

November Message

As I prepare for Part 2 of the community forums on November 4, 2013 at 6:00 – 7:30 PM at Treasure Mountain Junior High and December 5, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM at Park City School District Office, I have been analyzing the community and staff input from our first forums. The trends revolve around the staffs' appreciation for professional development and their desire to differentiate professional development. Each school expressed positive school culture. At the parent level, comments surrounded Dual Language Immersion and programs for high performing and gifted students.

Consequently, in the last two weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet with several parents and community members in different venues. The conversations ranged from topics to create more opportunities for our high performing and Gifted students in our elementary schools and better prepare them for the Honors Track in middle and high school to topics on high performing secondary schools. Because I believe increasing expectations and creating unique learning opportunities for all of our children, we have formed a committee to research high performing secondary schools. This committee is using our demographics, size of district, and geographical location as criteria to determine school districts that we want to study. Once the districts are selected, we are studying their programs, course offerings, number of teachers, teacher salaries, per pupil allocation, and schedules. In addition, we are beginning an internal review of our gifted and high performing elementary student program as we continue to expand opportunities for all children.

In the last three months, I have also become more aware of our partnership with Utah Valley University. They provide strong education programs for future teachers, along with internationally recognized degrees in engineering and science. Consequently, they have designed and hosted a student STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) summer camp for middle age children last summer. Superintendent Shoemaker, Wasatch County, and I are exploring the possibility of partnering together to host a similar camp.

Finally, I am going to encourage you to read the Utah Foundation Report. The Utah Foundation presented a report comparing Utah's school indicators against those of peer states and states that are highest achieving in the nation. The Utah Foundation Report can be found at:
<http://le.utah.gov/interim/2013/pdf/00003761.pdf>

I look forward to our winter season and, as always, honored to serve as Superintendent of Park City School District.