



NEBO SCHOOL DISTRICT'S SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

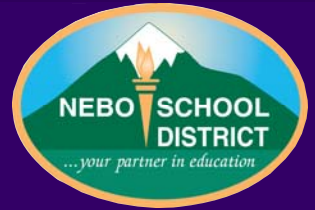
- Nebo District has nearly 30,000 students 2011-2012.
- Nebo District has over 4,000 employees.
- Nebo District is the 7th largest district in Utah.
- Nebo District is the 5th largest employer in Utah County.

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Nebo News

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Superintendent's Message

BYU's Young Ambassadors performed at a recent event I was privileged to attend. Their performance was as outstanding, inspiring, and uplifting as we have come to expect from this talented group of young performers. However, what struck me most that particular night were their actions **after** the performance. Immediately after the concluding number, these young people began to move among and interact with members of the audience. They talked of their hopes and dreams, their challenges and triumphs, the blessings and benefits of being a part of this amazing group of performers and of representing Brigham Young University. They clearly understood and fulfilled their role as ambassadors.

Nebo District's best ambassadors are our employees — our teachers, secretaries, bus drivers, custodians, lunch ladies, EVERYONE! You are

the people whom the community trusts.

Jamie Vollmer, well-known education advocate, recently shared "5 S's" for selling our story. Five simple ways to be effective ambassadors:

Stop. Stop badmouthing yourselves, your colleagues, your schools, and your district in public. (It's OK to gripe, but do it with your spouse or trusted friend.)

Shift. Shift your attention from the negative to the positive. What you focus your attention on will grow stronger in your life.

Share. Share the positive. Tell folks in the community about your successes.

Sustain. Once you start, keep it up. Ask yourself once a week how you are doing on these things.

Start. Start now.

This is a critical time for public education. Many face many challenges due to circumstances outside of our control. However, we do control our individual ability to be an ambassador for our profession,

"Public education is a miracle. And this is its most hopeful time."
~Jamie Vollmer

our individual schools, and our district. Thank you for sharing our amazing education story with our communities.

(Note: Jamie Vollmer is the author of the "Blueberry Story" which can be found at www.jamievollmer.com)

Superintendent
Rick Nielsen



Blomquist Hale – Employee Assistance Program

Call 800-723-9330 to make an appointment today for confidential and voluntary counseling. This service is provided as a benefit FREE OF CHARGE to you and your dependents living with you. Some of the areas we help include: relationship or family difficulties, legal or financial questions, work issues — stress/anxiety/depression, and alcohol/drug problems. Professional licensed counselors are available 24/7.

**Kids Don't Learn
From People
They Don't Like**
(Title of a Book)
**by Aspey &
Roebuck**



The Board of Education approved a "Voluntary Separation Benefit Package of 2012" (VSBP) retirement window for full-time employees who are eligible for retirement from the Utah Retirement System (URS) and have 15 or more years of service in Nebo School District.

The purpose of this incentive is to provide an opportunity for these eligible employees to pursue personal retirement goals that may have been delayed in recent years because of changes to the economy, reduced retirement options, and individual insurance needs.

Following are some general items of interest:

The window for applying for this incentive begins January 12, 2012, and closes on Friday, February 24, 2012, at 5:00 p.m.

Actual retirement must occur on or before July 1, 2012.

The incentive offers five years of single or two-party standard plan insurance at no cost to the employee, with the district covering 100% of the premium.

Employees may purchase family standard plan insurance for an additional cost of approximately \$3,600 per year.

After five years, employees may elect to purchase insurance through the district, at an increased percent of the active premium, for up to five additional years until the employee is eligible for Medicare.

In addition, the employee will receive 95% of this year's base salary, distributed at a rate of 20% of the amount each year over the next five years.

Information meetings regarding this incentive and general retirement information will be held at the following dates and times at the Nebo District Office:

January 31 from 5-7 p.m. – VSBP Information and URS Reps.

February 2 from 6-8 p.m. – VSBP Information and URS Reps.

Copies of the Voluntary Separation Benefits Package information are posted at <http://www.nebo.edu/vsbp> and are also available on our Employee Home Page.

To learn how this incentive may affect you personally we encourage you to attend one of the information meetings. If you have any unanswered questions after the information meetings we invite you to contact the Human Resources Department.

We sincerely hope that this incentive benefits our employees and that every employee knows how much we appreciate their dedicated service to the students of Nebo District.

REMEMBER:
**Submit your
letter of intent
to your principal
in February if
you plan on
working for
Nebo School
District in
2012-2013**

Have you updated your information in case of an emergency?

"Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence."
~ Chinese Proverb

Nebo School District will use ParentLink to communicate with employees about announcements and other emergencies.

Receive Emergency Calls on Cell Phone

In order to receive emergency phone calls on your cell phone, employees need to login to the Employee Finance Portal and enter your cell phone number.

Go to the Employee Home Page,

then Employee Finance Portal and login. Use the Self Serve tab, click on Demographics, ADD cell phone number, update phone numbers, and address information. Submit a request to update your information. For more information go to: <http://www.nebo.edu/employees/finweb>.

Receive Emergency Messages as a Text

In order to receive these emergency

notices as a text message, employees will need to login to ParentLink.

Go to the Employee Home Page, then login to ParentLink, click My Account at the top right-hand corner of the page, click the Add button under the list of delivery addresses, and select Text/SMS Number. For more information go to:

<http://www.nebo.edu/employees/parentlink>.

Special Education iPad tool

Nebo District's Special Education department is very excited to be introducing Apple iPads as a tool for our teachers to use with their students. An iPad is provided for Self-Contained (Severe) teachers, preschool teachers, and a few Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs). We hope to expand iPads to all of the SLPs and resource teachers in the future.

Over the summer, the special education department held an iPad in-service with

Scott Baggaley of the Utah Center for Assistive Technology (UCAT) who shared his vast knowledge of educational and communication Apps that are available.

Teacher feedback on the usefulness of this new tool has also been very enthusiastic.

Susie Perrett at Sierra Bonita Preschool stated, "The SeeTouchLearn program allows me to customize lessons for individual students that are not available elsewhere. These lessons allow for multiple trials on goals that students have

been having difficulty with. It helps them to generalize objectives that we have worked on in class."

The technology that is being produced today is so exciting and has such potential to help our students grow and progress, Special Education can't wait to see what comes along next!



Nebo Healthy Lifestyle Challenges' Vision

Nebo Healthy Lifestyle Challenges' vision is that participants will slowly add more healthy habits to their daily lives--don't expect drastic results overnight.

One wellness participant described her improvement over a similar challenge as November's MyPlate Challenge: "This challenge was hard last time, but it was easy this year. I hadn't realized how much my husband and I had changed the way

we eat. We really have drastically increased our intake of vegetables. It helped that we grew a garden this year and still have fresh vegetables in our freezer from our garden. I am slowly learning to eat healthier and exercise more as part of everyday life and not because I have to force myself to make healthier choices. All the challenges are helping me learn to enjoy a healthier lifestyle."

Many of our lives are busy and hectic. Educators give so much of themselves to others that it is easy to neglect our own health. By participating in the simple challenges, you will add lifesaving habits. Nebo District is all in this together, and good health benefits YOU the most!! See you on the web at: <http://wellness.nebo.edu/>.



School Board & Superintendent's Staff Goals

Nebo School District

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Focus on Students



The Nebo School Board and the Superintendent's Staff continue to collaborate and set goals for Nebo School District. This month we are highlighting Communication and Community Involvement.

The Communication and Community Involvement Goal: Enhance and expand effective communication within the district.

Action Items:

- ◆ Train personnel to effectively utilize the ParentLink Mass Communication system to facilitate efficient connections with our learning community.
- ◆ Develop strategic plans for website development and maintenance in every school.
- ◆ Create a monthly Employee Newsletter.
- ◆ Explore district use of social media platforms to more effectively communicate with students, patrons, and employees.
- ◆ Reinforce, recognize and regularly acknowledge the work of each School Community Council.
- ◆ Implement quarterly Communication Committee meetings.

Live Your Dream

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream, not only plan but also believe." By: Anatole France

Be a Better Communicator – Intentional Listening

Researchers tell us the average person speaks about 135 to 175 words a minute, but comprehends about 400 to 500 words a minute. So while the workshop speaker is pontificating on the virtues of the latest and greatest silver bullet to solve all your education problems, you have the opportunity to muse on whether the school's boiler is fixed, wonder why the speaker chose THAT tie, and plan where you're going to lunch.

Daydreaming during a conference is one thing. But having your attention wander during a meeting with a parent, teacher, or student can have serious consequences. In a world where we are constantly bombarded by information, it is more important than ever to be a good listener.

Listen to Achieve True Communication

In his *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey prescribes what he calls "empathic listening" as habit five. In essence, Covey promotes a listening state that goes beyond the mechanical process of hearing to reach a point where you actually feel what the speaker

feels. Covey suggests to achieve true communication, you must put yourself in the speaker's shoes and look through his or her eyes.

Changing the Way We Listen

The idea is to change the way we listen. Usually when we talk to people, we try to persuade them to see things the way we see them. But we have to concentrate on listening to what is being said and move ourselves out of the process.

Keys to Intentional Listening

This is an important part of a school's communication program. It is not just a way to listen, but a new way of looking at what you learn while you listen. Here are eight actions to becoming an intentional listener:

- ◆ **Ensure your intent.** Don't try to change someone's mind—put yourself in the other person's shoes.
- ◆ **Take ego out of the mix.** It isn't about you. Don't get defensive or emotional.
- ◆ **Eliminate your own world view.** Your

religion, morals, and politics should not filter or change what the person is saying.

- ◆ **Choose an environment free of distractions.** Be sure your cell phone, TV, and radio are off. Staying focused is difficult enough.
- ◆ **Ask questions,** but only those that help you understand, not those that challenge them.
- ◆ **Repeat ideas.** This reassures the person that you do understand what is said.
- ◆ **Use tried and true techniques.** Face the speaker, keep eye contact, and be sure your body language is open and is communicating that you're listening.
- ◆ **Act.** Once you finish listening, your responses should be supportive to assure the speaker you understand each point. Then, it's time to act – do something with the information.

While these techniques may not keep you awake during a boring speaker, they can help you become not only a better listener, but also a better communicator.

From the office of Lana Hiskey, Public Information Officer—Adapted NSPRA Principal Communicator