



The Superintendent's Monthly Musings...

A monthly communication for the staff of the Montrose Community Schools

March 2015

Refunding Bonds— A Big Win for Montrose

At their regular meeting on February 24, the Board Education approved a sale agreement for the refunding of bonds that have maturity dates ranging from 2023 through 2026. With the existing bonds carrying an interest rate of 4.17% and our ability to secure a new rate of 2.38%, the taxpayers of our district will save \$268,874 in interest fees over the life of the bonds. In addition, this process will also lower the district's borrowing need from the School Bond Loan Fund, which is anticipated to save another \$740,705 over future years. In total, this agreement is projected to achieve \$1,009,579 in cost avoidance for our community. While this amount of money does not translate into more money into our general operating fund, it does reflect good stewardship of the community's resources. Hats off to Mrs. Lynne Clark for her months of work with multiple firms to make this accomplishment possible.



Introducing Our Newest Board Member

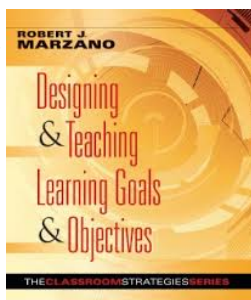
With the School Board vacancy created when Mr. Kurt Henige's term ended on January 1, 2015, remaining Board members interviewed three candidates and voted to appoint **Mr. Christopher Zolinski** to fill the seat through 2016. Mr. Zolinski has an impressive professional background in the area of technology and possesses a Master's degree in Computer Information Systems from the University of Michigan. Mr. Zolinski and his wife are the proud parents of a daughter who attends our SKIP program and are also the family hosts to our German foreign exchange student, Vera Suebyeci. **Welcome!**



Staff, students, and parents are being asked to participate in a series of surveys over the next few weeks. These surveys are part of a process known as High Reliability Schools (HRS), which is a systemic way to help schools identify and correct shortcomings in their operations and culture through the collection, analysis, and response to stakeholder perceptions, as well as qualitative data from multiple areas of school operations. Surveys are already posted on our school webpage and building principals will be sharing information with their respective staff in the near future. Thanks in advance for your participation and candid feedback.

Learning Together - April 23

The staff development topic on April 23 will be focused on **Designing Teaching and Learning Goals and Objectives**. Our presenter for the day will be Dr. Phil Warrick who currently serves as the Associate Vice President of the Marzano Research Lab. This training is another layer of learning and sharing in our goal to build a common language of instruction and consistent framework for professional practice. Learning outcomes for the day are as follows:



- Distinguish between true learning goals and mere activities or assignments
- Understand the difference between declarative and procedural knowledge
- Translate broad standards into specific learning goals
- Design goals at varying levels of difficulty and differentiate content for student needs
- Explore four levels of cognition and how to design corresponding assessment items and tasks
- Implement learning goals effectively over the course of a unit or school year

While more specifics for the day will be provided as we get closer to the date, we do know that lunch will be provided by the district and all instructional staff will receive a copy of the book, *Designing & Teaching Learning Goals & Objectives* by Robert Marzano (2009). This training and related resources are made possible through the planned and prudent use of Title II, Part A funds. Kudos to Ms. Rhonda Barber and Mrs. Cassandra Jackson for their work in securing this learning opportunity.

Through a cooperative agreement with the GISD, we have been able to secure the instructional technology support of **Mr. Casey Schaub**. Casey is on-site at least two days per week to provide individual and group support to all staff members in the area of technology applications (not repair). This agreement was created in response to the need to develop our collective capacity to make the best use of the technology resources available and to support the effective integration of technology as an instructional tool.



Among Casey's initial priorities includes the introduction of staff members to the power of the Illuminate program (assessment and data warehouse). Casey will also be helping staff members utilize **Reflector**, which is an application that mirrors the instructor's desktop with their iPad so that they can control what is projected on the Sharp monitor from anywhere in the classroom. Be sure to look for Casey's future email communications for more information and how to benefit from his expertise.