



Letter to the Board

Michael Havens

Superintendent of Schools

Phone: 315-524-1001

Fax: 315-524-1049

December 21, 2007

One of the hardest tasks of leadership is understanding that you are not what you are, but what you're perceived to be by others."

--Edward L. Flom, CEO of Florida Steel

Board Letter:

1. **Lacrosse:** Our modified Lacrosse program is scheduled to begin next year. I have been approached by the superintendent of Gananda asking if we would like to have a joint program. They have some interest but aren't large enough to run their own program. Currently they play football through a joint program with East Rochester. My initial reaction is that we want to have our own program with our own students and own controls. We would have to add Gananda's population to our own as they determine what class we would play in. Also Gananda will always have financial problems which may cause economic support to ebb and flow. I am curious about your reactions. Are there some points that I am missing that might make it in our interest to join with them?
2. **New Voice Messaging System:** Last night at 6:00 a test message went out to every staff member and parent in the district. It appears to have been very successful. We will be adding some people's cell phone numbers and daycare centers. For our next snow day all parents and staff should know within 5 minutes of closing.
3. **Scott Freischlag:** Earlier this year I talked to you about my summer meeting with Scott in which he said he wanted to be a more positive part of the district. Things have been going really well. Just last week he handled a very difficult situation with an out-of-control parent. On Thursday I brought his counseling memo of three years ago over to the Middle School so he could shred it. I think it was the right time to do this.
4. **Christmas Break:** There will be no letter next week. I hope each of you have a wonderful Christmas and a safe New Year. See you in 2008.
5. **Upcoming Events:**
 - 1/5 – Wayne Eagles Basketball Pancake Breakfast @ HS Cafeteria – 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.
 - 1/8 – MS PTO Meeting @ Media Center – 6:30 p.m.
 - 1/10 – Board of Education Meeting @ Freewill Elementary – 7:00 p.m.
 - 1/15 – OP/OE PTA Meeting @ OE Cafeteria – 7:00 p.m.

Athletic Events:

1/2 - Co-Ed Alpine Ski Racing @ Branting – 5:30
1/4 – Boys JV & V Basketball vs. Waterloo – 6:00 & 7:30
12/27-28 – Girls JV & V Wayne Eagles Basketball Tournament - Times TBD
1/7 – Girls JV & V Basketball vs. Brighton – 6:00 & 7:30
1/9 – Co-Ed Bowling Vs. Waterloo @ Empire Lanes – 3:45 p.m.
1/11 – Boys Freshman Basketball vs. Newark – 4:15 p.m.

10. Attachments

A) Holiday Letter to Staff

This year's Christmas story comes from a Metro Denver Hospice Physician. It reminds me that this time of year is really about giving both of yourself and your possessions.

I was driving home from a meeting this evening about 5, stuck in traffic on Colorado Blvd., and the car started to choke and splutter and die - I barely managed to coast, cursing, into a gas station, glad only that I would not be blocking traffic and would have a somewhat warm spot to wait for the tow truck.

It wouldn't even turn over. Before I could make the call, I saw a woman walking out of the 'quickie mart' building, and it looked like she slipped on some ice and fell into a gas pump, so I got out to see if she was okay. When I got there, it looked more like she had been overcome by sobs than that she had fallen; she was a young woman who looked really haggard with dark circles under her eyes. She dropped something as I helped her up, and I picked it up to give it to her. It was a nickel. At that moment, everything came into focus for me: the crying woman, the ancient Suburban crammed full of stuff with 3 kids in the back (1 in a car seat), and the gas pump reading \$4.95. I asked her if she was okay and if she needed help, and she just kept saying 'don't want my kids to see me crying,' so we stood on the other side of the pump from her car. She said she was driving to California and that things were very hard for her right now. So I asked, 'And you were praying?'

That made her back away from me a little, but I assured her I was not a crazy person and said, 'He heard you, and He sent me.' I took out my card and swiped it through the card reader on the pump so she could fill up her truck completely, and while it was fueling, walked to the next door McDonald's and bought 2 big bags of food, some gift certificates for more, and a big cup of coffee.

She gave the food to the kids in the car, who attacked it like wolves, and we stood by the pump eating fries and talking a little. She told me her name, and that she lived in Kansas City Her boyfriend left 2 months ago and she had not been able to make ends meet. She knew she wouldn't have money to pay rent Jan 1, and finally in desperation had finally called her parents, with whom she had not spoken in about 5 years. They lived in California and said she could come live with them and try to get on her feet there.

So she packed up everything she owned in the car. She told the kids they were going to California for Christmas, but not that they were going to live there. I gave her my gloves, a little hug and said a quick prayer with her for safety on the road. As I was walking over to my car, she said, 'So, are you like an angel or something?'

This definitely made me cry. I said, 'Sweetie, at this time of year angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people.'

It was so incredible to be a part of someone else's miracle. And of course, you guessed it, when I got in my car it started right away and got me home with no problem. I'll put it in the shop tomorrow to check, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

Sometimes the angels fly close enough to you that you can hear the flutter of their wings...

I hope you are fortunate enough to hear the call to be an angel to someone this season. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah.

Michael and Wendy

