

**Superintendent's  
Welcome Back Message  
2010-2011**

Welcome back to school! Those are words that carry a great deal of meaning to me. Opening a new school year enforces my belief that we have wonderful opportunities to make a difference in the lives of our students and that we are extremely fortunate to live in a community that values education. As we begin this school year, please know that it takes exceptional staff, informed parents and involved community members to create the best possible arena for learning.

As I write this article today, we find that our state aid has been significantly reduced. Unfortunately, I continue to receive reports that the financial situation of the state is not improving. In fact, they are cautioning school districts to plan prudently as the next couple of years may see an even deeper cut to public school funding. Therefore, we are looking at a very challenging budget season ahead of us. A sound financial foundation for the District remains of highest concern and, staff continues to focus on the mission of making sure our students receive the best education possible. Teachers, support staff and administrators all take great pride in working in a school system and community that produces outstanding learners. Time will tell in which direction the state will move in terms of cutting aid to schools. The business office and I will continue doing our level best to keep costs down and continue to plan conservatively for the financial future of the district. We are all being directly impacted by the state of our economy, and I am sensitive to the financial stresses many of you are experiencing.

My commitment to you as parents and taxpayers is that this school district will continue to strive in providing the best education possible so your children will be inspired to learn and to understand their potential in becoming skillful and thoughtful citizens who are equipped to play central roles in our community and our nation. Student achievement remains our highest priority, and we will continue to align resources to ensure success for every student as measured by state, national and international standards of academic performance. With our district operating on a minimized budget, your continued support will be more valuable than ever.

We are building a collaborative and respectful relationship with our Teachers' Association and were successful in retaining a higher percentage of staff for this school year. Our people are our strength. We have highly qualified and dedicated staff serving our wonderfully diverse student population. We are also fortunate to have a supportive and involved parent community. We are not letting the state budget crisis distract us from our primary mission, which is raising achievement for all students and closing the achievement gap!

We had several staff retire last year and wish them well. But, we would also like to welcome our new staff members to the Clatskanie team. New to the grade school are Hallie Vossen, 6<sup>th</sup> grade and Diane Arnst, Special Ed. At the middle/high school we welcome CJ Butenschoen, Science; Neil Riniger, Special Ed.; Mary Sizemore, Language Arts and Renee Wells, PE. We also have a new Speech Language Pathologist for the district who is a long standing resident of Clatskanie, Stephana Held.

I wish you all the most enjoyable and successful school year yet. I look forward to another exciting year of watching our fine students learn, achieve and grow!