



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

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Dear Staff, Families and Lowellians,

Happy Spring! Hopefully I have made the last wrong snow call for the season. The next storm we have to weather is the budget season. Unfortunately the School Department faces another significant cut to its budget due to the financial difficulties we continue to experience at the federal, state and city levels. I encourage you to attend the Finance Subcommittee meetings listed below, as very important and difficult decisions will be made over the next few months that will have a significant impact on our school district.

- Wednesday March 17, 2010 Finance & Operations
- Wednesday April 7, 2010 Lowell High School
- Wednesday April 21, 2010 Student Support Services (including Special Education)
- Wednesday May 5, 2010 K – 8 Schools
- Wednesday, May 19, 2010 Budget Presentation to take place at the 7pm Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Time and Location for all meetings above will be: @6:00PM
City Hall, Council Chambers

On March 2, 2010 Lowell Public Schools received official notification from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that the Charlotte M. Murkland Elementary School had

been designated a Level 4 School under the Education Reform Act. Under this statute districts must select one of four “turnaround” models to insure that significant and measureable improvements are implemented to serve the needs of students. In addition, the district must demonstrate its capacity to implement its selected model effectively over three years.

This designation of the Murkland School has been anticipated for some time. To that end, and in an effort to proactively address issues at the school, Murkland School staff, district personnel and representatives from the United Teachers of Lowell have worked collaboratively to position the school for sustained improvement while also developing plans for immediate short term gains for students.

It is my pleasure to inform you that the following winter athletic teams did qualify for the MIAA Team Academic Excellence Award at either the Silver or Gold Levels:

Silver Level Award winners: Girls’ Basketball (JV), Boys’ Basketball (JV), Boys’ Gymnastics (Varsity), Girls’ Gymnastics (Varsity), Girls’ Gymnastics (JV)

Gold Level Award winners: Boys’ Swimming (Varsity), Girls’ Track & Field (Varsity), Girls’ Track & Field (JV), Boys’ Track & Field (Varsity), Boys’ Alpine Skiing (Varsity), Girls’ Alpine Skiing (Varsity), Girls’ Basketball (Varsity), Girls’ Basketball (Freshman), Boys’ Ice Hockey (Varsity)

Cheerleading earned an MSSAA Gold Level Team Academic Excellence Award.

The combined GPA of our eleven winter varsity sports is 3.15, so as a program our teams are achieving at the Gold Level. This level of academic achievement is not possible without the support provided by the Friends of Lowell High School and their committees; thanks for all that you do for the students.

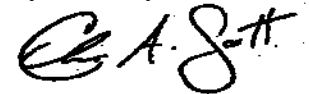
Congratulations to the students and staff at the J. G. PyneArts School for their production of Seussical Jr. It was an impressive production and showcased the many talents of both our students and staff. My congratulations – and thanks – also go to the 4th grade Abraham Lincoln School students and staff for a wonderful performance of the show Assignment Earth held here at the Administration offices. We had another exciting Knowledge Bowl competition this year with the Daley School taking 1st Place, 2nd Place went to the Wang and 3rd to the Sullivan School. Thanks to the students and coaches from all of our Middle Schools who made this year’s competition so worthwhile. The collegial spirit of cooperation, teamwork and respect was impressive to see from all of the students.

The work that we have done in the district to establish professional learning communities which focuses on collaboration at every grade level in order to improve student achievement is the key to our

school reform efforts. Educators are given the opportunity to collectively pool their professional skills in order to analyze the data and determine the most appropriate instructional strategies for their students. We are establishing the “cycle of inquiry” at every grade level so that educators have the opportunity to have professional conversations about teaching and learning. We believe that we will be able to continue to move our district forward because our focus has been and will continue to be on building internal capacity through the on-going promotion of healthy professional learning communities. This work has received both national and state recognition by the American Federation of Teachers [AFT]. Please refer to our district’s blog: lowellpublic.blogspot.com where this story is posted, as it appears on the front page of the AFT Massachusetts journal The Advocate March 2010. As many have heard me say “Lowell Public Schools is the coolest Urban School District” and we have many reasons to be proud – this successful initiative is just another example.

Please feel free to contact me at any time – my door is always open.

My best to you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.