

## School District Superintendent letter – used February 2009

Dear Staff,

We have a strong tradition of generosity in our district. Building by building, our parents, staff and students raise funds for food banks, scholarships, holiday baskets, and many other causes. I am so very proud of all we do to give to our community and teach our students the value of sharing and giving.

Starting February 9, we are taking our generosity to a new level. Our school community is launching our first ever district-wide fundraiser, Pennies for Peace. Our goal is to raise \$50,000, enough to build a village school in Pakistan or Afghanistan and endow it for 3-5 years. And we mean to do it one penny at a time, so every student can be an active participant, no matter what their family's level of income may be.

As a community that clearly places learning and education high on our list of core values, it's hard to comprehend there are children today who have no access to schools, or even books, pencils, or other things we consider to be the most basic tools for learning. Sometimes our world problems seem so big we forget that together we can accomplish great things. In our economy, a penny has become worthless, but in Pakistan a penny buys a pencil. Pennies for Peace was specifically designed for children, to teach the rewards of sharing and giving, and the power each of us has to make a difference in the world.

Pennies for Peace is different from anything we have attempted in the past. In every school, it is our students who are taking the leadership roles to plan the fundraising activities. Parent organizations and "Watch DOG" Dads are handling the money and working out logistics in supporting roles, and a core team of teachers have developed related lessons for all grade levels. The Snohomish Education Foundation has generously provided a class set of the book *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time* in the appropriate reading levels for every school.

This is truly a collaborative effort from our entire school community, and I am so very proud of the way we are all working together, modeling collaboration and empowering our students, preparing them to be strong future leaders in our global society. I am proud that we demonstrate the value we place on education by providing access to education for other children.

If you haven't yet read *Three Cups of Tea*, I encourage you to do so. I think you will be inspired by Greg Mortenson, recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and all he has accomplished.

I am excited about Pennies for Peace and what we can achieve when we work together. We have set a big goal for ourselves, but we will reach it if each of our students contributes just 527 pennies. I hope each of you will want to be an active participant.

Sincerely,

[Superintendent's Name]