The Land of the Longhorns

September 4, 2019 By Myers, Scott

District Site Council Summit Meeting and Aquatic Center Community Meeting

You and anyone you know with an opinion about how we go about doing things here in the Land of the Longhorns is cordially invited to attend a VERY important community meeting we are getting ready to have. On **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, at 5:30**, we will be gathering together at the District Office to hold the year’s first District Site Council Summit Meeting. Along with conducting the Site Council Summit (more about that later) we will also discuss the concept of building an in-door aquatic center right here in Holcomb! As all of this important, we TRULY would love for you to come to the meeting to lend your voice to the conversation.

If you attend this meeting, you will witness and hopefully participate in a meeting where you will learn of and talk about the various initiatives taking place at the different attendance centers throughout the district as we strive to make the learning experience personally meaningful to each and every student in our system. Along with all of the wonderful learning activities taking place in our district, we will take particular time to talk about the **Longhorn Festival** that is quickly approaching (September 26), the **Play-Based Education** taking placed at Wiley Elementary School, the expanded **Project-Based Learning** taking place throughout the district, the expansion of the **Individualized Plans of Study** (IPoS) for our students and the move we have made at the high school to utilize the **Flex Mod Schedule**. All of these approaches to education WILL make a real difference to our students, and we are excited to share information about all of this, and more importantly, to hear your thoughts about all of this and anything else you would like to discuss.

Along with engaging with a variety of people involved in all stages of the school district – that is a neat opportunity unto itself – we will then turn our attention to discussing the idea of whether to build an in-door aquatic center in Holcomb. In the short time I have been in Holcomb, the topic of re-opening the old in-door swimming pool has come up many times. (For those of you who might not know, Holcomb operated an in-door swimming pool for many years, but the district closed it down around nine years ago due to fiscal constraints facing the state and public education.) To a person, the people with whom I have talked about this topic have expressed regret over the fact the old pool is now closed as having it in operation provided the students of our system the distinct advantage of learning how to swim and about water safety – a definite life skill.

Well, time has passed and the fiscal situation of the state is in a much better place than it was several years ago, so the interest that has always been there has surfaced regarding the possibility of building a new in-door aquatic center to serve the needs of the school system and the community at large. Of course, the reality with this sort of project is ALWAYS money. I did a little poking around and discovered actual drawings were produced several years ago that would have been used to build an aquatic center; however, the bond issue to pay for this addition to the district fell short of passing. While that is a reality, the fact is now I have a solid understanding of the fiscal investment it would take to bring this vision to fruition, and I have to admit it is NOT inexpensive. That said, this sort of project is an investment in the future of our community, so it needs to be discussed.

As I have told ANYBODY who will listen, a project of this nature is so far reaching it CANNOT be a “Superintendent’s Project” nor a “Board of Education’s Project**.” It HAS to be a “Community’s Project”** as the investment to make it a reality would be far reaching and also given the fact the ENTIRE community would have the opportunity to benefit from it being built. So, during the meeting on **SEPTEMBER 16**, we will discuss the potential funding options for this sort of project. As you will learn, we do have several options for addressing this project, and we will go over each of these options in detail so people have a solid understanding of the lay of the land as we discuss this important project.

At the end of the day, I remain thrilled to be a part of a community that has the pride and ownership that this one does. Thus, I am SURE we will have a robust conversation about all of this when we come together on **SEPTEMBER 16 at 5:30 at the District Office**. (Actually, it would thrill me beyond all get out if we had so many people come to the meeting that we had to move it to a different venue. THAT would be wonderful.) Following the meeting itself, I will then be making a report to the School Board during the October Board meeting to discuss the next steps with all of this.

In all sincerity, I TRULY hope you are able to attend this important meeting so as to help us shape the future of the district and how we go about educating our students. I KNOW organized education is ESSENTIAL to the continued success of our great nation, so it is imperative that people lend their voices and opinions to the work we are tackling. I hope to see a large crowd of engaged people at the meeting on **SEPTEMBER 16**. If you have any questions before that meeting, though, please do feel free to contact me here at the District Office. I would love to hear from you. ☺

(If you would like to hear more about the aquatic center idea, please go to the Superintendent Podcast from August 27, “39 Years and Aquatic Center” found on the Superintendent Webpage, [www.usd363.com](http://www.usd363.com). There you will hear Mr. Stan Kennedy and I discuss this idea more in depth. If nothing else, you will get to hear our latest podcast. ☺)