



# STERLING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**TO: STAFF**

**FROM: TAD EVERETT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**DATE: WEDNESDAY MAY 18, 2011**

**RE: SUPERINTENDENT NOTES**

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## **Administrative Changes for 2011 - 2012**

Jefferson Principal, Mr. Ron Rick, has formally announced his retirement for the end of the 2012 – 2013 school year. At the time of retirement Mr. Rick will have served the students of Sterling Public Schools for 23 years. Ron, thanks for your dedication to our students and staff!

During his last two years of administrative service at SPS, Mr. Rick has decided to return to Challand Middle School as the Assistant Principal. Mr. Rick's decision has provided the opportunity for me to appoint internal candidate Matt Birdsley as the new Jefferson Elementary Principal. Mr. Birdsley has served in the role of CMS Assistant Principal for the last three years, and during that time he has proven to be a strong leader with an emphasis on instruction and the use of data.

Mr. Chris Palmer, the former CMS Dean of Students will have a title change for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Mr. Palmer is now one of two CMS assistant principals. As you know, over the last three years the district has been in the process of eliminating all dean positions.

In the February edition of Superintendent Notes, I informed staff that Mrs. Kathy Howard was resigning to take the position of Assistant Superintendent at the Regional Office of Education. Shortly after this verbal resignation, Governor Quinn released his proposed FY12 budget. As we all know this included the elimination of all Regional Office funds, so essentially the ROE position was no longer available. Since the Board of Education had not formally acted on Mrs. Howard's request, I gladly accepted the fact that she "pulled" her resignation request until further notice. Mrs. Howard continues to be an outstanding leader, and jokingly, this is the only reason I would ever say I don't want the ROE to receive money from the State.

The 2011 – 2012 school year will be Mr. Pat Fortney's last as the Washington Elementary Principal. He will be retiring at the end of next year, and like Mr. Rick, we want to thank him for his dedication to our students and staff. I would like staff to know that I intend to make the decision on Mr. Fortney's replacement in the middle of next school year. This will provide ample time for administrative transition, if needed.

## **Rationale for Increase Bilingual Staff**

We are currently in the process of increasing the number of certified Bilingual teachers we have in the district. This is based on student numbers and we have surpassed our limits. According to the Illinois Administrative School Code, schools with 20 or more bilingual students are required to have a Transitional Bilingual Education Program (TBE) and those schools with less than 20 bilingual students

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have a Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI). Sterling Public Schools currently has Jefferson, Washington and Challand Middle School as TBE programs and Sterling High School as a TPI program. For schools with a TBE program, it is necessary for all students, according to the school code, to receive core subjects such as English, Math, Science and Social Studies in the student's native language. In order to comply with these legal guidelines, we have posted an additional Bilingual position at Washington Elementary and Challand Middle School.

### **Update on the 2011 – 2012 Preschool for All Grant**

Next year's Pre-K grant, which is State dollars, has become a competitive grant. This essentially means that applications will be scored and funds will be given to those applications that have the at-risk needs for students as well as meeting the ISBE PreK rubric standards. The grant was completed and submitted by Sara Dail and PreK staff in April, and now we're waiting for ISBE to make a decision.

In our grant, we have requested the same programming as the 2010 - 2011 school year which consists of 1.5 bilingual classrooms at Jefferson and 1 classroom at Franklin. This program services 100 students who are screened and identified for the program by their at-risk factors. If you have questions regarding the grant or PreK in general, please email or call Sara Dail.

### **Problem Solving Process Update**

As you know, Sterling Public Schools has implemented a problem solving process to comply with changes in special education eligibility, as well as meet the needs of our Response to Intervention plan. Please keep in mind that you are able to access the current problem solving flow chart and teacher checklist on our website at <http://www.sterlingpublicschools.org/district/ss/rti/probsolv.htm>. As a result of our problem solving process we have seen increases in student progress. This has been accomplished by identifying interventions that meet the needs of a particular student as well as students who are in need of special education services.

### **Supporting K-12 RtI**

Throughout the school year Mrs. Robinson has been working with principals and their intervention teams. As these teams continue to improve the RtI process and coordinate services K – 12, the need for support and training repeatedly surfaced especially in the area of assessment and implementation of interventions. To meet these needs, as well as better improve articulation between grade levels and schools, the suggestion was made to expand the current grade levels supported by CMS RtI Coach Becky Haas. Currently she serves just grades 6- 8, and next year she will help support grades K-12.