

Peru Central

Cross-Campus Web-based Update

HIGHLIGHTS OF SCHOOL BOARD ACTION TUESDAY NIGHT

At the regular monthly meeting of **Tuesday, October 14, 2008**, the Board of Education:

- A. Recognized, as part of the statewide School Boards Recognition program, the civic benefit and good stewardship provided by the seven community volunteers who serve as this rural school community's governing board, commonly known as the Peru Central School District Board of Education.
- B. Hosted the annual greeting and reception for exchange students and for the high school student council.
- C. Congratulated Peru CSD middle school science faculty member James Kobak for receiving a North Country Teacher Resource Center mini-grant associated with science education for the 2008-2009 school year.
- D. Completed a second reading and adopted the 4000 [instruction] section of the various policies recommended by the NYSSBA as part of the school board's comprehensive updating of the Peru CSD Policy Handbook. This refined draft proposed set of 4000 section policies reflects constituent feedback requested by the district office and received September 2008.
- E. Completed a first reading of preliminary draft new language for the Peru CSD interscholastic athletic code of conduct publication, outlining conditions upon which a Peru CSD student may be eligible to join an athletics team once that season has started. A revised draft will be distributed across campus later this month for constituent review and comment to the Superintendent of Schools.
- F. Received the October 2008 update from the architect in regard to fall 2008 design development third-round meetings and associated other design development matters.
- G. Authorized the President of the School Board to sign the updated agreement between Peru CSD and the School Business Administrator, with the start date on the document to be changed to October 14, 2008. The various details of this document reflect the specific terms previously authorized by the Board of Education.
- H. Authorized the Superintendent of Schools to sustain the ongoing partnership program between Mountain Lake PBS and Peru CSD, by using \$500 from the

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FROM A. PAUL SCOTT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

general fund for 2008-2009 costs associated with this partnership which provides the full complement of PBS resources to the faculty and students of this school district for 2008-2009.

- I. Authorized the Superintendent of Schools to sign the partnership agreement between SUNY Plattsburgh program for nurse students and Peru CSD, pending the Superintendent's final examination of the contract document.
- J. Authorized the Superintendent of Schools to sign the partnership agreement between SUNY Plattsburgh program for the high school outreach program, pending the Superintendent receiving confirmation that if for budgetary or program evaluation reasons the school district chooses to end the partnership after the initial pilot year of the program, the parties agree there is no further obligation by either party to extend this program at Peru CSD. The yearly \$7,500 program fee is the same cost as previously authorized by the school board for this school year's piloting of this high school outreach program.
- K. Updated the 2008-2009 club president reporting timetable to reflect the substitution of Key Club for November 2008.
- L. Approved \$550 of general fund monies for 2008-2009 Peru CSD membership with the Rural Schools Association of New York State.
- M. Authorized the school district proceed with purchase and installation of additional air cooling capacity plus an eight-foot chain link fence with gates to provide added security for that portion of the facility's exterior, as part of the year 2002 capital project's updating of the information technology center.
- N. Set December 9th as the date for the next audit committee of the school board. Agenda to include monitoring implementation of the internal auditor's recommendations, an examination of the annual internal audit plan to ensure that high risk areas and key control activities are periodically evaluated and tested, and a review of the independent auditor's presentation of the annual independent audit.
- O. Received at the meeting the annual independent audit report from the independent auditor.
- P. Received and discussed an updated draft of the multi-year finance plan, in keeping with the twice-annual examination and discussion of that plan, as outlined in the budget development timetable.

Various reports were examined during public session, including:

- A. Timetable of public reports for 2008-2009;
- B. Annotated copy of the governing team's goals for 2008-2009;
- C. This month's snapshot report from an extra-curricular club student president;
- D. October 2008 student enrollment report;
- E. Team planning at the middle school.

The next monthly school board meeting is set for Tuesday, November 18, 2008 in the community room.

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FROM A. PAUL SCOTT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

MISSION IS CLEAR AND CERTAIN

As Education Commissioner Richard Mills would say, the mission of Peru CSD is certain for this rural school community and for this rural school community's children:

“ Teach all students a continuously updated curriculum, using a variety of practical, proven research-based methods to actively engage students and meet individual learning styles; and expect the school community to provide a positive, safe, caring and child-centered environment where teaching and learning are emphasized and rewarded, and where there is mutual respect. ...”

UNCERTAIN NATIONAL & STATEWIDE ECONOMIES

In contrast, national and state economies are in a period of uncertainty. The **New York Times** reported that October 8th was the busiest day in New York Stock Exchange history, when panicky investors dumped stocks en masse: 1,754 stocks fell with just 87 stocks rising. In the course of six trading days, the Dow plummeted 2,251 points [20.8%]. That's similar in size to the October 19, 1987 drop of 22%.

The New York State Executive Office **Division of the Budget** October 3, 2008 economic outlook report states the financial market terrain now looks very different from the way it did just a few months ago. The prime brokerage industry has been permanently altered with the wholesale disappearance of two investment banks, the purchase of two prime brokers by large banks, and the remaining two largest brokers reorganizing as bank holding companies.

The **Rockefeller Institute Fiscal Studies Program** October 2008 state-by-state national report on revenues pinpoints 'three more shoes to drop' regarding the economy:

1. States such as New York which rely especially heavily on the financial services industry will be hit extremely hard, via the taxes they levy on the financial services sector, and through the spillover effects on other parts of the state economy;
2. Investment income of taxpayers is likely to fall significantly, although it is difficult to predict precisely how much and when;
3. Growing anticipation of a significant and prolonged recessionary period.

The Institute's forecast calls for economies in states such as **New York, New Jersey and Connecticut** to face extreme difficulty in the wake of the financial services industry meltdown, due to a higher percent of their state revenues historically coming from the financial services sector. A challenging period of adjustment for such states is forecasted.

NYSCOSS TESTIMONY CALLS FOR THOUGHTFUL ACTION & STREAMLINING

Testimony from the New York State Council of School Superintendents [NYSCOSS] to the New York State Property Tax Relief Commission on October 2nd forecasted the turmoil on Wall Street and the associated national and state economic downturns would make a tax cap on schools potentially devastating, particularly among the less wealthy communities that depend on state aid for most of their revenue.

NYSCOSS suggested to the Commission that planning and reporting administrative mandates should be trimmed. With 130 state-mandated public school district plans and reports each year, and nearly 700 school districts statewide, the state receives 91,000 mandatory school district plans and reports annually. After studying the matter for years, according to the NYSCOSS, the state has yet to repeal a single report.

BRIEFING TONIGHT ON SIX-MONTH UPDATE TO MULTI-YEAR FINANCE PLAN

Tonight's agenda calls for a public session discussion of an update to the draft Peru CSD multi-year finance plan. The purpose of such a draft multi-year plan is to afford the governing team a multi-year vantage point from which to better set overall direction for financial planning. Such multi-year finance planning is common among progressive school districts with focus on continuous improvement and fact-based management. In recent years, Peru CSD has strengthened its financial foundation. That foundation will help Peru CSD and the rural school community we serve respond to the fiscal storm that's emerging.

FALL 2008 SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM AUDIT TEAMS ANNOUNCED

Fall 2008 curriculum audit teams associated with the social studies program will be comprised of the individuals listed below. Details regarding timetables, communication channels and roles will be provided to all members of the social studies department, starting this week. As was the case throughout the piloting process last school year, the Superintendent of Schools will serve as convener for each and every curriculum audit team. Faculty member Holley Christiansen, with experience last school year as a curriculum audit team member, is designated as 'senior auditor' and we'll put her experience to use.

The engagement of these faculty members in our curriculum audits is noted and valued!

Audit Scope	Role	Individual
Social Studies Grades 7 & 8	Auditor	Bruce Beauharnois
	Auditor	Mark Hamilton
	Auditor	Peter McCormick
Global Studies 9 & 10	Senior Auditor	Holley Christiansen
	Auditor	Deborah Daly
	Auditor	Kathy Lawliss

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES CONTINUE THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Fiscal accountability updating in recent years has included updating and/or establishing district policy and protocols for cell phones, competitive bidding, conference/workshop reimbursement, inventory control, mandatory board member training on fiscal oversight matters, meals & refreshments, Medicaid reimbursement, multi-year financial planning and purchase orders.

The current set of fiscal accountability initiatives at Peru Central include payroll, cash disbursements, cash receipts, extra-curricular activity accounting and information technology network controls. Various aspects of these areas were identified last fall by the internal auditor and administration as 'next steps'.

I anticipate similar findings and recommendations from the upcoming State Office of the Comptroller comprehensive fiscal accountability audit of Peru CSD. That would be **solid verification** that internal auditing areas of focus for continuous improvement are 'on point' and relevant.



Respectfully submitted by A. Paul Scott, Superintendent of Schools