

October 2017

Building a school community that learns, grows, lives, works, and leads.

As I was driving down 16th street between Central High School, Talmadge Middle School, and Ash Creek Elementary, I was reflecting on my first three months in the Central School District 13J community. I kept reflecting on the word community. When key words resonate with me, I refer back to their definition(s) to indulge my reflective connection to that word. There are several different definitions of community: a group of people living in the same place; a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals; or an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location. In this reflection of the different definitions, I realized that many of us live each day in several different communities. For example, our family community, school community, and work community to name a few. Some may have connections to one another and some may not. Throughout my first three months, I have had the opportunity to see and learn about the many different communities within each of the five schools, district departments, as well as the greater Independence and Monmouth communities. All of these connected make up the great community I have the honor of serving each and every day as the Superintendent.

As one of the educational leaders within this community, it is vital we continuously foster environments where learning, growth, working, and leading are prevalent. As I have met with students, staff, families, and community leaders it is clear this type of environment is being fostered. Within any community, it is important that we build a culture of trust, we build a culture of relationship, we build a culture of communication, and we build a culture of understanding. Please know, within these different communities, there will be times we will agree to disagree and view things different. Which is always a great way to learn and grow, by listening to understand and reflecting on those differences. But, the capacity of a human community, is people living and working together, learning, growing, and leading, to bring forth new realities, for the success of Central School District 13J, students, families, staff, and the greater communities we are in.

To close, I want to share a few anonymous quotes from Central staff as I asked them to reflect on their dreams for students, families, and the greater Central community.

In regard to students: That they “love to learn.” That they “experience the joy of realizing they can be successful beyond their wildest imagination,” and “have a feeling of accomplishment in whatever they do.”

In regard to families: That they “feel welcome and involved within the schools.”

In regard to community: That we “work together to support the needs of students, families, staff, and the greater community.”

Our work together has just begun in Central School District 13J, a gem of a school district, located in the beautiful Willamette Valley. I look forward to working with the many communities that make up Central as we continue to polish this gem in support of our students, staff, and families.

Jennifer Kubista, Superintendent