

Volume 4 Issue 1
Dec/Jan, 2009-2010

District Events:**Dec 7**

HS Christmas Concert

Dec 8

5th Grade Band Concert

Dec 9

1:00 Early Dismissal

Dec 14

K, 2nd & 4th Grade
Christmas Concert

Dec 17

MS Christmas Concert

Dec 21

School Board Meeting -
Independence

Dec 23 - Jan 3rd

Winter Break

Jan 4

School Resumes

Jan 13

1:00 Early Dismissal

Jan 18

No School

Jan 18

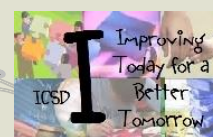
School Board Meeting -
Brandon

Jan 27

1:00 Early Dismissal

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**The Impact of Our State's Financial Situation**

By Devin Embray, Superintendent

At the state level, K-12 education makes up 45 percent of the general fund. When community colleges, AEAs and higher education are included, the percentage climbs to 60 percent. Human Services raises the number even further: to 80 percent. The state budget for this fiscal year was determined by estimating a -3.6% in revenue receipts.

Unfortunately, the actual current revenue receipt percentage is - 9.4%. The State used over 680 million dollars of stimulus money (which must be considered "one time" funding) to build this year's budget. Considering all of these factors, it is estimated that the State of Iowa may be as much as 1.3 billion dollars short for next year's budget. (Fiscal years 2012 and 2013 could possibly be worse than fiscal year 2011.) In response to this situation, the governor has determined that there will be an across the board cut of 10%.



This will impact our district for THIS current budget year by \$707,525. We ended the 08-09 fiscal-year with a negative cash flow of over (\$505,000). The 10% reduction will take us to a negative 1.5 million dollars in our unspent fund balance. The unspent fund balance is somewhat similar to a checking account. Our permission to spend, called the unspent balance, is also declining. We ended our 08-09 fiscal year with \$1.6 million in authority or permission to tax. At the end of this fiscal year we estimate that figure to drop to \$1.3 million.

With anticipated increased costs for next year, we could be looking at \$680,000 — \$750,000 in position and program reductions for the 2010-2011 school year. The state has eliminated Phase I from the Iowa Code as well as the state aid portion of the instructional support levy. These two items account for approximately \$63,000 in general fund revenues that we will *not receive* for the 2010-2011 school year. In addition, we have an increase in IPERS contributions for both the employer and employee. Our cost for the IPERS increase will be approximately \$17,500. In addition, we estimate that we will be over budget by as much as \$300,000 this year.

(Continued on page 16)

Indee Staff participate in USDA Team Nutrition Chef Workshop



Kelly Duritsa and Angie Tournier participated in USDA Team Nutrition Chef Workshop: “The Role of Nutrition Programs in a Healthy School Environment”

Kelly Duritsa, Independence Schools Food Service Director, and Angie Tournier, Kitchen Manager at the Independence High School, attended a Team Nutrition Chef Workshop about the role of nutrition programs in a healthy school environment. Thirty school nutrition directors and staff from 16 school districts participated in this two-day workshop, held on the Iowa State University campus June 11 and 12, 2009.



**Kelly Duritsa,
Food Service Director**

The workshop, with a theme of “The Role of Nutrition Programs in a Healthy School Environment,” was jointly sponsored by the Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation Services and Iowa State University Extension (Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management program) through a Team Nutrition grant from the USDA. Cindy Baumgartner, ISU Extension Nutrition and Health Program Specialist, also participated in the workshop and has strategized with Kelly and Food Service Directors from other districts in Northeast Iowa on action steps to improve their school health environment.

Staff from Independence Schools and other districts across the state were selected and invited to participate by a recommendation from their Bureau of Nutrition Consultant because they have already shown good progress toward creating a healthier school environment and have also demonstrated readiness to implement “best practices” for continued improvement.

Kelly says, “It was an excellent workshop. We learned how to market healthy fresh fruits & vegetables to our students, preparing and displaying them in a fun way where kids might be more inclined to try them rather than leave them sitting on the lunch table. We are also trying a variety of new recipes and many fresh, locally grown foods in an effort to introduce healthier options to our students. We hope to not only introduce new foods to students, but also teachers and parents. In this way, teachers and parents have the opportunity to be good role-models for students by trying something new themselves and showing students that healthy foods can be good!”

Session facilitators included: Chef Cyndie Story (Consultant/PhD/RD), Catherine Strohbehn (ISU Extension/PhD/RD), Janell Meyer (ISU research project coordinator), and Patti Delger and Carrie Scheidel (Bureau Team Nutrition Coordinators). Each participant rotated through three break-out sessions including: 1) hands-on production experience with menu items that meet the “Dietary Guidelines for Americans” 2) merchandising healthy menu options and 3) communication about child nutrition programs to school district stakeholders. In one break-out session, Chef Cyndie Story demonstrated ways to reduce sodium and fats and increase fruit, vegetable, and whole grain use in school meals, followed by the participants preparing and evaluating selected recipes.

Donna Becker, Food Service Director/RD in Perry Community School District, shared her experiences in successfully meeting the goals of the Healthier US School Challenge, a standard for nutrition excellence in schools. More information on the Healthier US School Challenge can be found at: <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html> Jane Heikenen, Bureau Consultant, presented ways to incorporate USDA commodity foods into healthy school menus. The workshop was approved by the School Nutrition Bureau for 12 continuing education credits.



**Chef Cyndie shows how to
“culinize” healthy school
choices.**



Principal's Corner by Mary Jean Blaisdell

The year is off and running and the students are well into their learning! Our weather has been a bit odd this year and we need to be prepared for it turning cooler soon. When this happens, jackets and warmer clothing will be needed. Please note that students will be required to wear snow pants and boots once the weather turns cold or begins to snow. If they do not have these, they are asked to stand on the sidewalk.

Although the school day officially begins at 8:30, students are let in the building at 8:10. In classrooms at that time, coats are taken off and hung up, book bags are put away and students get materials ready for the day.

This time in their classroom is often spent in quality interactions with their teacher and friends. Individual issues such as notes from parents about rides home, illness issues, or other concerns are taken care of at this time. One of the best ways you can help your student succeed at school is to be sure they arrive on time! Better yet, be sure they arrive when students are allowed in the building at 8:10. In addition, if your student is eating breakfast at school, please be sure they are arriving in time to sit and eat for at least 10 minutes. Breakfast is no longer served past 8:20, so students need to arrive before 8:10 in order to have time to eat.

Parents can help with their child's education by spending at least 15 minutes a day reading to their child (or having them read to you!) Parents can help with math by using math in the world around them daily (such as counting/adding objects at home).

Beginning of the year assessments occurred in September. These assessments measured reading accuracy, comprehension, fluency, phonemic awareness as well as math skills. These tests help us determine what direction instruction should take for each student. Similar tests will be given in February and again in April to determine how much growth has occurred for each student. Testing results will be shared with parents at conference time.

In-service time for all teachers is important to the progress of your child. September's early dismissal in-service was spent setting goals for our learning teams and learning how to analyze student performance data. We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to improve the educational experience of your children.



Mary Jean Blaisdell, Principal

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

Dec 9 12:50 Dismissal
In-Service

Dec 14 K, 2nd & 4th
Grade
Christmas
Concert

Dec 23-Jan 3
Winter Break

January

Jan 4 Classes Resumes

Jan 13 12:50 Dismissal
In-Service

Jan 18 No School
In-Service

Jan 27 12:50 Dismissal
In-Service



Box tops for Education/ Pop Can Tabs/Milk Moola for Schoola

We continue to collect General Mills Box Tops, Pop Can Tabs & bottle caps and bag tops from Kwik Star products. This is a good way to help us earn extra money for things we need. Thanks!

If you are interested in spending time at school or at home sorting/cutting and redeeming these items for our school, please call 334-7425.

Is Your Child Sick?

From Our Nurse...

Please keep your child at home if he/she is running a temperature and/or vomiting. If your child has a cold and needs rest, keep them home. This avoids many others from also getting sick and helps your child get better faster!

Early Childhood Center

The Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms at the Early Childhood Center have been spending the beginning of the year talking about all things related to "me". One part of our special lessons focused on friendships. During a large group time in Mrs. Gaul's classroom all of the students worked together to form a friendship chain. Each student took different colors of construction paper, representing all people, drew a face on each one and linked them together to form a chain. When each student finished the chain, they each helped to link all the chains together to form one large chain. A cooperative effort that demonstrated friends helping friends! The chain is now hanging in the hallway at the Early Childhood Center for all to see!



Mrs. Gaul helps students make friendship chains.



Mrs. Bonefas' students and paraprofessionals show off the chains they made.



After reading If You Take a Mouse to School, Miss Kellar's class watches a science experiment.

Kindergarten Corner

Kindergartners at East Elementary have been off to a busy year! Our students learn many things through hands on activities and play. Math tubs help students learn counting, sorting, and patterning. Through play our students also gain valuable social interaction and begin to make appropriate behavior choices. During group instruction and seat work time, students practice body basics, line basics, academic skills, and extend their attention spans.

September and October will bring two activity based field trips! We will visit Fontana Park to experience the changes that fall brings, as well as learn about how animals prepare for winter. At the Independence Fire Station we will learn about fire safety and equipment. Ask us about stop, drop, and roll!

First Grade Focus

The first grade classes have been very busy studying insects. We have especially concentrated on the life cycle of the monarch observing the change from caterpillar to chrysalis to the adult butterfly. One of the highlights of our unit was a trip to Fontana where we observed insects in the field and by the water. We also visited the many animals that East Elementary adopted last school year and are looking forward to helping them again later this year.



We were very pleased at the wonderful turn out for Open House. The children were really happy to show their families their rooms and all the hard work they had done. Thank you so much for coming!

Second Grade Scene

Second Graders have been busy in September learning the rules and routines of their classrooms and reviewing our respect and protect program. We will be doing a short study of Frogs and Toads, and in October the Fontana naturalist will give a presentation on amphibians. In Social Studies we will begin a unit on our community and will be touring The Mill and learning about the history of the Mill and the Wapsipinicon River.

WANTED!

Mileage Club Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to devote 15-30 minutes each week outside at recess to help students reach their goals in the Mileage Club, please call the PE teacher, Brian Loughren at East Elementary to volunteer your time!

Mentors Needed!

If you are interested in being a mentor and volunteering your time to work with a child for approximately 30 minutes each week on a regular basis, please call and let us know!

Wanted: Substitute Associates

If you are available to substitute occasionally as a classroom, office, or library associate (duties vary), please call 334-7425.

We need YOU!

**Preschool
Openings!**

Slots still available for the free
4 year old preschool program!

Call **334-4780** to enroll today!

News From West Elementary by Sandy Merritt, Principal

The 2009-10 school year is off to a great start at West! Students and staff have settled back into the routines of school and are working hard to make every day a successful one! The building and grounds staff were very busy over the summer getting the building ready for us. We have some wonderful upgrades because of that. One of the biggest improvements is in our bathrooms—all of them have been upgraded with new bathroom fixtures and floors. Thanks to our custodians for all their hard work!

Another addition to our entryway is an 8ø by 8ø mural of a øMini Mustangø. The painting was part of a parent involvement project that the district participated in last year. The West team believed that we needed to spruce up our entryway and provide more direction for visitors in getting around the building. Erin Pilcher, a former graduate of ICSD, painted the mural and Dan Lake, parent in the district, created directional arrows to put on each side of the mural. We plan to add a map of the building on the same wall to provide extra help in maneuvering around the building. Thanks to Dan and Erin for your hard work!

Naming our øMini Mustangø was the first project for our new Principalø Student Advisory Council. The council was requested by students and is comprised of 5th graders Grace DeGreif, Erica Barloon, Brent Henderson, and Grace Bertelli. They put together a contest for students that resulted in the name øSpiritø. The council will meet regularly with Casey Reinkoester, School Administrative Manager, and myself. We also have a new security system in our building. Visitors to the building prior to 8:20 will need to

stop first at the office to pick up a visitorø badge. We will ask that you leave a photo ID, which can be picked up when leaving the building.



This practice will help us to keep track of who is in the building. After 8:20, you will pick up the phone in the entrance and state your name and purpose for coming to visit. You will then be buzzed into the office to pick up your visitorø badge. We understand that this may be an inconvenience but it is a necessary practice in ensuring the safety of our students.

We welcome several new staff to the building this fall, including Casey Reinkoester and myself. New staff includes:

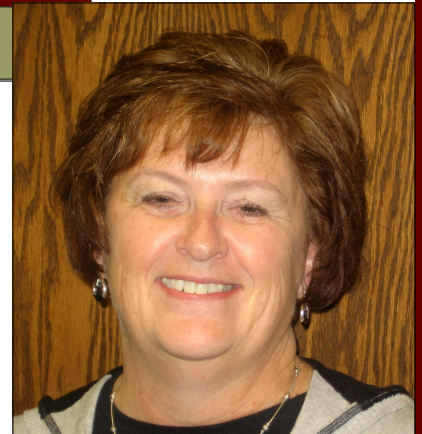
Kelsie Wittrock is a recent graduate of UNI with Spirit Lake as her hometown. She is teaching 3rd grade.

Bridget Becker is a new teacher from UNI whose hometown is Burt, Iowa. Bridget is teaching 3rd grade.

Helen Lukes comes to us from Illinois with 13 years of teaching experience. She is one of our new 3rd grade teachers.

Chrissy Kimball transferred to West from the Early Childhood building.

Lori Simon is a recent graduate of UNI who lives in North Liberty. She is teaching 5th grade.



Sandy Merritt, Principal

Kirby Bantz transferred to West from the Middle School.

Stefanie Saelens is another recent UNI grad whose hometown is Bettendorf. She is one of our special education teachers.

Megan Rawlins comes to us from East Marshall with 4 years teaching experience. She is the Gifted and Talented teacher for West, East, and the High School.



Kirby, Chrissy, Helen, Bridget & Kelsie

Diana Sloan is a teacher associate who transferred from East.

Trisha Gee is a new teacher associate.

Laurie Anfinson is a teacher associate who transferred from East

Michele Michael is a teacher associate who transferred from East.

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Melissa Kearns is a teacher associate who transferred from East.

Brenda Zimmerly is a new dishwasher in the kitchen



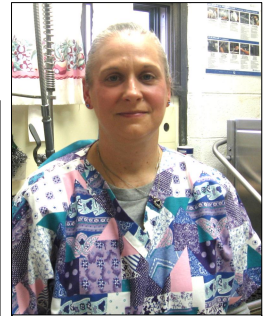
Lori and Megan



Melissa, Diana & Laurie



Trisha & Michele



Brenda

Nurse News

By Teri Schloss, RN and Rhonda Jasper, RN

Once again, our beautiful fall weather is coming to an end. With winter quickly approaching, I would once again like to remind you about the importance of appropriate cold weather attire.

Students at East and West should come to school with a weather appropriate jacket or coat. Gloves, hats, snow pants and snow boots are an absolute must when it is snowy outside. Students will go outside for fresh air unless the temperature is below zero.

Students at Middle School also go outside after lunch. Many students are still coming to school in shorts, short sleeved shirts and no coats. Please encourage your child to dress according to the weather. Layers are a great way to accomplish this.

Independence Community School District is participating with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) in tracking influenza activity in the state of Iowa. If you call your child's school to report them ill, you will be asked what symptoms they are currently experiencing. No identifying information is given to the IDPH during this influenza surveillance. Symptoms that we are specifically tracking are: sudden high fever, headache, non-productive cough, exhaustion, and severe body aches. The symptoms of influenza usually come on fairly quickly. Influenza vaccines are still available. Check with your health care provider.

Some ways in which we can all try to stay healthy during this time of year include: Getting your influenza vaccine, eating nutritious food, getting plenty of sleep, washing your hands often especially before eating and before and after using the restroom, and avoiding close contact with others who are ill.

Your child should be kept home with the following symptoms:

Fever greater than 100 degrees. Students need to be fever free without the use of Tylenol, Motrin, Advil or other fever reducing medicines before returning to school.

Diarrhea or vomiting. They may return to school 24 hours after the last episode.

Rash of unknown origin.

Severe sore throat. A minor sore throat without fever is not a problem at school. You may have your student bring throat lozenges as long as they are in the original package and have a written permission slip from the parent brought to the nurse's office.

Not all illnesses will fall nicely into these categories. You know your child better than we do. If they appear ill, keep them home. As always, consult your health care provider with any questions or concerns you may have.

For consumer information regarding toy and other recalls, go to www.cpsc.gov or www.recalls.gov for the most current information.

Middle School News

By Dave Jacobson, Principal

It's been a loooooong time since my last letter in April. We've had a lot of new and exciting things going on at the Middle School of which I want to inform you.

SUMMER SCHOOL. We are very proud of our students and faculty for the success we observed in summer school. Our numbers dropped from 40 a year ago to 12 this summer due to student completion of their GLEs and hard work by our faculty. Ms. Bock taught summer school and finished a week and a half early due to GLE completion by the 12 students. CONGRATULATIONS to all for your efforts - we are very proud of you!

NEW STAFF. We would like to welcome Mr. Charles Bare to the industrial technology position, replacing the retired Mr. Tim Nichols. Mrs. Tracy Steger is the new 8th grade language arts teacher. (Ms. Kirby Bantz is now teaching at West Elementary.) New associates we want to welcome are: Stewart Bagley, Susan Case, Lannette Frye, Lila Givens, Krista James, Sandy Johnson, Kathy Meister, and Diane Shonka.

MEET THE TEACHERS NIGHT. Last spring we decided to change the format for the usual "Open House" in the fall. We came up with "Meet the Teachers Night", and we heard many positive comments regarding the evening. A panel of all three grade level teachers was held to provide information to parents, reveal some trivia about our faculty and highlight a power point presentation for 6th grade parents. The remainder of the evening was meant to provide an opportunity for parents to visit with teachers and participate in our Media Center's Book Fair.

We have many suggestions for improving this next fall and we want to extend a very special THANK YOU to the parents who attended.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. Our faculty spent many hours over the summer preparing for this school year. Many have participated in professional development activities through our school district, the AEA and opportunities provided by the state. Garry Anderson, Amanda Bock, Tracy Curtis and Jan Reed are participating in the ICC Characteristics of Effective Instruction AEA sponsored workshop. Victoria Reinkoester and Tia Shaffer are participating in the E 20-20 computer based workshop. Lori Dietzenbach, Sonya Elzey and Dawn Keenan are participating in the Second Chance Reading workshop to improve our EX-READ courses. Charles Bare attended many spring and summer sessions to get the Project Lead The Way program up and running. Hopefully I didn't miss anyone; I thank you all for your efforts. It will benefit all of our students!

CONFERENCES. Walk-in Parent-Teacher conferences this fall were on Thursday September 24 from 3:45 to 7:30 PM. Our annual, popular and very successful student led conferences will again be in November on the 23rd and 24th from 1:30 to 8:00 PM. We hope to see all of you at conferences and encourage you to stay actively involved with your children's education.

IMIT and SIMS. The Independence Middle School Intervention Team has incorporated a tracking system to help those students referred to the "Success in the Middle School" after school program. These students receive extra instruction from Victoria



Dave Jacobson, Principal

Reinkoester to help them complete homework, pass GLEs and eventually see improvement in their ITBS scores. Individual students will now be setting goals; Mrs. Reinkoester will track their progress during SIMS and the individual teachers will track student progress for two weeks after they have completed a SIMS session.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS. Winter sports are getting into full swing and we hope to see you at the basketball and wrestling activities. Our 2nd annual school field trip to Camp EWALU was September 28 for the 6th grade, September 30 for the 7th grade and October 7 for the 8th grade. Our first sessions for the NWEA/MAP testing were from October 5 through October 20. The annual RED RIBON WEEK was held from October 26 through October 30.

Please call if you have any issues, concerns, Power School questions, or if we can help to meet the needs of your children so they may continue to improve academically.

Principal
Dave Jacobson



Dec/Jan Calendar

Dec

- 1 MS Wrestling @ Indee 4:15
- 3 7th GBB @ Dyersville Beckman Xavier Gym 4:15
8th GBB @ Indee St Johns 4:15
MS Wrestling @ Indee 4:00
- 7 7th GBB @ Indee 4:15
8th GBB @ Marion 4:15
- 8 MS Wrestling @ Marion 4:00
- 9 1:00 Early Dismissal
- 10 MS Wrestling @ Indee 4:00
7th GBB @ Indee St Johns 4:15
8th GBB @ Benton Comm Norway 4:15
- Dec 23-Jan 3 Winter Break

Jan

- 4 Classes Resume
- 13 1:00 Early Dismissal
- 14 7th BBB @ Marion 4:15
8th BBB @ Indee 4:15
- 18 Non Student Day
No School
- 19 7th BBB @ West Delaware 4:15
8th BBB @ Indee 4:15
- 25 7th BBB @ Benton Comm Norway 4:15
8th BBB @ Indee 4:15
- 27 1:00 Early Dismissal
- 28 7th BBB @ Indee 4:15
8th BBB @ CPU 4:15

Hello from the Gifted and Talented Department at Middle School

By Jackie Berryhill, MS GAT/TAG Teacher

The district's gifted and talented program has made some changes/updates this year. GAT/TAG participants are based on the following criteria:

- *Core totals from the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) in Reading and/or Math at 95% or above.
- *Teacher and/or guidance counselor recommendation (s).
- *Results from the NWEA gifted and talented RIT scores in the fall and spring may also be used to help with new identification and current status for participating TAG students.
- *Enrichment opportunities *may* be made available to students who average 90% or better on the core totals of Math, Reading, Science, and Language.

For a student to be successful in the *GAT program*, they will need to maintain responsibility within the GAT/TAG program as well as the general classroom. In order for your child to be properly placed and their needs met: the scores mentioned above, responsibility, performance, and productivity will be evaluated throughout the current year and placement will be reevaluated as they enter a new grade level. *Previous *talented and gifted* participation does not necessarily qualify a student for continued services. (Keep those test scores up!)

We are very busy trying to get goals accomplished and program deadlines met. Programs in which the students are participating in depend on their area(s) of strengths, interests, and time availability. The Future Problem Solving groups have finished their first packets and have a good start on their next. We will go over the judges comments before our second packet goes in for judging in order to make adjustments. Future City students are off to a good start and many things to do before January. LEGO League students would like to thank Loren Staton for building our playing field and thank our mentor, Dean Wieland for donating his time to help us reach our goals. Math Olympiad, Math Bee, and Math Counts students are spending time problem solving. My Writers' Workshop is also. Be sure to check out the Student Writing Corner in the Bulletin Journal. Thank you to Mike Holenbrink, editor, for allowing the students to share some of their work with the community.

Some dates of interest for GAT/TAG participants and their parents:

FIRST LEGO League Competition 6 December 12 in Cedar Rapids.

Future Problem Solving Regional Competition will be during the week of January 25-29 in Cedar Falls. (Specific day has not been assigned at this time.)

Future City - estimated to be Saturday, January 23 at Prairie Middle School in Cedar Rapids.

Math Counts Competition has been tentatively set for Saturday, February 13, 2010 in Cedar Falls.

Math Bee Competition will be held March 12 in Cedar Falls.

The NE Iowa Reading Council and the River of Words contest deadlines are in December.

ELMO

By Dawn Keenan, Special Needs Teacher 6th, 7th, & 8th Grades

It wasn't that long ago that when I heard someone say "ELMO", I thought of a furry, red Sesame Street character. Now, I have an "ELMO" in my classroom, and it's not furry or red. I have learned that ELMO is an acronym for Energy-Localized Molecular Orbital. The ELMO is similar to an overhead projector with many more possible classroom uses.

With this new piece of technology and the LCD projector which is a type of video projector for displaying video, images or computer data on a screen or flat surface, I will be able to present various types of materials and information to my students. I will be able to increase student involvement in their own learning process. Students will be able to display and present their work on certain activities to the rest of the class, as well.

I will be learning how to use the ELMO and LCD projector more as the school year goes on to present materials to my students in math and language arts. With the use of this technology, I will be helping them increase their reading, math and writing skills. I'm looking forward to it!

Seventh Grade Language Arts

by Amanda Bock, 7th Grade Language Arts

This year of 7th grade Language Arts is going to be filled with lots of activities and projects. The focus of seventh grade Language Arts is to study various genres of literature and work on writing and speaking skills. We have begun with our Greek and Roman Mythology unit. The students finished this unit with a Myth Puppet Show by making one of the myths we've studied into a puppet show, making their own puppets and performing it in front of the class in groups of 2-3 students.

Throughout the year there will be other projects, all including technology in some form. For instance, the students will research and give a PowerPoint presentation to the class on a historical mystery. Through the presentation, the students will have an opportunity to use the MIMIO board.

As a new year begins, I'm excited to see this group of seventh grade students learn and grow in the areas of reading, writing and speaking.

Extended Reading by Sonya Elzey

Extended Reading is a class offered at the Middle School that focuses on improving reading comprehension. Extended Reading follows the Second Chance for Struggling Readers program developed by Dr. Showers. This program has been nationally shown to increase reading comprehension. This is done through various activities with short stories, reader's theater, and even song lyrics. Students enjoy getting involved in "hands-on" reading activities. In Extended Reading, reading is not a mundane activity to be done in isolation. Reading is exciting! Reading is engaging! Reading is fun!

Students in Extended Reading get the opportunity to set their own reading goals. The teacher works closely with each individual student to assure that the students' goals are challenging, yet obtainable. The student and teacher also work together to monitor their progress toward their goal. This semester students that reach their individual goal will be able to participate in a popcorn party!

Students in Extended Reading are getting excited about reading! I have had students ask me if I can search for a specific book to add to our classroom library. Students are recommending books to each other. And I hear students talk to each other about the books that they are reading. Students in Extended Reading are becoming engaged in reading.

Thank You for Your Support!

By Mr. Dederling

The start of a new school year brings lots of excitement and a little bit of apprehension. In my class we try to look for student strengths and build on them to create a positive student attitude and approach to school. The challenges that students face are dealt with in a remedial instructional approach, along with lots of staff and peer support for student efforts.

Our schools, and all classrooms, are always appreciative of the community support we receive for all of our projects. We want to specifically thank Bill's Pizza and Smokehouse, Wal-Mart, Pizza Hut, Starlight Cinema and Homestead Restaurant at this time.

On September 22nd, several students were the guests of Homestead Restaurant in Independence for a lunchtime meal. They were able to order from the menu and enjoy a delicious meal while practicing their manners, as well as, social and communication skills.

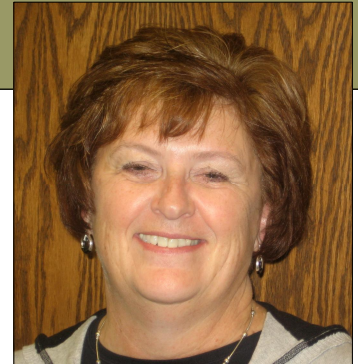


Classroom associates are a big part of the support the Independence Community School District provides for students. The students and I, feel very fortunate to have four dedicated and positive professionals helping all of us on a daily basis. They fulfill a multitude of jobs and responsibilities each and every day. Pictured from left to right are Marilyn Oline, Diane Shonka, Erin Maurer and Chrissy Snyder.

We anticipate a great school year and want to work with parents to support their children in meeting their goals. I encourage parents to communicate with me if they have questions or concerns. As a team, our efforts will be maximized.

Curriculum and School Improvement News

by Sandy Merritt, Director



Sandy Merritt, Director of
Curriculum and School
Improvement

NCLB

Our district has received notification that our elementary buildings are on the watch list because some of our subgroups did not meet the 2009 NCLB proficiency targets. As you probably know, the expectation is 100% proficiency by 2014. East's low socio-economic subgroup did not make adequate progress in reading. West's students on IEPs did not make adequate progress in math. Our middle school has been identified as a School In Need of Assistance because the low socio-economic and IEP subgroups did not make adequate progress in reading or math.

We do have an aggressive and multifaceted plan in place to help our students be more successful. We are already implementing "Headsprout Early Reading", a computerized program designed to help K-2 students learn phonemic awareness and decoding and this year will add "Headsprout Reading Comprehension", a program to help students in grades 2-6 with reading comprehension. We are planning to implement another computer-based program this year, "e2020", in our Middle School and High School for students who are having difficulty with reading and math. A reading class, "Second Chance Reading", will be utilized at Middle School and High School to provide specific reading instruction for students who are struggling. There will be an after school program at West for students who could benefit from more instruction. The Middle School after school program will continue this year. Teachers will closely monitor student progress throughout the year and provide added support as needed.

Our staff is truly committed to student achievement! At Independence, failure is not an option! We are confident that the implementation of all of these programs will 1) allow us to develop and implement instructional plans to help students be more successful and 2) increase student achievement in the district.

We want to thank our parents and community for the important work you continually do to help our students succeed! Thank you in advance for your support this year as together we strive to help our students reach their highest potential!

Tips and Tools

Our Tips and Tools project will continue again this year thanks to a grant from the Buchanan County Foundation. Our first session was held on October 12th at the Middle School. Our featured presenter was Connie Neal, author and national speaker, who addressed social networking and helping parents better understand this communication tool used by many teens. In breakout sessions, she also shared how parents can make informed, confident decisions about their children's use of MySpace and Facebook. Other breakout sessions included: Understanding the MAP Assessment, Football Basics for Moms and Volleyball Basics for Dads, and Keeping Our Children Healthy. The Food Service Department provided some great food for everyone, National Honor Society provided childcare, and many local businesses provided gift cards for door prizes! Thanks to one and all for your support of this project! We will be planning another session for the spring. Watch for more details about sessions that will be offered.

MAP Assessment

We have concluded our fall MAP assessments in grades 3-8. Students were assessed in the areas of reading, language usage, math, and science. Teachers will have information to share during the fall conferences. Students will be assessed again in March. Comparing the data from fall to spring will show us growth over the course of the year.

Health Alert Fact Sheet: Scabies

What is scabies?

Scabies is a skin disease caused by an almost invisible bug called a mite. Scabies mites burrow under the skin, producing pimple-like bumps.

What are the symptoms of scabies?

The major symptom of scabies is intense itching, particularly at night. In adults, the areas of the skin most affected by scabies include the webs and sides of the fingers, wrists, elbows, armpits, waist, genitals, breasts and lower buttocks. In children, the feet and toes are also commonly affected.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms will appear in 2 - 6 weeks in people who have never had scabies. People who have had scabies before may show symptoms within 1 - 4 days.

How is scabies spread?

Scabies mites spread by direct skin-to-skin contact. Transfer of scabies from undergarments or bedclothes can happen only if these are reused immediately after being used by an infected person. Scabies can also be spread during sexual contact.

Who gets scabies?

Anyone can get scabies. Scabies most commonly occurs in nursing homes, institutions and child care centers.

How long is a person infectious?

A person can spread scabies until mites and eggs are destroyed by effective treatment.

What is the treatment for this illness?

Skin products are available from a doctor for the treatment of scabies. The products are generally applied to the whole body except the face and neck. Always follow label instructions. A few persons may require a second treatment 7 - 10 days later. Itching may continue during and for several days after treatment. Skin care is important to reduce itching due to skin dryness, which may be caused by the treatment. Clothes and bedding should be washed using the hot cycle of both the washer and dryer.

Do infected people need to be excluded from school, work, or child care?

People may return to school, work, or a child care center after receiving an initial treatment.

What can be done to help prevent the spread of scabies?

Avoid direct physical contact with people who have scabies and their belongings, especially clothing and bedding. Early proper treatment of infested persons is extremely important to stop the spread of scabies.

Family Fun in the Kitchen ó Winter

From the Iowa State University Extension



'Tis the Season...

... to enjoy orange, yellow, and red fruitsóoranges, tangelos, grapefruit, tangerines, apples, cranberries.

Choose Fresh Fruit Carefully

Fruit is most nutritious and best tasting at its peak. Select and handle fresh fruit carefully. Avoid buying fruit with cuts, bruises, mold, or decay. Place fruit in your shopping cart where it won't get damaged and then pack it safely for the trip home. Buy only the amount you can use before it spoils. We know it's healthy to wash apples, pears, and peaches before eating. It is also important to wash fruits that are peeledó such as oranges, grapefruit, kiwi, and bananas. Rinse all fruit well under cool running water; use a vegetable brush to remove any dirt. This prevents bacteria from being transferred from the outside to the inside when cutting through the fruit.

Winter Fitness Ideas Outdoors:

ÉWalk and talk with children. It's a good time to discuss serious issues ó like schooló in a less threatening atmosphere.

ÉPlay óSimon Saysó while you walk.

Walk with hands on head or behind your back. Walk like a penguin.

Walk on tippy toes, skip, or stomp.

ÉWalk and shop. Put on a back pack and head to the grocery store or post office.

Indoors:

ÉClear some space for playing with a soft ball (such as Nerf® or Koosh®).

ÉGet all tied up in a game of Twister®.

ÉDance! All you need is music and a bit of space.



Be Smart in the Kitchen

—Knife Safety

ÉA paring knife is probably the safest knife for children to use. Even then, adult supervision is important.

ÉTeach children how to pick up a knife by the handle, not the blade. Consider marking the top of a paring knife handle with sticky dots or with red nail polish to show where to hold.

ÉIf a recipe requires chopping or dicing, use a clean cutting board, not the countertop. Place food on the cutting board and hold it down on one end.

Hold the knife in your other hand and cut down slowly and carefully. Always cut away from yourself.

ÉNever lay a sharp knife near the edge of the counter. A young child may reach up and grab the knife or knock it off.

ÉWhen finished using a knife, set it aside to wash separately. Don't drop sharp knives into soapy water.

ÉStore knives in a knife rack or in the drawer in an empty paper towel tube. Storing knives safely is a good way to protect fingers from painful cuts.

SAFETY TIP: Children who are not ready for a sharp knife can use a table knife, pizza cutter, or scissors to cut some foods. Want to watch short video clips on a variety of topics, including knife safety? Go to www.kidsacooking.ksu.edu/site.aspx?page=TipsList&Category_id=4

Recipes to try

Fruit Salad

This is a good "practice cutting" recipe; adding the juice helps preserve fruit coloró

You will need:

- 1 medium banana
- 1 medium apple
- 1 medium orange
- 1/2 cup grapes
- 2 tablespoons orange juice

What to do:

1. Wash your hands. Wash all fruit under cool, running water; pat dry with paper towel.
2. Peel banana, cut into thick slices, and put into bowl.
3. Cut apple into quarters, removing core. Cut into small cubes and add to bowl.
4. Peel orange and separate into segments. Cut segments in half and add to the bowl.
5. Add the grapes and orange juice concentrate. Stir to coat fruit with juice concentrate.
6. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

Refrigerate leftovers.

Makes 4 servings, about 1/2 cup each

Nutrition Facts (1/2 cup):

63 calories, 0g fat, 0mg cholesterol, 0mg sodium, 16g carbohydrate, 2g dietary fiber, 1g protein

FIND MORE RESOURCES

at these Web sites

— www.extension.iastate.edu

— www.kidsacookin.ksu.edu

... and justice for all The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914 in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jack M. Payne, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.

Positive Attitude in Education

"At the desk where I sit, I have learned one great truth. The answer for all our national problems--the answer for all the problems of the world--comes to a single word. That word is education."

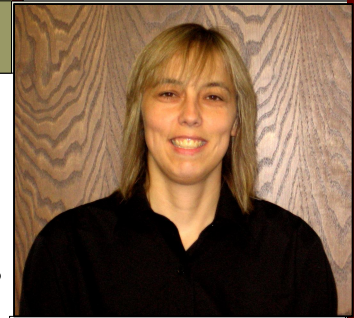
President Lyndon Johnson

I have always had great respect for President Johnson because he was a high school teacher before he went into politics. I feel he brought a different perspective to the Oval Office. The view and the attitude about education need to be positive. Problems may be solved through education. How does this apply to High School?

Lifelong skills will be acquired in high school. Many students don't see the connection or the

relevance of what they are learning. There is the age-old question, "When am I going to need Algebra?" Not everyone will need Algebra in their future career but everyone can take advantage of the thinking skills and problem solving skills that you can learn in Algebra.

Students need to have a positive attitude about new material and new concepts. We are also trying to equip the students with the tools so they can be critical thinkers and active learners in the future. Everyone in society faces new ideas and concepts they have to acquire. If anyone is going to learn at any time, their attitude towards learning will greatly impact how successful they will be at acquiring new skills. It is critical to help students overcome negative thoughts about learning new concepts and to find success in high school. It will provide a positive foundation for their future.



Jennifer Sornson,
High School Principal

Independence HS Teams Up with the Independence Area Food Pantry

By Amanda Sedlacek, Student Council Advisor

During Homecoming week this year our Student Council sponsored a food drive at the Rough and Tough volleyball game and the Community Pep Rally. Thanks to the community support we were able to collect over 500 cans of food and \$400.00 to be donated. We will use that \$400.00 to purchase canned food items

from local grocery stores. 100% of these donations will go directly to the Independence Area Food Pantry. On behalf of the Student Council I would like to thank the community of Independence for your generous donations. We are going to continue our efforts to support the food pantry throughout the month of October. We have entered a contest to compete against area schools such as Waterloo West and Cedar Falls High Schools to see who can collect the most cans. Because Waterloo West



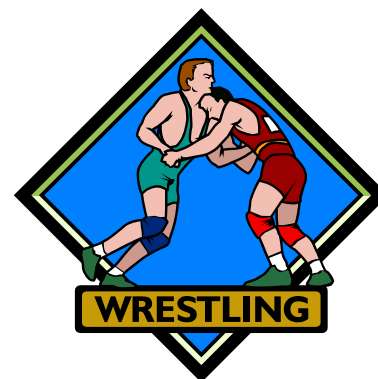
Sophomores
Cassara
Higgins,
Dusty Toale
and Zach
Schulz
show off
some of the
food that
has been
collected.

and Cedar Falls have a much higher enrollment than Independence HS we are going to need the community's help to meet our goal of beating the larger schools and supplying the Independence Area Food Pantry with more than enough food for the upcoming holiday seasons. If at any time you would like to bring in donations to the high school we would gladly accept them. I also strongly encourage the elementary and middle schools to get involved and hold your own food drives. Together we can make a difference to help end hunger in Buchanan County!

High School Calendar

DECEMBER

Tuesday Dec. 1	Boys BB @ Western Dubuque	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. Western Dubuque	4:30 pm
Friday Dec. 4	Boys BB vs. Maquoketa	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ Maquoketa	4:30 pm
Saturday Dec. 5	Indee Wrestling Invite	10:00 am
Monday Dec. 7	HS Christmas Concert	7:00 pm
Tuesday Dec. 8	Boys BB @ CPU	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. CPU	4:30 pm
Thursday Dec. 10	Wrestling Dual Home vs. West Delaware	6:00 pm
Friday Dec. 11	Boys BB vs. Marion	4:30 pm
Friday Dec. 11	Girls BB @ Marion	4:30 pm
Saturday Dec. 12	JV Wrestling @ Union	9:00 am
Saturday Dec. 12	V Wrestling @ Western Dubuque	6:00 pm
Tuesday Dec. 15	Boys BB vs. CCA	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ CCA	4:30 pm
Thursday Dec. 17	Wrestling Dual Home vs. Marion & Columbus	6:00 pm
Friday Dec. 18	Boys BB @ Vinton	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. Vinton	4:30 pm
Saturday Dec. 20	Wrestling @ N Linn	9:00 am



Gyms reserved for AAU not listed. Please check with your child's coach if you have questions. Most weekends from November through February are booked.

JANUARY

Friday Jan. 1	Var. Wrestling ðThe Clashö @ Rochester, MN	9:00 am
Saturday Jan. 2	Var. Wrestling ðThe Clashö @ Rochester, MN	9:00 am
Monday Jan. 4	School resumes	
Tuesday Jan. 5	Boys BB vs. Williamsburg	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ Williamsburg	4:30 pm
Thursday Jan. 7	Girls/Boys BB @ Waverly	6:00 pm
	Varsity Wrestling vs. CPU & Williamsburg	6:00 pm
Friday Jan. 8	Boys BB @ Columbus	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. Columbus	4:30 pm
Saturday Jan. 9	JV/Varsity Wrestling @ Benton Community	8:00 am
Tuesday Jan. 12	Boys BB @ Benton Community	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. Benton Community	4:30 pm
Thursday Jan. 14	Varsity Wrestling Dual @ Benton Community	6:00 pm
Friday Jan. 15	Boys BB vs. Marion	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ Marion	4:30 pm
Saturday Jan. 16	Varsity Wrestling @ Osage Duals	8:00 am
Monday Jan. 18	WaMaC Speech @ CPU	4:30 pm



Continued on the next page...

JANUARY Cont.

Tuesday Jan. 19	Boys BB vs. CPU	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ CPU	4:30 pm
Thursday Jan. 21	Varsity Wrestling @ CCA Duals	6:00 pm
Friday Jan. 22	Boys BB @ DeWitt	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. DeWitt	4:30 pm
Saturday Jan. 23	Large Group Speech TBA	TBA
	JV/Varsity Wrestling West Marshall Duals @ Le Grand	8:00 am
Tuesday Jan. 26	Boys BB @ CCA	4:30 pm
	Girls BB vs. CCA	4:30 pm
Thursday Jan. 28	Varsity Wrestling vs. Maquoketa (Senior/Parents Night)	6:00 pm
Friday Jan. 29	Boys BB vs. Benton	4:30 pm
	Girls BB @ Benton	4:30 pm
Saturday Jan. 30	Varsity Wrestling WaMaC @ Benton	8:00 am



Gyms reserved for AAU not listed. Please check with your child's coach if you have questions. Most weekends from November through February are booked. All dates subject to change if impacted by weather.

The Impact of Our State's Financial Situation (Continued from page 1)

Should the State reduce our allowable growth or make it zero, we will have no new money to work with for the upcoming year and we will be over \$363,000 short before the year even begins.

This information is being provided to you so that you may understand why we will be forced into making program and/or staffing reductions for the upcoming year. Our district's work-out plan will consist of the following:

- Tax back our community for cash reserves to work our way out of debt over a period of time (five to seven years).
- Reduce programming/positions equal to dollars we lose to declining enrollment plus loss of phase I, Instructional support state aid, IPERS increase, over spending of the budget, and anticipated negotiated settlements.
- Developing a plan to curb the decline of enrollment.
- Continue efforts to build sharing opportunities with East Buchanan and Jesup and other districts and/or entities such as Hawkeye Community College.

This will be a difficult time for all of us. We are forced to respond to these unfortunate events and find the best way to get through. There are no right answers- only possible ways to make ends meet. I encourage you to support your district during the difficult challenges it will meet in the coming months.

Again this year, our schools are participating in the Iowa Department of Public Health's influenza survey. If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please inform the secretary of you child's symptoms. No identifying information is given to the Iowa Department of Public Health.

On the district website you will find information regarding the H1N1 influenza virus and when to keep your child home from school to minimize the spread of disease. We recommend that you keep your child home if they have a fever of greater than 100° until they have been fever free for 24 hours without using any medication like Tylenol or Motrin. It is also recommended that they stay home until their symptoms, such as coughing, sneezing, runny nose, are well under control.

Good hand washing is the best way to prevent disease. **Teach and encourage** your children to wash before eating, after using the restroom, after playing outside or with pets, after coughing or blowing their nose or when they are visibly dirty. Using alcohol based hand sanitizer should be reserved for those times when soap and water is not available.

If your child develops a cough, **teach and encourage** proper respiratory etiquette. Have them bend their elbow and cough into their upper sleeve or use a tissue and then wash their hands. It is no longer recommended to cough into your hands.

Make sure your child's teacher and school have your most current telephone numbers so we can reach you if your child becomes ill while at school.

Teri Schloss, RN

Rhonda Jasper, RN

Proper Hand Washing

- **Place hands under warm running water.**
- **Soap up hands.**
- **Scrub hands together for at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice) making sure to clean between fingers, the tops of your hands, the palms, the nails and wrists.**
- **Rinse hands with warm running water.**
- **Dry hands with a towel.**
- **Turn the faucet off using the paper towel.**
- **Throw away paper towel.**



WALKING HOURS

DUE TO SAFETY AND TO KEEP FLOORS CLEAN AND DRY, PLEASE BRING SHOES OTHER THAN YOUR STREET SHOES TO WALK IN. THANK YOU.

EAST ELEMENTARY

(Enter Front Doors)

7:00-7:45 a.m. Monday through Friday



WEST ELEMENTARY

(Enter Front Doors)

6:30-7:45 a.m. Monday through Friday

4:00-8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday



MIDDLE SCHOOL

(Enter South Doors)

6:30-7:45 a.m. Monday through Friday

4:00-6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

BUILDINGS WILL BE CLOSED TO WALKERS WHEN THERE IS A SCHOOL ACTIVITY IN THAT BUILDING AND WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION.

BEGINNING November 16, 2009

INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

Volunteers are an important resource to the educational process in the Independence Community Schools. Please complete the information below and on the back so that we may best utilize your time and talent. Regular, ongoing help is not necessary. If you have questions, please call (319) 334-7400 Ext. 626 or email Val at vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us Thank you!

RETURN THIS FORM TO: Independence Community School District
Attn: Volunteer Program
1207 First Street West
Independence, Iowa 50644

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ - _____ - _____ Cell phone _____ - _____ - _____ E-mail _____

Employer _____ Business Phone _____

Current Occupation _____

Other occupational experiences _____

Retired? _____ yes _____ no Names and grades of any children in school _____

Do you have any health or physical limitations that might affect certain types of volunteer positions? ____ yes ____ no

If yes, please list: _____

In case of emergency, contact: _____
Name Phone Relationship

Where and when are you available?

____ District (anywhere needed) ____ ECC (PK) ____ Elementary (K-5) ____ Middle School (6-8) ____ High School (9-12)

Time(s) available: ____ Daily ____ Weekly ____ Variable, Occasional Other: _____

If you have specific hours on specific days, please list here: (Example, 8:00-9:30 on Tuesdays)

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Do you have a specific class or teacher request? _____

**PLEASE FILL OUT THE BACKSIDE TO LET US KNOW YOUR
INTERESTS/TALENTS.**



Independence Community School District

1207 First Street West
Independence, Iowa 50644



Non Profit Org.
PAID
Permit 197
Independence, Iowa

We're on the Web

<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us>

VOLUNTEER PREFERENCE CHECKLIST - Please check any and all areas you would help in.

Name _____ Today's date _____

Phone _____ Start date _____

Teacher Support

- ☐ Small group(s)
- ☐ Any in-class assistance
- ☐ Assist handicapped
- ☐ Clerical support
- ☐ Field trip chaperone
- ☐ Media center/library
- Specific grade request _____
- Specific teacher request _____
- Other: _____

Special Projects/Programs

- ☐ Classroom special events
- ☐ Volunteer bulletin board help
- ☐ Mentoring (lunchtime)
- ☐ After-school homework help
- ☐ Career exploration speaker
- ☐ Camp Ewalu (Middle School)
- ☐ Book fair help
- ☐ Music program help
- ☐ Athletic program help

At Home Help

- ☐ Computer work
- ☐ Material preparation
- ☐ Food/treats preparation
- ☐ Telephoning parents
about events, reminders
- ☐ Grade papers
- ☐ Assemble projects
- ☐ Make costumes (sew)
- Other: _____

Skills/Knowledge You Could Share Not Listed In Above Categories: _____
