

Friday, April 12, 2013

Dear Family and Friends of the School District of Fort Atkinson,

"Spring is the time of plans and projects."

Leo Tolstoy (from his novel Anna Karenina)

I begin this letter from the sunny Gulf Shores of Alabama. My wife, Therese, and I began our drive south on March 28 and finally escaped the snow as we entered the state of Kentucky. Illinois is one long state down Interstate 57! I had a lingering cold that exacerbated my asthma most of the months of February and March. It is amazing what sunny days with temperatures of 75 degrees can do, not only for a cold but, for your psyche as well. I feel rejuvenated after a few nice walks along the Gulf Beach. As we make our way north April 4, I hope to drag this sunny and warm weather with us as we make our way back to Fort.

I like the quote above as it reminds me spring is a good time to feel energized to make plans and attempt projects that give us something to accomplish. Especially if it is a plan or project that advances the greater good of not just ourselves but others! I think winter can cause us to get in a rut and sometimes our motivation and energy can wane. Spring invigorates us – it gets us going; it puts a *hop in our step*; the sound of tractors and farmers working in their fields; the smell of grass after a nice evening shower as the sun rises; the leaves on the trees beginning to blossom; and Wrigley Field and Miller Park start coming alive again with baseball for Cub and Brewer fans! (Okay, I stretched it with my Cubbies ☺)! Anyway, spring is here and I hope it is a good time for you as it usually is for me!

Legislative Forum, Monday Night, April 15, at Luther 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. – Biennium Budget. Invitations have been sent out to Senators Neal Kedzie and Tim Cullen and Representatives Steve Nass and Andy Jorgensen to participate in a discussion on the Governor's Budget including their views on PK-12 education funding as proposed by the Governor in February.

I have shared in past newsletters, columns, and Daily Union articles, my disappointment in the Governor's proposal that drastically lacks the support public schools need and deserve in remaining one of the top state public school systems in our country. In the Governor's Budget with a freeze on the revenue limit, not a dime goes into classrooms or teaching and learning with the freeze, while funding for voucher schools, private schools, and choice schools would be increased dramatically and siphoned from public school aid. Adding insult to injury these voucher schools have no accountability measures while public schools must comply with accountability mandates for student performance, educator licensing, and special education. The Joint Finance Committee is currently meeting around the state in four meetings. The closest meeting to us was in Greenfield a week ago.

In many communities, local legislators have met with School Boards and citizens over the budget proposal of the Governor that is now in the hands of the legislature to mull over and ultimately finalize for the Governor to sign or veto (in part or in whole) by June 30th. We hope our local legislators will accept our invitation April 15 in giving our citizens a chance to be heard while they share their thoughts and views on the Governor's proposed budget and where they stand on public school funding and the voucher program.

Below are our representatives and their contact information. Please request of them fair funding for your children in Fort Atkinson, and children in all public schools in Wisconsin, and a revenue limit increase of no less than \$150 as proposed by Senators Luther Olson and Mike Ellis and supported by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards, of which our Board Members in Fort Atkinson are members.

- Representative Stephen Nass, rep.nass@legis.wisconsin.gov, (608) 266-5715
- Representative Andy Jorgensen, rep.jorgensen@legis.wisconsin.gov, (608) 266-3790
- Senator Neal Kedzie, sen.kedzie@legis.wisconsin.gov, (608) 266-2635

Board of Education Election Results: Mr. Bob Chady was reelected to the Board of Education on April 2nd, along with newcomer Bob Vincent. We thank Kent Koebke, a former Board Member, who also ran in this election per his willingness to serve once again. We feel fortunate in Fort Atkinson we had very fine individuals who ran for Board of Education seats for the right reasons—their desire for finer education.

We will also be very sad to see Carrie Chisholm leave our Board. During her two terms (plus completing the unfinished term of the late Mrs. Lee Chadwick) she served very loyally. Her peers on the Board would acknowledge (along with yours truly) that Carrie accepted graciously some of the most difficult committee assignments and provided great leadership in many initiatives that have advanced our district during her years of service. She will be missed!

Open Enrollment Application Window Now Open until April 30 at 4 p.m.: The open enrollment window is now open and extends until April 30 at 4:00 p.m. We have a link on our website to the Department of Public Instruction's on-line application or we have paper copies in our office. If you have any questions, please contact my assistant, Debbie Kopps at 563-7807. If you know of families outside of our district who might desire to open enroll to our district, please pass this information on informing them to have their open enrollment paperwork completed by April 30 at 4:00 p.m.

Badger Conference Art Show Saturday April 13 at 1 p.m.: We have some great artists in our district—that is for sure! The Badger Conference Art Show is being held at Edgewood High School in Madison, Wisconsin on March 24. One of the reasons I have always liked the Badger Conference is that all the schools in the conference are high performing schools not just in athletics but in academics and the arts as well. I want to thank Angie Szabo and Andrea Goswitz. They do a great job getting our students prepared for this show.

Service Awards Program Reception held March 26: We recognized honorees that reached milestone benchmarks per their years of service in Fort Atkinson. Without a doubt our community has been blessed to have devoted and caring staff members who work in our learning community. Listed are our 2013 honorees, who per a “Fort ritual” received the Fort coffee mug.

35 Years - Maurice Jenks.

30 Years - James Haag, Bobbie Rawinski and Randall Vandiver.

25 Years - Rick Brietzke, Sandy Brokl, Martha Firari, Sandy McClain, Norma Rockwood, Roger Rumppe, Linda Schroeder, Jerry Searing, Kay Swetland, and Brenda Thayer.

20 Years - Steven Bakken, Cynthia Bliss, Jacqueline Green, Joan Gozy, Janice Madson, Kelly Ramirez, Chris Reed, and Sandra Stone.

15 Years - Mary Baldwin, Sally Davis, Kevin Diece, Lynn Dowgwillo, Theodore Hanson, Jeffrey Jensen, Rhonda Klingman, Dana Linde, Steven Merkel, Amy Oakley, Patty Snyder, Ginny Timm, Renee Vierck, and Heidi Wegner.

10 Years - Kaaren Adams, Leanne Bongers, Kris England, Justin Frey, Jamie Hahn, Nick Hamele, Candice Johnson, Mari Jones, Linda Kolodzne, Michael Murray, Denise Poeppel, Jen Prowitz, Lisa Schuenke, and Kim Westby.

Rotary Club and Khan Academy: Many of you may have gone on-line and saw the tutorials that the Khan Academy provides students, mostly in the area of Mathematics. Enclosed in this mailing is an information sheet about the Fort Atkinson Rotary Khan Academy Program. Please read it and sign the information sheet giving your approval for your child to participate. Then have your child bring the form back to his/her teacher. (In Middle School bring it to the homeroom teacher). We support this Rotary Program and think your child might find the program very interesting. There will be prizes for the school and individual students who earn the most *Energy Points*. Please turn these forms in by May 1.

Timeline for Budget Development for 2013-2014: As of this writing, we are hoping for the best per the final draft and approval of the Biennium Budget for 2013-2015. Like all districts, we make assumptions based on the best information we have at the time and hope we can meet our needs. Below is our timeline for establishing the 2013-2014 District Budget.

- **Thursday, April 18 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education**—Board considers staffing increase request.
- **May 16 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education:** The Board has a first reading of the 2013-2014 Budget presented by Mr. Demerath, Director of Business Services.
- **June 20 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education:** Second reading of the proposed 2013-2014 Budget for the Board to approve and take to the Annual Meeting.
- **Monday, July 22 Annual Meeting at 8 PM to approve 2013-2014 School Property Tax Levy.** The Annual Meeting follows the regular July Board Meeting beginning at 7:00 PM.

Sponsorship Deadline Coming Up June 1: Just a reminder that we have a Sponsorship deadline coming up June 1. We began this program last year and we have had great success. For more information, please go to our website www.fortschools.org. On the left, please click on *District* and then *Sponsorships*. Once there you will see *Sponsorship Guide*. You will see the many opportunities available. Keep in mind too, if you have an idea not listed in the guide we would certainly entertain your proposal. These sponsorship opportunities are a way for businesses to gain exposure in the community, for individuals to dedicate a specific facility that holds a special place for them, or even for an organization to assist the district in achieving its academic goals.

Rotary Pancake Breakfast is this Sunday, April 21 from 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM—Bring your appetite! The proceeds from this fundraiser benefit the many programs Rotary supports in our school district.

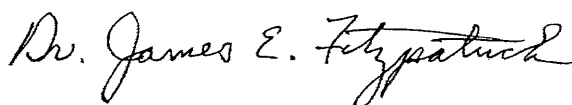
Summer School 2013 will begin on June 19 through July 19 (No school July 4 & 5). For information, go to our District website (www.fortschools.org), click on the Parents & Students tab and then the Summer School link. Registration will begin Tuesday, April 30, at 4:00 p.m. The Luther Elementary Computer Lab will be open from 4:00-6:30 that day for anyone who needs access to computers or assistance. Please remember payment is due at time of registration. If you have any questions, please call the Summer School Office at 563-7801 and Cindy Fairfield can assist you.

Early Dismissals: Just a reminder of our early dismissals on April 19, May 10 and June 11.

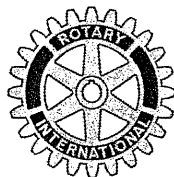
In closing, thank you for the many kind cards and messages per my retirement. I have a lot left to accomplish in my last two months and I am delighted to pass on the leadership torch to my colleague Dr. Zaspel whom I know will do a great job in advancing this learning community.

I look forward to seeing you at many spring events in the upcoming weeks. The fourth quarter of the year is fast paced and wonderful with many celebrations—the ultimate being Graduation for the Class of 2013. Take care and get those spring and summer clothes out—then the good weather has to come!

With kindest regards,



Dr. James Fitzpatrick
Superintendent
School District of Fort Atkinson



ROTARY CLUB

Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin

Dear Fort Atkinson Parents & Students,

As featured in the Rotarian magazine, the Rotary Club of Fort Atkinson is proud to announce its first ever, on-line, Khan Academy Summer Math Challenge. Khan Academy is an organization on a mission. Endorsed by Bill Gates and Rotary International, they are a not-for-profit with the goal of changing education for the better by providing a free world-class education for anyone anywhere.

It doesn't matter if you are a student, teacher, home-schooler, principal, adult returning to the classroom after 20 years, or a friendly alien just trying to get a leg up in earthly biology. Khan Academy's materials and resources are available to you completely free of charge. Math, Chemistry, Art History, Finance, Biology, U.S. History you name it, Khan Academy teaches it.

Khan Academy Math is full of game mechanics. As soon as your child logs in, they'll start earning badges and points for learning. The more they challenge themselves, the more bragging rights they'll get! We've heard of students spending hour after hour watching physics videos and 5th graders relentlessly tackling college-level math to earn Khan Academy badges. Some of the smaller badges are very easy, but some of the legendary badges are a lot more challenging. At the end of the summer, the school that has earned the most Energy Points will be recognized by and earn a prize from the Fort Atkinson Rotary Club.

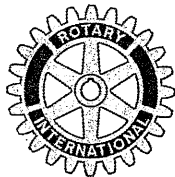
Sign-up on the back of this sheet so that your child can also gain access to:

1. FREE - On-line math challenges and opportunities to earn badges, energy points, etc..
2. FREE - Videos (for when they get stuck) from basic addition to advanced calculus.
3. FREE - Participation in their school's quest for Energy Points and Rotary sponsored prizes.
4. FREE - Opportunity to enjoy math (and other subjects) at their own pace - fast or slow.
5. FREE - Frosty Freeze Party to the school with the most Energy Points per participant.
6. FREE - Prizes to students whose math has earned the most Energy Points.

Fill out the form on the back of this page and have your child return it to his/her teacher. The Fort Atkinson Rotary Club will make sure your child is enrolled in the Khan Academy before school ends. After they have been enrolled this sheet will be returned to you so that you and your child have the necessary information to access the Khan Academy.

Alternatively, parents can sign up their children directly at www.khanacademy.org. Be sure to input rotaryfortatkinson@gmail.com as your child's "coach" so that we can make sure your child's efforts are tracked and recognized. Also do this if your child already has a Khan Academy account.

TURN OVER, FILL OUT BACK, RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER



ROTARY CLUB

Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin

If you approve of your child(ren) participating in this program, please provide the information below and sign where indicated. By signing you confirm that you are your child's parent or legal guardian and agree to the Khan Academy's Terms of Service (www.khanacademy.org/about/tos) and Privacy Policy (www.khanacademy.org/about/privacy-policy). Furthermore, you give permission to the Fort Atkinson Rotary Club to create a Khan Academy account for your child on your behalf. If you have multiple children participating feel free to make copies of this form or add the required information in the margins.

Again, parents can sign up their children directly at www.khanacademy.org. Be sure to input rotaryfortatkinson@gmail.com as your child's "coach" so that we can make sure your child's efforts are tracked and recognized by the Fort Atkinson Rotary Club.

Student(s) name(s): _____

Does your student already have a Khan Academy account?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Create a Student Khan Academy on-line username: _____

(Letters only, no spaces, ex. JSmith; if your child already has a Khan Academy account, please provide the child's existing username above)

Create a Student Khan Academy password: _____

(Minimum 5 characters, different from username; if your child already has a Khan Academy account, then you do NOT have to write down the password as long as your child knows it.)

Student's birthdate: _____

Student's current school: _____

Parent/guardian e-mail: _____

If you want to see how your child is learning on Khan Academy, we encourage you to create your own Khan Academy account as well. You'll be able to see what your child is working on, and there's plenty of material on the site for you to learn anything you want, too. Simply go to www.khanacademy.org and click Sign Up to get your own account.

Please sign below to give your child permission to use Khan Academy this summer.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

(For Middle School students, return to Homeroom Teacher)