

Message From the Principal - June 2010

Dear Families,

The year is done and the halls are empty. It's been quite a year. We began with the teacher's contract unresolved and leave with our budget and staffing uncertain for next year, even though we thought we were all set. As I write, Central Leadership is putting together a plan to adjust for the 19.4 million dollar shortfall due to decreased State revenues. The budget the School Board previously approved for next year already uses \$16 million from our reserves. They are trying to avoid one-time solutions with their plan. There is more to it than this, but here are the key points.

- **Prioritize schools:** Continue to take disproportionate cuts in the central office yet not dismantle vital support functions.
- **Preserve a universal core academic program.** This includes our courses that meet the PPS graduation standards: the Arts - visual arts, choir, band and theatre, Advanced Placement classes (a minimum of 10), World Languages (the universal core calls for two, we offer three), and a licensed media specialist.
- **Hold harmless Academic Priority Zone schools.** While they will be required to make District-wide program changes, their overall FTE will not be decreased. The "zone" schools are BizTech, Bridger, Kelly, King, Sitton, George, Jefferson and Roosevelt.

What that means here at Wilson is that we will see an increase in class sizes and teachers will be asked to go from teaching five of seven class periods to teaching six of the seven periods to off set the cuts we will have to make in actual staff positions. You can read more on the PPS web site. I am also available to answer questions you may have.

For next year, we were already saying good bye to four retirees: Spanish teacher, Manuel Espinoza, ESL teacher, Elaheh Greenebaum, Choir Director Steve Peter and from the Resource Room, Kathy Carlile. We are also losing one of our biology teachers Kevin Marquardt. We wish them well. They will be missed. At this point, because we are in this process of making reductions and have not been cleared to re-open hiring, I cannot update you on new staff.

OK then, on a lighter note, an All Wilson Reads! is in the works. I would like to invite you and your family to read the book, Stones Into Schools; the book Greg Mortenson provided for free this past spring. As you may recall, after his visit to Wilson, he donated a school load of books, 1500 to be exact. Teachers handed out those books in class and many of them may have made it home by now. (Some were left in lockers and we've rescued them!) We also had extras and they've been catalogued and are stored in the Library. Parent, Lucy Brehm has offered to help plan a fall gathering to discuss the book. So, put on some sunscreen, get out the chaise lounge or head to the pool and READ, READ, READ!

Have a great summer!

Sue Brent