

Superintendent Corner - Feb. 2016

I find the types of questions interesting that fellow colleagues across the state ask about administering an Island School. Obviously, the most common questions are in regards to the ferry. Yet the question, most common in reference to the school, is about our athletic programs. As an Island school we certainly have some limitations, but what I find inspiring is the ability of staff and Island community to support our schools athletic program, and specifically our recent successful basketball season. What is equally impressive is that **all** the students play regardless of their ability. There are no conference titles on the line, no bids for a state championship. Students are motivated by the simple love of playing the game, and as a bucks fan, they are fun to watch.

A lot of hard work and organization are required to make this year's basketball program happen, and it is important to say an appreciative word of thanks to all the adults. For starters there is our new Athletic Director, Michael Gillespie who has worked closely with coaches, students, and parents to make sure high academic and athletic standards are maintained. Then there are our seasoned coaches Pete Nikolai and Sarah Gibson. Both Coaches have put endless hours in with our student athletes in practices and tournaments both on and off the island. They have had an integral part in helping our students develop as players and mature as athletes. Assistant Coaches Chad Beneda and Anna Gibson have been right there providing their support. Also there are the community members who constantly pitch in to help who include; Jim & Ann Rose, Sue Cornell, Kirsten Purinton, Michelle Jordan, and the members of Student Council. I want to share a word of huge thanks to our Buck's Fans who come out to support the teams time and time again. The fans help validate our team's hard work with your loyal support and Buck's enthusiasm.

Finally a word about the student athletes themselves and specifically the upperclassmen, Chris Cornell, Daniel Moron, Lydia Schultz, Micala Ervin, Hailey Jorgenson, Alex Johnson, Joshua Ervin, and Elena Waldron. As upperclassmen they represent the foundation of our teams. They demonstrate poise, and maturity you can see it on the court and in their eyes. There is no drama, just a job that has to be done. As upperclassmen they have a maturity you can sense. There is no fear of failure, they all know how to handle the ball, but more importantly they know how to be a part of team. They know how to handle the pressure. I get a kick out of when two girls were in Elena's face, trying to intimidate her and box her in, she just grinned and took the ball to the hoop anyway. Each of these players has had similar moments in which you can sense these young athletes are going to make in this world as fine young men and women. Yes, at moments like this, it feels good to be a Washington Island Bucks Fan.