working with the children's performance and class as she's been subbing for Elizabeth for two weeks. Everyone loved having Board Treasurer, Tim, join us for the morning, too! Thanks, Tim!
- **2/16/11: Gina's 1-2grades Reading Group** ran the show in addition to sharing several great plays from fables they have been reading.
- **2/23/11: Wren's 3-4** were in charge and shared a song they had written which followed the life timeline of DaVinci to help the school learn more about their new namesake.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CURRICULUM**

- **2/9/11 (1-3PM): AIMSWeb:** School Improvement Team (Angela, Brenda, Wren, Cindy and IBC Joanie) training by Jenny Fisk to use this data assessment tool. They will train remaining staff during a future professional development day.
- **2/9/11: Training on Screening and Response to Intervention (3:30-5PM)** by Capacity Builder, Joanie
- **2/18/11: Professional Development Day-** Staff shared responsibilities to teach their peers Grant Writing (Brenda), Professional Portfolios (Pat), School Improvement Plans (Angela, Wren & Brenda), Healthy School ideas (Ben) and discussed Student Portfolio Development (Ryan & Marti). The afternoon was open time for staff to use as needed (achievement reports, etc)

### **ARTS INTEGRATION\***

- Rebecca is teaching music theory to all students during their Art Studio times now. They've been learning about different types of music and how to identify instruments. She is coordinating our All School Performance (in May) with staff. Teachers and students are developing a variety of presentation/performances showcasing what they've been learning in class. It's going to be a great grand finale to the year!
- Several classes will be on field trips to the Boise Art Museum this month.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION**

Winter weather's made it a bit harder to get out this month, but the 1-2 classes of Marti and Gina had a great trip to the Boise Watershed. Brenda's 7-8 graders will be heading to McCall for MOSS camp in March and the 3-4 students of Wren and Ben will continue their nature series at the M-K Nature Center this month.

### **FINANCES**

- **GRANTS:** Congratulations to our "grant queen", Brenda Miller, who has received two more grants recently! The Professional Standards Committee of Idaho awarded her \$500 to attend the National Art Ed conference in Seattle and the Northwest Professional Educators attended a recent Community Circle to award her with a \$486 grant she will be using for video cameras for her students' project work.
- **BUDGET:** We're right on track. No projected budget changes from our current format until the legislature has completed its education budget.

### **NAME CHANGE**

- **INFO** - Students are sharing bits of information about DaVinci during Community Circles now. The All-School Performance in May will include some aspects of DaVinci also. Community Council/Family Night on March 24 will include activities about art, inventions and DaVinci.
- **WEBSITE** - We are in the process of launching a second website (DaVinci) soon. Both the GCCS & DaVinci sites will have the same info on them – with a link directing to each other until next fall. The DaVinci site will have an entirely different look, but the information will be identical to ensure we don't lose anyone interested in the school – via whichever name they know throughout the transition. Candy Wildt is continuing to help us with this and we appreciate her "hanging in their" as our new process is through Go Daddy and will require some training and adjustment to what she's been doing for us on our current site.
- **ADVERTISING** – We're using the DaVinci name – but with the GCCS website until the additional site is ready.
- **LOGO** – I hope to have this ready to share by the February Board meeting. (The professional graphic artist parents who'd offered to create this have not come through, so this is taking longer than I'd hoped!)

## **BUILDING**

- A lot of research has taken place on a future building for the school this past month. We are currently gathering data, building plans and financial options in an attempt to purchase a building shell and three acres found on State Street. I have met with realtors and architects to develop basic internal construction plans to figure projected costs. I am researching various funding options through a recommended charter school finance company that several local charters have used in addition to our bank, Zion's. Board treasurer Tim and I met with Zion's Bank to hear financing options they could offer. We are still working on this as we want to be very careful to be fiscally responsible. We have not yet found a viable option that we feel is realistic and safe, but are continuing to research and will meet with them again – prior to the upcoming board meeting.
- At this point, a required neighborhood meeting is scheduled at the school for Tuesday, March 1 from 5:30-8:00PM to allow anyone within 300 yds of the school to discuss questions or concerns about having a school by them. Letters were required to be sent out announcing this. In order to meet Planning & Zoning requirements, I've decided to have this meeting even if everything doesn't come together for the purchase or we will be a month behind in starting construction to meet school opening times.

**OUR SCHOOL FAMILY** – I felt the board would want to know that are staff is doing great, but there have been some tough times this past month for almost everyone. Shana's grandmother in Boston passed, reading specialist Linda's husband (& Kaitlyn's daddy) had a heart attack (but is doing well) and Elizabeth had to go into emergency intestinal surgery that ended up with some infection complications. We've missed her for a couple weeks and hope she's well enough to return soon. Almost everyone's been fighting flu and colds, too. I'm sure they'd appreciate your understanding and support as they continue helping children learn and cope with their own lives as they go the extra miles and hours at this type of school. I hope sunshine and good weather will bring magic and health to all soon!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **March 2 & 3 (5-7PM): Student Led Conferences and Parent Surveys**
- **March 2 – Module 4 – Classroom Observations & Evaluations** trainings - Cindy in Parma with IBC trainers Joanie & Kathleen
- **March 3: Michele & Cindy will attend IASBO workshops** on educational financing updates
- **March 4 – No School/Professional Development Day – Screening and Assessment Development** by IBC Joanie.
- **March 7-10: McCall Outdoor Science School** – Brenda & Pat are taking the 7-8 grade students to the U of I's program where they'll snowshoe and ski to locations to study various science programs.
- **March 9 – Supt. Network “Instructional Rounds” instruction** Cindy will be in New Plymouth this morning
- **March 10 (6-7 PM) – Open House for potential 2011-12 students and families**
- **March 16 – Idaho Supt. Network Meetings – Cindy attends**
- **March 16 – DaVinci 2011-2012 lottery drawing at 6PM** (if needed)
- **March 16-20 – National Art Ed Conference** to be attended by Brenda, Wren, Ryan, Gina and Ben in Seattle.
- **March 24 – Family Fun Art Night, 6:30-8:00PM** – art & inventions following DaVinci (volunteers needed)
- **March 26 – Kids Expo at GC Expo Bldg, 10AM-5PM** to promote the school (volunteers needed)
- **April 27 – 28 – Annual Programmatic Audit** *It's very important for all board members to meet with the team for an early dinner Wed 4/27 as this is a required component of the process – interviewing all board members. More info to come.*

Respectfully submitted,  
*Cindy Hoovel, GCCS Director*