



Key Communicators

March 2008

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Who is a key communicator? A key communicator is someone who, because of their interest or involvement in the South Whidbey School District, has asked to be on an email list of people willing to receive information and to provide feedback from time to time to the school district. This two way flow of communication regarding significant issues and/or initiatives being undertaken is essential to the accomplishment of the mission of the school district.

Thank you to our many friends of public education and the voters of South Whidbey for the passage of three tax levies on February 19, 2008. We realize that these are particularly challenging times economically for many of the people in our communities. The funds they have authorized will help us to plan for an exciting future for the students and parents in our school district.

Two planning efforts in particular are underway and will have significant implications for how we as a school system will adapt, change, and improve our services. A Long Range Facility Use Study Committee was commissioned in January of 2007. The committee consisted of 17 key stakeholders, citizens, staff members, and parents. They studied the district's current facilities, gathered data, and made a recommendation to the school board on January 27, 2008. Their recommendations are available for your review on the districts home page: www.sw.wednet.edu or in writing from the school district superintendent's office, 221-6198 ext. 2245. The school board held its first public workshop with the committee and interested community and staff members on February 14, 2008. Input was given by a number of individuals and was collected for the board's consideration. The second such opportunity for staff and community input and dialogue with the board will occur on March 12, 2008 in the Community Room of the Intermediate campus of South Whidbey Elementary School at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to attend and contribute their views. The board is giving careful consideration to the committee's recommendation and all of the minority reports and appendices data.

The second important planning effort underway is entitled NAVIGATION 2020. This long range planning initiative involves key stakeholders and staff in a series of 2 hour monthly evening meetings and input activities leading up to a written five year plan for improvement of programs and services for the students of the South Whidbey School District. Three sessions have already been held in November 2007, January 2008, and February 2008. Three more remain on March 19, 2008, April 16th, and a full day concluding workshop on Saturday, May 17, 2008 from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. A presentation of recommendations is scheduled for the school board work session on June 11, 2008. When accepted by the school board, these recommendations will be brought together in the form of a written NAVIGATION 2020 Plan. This plan will be a blueprint for in depth study of specific improvements and initiatives over a five year period of time.

It is the expectation of the school board that these two important planning efforts will come into alignment so that the programs and services desired are provided in the optimal facility structures for teaching and learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to share some inside information this month. As spring comes to Whidbey Island, we are mindful that one of the greatest gifts we share is the gift of hope. Our hope is that with your help and expertise, we will be able to create a high performance school district with exciting and innovative educational experiences for the students of South Whidbey. We want our students to be happy, successful, well educated, and for them to go out and make a difference in the lives of others.

Sincerely,

Fred McCarthy
Superintendent

To Expect, To Encourage, and to Enable Educational Excellence for All Learners