

## **Tac Titooqan Article June 2016**

As we come to a close on another successful school year in Lapwai, I wanted to take a moment to thank our dedicated staff for the countless hours directed toward improving teaching and learning in our district. School improvement and increasing academic achievement as well as expanding opportunities was our top priority again this year.

The school and district-level leadership teams in Lapwai share a common language and vision solely focused on improved instruction, with a research-based approach to building teacher capacity and effectiveness. Our concentration on instruction has included building policies and system-level strategies that deepen student learning and remove barriers to change.

Our leadership teams have defined the process of delivering collaboratively determined, job-embedded professional development:

Weekly Professional Learning Community meetings each Wednesday morning from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. to advance improvement goals are board approved and built into the school calendar.

Weekly professional development every Friday from 1:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m. to provide time for research-based learning and data analysis is board approved and built into the school calendar. Professional development currently involves all instructional staff including para-educators and tutors.

Both schools hold Leadership Team Meetings for a minimum of 4 hours per month with support from district administrators, including the superintendent.

Professional development includes a research-based and data-driven approach to increasing student engagement, deepening student learning, and use of intervention and assessment tools.

On behalf of the Lapwai School District, I would like to sincerely thank our parents and the Lapwai community for their support of our schools. Thank you for honoring the time we need to focus on improving teaching and learning for Lapwai students. When the calendar changed in 2013 to reflect early release on Fridays, we also added additional minutes to the school day. Students actually gained instructional time with teachers. This included adding 10 minutes to the elementary school day (1,900 minutes per year, approximately 32 hours) and 14 instructional minutes to the middle-high school day (2,660 minutes per year, approximately 44 hours). This increased student contact time was a critical component to increasing student achievement and academic success.