

"Everybody has accepted by now that change is unavoidable. But that still implies that change is like death and taxes it should be postponed as long as possible and no change would be vastly preferable. But in a period of upheaval, such as the one we are living in, change is the norm." --Peter F. Drucker

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Theme for '09-10: Re-Invention

Re-Invention: it might be a good choice for a theme in any year. But the elements of our new reality, the state of our state and county, and the very specific directives from our mother district make RE-INVENTION our clear and welcome theme for 2009-2010. Welcome because, well, for a while there it looked like our funding was in such a freefall there wasn't any guarantee we'd have even the possibility of re-invention. But we are planning an instructional program to open August 19, we are beginning to assign some of our temporary teachers, and we have been asked to begin planning for *the next* school year, 2010-2011. That's good news! What the latest state budget passed last week means for us in adult education is still uncertain. Indeed, even this budget may be subject to further change in Fall. We can't let this uncertainty freeze us, we've got important work to do. How we work *must* include the ability to adjust, adapt, modify... re-invent with some expertise, energy, and *élan*. Oddly, at the same time we are asked to be able to change quickly, we are also being asked to "re-think" what we will be in the years to come. You may have seen that we are asked to present to our School Board a "picture" of what our school will be next year. This presentation will be at the first Board meeting in September. You'll be hearing a lot more about this, including at our Prof Development Day on August 18. Oh and another thing: twenty dollars to the first person who can give me two synonyms and two antonyms to "re-invention." On paper in my office.

Status of the Re-organization: The Welcome Center

It has been very hard to lose some of our most capable employees in this re-adjustment to lower funding and our offering fewer classes. Of course most visible is the loss of some of our classified employees. But let's not forget as well the many temporary teachers who will not be assigned this school year. As we adjust we are looking for an operational scheme that will let us run with fewer people. "Centralizing" operations is one way to reach that goal. Already the old computer lab in Creative Living is the Data Center, and attendance and TopsPro functions will be centralized there. Also, there will be much less public contact and "customer service" in the departments as we are planning to have a Welcome Center where the Bookstore was. This will be a "front desk" that will know everything, be able to solve any problem, and have only bi-omic staff working there (The Few, The Proud). Blanca Rodriguez will be working with a team of classified staff to develop this centralized help desk. Also the main telephone line will answer there. Your ideas and feedback, and your helping students understand how to get the help they need, including at the Welcome Center, is the key to the success of this change.

Prof. Development Day: August 18

Our bi-annual Professional Development Day is being planned by a group of teachers and classified staff. What follows is a general and tentative agenda for the day. We hope to have our new Superintendent Jim Earhart there to give you greetings. Our instructional focus, which is the result of our multi-year effort to develop a Schoolwide Improvement Plan, is **project-based learning**. This kind of instructional activity, which is constructivist, competency-based, hands-on, interactive and often group oriented, is what much of the research of the last hundred years says works with adults. All are invited, and our permanent teachers will be paid for the day. **If you are a temporary teacher you are welcomed and encouraged to come, but this year we cannot pay you for the day.**

See you on August 18 in room S-1. Oh, and twenty dollars to the first person who can tell me about Vygotsky's ideas on social cognition; email is sufficient, but no cut and paste!

8:30 Check in/ Coffee
9:00 – 9:10 Greetings
9:10 – 10:00 State of the School – Wha' happened?
10:00 – 10:30 Our Schoolwide Improvement Plan
10:30 – 10:45 Break
10:45 – 11:00 Overview of Project Based Learning
11:00 – 12:00 Small groups

