

Annual Report to the Community
January 2018
Reedsport School District
Dan Forbess, Superintendent

During my 23 months in Reedsport I have been primarily engaged in developing systems and protocols that will lead to more efficient and effective district operations. In addition, all district staff is working together in developing a concerted, K-12 continuous improvement focus. Efforts to improve the academic and social success of our students are ongoing, although less expedient than I had hoped, but our developing K-12 vision continues to emerge. A climate and culture of continuous educational improvement is basis for our professional development strategies. With support of federal and Oregon education grants, along with earmarked general fund resources, we are focused on improving student achievement and social success through professional development, which is leading to improved practice. Our goal is to engage students through planning, implementing, studying, and acting as a K-12 system. Our long-range objective is to develop, measure, and continuously improve the educational system in our Reedsport school community.

The Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) under section 581, Division 22, guide public school districts in maintaining compliance with Oregon curriculum and instructional standards, program requirements, annual reporting, and related education mandates. With the exception of scheduled instructional materials adoption, the Reedsport School District is generally in compliance with the Division 22 requirements. Recent language arts (grades K-6), math (grades K-12), and science (grades 7-12) instructional materials were afforded by a strategic budgeting effort. I am hopeful we will be able to continue our budgeting efforts in this area, which will allow us to replace necessary instructional materials on a five to seven year cycle.

Specific to Division 22 OARs, the following information is provided to inform the community of our “continuous improvement” efforts in the areas associated with legislative Oregon education law/rule (OAR 581-022-0606):

Curriculum & Instruction Focus – Highland Elementary School has been supported as an Oregon Focus School for the past four years and qualified for a competitive School Improvement Grant. Instructional coaching is supporting improved teaching practices, both pedagogy and student engagement, in the core academic areas. In addition, school climate and student leadership improvement efforts are supported by The Leader In Me program implementation.

We received a District Improvement Partnership (DIP) grant from the Oregon Department of Education, January 2017, which is helping Reedsport Community Charter School focus on student attendance, school climate, and mathematics teaching and learning improvement. Although primarily used to support junior/senior high school improvements, DIP funds are being used to connect elementary and high school improvement activities that will lead to a seamless K-12 effort.

Instructional programs – We continue to utilize self-contained K-6 grade elementary classrooms, 7-12 grade content specific courses as part of meeting Oregon’s graduation requirements. Basic and advanced coursework in the core academic areas, as well as, applied arts, a second language, and career/technical classes are available to our students. In addition, alternative education options (Reedsport Academy, E2020, ORVED, and AYA REAP) are available to students in need of a flexible scheduling, credit recovery, advanced credits, and/or the desire to complete a modified diploma option.

Co-curricular and extracurricular programs are offered and sanctioned by the Oregon Scholastic Activities Association in support of developing character through student-leadership, service-learning, athletic teams, clubs, and school-related organizations.

Professional Development – Much of Highland Elementary School staff professional growth is focused on three primary goals aimed at improving student success, which are: a) strengthening core instruction and practices in reading and math, b) improving student engagement, and c) improving school climate and culture. Instructional focus on implementing the Journeys language arts curriculum and Engage New York math materials is evident. At Reedsport Community Charter School (RCCS), targeted professional development in the areas of mathematics, along with increased student tutoring support, and school climate are on-going efforts. Specifically, RCCS staff are learning more about Trauma Informed Practices as a means to help support the learning and social-emotional needs of all students.

Our continuous improvement process, as originally expressed in a 2014-2015 Comprehensive Plan Report, contains performance indicators in the following five areas: 1) District and School Culture, 2) Family and Community Involvement, 3) Technical and Adaptive Leadership, 4) Educator Effectiveness, and 5) Teaching and Learning.

Although many factors are considered when measuring the success of a public school district, one measure of educational success is based on the State mandated assessment tests. Implemented by law in 1997, the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) statewide assessment has been used to measure grade-level educational progress (Grades 3-8, and high school) in the subjects of Math and Reading. Writing is currently assessed in the 11th grade, and science is assessed in grades, 5, 8, and 11. Below, is a table providing the percentage of students in Reedsport, with comparative State averages percentage, who have met or exceeded the OAKS math and reading assessments during the past seven years in traditional benchmark grades 3, 5, 8, and HS (10th or 11th).

Annual Review of student performance – Comparative results are provided below:

<i>Overall 7-year comparison of OAKS data:</i>			<i>Math</i>	<i>Reading</i>
			<u>RSD / State</u>	<u>RSD / State</u>
•	<u>Status % Meet-Exceeded</u>			
•	2011 All Students BM I actual (3 rd Grade)		39% / 62%	75% / 83%
•	2012 All Students BM I actual		56% / 64%	60% / 70%
•	2013 All Students BM I actual		33% / 61%	49% / 66%
•	2014 All Students BM I actual		39% / 59%	69% / 66%
•	2015 All Students BM I actual (Smart Bal)		27% / 46%	22% / 46%
•	<u>2016 All Students BM I actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>27% / 47%</u>	<u>32% / 47%</u>
•	<u>2017 All Students BM I actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>17% / 46%</u>	<u>21% / 45%</u>
•	2011 All Students BM II actual (5 th Grade)		45% / 57%	69% / 79%
•	2012 All Students BM II actual		32% / 60%	49% / 69%
•	2013 All Students BM II actual		25% / 58%	40% / 67%
•	2014 All Students BM II actual		38% / 59%	59% / 67%
•	2015 All Students BM II actual (Smart Bal)		10% / 41%	31% / 54%
•	<u>2016 All Students BM II actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>26% / 40%</u>	<u>41% / 56%</u>
•	<u>2017 All Students BM II actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>28% / 39%</u>	<u>32% / 53%</u>
•	2011 All Students BM III actual (8 th Grade)		33% / 64%	69% / 50%
•	2012 All Students BM III actual		57% / 65%	83% / 67%
•	2013 All Students BM III actual		49% / 62%	78% / 66%
•	2014 All Students BM III actual		41% / 62%	49% / 66%
•	2015 All Students BM III actual (Smart Bal)		13% / 43%	75% / 57%
•	<u>2016 All Students BM III actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>15% / 42%</u>	<u>26% / 57%</u>
•	<u>2017 All Students BM III actual (Smart Bal)</u>		<u>8% / 41%</u>	<u>25% / 55%</u>

	<i>Math</i>	<i>Reading</i>
• <u>Status % Meet-Exceeded</u>	<u>RSD / State</u>	<u>RSD / State</u>
• 2011 All Students BM HS actual (10 th grade)	47% / 68%	68% / 84%
• 2012 All Students BM HS actual	46% / 67%	79% / 83%
• 2013 All Students BM HS actual	58% / 68%	71% / 84%
• 2014 All Students BM HS actual	51% / 69%	82% / 84%
• 2015 All Students BM HS actual (11 th grade/SB)	21% / 30%	49% / 67%
• <u>2016 All Students BM HS actual (11th grade/SB)</u>	<u>18% / 33%</u>	<u>41% / 68%</u>
• <u>2017 All Students BM HS actual (11th grade/SB)</u>	<u>29% / 34%</u>	<u>57% / 69%</u>

Oregon instituted a State Assessment program 19 years ago and the summative assessment tools (e.g. OSAT, TESA, and Smarter Balance) have been adjusted and modified several times. Basically, the State bar used to measure student success has changed several times since 1997, which makes it difficult for educators to rely on the State's summative assessment. We now have three years of, Common Core aligned, State assessment tests named Smarter Balance. Our goal is to incorporate standards-based curriculum materials and utilize teaching strategies that are best suited to our students' academic needs.

Our staffs consider daily classroom performance, formative assessments, and other measures of student achievement as a means to analyze the impact our school system is having on student success. By disaggregating student data, we are able to look at individual and common group (e.g. special populations) strengths and weaknesses as we plan, monitor, and adjust our instructional strategies. As a whole, Reedsport School District students, from year-to-year and grade-to-grade, demonstrate different levels of performance on the State assessment. Overall, Reedsport students are demonstrating OAKS performance success that is slightly below Comparable Schools (similar socioeconomic status) and the State averages, with our English language arts scores outpacing math performance. During the 2017 assessment year, high school math and reading scores significantly improved compared to the previous two years.

Local Efficiencies/Budgeting – In general, prior to 2016-2017, due to declining student enrollment, the district reduced operating expenses by reducing staff, combining duties, reducing programs, and contracting for a portion of services through our local education service district, South Coast ESD. However, the reduction of staffing, combined with ever-changing federal and state mandates, which continue to increase our accountability and reporting requirements, has continued to stretch the limits of our human resources. In addition, limited resources had been used to maintain essential student programs without providing resources for instructional materials replacement, comprehensive education options for students, facility maintenance projects, and other long-term investments.

I've worked with our part-time business manager to strategically plan for and fund areas, such as: a) long-term bonded debt, b) facility maintenance projects, c) instructional materials replacement, and d) technology replacement. Most recently, given the current district size and staffing configuration, along with supervisory needs within district, I've advised the Board that a half-time superintendent position was not sufficient time to manage and lead the Reedsport School District. Therefore, a full-time district administrator will be hired beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.

Two decades ago, Reedsport enrollment was around 1,200 students and had been in a steady decline since the early 1980's. However, our declining enrollment trend appears to have ended in 2011-12. Currently we are close to averaging 700 students in our district. We have increased enrollment by approximately 100 students in the past five years. As one can see (below), our annual budget revenue and student enrollment are growing at a moderate pace, which is a good thing for long-term stability.

Although our current financial picture is good, the 2017-2018 school year has seen an unanticipated increase in special population student needs. Our school district is currently providing Individual Educational Plan services for more than

18% of our total student population, which is five percent (5%) more than the State average of 13%, and seven percent (7%) more than our base State School Fund allocation for special needs students, which is 11%.. Considering our current 2017-2018 budget, we anticipate overspending more than \$100,000 above budget expense to support the needs of our special population students.

Considering our current revenues, expenses, anticipated increased costs, and potential leveling-off of enrollment gains, we need to consider short- and long-range budget planning that will help provide financial stability to the Reedsport School District, while continuing to meet the needs of our students. Our current district cash (ending fund balance) has grown during the last three years, but we expect a slight decline in available cash at the end of this year (June 2018) due to aforementioned, unanticipated increases in Special Education staffing. Our current cost increase expectations for next year will include increased Superintendent administrator time (half-time to full-time), along with employee cost of living adjustments, and potentially other program cost increases.

A six-year review of audited and budgeted comparative operating expense, followed by student enrollment numbers, is provided below:

General Fund Budget (Summary)

School Year	Revenues	Expenses	Ending Fund Balance
2012-13 (Audited)	\$5,233,405	\$5,413,733	\$244,586 (actual)
2013-14 (Audited)	\$5,514,946	\$5,502,165	\$257,367 (actual)
2014-15 (Audited)	\$6,511,758	\$6,103,235	\$615,890 (actual)
2015-16 (Audited)	\$7,619,770	\$6,728,512	\$907,148 (actual)
2016-17 (Audited)	\$8,123,886	\$7,612,458	\$1,158,576 (actual)
2017-18 (Budget)	\$8,791,122	\$8,241,096	\$550,026 (budgeted: contingency plus UEFB)

<u>Enrollment</u>	September	June	(Enrollment as per adopted Budget)
2012-13	598	578	597
2013-14	612	581	540
2014-15	635	616	545
2015-16	638	669	609
2016-17	702	668	655
2017-18	694	TBD (Dec 2017: 692)	681

Safe Educational Environment – Local policies and practices include efforts to reduce bullying and harassment at school and during school sponsored co-curricular activities. Reducing and addressing unwanted bullying and harassment behaviors in our school environments continues to be important improvement goals at both HES and RCCS. Providing student leaders with skills aimed at improving positive student-to-student interactions, along with training staff on utilizing Trauma Informed Practice strategies while interacting with students are key to our efforts.

Family and Community Engagement – The Reedsport School District is fortunate to have a core of supporting community groups, including, but not limited to, the Reedsport Education Enrichment Foundation, the Highland Parent Organization, the Reedsport Community Charter School Advisory Committee, and the Reedsport Booster Club. In a variety of ways, including structured parent information nights and fundraising efforts, our school and community partnership contributes to enhanced educational programs for our students.

Facilities – Reedsport facilities are in fair shape and are being maintained will by our custodial staff. Ten years ago, the passage of a facility construction bond provided timely upgrades at HES and RCCS for electrical service, energy efficient lighting, heating/ventilation, energy efficient windows and roofing. However, because of construction cost restrictions we are learning of several facility upgrade needs (heating, roofing, furniture, etc.) and must develop a short-term and long range facility plan, with supporting resources, to keep our facilities safe for our learning and work environment. This year, we received three Seismic Upgrade Construction Grants, approximately \$1,500,000 each, from the State of

Oregon – two at RCCS that will upgrade our main gym and auxiliary gym structures, and one at HES that will upgrade the classrooms, library, cafeteria, and office areas. After a July 2016 drinking water test in both schools, only one of 24 locations showed slightly elevated lead levels and the fountain was replaced. As per our Healthy and Safe Schools Plan, radon testing was performed several weeks ago. Of the 48 test areas, only three areas will be retested because the short-term passive test results indicated radon levels at the maximum threshold level (4.0 pCi/L – picocuries per liter of air).

Technology – This year, a District Technology Committee was formed for the purpose of aligning our curriculum with Oregon technology content standards. Our committee goal is to create a technology infrastructure plan, which aligns resources with student learning needs, teacher instructional needs, and reduces barriers to our efficient use of technology tools. Technology is a key component to our teaching and learning strategies and we want to ensure our students have technology skills commensurate with post-secondary and employability skill requirements.

Staff Leadership Development, Data Systems, and Data-Driving Planning – A critical long-term strategy for any organization is to encourage and promote leadership opportunities for staff. Professional Learning Communities, subsets of our continuous improvement strategies, are one way the District provides staff with leadership role experience. At RCCS, a Dean of Students/Athletic Director position was created to allow a licensed staff member to engage in a formal programs management role. In addition, a Student Services Coordinator role was developed at HES for the same leadership development purpose. My hope is future building and district administrators will emerge from within our staffs as a means to maintain consistency and focus on continuous improvement efforts.

Last year, we began using the Willamette Education Service District's Data Warehouse program as a vehicle to retrieve and utilize comprehensive student data. The Data Warehouse contains multiple years of state assessment, local assessment, attendance and related data for every student in our district. We have provided staff with two formal training sessions and are hopeful the continued use of the data system will lead to data-driving planning and decision making for all students.

Individual Learning Plans for all Students – Our district provides individualized education plans for approximately 120 special education students. Also, beginning at the 7th grade level, efforts to improve our Education /Career Path Plans for middle and high school students are targeted for overall improvement. Formal supplemental learning programs are in place for identified elementary students in need of core reading skill development (Title I), learning disabled (IDEA), and other federal medical condition (504 plan) qualified students. In addition, students may be identified for additional supports, such as: remediation, tutoring, credit recovery, grade retention, and other alternative learning environment settings. As all students move through our elementary, middle, and high school grades, individual educational plans, with career learning goals, are developed and tracked using student portfolios.

Review of student and staff characteristics – Our District operates two school buildings. Highland Elementary School operates Kindergarten through sixth grade classrooms and, as of this report, had a total enrollment of 361 students. The Reedsport Community Charter School operates seventh through twelfth grades and currently has an enrollment of 335 students. HES class sizes are averaging 24 students per class and RCCS classes average 22 students per class. Approximately 80% of our students are White, Hispanic/Latino students make up 10% of our population, approximately 5% of our students are American Indian/Alaska Native, 1% of our students are Black/African American, and 4% of our students report they are Multi-Racial. Students with specific learning disabilities make up approximately 18% of our population. Our student mobility rate, those moving in or out of our district during the school year, is averaging 23%.

All Reedsport School District classes are taught by highly qualified teachers, as monitored by Oregon Teachers Standards and Practices Commission, and as denoted by their current licenses and registrations for public school teaching. Last year, the average teaching experience in our school district is 15 years.

Conclusion – I believe the Reedsport school community is supportive of the public education system in our community. Based on my experience as a visiting educator in the early 1990's and having been the district superintendent since February 2016, three decades later, there are distinct socioeconomic differences in our community. I believe our most important work must be to better understand the changing needs of our students and families. We must provide students with educational rigor, in the context of relevance to their experiences. Above all, we must develop positive rapport with parents and positive relationships with students if we expect to help all students achieve academic and social success – I believe this is our most critical school improvement challenge. Please contact me at 541-271-3656 or at dforbess@reedsport.k12.or.us if you have any questions about your Reedsport School District. Thank you!