Greetings,

Our District, like many others across the state and the nation, is in the process of negotiating a labor agreement with its certificated staff, represented by the White River Education Association (WREA). I am writing this letter to ensure that our community is kept up to date with accurate information about these negotiations.

Educational excellence and opportunity for our students and staff, as well as fiscal responsibility, are the driving forces in our negotiations. With those in mind, we are working on coming to agreement on some important issues for both parties, those being: compensation increases, more teacher preparation time, continuity of staff development and training, control of current district directed staff time, professional development, and additional leave time. While we believe that progress is being made, the parties still have some significant differences on how to achieve our goals.

Several years ago, the District found itself in a dire financial situation. Despite lower enrollment and serious state budget cuts, the District has worked hard to establish a more stable financial position and has built reserves for required contingencies, emergencies, sound financial practices, and established policies. This has been an arduous process and we are determined not to endanger our current and future stability by allowing the reserves to be depleted.

Our goal is to reach a fair contract with the WREA, and we believe we are on track to do that.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate in calling me at 360-829-3814.

Tom Lockyer
White River School District Superintendent