

From the Superintendent

Happy Holidays!

We are heading towards the midpoint of the school year and I have included a few items for you. First, I would like to go through some information concerning school funding including the state aid formula and changes that happened in the special session of the Legislature and I have included the weather cancellation information again just in case you missed it last month.

SPECIAL SESSION – The Nebraska Legislature met during the month of November for the sole purpose of amending the budget. Since passing the two year budget earlier in the year, the forecasts for tax receipts have been lower than expected and that means there is not enough money to pay for all that has been budgeted.

During the special session, there were several areas that were cut and money to education in the form of state aid to K-12 schools in the amount of over \$30 million. State aid is given to some schools using a very complicated and unpredictable model. At this time, Wakefield school received \$1.6 million for the 2009-2010 school year. With the loss of money due to the budget shortfalls, the prediction for the 2010-2011 school year is that we will receive between \$1.6 to 1.7 million. The reason why the exact amount is unknown is because the state is using old data to predict these numbers and we are unsure what the Legislature is going to do in its regular session in the spring.

What does this mean for Wakefield Community School? Quite honestly, we will not know the full extent of the loss in state aid and how it will shape our decisions until after the regular session closes next spring. We are in the process of looking at where every dollar is being spent and how we can be thrifter than normal. If you would like to contact our state senator his name is Robert Giese and his office number is (402) 471-2716. Senator Giese is on the Education Committee where the most recent cuts have been created and ultimately passed.

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS - Now it is time to talk about the weather. Soon it will turn cold and the question will arise regarding school postponement or cancellation due to inclement weather. My decision focuses on whether or not students can safely be transported to school. If we have school and a parent believes that it is unsafe to travel, that parent is free to (and encouraged to) make their own decision.

The information will be provided to media, it is not always accurate due to technical difficulties, or sometimes the stations are overloaded, so utilize more than a single source of information:

- ❖ **INTERNET:** SnowCap: <http://snocaponline.net> - register to have automatic alerts sent to your mobile phone or email. We have placed instructions on our website and in this newsletter going step-by-step on how to sign up for this free service.

- ❖ TV: KTIV (Channel 4) has its own system and it seems to be the most reliable. I contact all Sioux City TV stations and a “central clearing site,” but there are often problems—proceed with caution.
- ❖ Radio: Tune to KTCH in Wayne and KNEN, KEXL, & KUSO (US92) all in Norfolk.
 - Click on the “Alert 4 School Announcements” at the KTIV website <http://www.ktiv.com>