

HIGHLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 14, 2007

*Memorandum*

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TO: All Employees  
FROM: John P. Welch



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John's Journal

*Reflections from the Superintendent*

Dear Colleagues:

It is hard to believe that winter break is almost upon us! This fall has whipped by like a fierce autumn wind. In reviewing this past season in my mind, I realized that I have missed some of my monthly notes to you. My new year's resolution is to make sure *John's Journal* goes out every month for the rest of the school year.

Along with this letter, you will find a wallet-sized card that outlines our district mission, vision, core beliefs, and strategic goals. I wanted every person in our system to have one as a reminder to self and as a way to share with others what Highline Public Schools is all about.

Though our mission statement, *educate every student and expect excellence*, has been around for a number of years, I think it is important to remind ourselves of its centrality to all that we do.

The vision statement—*all students prepared for college, career, and citizenship*—helps us focus on our "end game"; that goal that we are striving toward.

The district's core beliefs, developed by the school board, tell the rest of the world what we value as an organization and give us a set of guidelines to frame our work.

The strategic goals were developed last year through an extensive strategic planning process that included input from a broad range of staff and community representatives—school board members, teachers, administrators, classified staff, parents, and community members. These strategic goals outline the important areas of district work, represented by the acronym LEARN. Notice that the "A" for *achievement for every student* is at the center, because it is the very center of all the work we do.

I think it is important that each one of us keeps these important principles in front of us every day. If we all know where we are headed and how we are going to get there, we will be able to move farther faster for the benefit of our students. Like a living organism, an organization such as ours depends on all its various parts; our mission, vision, goals, and beliefs are the DNA that links us all together in working for one purpose.

I suggest you keep this little card someplace where you will see it often. I will be keeping mine handy.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for getting this school year off to a great start. As you head off to a well-deserved break, I wish you all a peaceful and relaxed season with family and friends.