

HIGHLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 8, 2008

Memorandum

TO: All Employees
FROM: John P. Welch

Dear Colleagues:

When I visualize ultimate success for our schools, I see students who have graduated and are successful in post-high school education—an apprenticeship, technical training, university, or some other college experience. We are all working toward this vision every day in our efforts to support student success. Yet there are obstacles to college facing many of our families. Perhaps the toughest of these is financial.

Over the next few weeks, we have the rare opportunity to help lift those financial barriers for many of our students. This is so important that am asking every one of us to think about how we can play a part.

This opportunity is the new College Bound Scholarship for middle school students. The scholarship pays for tuition and books at two- or four-year institutions for foster children and students from low income families. Students must apply by the end of 8th grade and pledge to maintain good grades, graduate from high school, and demonstrate good citizenship.

We have roughly 750 eighth graders who qualify for the scholarship. Our goal is get 700 students to apply. Some folks may think this is too ambitious, but I believe that we can make it happen. It will take a concentrated effort between now and the end of the school year from all of us. I am asking you to help Highline reach this goal and open up the doors to college for 700 of our students.

I recognize this is a very busy time of year. However, I believe your extra effort will pay many dividends in the coming years, not only in terms of helping families pay for college, but also in keeping many more students in the class of 2012 focused on school during their high school years.

If you are a teacher, you may be asked by your principal to take responsibility for seeing that qualifying students turn in their applications. If you are an office manager, you may need to keep track of applications and mail them. If you are a bus driver, you may be given flyers to hand out to students. I'm sure you can think something of you can do that fits with your job. Whatever your role, I am asking you to be creative and use innovative ways to reach out to our families so *not one student* misses this amazing opportunity.

We have a short window of opportunity; applications must be in by the end of the school year. I want to thank you in advance for the time and energy you will put into this effort in the coming weeks. I believe if we work together, we will take a significant step toward reaching our vision of college for every student.