



From the Superintendent's Desk

Proctor Public Schools, ISD 704

John Engelking – Superintendent of Schools

March 8, 2012

This is my weekly update on the state of the district which focuses on a variety of issues relating to facilities, curriculum, activities, and programs occurring throughout our district. There may be weeks in which I only focus on one or two topics, but I do want to keep you informed. I welcome comments and feedback regarding this update or any of your concerns regarding our district.

School Closings:

Well... we finally got a blast of winter and Teri Day got to experience her very first "snow day." I wanted to remind everyone of the procedures we use to close school. First of all, Curt Benassi and I are up very early along with our bus drivers to begin to assess the situation. Curt and I keep a very close eye on radar and warnings. Additionally, we are in contact with the Duluth and Hermantown schools. Closing school is a big commitment on the part of everyone involved which includes our parents. I try to make a decision by 5:00 am and once we make the decision to close we put into play our notification system. I notify Ashley Winchell (who also gets to be up early) so she can start the Alert Now phone message which notifies our students' families and all of our employees. Next I put a notice on our web page and call the news agencies. Ashley sends our notice out at 6:00 am (so everyone else gets to be up early).

Someone asked me recently, "How much does it have to snow before you call off school?" Actually it's its all timing and when the snow begins to fall. The safety of our students is a paramount importance. If there is a chance that it won't be safe, I always prefer to error on the side of caution and protecting our students. I would appreciate your feed-back on the timing of the automated phone alert. I think 6:00 am is the opportune time, but let me know your thoughts.

I hate to dampen your thoughts of Spring and the warm forecast we have in store, but I will. I have made more decisions to close school in March and April than any other months. However, I am keeping the faith that an early Spring is upon us.

School Calendar:

Our School Board has approved our school calendar for 2012-2013. I am also attaching it with this update. I understand the desire of many of our staff and faculty to have a February break. This is the second year in a row we have not had a February break. There is a growing trend across the state to not schedule week long breaks in the Spring. One trend that is happening in some metro school districts is to move to more 3 day weekends throughout the year. I am not certain that this is the key to a good calendar, but I am certain that many of us will appreciate being out of school early in June.

Budget Reductions:

It is the time of the year when our Finance Committee and I begin to look at our budget for the upcoming school year. There are some reductions that we have to put into place, especially in light of Districts across the state losing the remainder of our Federal Stimulus Funding. I will be sharing more information about any reductions with you in the very near future. If you have concerns or ideas that you'd like to share with me I welcome your input.

Closing Comments:

I welcome your feedback and comments. Have a terrific weekend! Let's cheer for our neighbors to bring home some hardware from the State Hockey Tournament!