

From: Dean Cascadden
Sent: Friday, April 04, 2008 8:49 AM
To: Everyone
Subject: Letter from Board Chair re IB

Dear Staff,

Thank you for the time, effort and emotional investment you have all made in pursuing the IB diploma program for the Bow High School. The members of the School Board all agree that educationally, the IB program may be a very good fit for Bow and certainly has a lot to offer to improve education in Bow. However, there continue to be questions about far-reaching programmatic changes that may come about as a result of implementing IB and how much they may ultimately cost the district, beyond the minimal direct costs associated with the IB diploma program. There also continue to be questions about how well our differentiated delivery to both AP and IB students will work.

That said, there are times when a School Board must make certain decisions for political reasons, and not purely for educational ones. In the current political climate in Bow, where there is a very organized and active anti-tax group "working" the media, insisting on moving forward with IB at this time may have meant a much greater loss to the district.

At the School District Meeting in March, parents who should have been interested in supporting the schools and education were absent from the political process. Instead, out in force, were those who would prefer to have no growth in spending of the school budget at all. You may have heard through the grapevine that a motion was made to cut close to \$2,000,000 at the School District Meeting. It was, thankfully, defeated, but the *number* of people that voted *for* it was of concern.

You've all seen some of the rhetoric being tossed around about IB. Yes, most of it is untrue, but.....There are two people running for School Board positions on a purely anti-IB platform. There is an anti-IB petition posted on the taxpayer association website. With this kind of sentiment in the community, we *could* win the battle but lose the war.

While we are not going to continue to do the preparation for Application B at this time, we have an opportunity to begin a more effective dialogue with the public about the benefits of IB. We have a chance of keeping IB on the table for the long run. If we are convinced that IB is a methodology that Bow should pursue, then a temporary setback won't

stop us. If, however, we feel that without the structure of the application process we are no longer interested in pursuing IB, then perhaps the conviction that it's the right program for Bow isn't as strong as it needs to be in order to be successful.

While this decision is a disappointment for all of us, we would like to continue efforts to educate the community about IB. If we do our homework, we will have a community united in the effort to bring IB to Bow, and a community united in its agreement to support the excellence in education we strive for.

Again, thank you for all the time and consideration that you have invested in this project to date, and for your continued dedication to the students of Bow.

Dr. Dean S. T. Cascadden
Superintendent
Bow School District, SAU 67