

## **From the Superintendent's Desk**

### **Greetings Future Tigers, Cubs and Tigers,**

It is hard to believe that May is here and we are headed into the final homestretch. The 2016-17 year was full of activity, fun, celebrations, some disappointments and challenges. Overall, it has been a great year for La Junta Schools.

Our state testing window has closed and the buildings will now move forward to the local end of year assessments along with field trips, concerts, and all of the end of year events in which we are used to participating. We will be putting together our end of year testing data for our June Newsletter. We are still not where we want to be academically, but we are consistently improving and I have been proud of the efforts of our students and staff. We will continue to drive forward to meet our goals!

We will be presenting before the CDE BEST Grant board on May 18. Shortly after, we will find out whether or not we will be awarded the grant for renovations and additions to our Primary School. The project total is estimated at approximately \$12 Million. The district match is 28% which is approximately 3.4 Million. The district is exploring the options of a possible bond election and also options with our existing bonds. In either case, the hope is to minimize the impact for our local taxpayers while providing major improvements to the facilities for our young students at La Junta Primary School.

We are still in the competition for the Donnell Kay Foundation grant to help schools leverage the 5<sup>th</sup> day on a 4-day week. I have been in close contact with the La Junta Parks and Recreation, La Junta Public Library and Southeast Health Group to help develop ideas for activities and programs for our La Junta students on Fridays for the upcoming year. We hope to pilot a couple of activities this summer to help develop the logistics. Regardless of the receipt of the grant, I am very confident that there will be some exciting opportunities for enrichment and support for our kids.

Our high school is in the process of looking at the current graduation requirements and the possible revision of the policy to include a college bound program along with a workforce program. Both would require the same number of credits to graduate, but the core academic coursework would be mostly online for the workforce programs. Students who may want to develop skills and trades to enter directly into the workforce could possibly get their courses complete with an online platform, then take electives on campus in line with their ICAP (Individual Career and Academic Plan). With this proposed revision, we would hope to improve our local work force along with increasing our graduation rates by providing more students with the skills they need to be successful beyond high school. Right now the policy is still in the drafting phase.

Finally, as we head into summer, I would like to personally thank the staff, parents, community and students for the efforts to continuously improve La Junta Schools. As with any school, we have our peaks and valleys, but the pride and support of the La Junta community is second to none! I am very proud and honored to be part of the La Junta School District!...**TIGER PRIDE!**