



## **Butte Falls School District #91**

P.O. Box 228 • 720 Laurel Avenue • Butte Falls, OR 97522

(541) 865-3563 • fax (541) 865-3217

*Be Safe. Be Respectful. Be Responsible.*

January 8, 2018

### **Dear Butte Falls Charter School Parents (and Students),**

We are almost half-way through the 2017-18 school year. Like many, I was thankful for the winter break as it gave me a chance to catch my breath after a very busy start to school. School is now back in session and we are sprinting forward toward spring. I wanted to update you on several items of interest.

**Rapid Enrollment Growth.** This past fall was especially busy as our enrollment increased substantially—from 180 to 230. While we anticipated some of this growth by hiring a new elementary teacher in the fall and adding a half-position at the secondary campus, we have continued to add part-time teachers and aides to support the needs of our larger student population.

**Sports Collaboration with Crater Lake Charter Academy (CLCA).** Our recent agreement with CLCA created some growing pains for our athletic program. While the partnership resulted in many more opportunities for our students to play a sport, it also increased the demands on our gymnasiums, coaches, and transportation services. Additionally, we thank parents and staff who have stepped in the gap to help support this infusion of athletic energy and hope in our athletic program. Thank you also to community members who have turned out to support our student athletes at games. We are working to refine our programs so that students get the maximum benefit for them.

**Student and Staff Safety—Cameras and secure doors.** The addition of cameras to our elementary campus this past summer has helped reduce inappropriate behavior at the school in the evening and on weekends. We added cameras on our buses as well as temporary bus monitors to coach students on following expectations. Bus rider behavior has been marked better this year. We also added additional emergency exit doors to our modular classrooms and upgraded locks so we can better secure classrooms in the event of an emergency.

**Student and Staff Safety—Appropriate Interpersonal Boundaries.** As some of you are aware, several students raised concerns about uncomfortable interactions with a staff member at our high school campus. While we did not effectively respond to this when we initially learned of the concerns from one student in late-September, additional reports including those from several other students in mid-November caused us to thoroughly investigate and attend to the matter. It is a challenge to sort through such matters while respecting individual rights. It is

important, however, to ensure our students and staff can bring such concerns to the district and know that they will be heard and attended to in a safe and respectful manner. That takes courage. We want to encourage such courage.

**Student and Staff Safety—Additional Training and Support.** We are now reviewing our practices and policies for responding to such concerns and looking for ways we can improve. The district will offering additional staff training for all employees and reviewing practices and policies to ensure respectful and appropriate interpersonal boundaries are maintained. If you have a specific concern regarding this matter, please contact me at 541-865-3563 (select option 3). If I am not available, leave a voice message and I will get back to you.

**Student and Staff Safety—Social Media.** One consequence of the concerns raised by the students was that some unkind, inappropriate, and inaccurate posts appeared on social media. Such posts can be considered cyber-bullying or cyber-harassment. We encourage you to monitor the social media activities of your student to ensure your student does not suffer from (or participate in) such harassment. Consequences for students who engage in such behavior can include suspension, expulsion and revocation of the right to apply or continue driving privileges by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

**It may get noisy this winter!** We have just heard back from our new construction contractor, Ausland Group, with news that they are poised to begin the seismic retrofit of our high school and gymnasium in the coming weeks and months. The retrofit will result in a safer learning place for our students. It will also mean that we will likely be shifting classrooms around to accommodate the retrofit work. Look for an update on this important safety project in upcoming newsletters.

**About that Winter Weather.** We have been fortunate not to have as severe of a winter this year as last. Nonetheless, please remember if we do close school for inclement weather or other emergency, we have reserved three Fridays as makeup days. The dates are January 19, February 23 and June 1. If we do not need to make up any days, these will revert to non-school days.

Raising children to adulthood is a serious endeavor. We are striving to be a strong partner with parents in this undertaking. Thank you for entrusting your student to us and for providing helpful feedback to our staff and our district on ways we can improve.

Sincerely,



Dr. Phil Long, Superintendent



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