



Mondays with Mike



January 18, 2009

2010-2011 Calendar

Six weeks ago, a draft calendar was provided to staff/parents about the extension of the existing calendar for one year. Several times over that six weeks, staff has been encouraged to provide feedback to the District Office, or their respective representatives with the ambition to adopt the calendar at this week's School Board Meeting.

Last week, the last call for ideas and suggestions was made. These suggestions came in at the eleventh hour and suggested we should wait a month for the development of consensus. By the way, the definition of consensus is generally that everyone that wishes to have a "say" has an opportunity, that we will listen to all dissenting opinions and work for a proposal that all can live with. (This is the same concept we are using with the budget suggestions.)

Suggestions that we received include:

- ◇ Changing the October break to match a Colorado hunting season.
- ◇ Starting after Labor Day and eliminating either the October or February break.
- ◇ End before Memorial Day so teaching staff does not need to come back after a three-day weekend.

Another Major Question:

Why are we looking at a calendar prior to the full development of the conversation of the 4-day work extension week?


The intent of this effort was to have both documents in hand; if we need a calendar extension, we have it; if we change the calendar to a 4-day week—everything is then up for debate.

I am absolutely willing to allow the discussion to carry on for months, or even look at a three-year calendar adoption. The stimulus I have had for an earlier conclusion is that staff and families are needing to know dates for their planning process. The early adoption was intended for all students/parents/staff to know 9 months in advance.

I encourage you to use your networks to work together consensus. Individual e-mails are fine, but are more meaningful if they say, "This is the consensus of my building, or most of my colleagues."

Budget Question

I understood that various semi-final suggestions were sent out on Friday—tell me again what we are supposed to do with them once they are received from our principals?

Thanks for the question. We have received over 40 suggestions or ideas of how to cut expenditures. They were presented in several issues of *Mondays with Mike*. Many of the major ideas listed, in no particular order, provided "pro + con" statements as well as the option of 

"other," so that staff can identify and endorse an additional reason for or against the issue.

We have attempted to refine and group ideas into similar concepts. For example: various suggestions were to cut this activity, or that athletic program. These ideas were included under reduction of low enrollment activity programs. Every idea was either incorporated or listed independently.

Based on these spread sheets, the suggestions should be examined using the following criteria:

- 0 No impact
- +1 Positive impact
- +2 High positive impact
- 1 Negative impact
- 2 High negative impact

Each suggestion should use a three prong test: FISCAL, STUDENTS, STAFF.

Again, consensus opinion should be communicated to the District Office, or any one of these Budget Task Force members.

Glen Suppes	gsupes@deltaschools.com
Nikki Lally	nlally@deltaschools.com
Connie Davidson	cdavidson@deltaschools.com
Sheri McFadden	smcfadden@deltaschools.com
Jackie Allinson	jallinson@deltaschools.com
Debra Richards	drichards@deltaschools.com
John Jones	jjones@deltaschools.com
Caryn Gibson	cgibson@deltaschools.com
Brent Curtice	bcurtice@deltaschools.com
Greg Figenser	gfigenser@deltaschools.com
Derek Carlson	dcarlson@deltaschools.com
Dale Haag	dale@kaycee.net
Amanda Kreiger	akreiger@deltaschools.com
Shawna Wilczek	mskhw@aol.com
Cassandra Shenk	cshenk@deltaschools.com
Bob Stechert	bstechert@yahoo.com
Robbie LeValley	Robbie.Levalley@coloState.EDU
Pete Blair	peteblaircpa@yahoo.com
Lynda Campbell	37321 Campbell Rd., Hotchkiss 81419
Susan Hansen	shansen@deltacounty.com



It is more meaningful that they receive input that is along the lines of, "our local parent accountability group feels,," or "our staff consensus is....."

All of the Budget Task Force members will serve as representatives for their constituents and to the best extent possible "hold" on to their personal feelings unless it best represents that network. The next Budget Task Force meeting is January 26 at the District Office at 5:30 p.m. You are welcome to attend, but this is a work session for the "Task Force," and will not be taking in visitor input at the meeting. Please allow your opinions and the feelings of groups, or networks to speak "volumes" rather than "I think." (e-mail a member)

Thanks for your participation and patience, the two most important "Ps" in any consensus process.



Mondays with Mike

School Board Meeting January 21, 2010 at Delta Center at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Agenda Review**
3. **Good News**
4. **Public Comment(s)**
5. **Board Member Comment(s):** Change of location for February 25 School Board meeting to the Delta Center.
6. **Routine Items (Consent Agenda):**
 - a. Approval of Regular School Board Minutes on 12/10/09.
 - b. Expenditures
 - c. Routine Personnel Items
7. **Financial Resolution:**
 - a. Cash Projection Report
8. **Superintendent's Report:**
 - a. Exclusive Chartering Authority
 - b. Revised State Vision Coalition Waivers
 - c. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement
 - d. Resolution: Official Location of Public Information and Notices
 - e. Disclosure of Public Officeholder Report of Gifts, Honoraria & Other Benefits
 - f. Budget Task Force Report
 - g. Delta County Professional Development on January 18 Report
 - h. PERA Retirement Seminar January 27
 - i. PLC Focus Work Report
9. **Correspondence**
10. **Coordinating Council**
11. **District Accountability**
12. **Policy Review**



PERA Retirement Seminar Reminder

On January 27 at 6:30 p.m. Carol Wright, and another ambassador with PERA, will be on hand to discuss questions on the PERA changes. District personnel will provide updates on work agreement options, health insurance, and others. Please call or e-mail Arlene if you plan to attend this seminar. 970-874-4438 or ahutchins@deltaschools.com (Light supper provided.)

Certified Staff In-service January 18, 2010

January 18 was set aside at midpoint of the year for teacher in-service. This is one of the two certified furlough days that is being discussed as a cost saving's concept. Basically, this proposal, instead of a certified staff development, would have the day off, but with no pay.

The work of this morning, with the schools attending at the Delta Center, was significant. Staff participated, took notes, and asked great questions on effective teaching practices, curriculum alignment and instructional leadership. Although no "official" evaluation form was completed, a number of staff members took time to say, "It was a great mid-year reminder," "Thanks for having this—it was right on target." The day was a great reinforcement to what we have been doing," etc.

The headliner of the morning was Dr. Mike Miles, Superintendent of Harrison School District, one of the most challenging inter-city districts in the state. Since taking on the superintendent's position in 2006, Miles has created a "turn around district" using the same strategies we recognize as producing excellent achievement results: aligned curriculum, the "Big 4", formative assessment, use of student data, effective classroom instruction, and instructional leadership.

True to his background as an elite officer in a special ops *Army Ranger Battalion*, Mike took few prisoners. Topics like PLCs, learning objectives, DOLs (demonstration of learning), effective and ineffective teaching practices were openly discussed with positive and negative examples. Certainly, the morning provided outstanding "take homes" both in things to think about, ideas for stronger more focused PLCs, and how to better engage students in learning. We laughed with Mike and we laughed at ourselves because all of us would admit using practices that missed the mark, or were ineffective. All staff would recognize items out of the list including the *crayola curriculum* that they have used, or have seen used in school settings.

While some of the points are still fresh in your mind, identify some "to do" items and some others "to do less of."

Thanks, Mike Miles, for helping us renew our focus.

You can make more friends in two months
by helping other people than you can in two
years trying to get others to help you.

....Author Unknown



Mondays with Mike

Stressful Times


By now virtually everyone realizes that difficult and stressful economic times have hit our school district, the rest of the state and the nation. Until things come home to your area, school or neighborhood, it seems unreal. Much like the orbits of the planets that we all studied in elementary school, the farther away something is, the less attention it is given. The orbit of Pluto is like what is happening in Washington, or the east coast. The orbit of Mars is like Colorado, or perhaps, Western Colorado. The closest orbit is our own earth. When difficult economic times are in your backyard or knocking at your door, reality really sets in.

How did this happen? Basically the state economic situation has caused a significant reduction in the amount of revenue the state is receiving through sales and income tax. Since 43% of the state revenue is directed toward K-12 education, you can see why this district and 177 other school districts face serious financial issues. Officials at the state level are anticipating that there will be a \$260 million state shortfall in school finance for next year. The problem of \$1.9 million for this district joins two other local fiscal issues: enrollment decline, and reduced special education support from the state and nation. Many economists believe these types of budget issues will be part of the school landscape for at least three years.

Over the next two months, ending in late March, we are seeking consensus opinion on a number of expenditure saving ideas. The Budget Task Force will be seeking consensus from all of our educational constituents (staff, parents, and community members) on how to offset these financial issues. In addition, the Budget Task Force will generate ideas to enhance revenue. Your input is welcome and encouraged. We must become more efficient and effective wherever and whenever we can.

Thank you, for your support and thoughtful consideration.

Calendar

- January 21** School Board/Vision HCP Work Session @ The Delta Center
3:30 p.m. North Fork Vision
4:00 p.m. Delta Vision
4:30 p.m. Surface Creek Vision
- January 21** School Board Meeting @ Delta Center
6:00 p.m. Policy Review
7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting
- January 26** Budget Task Force Meeting @ D.O. at 5:30 p.m.
- January 27** Classified Council Meeting @ D.O. at 12:30 p.m.
- January 27** PERA Meeting @ Delta Center at 6:30 p.m.
- February 2** District Accountability Meeting @ D.O. at 6:30 p.m.
- February 9** Principals' Meeting @ D.O. at 8:00 a.m.
- February 9** Coordinating Council Meeting @ D.O. at 4:00 p.m.
- February 14** Valentine's Day 

Random Acts of Kindness

Kindness is an innate quality of most human beings. When we see it directed toward others, it makes us feel good. When it is directed toward us, we feel great. Yet sometimes we feel kindly toward someone around us, but feel uncomfortable showing it. Why not let your kindness show? One of the best ways to do this is by practicing random acts of kindness.

Kindness doesn't cost anything. In fact, it's much easier to be kind than to be mean. In addition, the kind acts we perform will often prompt others to act in the same way, even if we may not always see it.

The secret to practicing kindness is to not expect a reward. If we're not dependent on the other person's reaction, we can enjoy the simple act for itself. Another key to kindness is to keep the act anonymous. What if you arrived at work and found a batch of freshly baked cookies sitting on your desk? You would want to know who gave them to you, but even if you never found out, you would still enjoy the cookies.

Practicing random acts of kindness on those around you--even people you don't know--is easy. We all know someone who is having a difficult time at home. Maybe that person has a very ill family member or maybe he or she is just down and depressed. A fresh bouquet of flowers from your garden left on the person's desk may just brighten his or her day and lessen the load. Offering to fill in for someone who is anxious about a sick child at home is a more direct act of kindness, as is offering encouragement and support to a co-worker who is struggling with a difficult task or project.

It doesn't take much to start practicing random acts of kindness, just a good spirit and a desire to be helpful to another person. Don't be surprised if other people in the office start doing the same once you get the ball rolling. In addition to being very good for your mind and spirit, kindness is also contagious. Once you start, you just can't stop.



"Do me a favor, will ya? Stop calling me 'honey.' "

