

OYA *In the Loop*

September 12, 2008

Now that you've been "in the loop" for a week or so, I thought I would step back and answer your questions about this new communication vehicle. I created "In the Loop" so you would receive information pretty darn quickly, and right from me. I intend to share with you major policy decisions, progress on our initiatives, updates that won't wait for "Directions," and other breaking news.

Most of all, I want you to get a sense of the excitement and hope that I hear is beginning to crisscross our agency. Sometimes when an agency receives a lot of "attention," people embrace that opportunity to reflect on its mission, vision, principles and purpose. Revisiting these basics, combined with renewed principle-based decision making, ethics and professionalism really gives us a lot for which to be hopeful and excited.

That being said, communication is not one-way. I ask that you keep me in the loop as well. What are you hearing? What concerns you? What's been going well or not so well? What ideas do you have? It is very important that we in central office hear from staff and partners who support and carry out our mission every day.

We are in the process of setting up an easy feedback mechanism: a mailbox tentatively called OYA In the Loop (oyaintheloop@oya.state.or.us). When it is ready and that address finalized, I'll let you know. In the meantime, share your thoughts and ideas with Perrin Damon (perrin.damon@oya.state.or.us), our public affairs manager; she will make sure that I hear what you have to say.

Because my tenure as your director will be short, I can't promise that I will be able to act on every one of your ideas, but I can promise that if you share them with me, I will make sure that they reach my successor. The other avenue that you have is through the Transition Team, which actively began its work this week. Feel free to let them know information you would like the new director to have.

News of great importance: In early October, all OYA full-time employees will be asked to participate in a survey designed to gauge your satisfaction with the workplace and culture. You will be given time on the job to participate. The information gathered will help us understand your point of view and identify what we can do to improve. It also gives us a baseline against which to measure progress.

Working closely with SEIU and AFSCME presidents, we have contracted with a national firm to design and conduct the survey. You will be learning more about the survey in

coming weeks, but I'll say it first here and you'll hear it again – please help determine our future by participating and encouraging your coworkers to participate.

Budget Summary posted: OYA's Agency Request Budget for the 2009-11 biennium has been submitted to the Governor and DAS for consideration in preparing the Governor's Request Budget.

The Agency Request Budget document is more than 2" thick, so Budget Manager Linda Gesler and her team created a summary that has been posted to the Outlook public folder under "All Staff" called "Budget Summary." It provides a concise look at expenditures, sources of revenue, and policy option packages – requests for funding not in our current budget.

I've attached a copy of the budget request summary in this email for your easy reference.

State budget outlook: The DAS Office of Budget and Management has been running numbers in anticipation of preparing the Governor's Recommended Budget. Because of the downturn in the economy, there is a budget hole of approximately \$100 million between anticipated revenues and essential budget levels. Additionally, there are other demands for funding that expand that gap to \$510 million.

And then there is the uncertainty caused by measures on the November ballot that have a fiscal impact. DAS estimates that available monies will decrease by at least 6 percent if one of the property crime measures passes. Tax measures will further reduce revenues.

Spreading the revenue reductions across all agencies means a budget decrease of at least 3 percent. However, some agencies can't take a cut, leaving other agencies anticipating cuts of 8 – 10 percent.

OYA, like all agencies that can, is making contingency plans to deal with potential budget shortfalls through service/supplies efficiencies, administrative restrictions on travel and conferences and other areas in which we can exercise fiscal discretion.

New public folder: Right at the top of the "All Staff" public folder, you will find a new public folder called "Agency News." In that folder you can find news articles of interest to OYA world, press releases, and other information that will further help you be in the loop. If you find something you'd like to post there, please contact our new public affairs manager, Perrin Damon, or her assistant Amanda Lowe-Davies.

Apology to you: In the last issue of "In the Loop" I neglected to tell you that Lory Humbert, new superintendent of Oak Creek YCF, will assume responsibility for Corvallis House as well. There are no changes except Fabian Casarez is reporting to Lory, which provides a lot of continuity of services to girls