

Volume 7 Issue 1
Fall, 2012-2013

District Events:**Nov 14**

1:00 Early Dismissal

Nov 19

School Board Meeting -
Rowley 6:00 p.m.

Nov 19 & 20

1:00 Early Dismissal

Nov 21-23

No School;
Thanksgiving Break

Dec 5

1:00 Early Dismissal

Dec 10

School Board Meeting -
Independence 6:00 p.m.

Dec 21

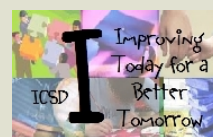
1:00 Early Dismissal

Dec 24 - Jan 4

No School;
Winter Break

Jan 7

School Resumes

***From the Desk of Jean Peterson, Superintendent***

The 2012-2013 school year has begun successfully. It is incredible how fast staff and students transition into their school routines and the business of learning so easily. I want to thank our staff for all of the assistance they provide our students during the school day. It is truly amazing how fast the time does go as well. The end of the first term for our 7-12 grade students is October 24th. The end of the first trimester for our K-6 students is November 13th.

The construction of the new Jr/Sr High School is moving ahead at a fantastic pace. Because we had such a dry summer, they have been able to make excellent progress. It has been so fun and so rewarding to see our new facility being built. This is going to be such an awesome facility for our current students and for future generations. We are planning on providing another tour of our new facility for the public on Sunday, November 4th. We will start this tour at 1:00 p.m.



**Jean Peterson,
Superintendent**

Certified Enrollment:

We certified our enrollment with the State Department of Education on October 15th. Certified enrollment determines how much the school district receives per resident student from the state of Iowa in the next fiscal year.

Our total enrollment for this year is 1353. Last year it was 1341. This is an increase of 12 students. We had an increase of 12 students during the 2011-2012 school year too. We had 1274 resident students last year and we have that exact same number this year. The increase in enrollment comes from 10 new open enrolled in students and two tuition in students. Our open enrolled in students totaled 43 last year. There are 53 this year. Last year we had 109 open enrolled out students. This year we have 106 open enrolled out to other districts. So, we are starting to bridge the gap better between our open enrolled in and out students. We have also not had back to back school years of increased enrollment since before the 1997-1998 school year. Hopefully, we can keep this momentum going!

Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Policies:

All school districts in Iowa are to have an anti-bullying/anti-harassment policy in place. Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state, and local policy and are not tolerated by our school district. The school board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect.

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All of our buildings have specific goals they are working on this year in regard to educating our students and staff about bullying/harassment and what avenues are in place to stop this kind of behavior from happening. Our Board of Education and our staff take this very seriously. We do have a specific Board Policy in regard to Anti-Bullying/Harassment. It is policy #106. You can find our Board Policies on our school's website. Click on the District Information tab and then click Board of Education to find the policy section.

We are also sending some of our counselors and teachers to the Governor's Bullying Prevention Summit to be held in Des Moines on November 27, 2012. This summit will feature a number of speakers from Iowa communities who will present their strategies on combating bullying. There will also be state and national experts sharing strategies on dealing with bullying both offline and online.

Student Services:

During the past school year we reviewed and revised our Student Services Plans. We also presented these plans to our Board of Education for their consideration as well.

We updated the following: Special Education District Delivery Plan, Drop Out Prevention Plan, English Language Learners Plan, Talented and Gifted Plan and our Homeless Education Plan. You can find all of these plans when you click on the Program Tab on our school's website. Do take some time to look these over. Our staff is working hard in all of these areas to provide as much assistance as we can for our students.

School Improvement Advisory Committee:

Our School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) will have its first meeting of the school year on October 30, 2012. This committee is made up of community members, parents, teachers, associates, administrators, and students and meets five times a year. The goals of the SIAC are to help our school determine our student achievement goals, our bullying/harassment goals, review curriculum, consider new course proposals, and to help us brainstorm areas/ideas that can help us be a better school.

The following is a list of our School Improvement Advisory Committee Members for the 2012-2013 school year. Please feel free to contact any one of these members if you have questions or ideas for helping to make our school district better.

School Improvement Advisory Committee Membership for 2012 – 2013

PK-2 Teachers

Donalyn Pogue
Brandi Davis

Grades 3-6 Teachers

Kay Reidy
Kelsie Wittrock

Grades 7-8 Teachers

Lori Dietzenbach
Tracy Curtis

Grades 9-12 Teachers

Tracy Steger
Judy Olsen

Jason Lang
Jon TeStrake
Shalon Frye

Classified Staff

Terri Janaszak

Board of Education

Rusty Donnelly

Community

Kathryn Jensen
Amy McGraw
Ann McMillan
Susie Toale
Jennifer Eddy
Kevin Jimmerson
Margaret Wood
Mike McGill

Students

Maddie Rummel
Megan Jimmerson
Ryan Kurt

Administration – Superintendent, Principals, Directors

Jean Peterson - Superintendent
Jennifer Sornson - JSH Principal
Rob Arnold - JSH Assistant Principal/
Activities Director
Sandy Merritt - West Elem Principal
Mary Jean Blaisdell - East Elem and Early
Childhood Center Principal
Deb Donlea - Director of Curriculum/
Student Services
Steve Noyes - Director of Technology

Curriculum/Student Services

by Deb Donlea, Director of Curriculum/Student Services

Curriculum



Deb Donlea, Director of Curriculum/Student Services

Student Centered Learning

At ISCD, we continue to look at the Characteristics of Effective Instruction; Teaching for Understanding, Assessment for Learning, Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum, Teaching for Learner Differences, and Student Centered Classrooms. Our focus this year is Student Centered Classrooms with Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum.

In student centered classrooms, students construct their own knowledge based on experiential, holistic, authentic, and challenging experiences. Teachers take the skills, knowledge, and concepts that the curriculum requires and connect them to students' experiences, interests, and environment. They provide opportunities for students to communicate their understandings, reasoning, solutions, and connections. Teachers encourage students to reflect on their own thinking and learning. Curriculum and assessments are centered on meaningful performances in real-world contexts. Classroom learning experiences are intentionally designed for collaboration.

Because the focus is on individual students rather than whole class structures, teachers often offer choices and adaptations within lessons. To be considered a student-centered learning environment it will be open, dynamic, trusting, respectful, and promote children's subjective as well as objective learning styles. This experiential learning involves the whole child—their emotions, thoughts, social skills, and intuition. The result is a person who is self-confident and a critical thinker.

New Math Resources K-8

Everyday Mathematics (K-5)

Everyday Mathematics is a research-based and field-tested curriculum that focuses on developing children's understandings and skills in ways that produce life-long mathematical power.

The Everyday Mathematics curriculum emphasizes:

- Use of concrete, real-life examples that are meaningful and memorable as an introduction to key mathematical concepts.
- Repeated exposures to mathematical concepts and skills to develop children's ability to recall knowledge from long-term memory.
- Frequent practice of basic computation skills to build mastery of procedures and quick recall of facts, often through games and verbal exercises.
- Use of multiple methods and problem-solving strategies to foster true proficiency and accommodate different learning styles.

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Each grade of the Everyday Mathematics curriculum is carefully designed to build and expand a student's mathematical proficiency and understanding. Our goal: to build powerful mathematical thinkers.

Holt McDougal (6-8)

Holt McDougal Math for middle school grades 6, 7, and 8 offers comprehensive instruction, assessment, and intervention tools. The goal of the lessons taught is to achieve a deeper understanding of math concepts for all learners. With this goal in mind, embedded math Rtl resources within Holt McDougal Mathematics, ensures every student gets the help they need.

An online interactive prescriptive assessment is provided that offers skill and problem-solving intervention practice to address student weaknesses before they are given summative tests, or enrichment for those ready to move on.

Like K-5 math, the goal is to build powerful mathematical thinkers.

Student Services

When I moved from classroom to administration, my biggest fear was I would miss out on interacting with students. As Director of Student Services, I've had many opportunities to talk with students, observe their learning, and assist with personal education plans.

As the Director of Student Services, I wear many hats. My responsibilities include: At-Risk/ Drop Out Prevention, Special Education, Homeless Education, New Teacher Mentoring, Talented and Gifted, English Language Learners, Student Assistance Team, working with the Four Oaks program and visit all six sites each week to observe in classrooms. Each responsibility has given me opportunities such as getting to know students and staff as well as learning about each program.

Our Student Assistance Team, which is new this year, is made up of our school counselors, At-Risk personnel, our Success Center coordinator and our K-12 Truancy Officer. This team works very hard to make sure our students are getting assistance in multiple areas so they are successful socially, emotionally, and academically. To ensure this success, our team has been learning about the various resources available to our students and families in the district. If you are part of a program, organization, or service to Buchanan County and would like to visit with our team, please do not hesitate to contact me at 319-332-0459.

Principal's Corner

by Mary Jean Blaisdell

How can it be November? We are looking forward to sharing student successes at school with parents at conference time this month.

In-service time in October was spent learning about our new math series, Everyday Math. We are excited to implement what we learned in our training. In-service is important time for faculty and we thank you for your continued support in our efforts to improve the educational experience of your children.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Monday-Tuesday, November 19 & 20, 1:30-8:00pm. Conference time is crucial to the educational development of your child. It is a chance to learn more about your child's academic progress and to share information with the teacher who can help him/her to best meet your child's needs.



Mary Jean Blaisdell,
Principal

Preschool Press

On Tuesday, October 16, Lisa Laird came to present at our Fall Parents and Family Night Out. Lisa is a former preschool and elementary teacher who now travels to provide children's entertainment that is entertaining, encouraging, and educational as well as fun! Every show uses ventriloquism, magic tricks, audience participation, stories, and songs. Our theme for the evening was a Pajama Party and the children loved the show!

Early in the day, Lisa also presented a workshop to the ECC and Pre-K teachers about using puppets in the classroom. She taught us several different ways to make puppets, and each teacher had the opportunity to make a few of them. It is always fun to learn new ideas to use with the children!



Kindergartners Give Thanks

November will include a study of Thanksgiving and things we are thankful for as kindergartners. A highlight of our unit will be a Charlie Brown Thanksgiving Feast. We will also be holding Parent/Teacher conferences November 19 & 20. We look forward to sharing your child's



progress with you! Kindergartners continue to develop their alphabet and number skills, as well as the practice of line basics and body basics.

We look forward to seeing the play, "The Boy Who Cried Wolf", at the Williams Center, in Oelwein, November 15th. What a great opportunity to see a Gallagher-Bluedorn play in our area!



Kindergartners visit Fontana!

First Grade Focus

First Grade started their school year with a trip to Fontana Park. Students have been learning about insects and their habitats. During the fieldtrip, the children were able to explore water insects with Naturalist, Sondra Cabell and prairie insects with their teachers. They were also able to release some Monarchs that had been raised in the classroom. Students helped Sondra tag the Monarchs as they started their long journey to Mexico.

Watermelon were harvested from the Farm to School garden and brought to school by Joe Olson. First graders seemed to enjoy this delicious snack. We hope maybe a few seeds found their way home in some pockets! (Be sure to put them in a safe place and plant them next spring!)



1st Graders enjoy watermelon from the school garden!

Second Grade Scene

The fall season is already upon us and the second graders are becoming active engaged learners. They have learned the routines of our Daily 5 Reading and Café and continue to grow as readers. It is important that they read at home each night to further increase their comprehension and fluency. The biggest change for our second graders is the Everyday Math program. During each lesson the students are engaged in whole group lessons, independent work, and games that enhance their learning of new concepts. In order for the students to be successful it is very important that you look over the Home Links from Everyday Math that they bring home and to work through some of the problems with your child if help is needed. Also, in the near future each student will be receiving passwords that they can use to get into the Everyday Math site, and with this password they will be able to play math games on a home computer.

All of the second graders have been learning about Frogs and Toads. Sondra Cabell, Fontana, brought some of these creatures into the classroom on October 15th and talked to the students about the unique characteristics of these amphibians. Also, as part of science curriculum all K-2 students are trying to go to the prairie once a week to explore the habitat.

With fall upon us, the weather is forever changing. Please make sure that your child is dressed properly for the changing temperatures, and be looking soon for information about upcoming Halloween parties in each classroom.



2nd graders examine things found in the Prairie.



2nd graders use cards to learn in Everyday Math!

Scholastic Book Fair

We invite you to visit our Scholastic Book Fair and experience a celebration of reading that provides families the opportunity to get involved in a universal mission: *encouraging kids to read every day so they can lead better lives.*

Our Scholastic Book Fair theme – **All-Star Book Fair: Every Reader Is a Star!** – is part of an exciting reading event that brings to school a wonderful selection of fun, engaging, and affordable books kids want to read. Giving kids access to good books and the opportunity to choose their own books will motivate them to read more. And like most acquired skills, the more kids practice reading, the better they'll get.

Please make plans to visit our Book Fair. Hope to see you there!

Book Fair Dates: November 19 & 20, 2012
Shopping Hours: 8:00am – 8:00pm during Parent-Teacher Conferences
Special Events: Family Shoppers Drawing, 1:00pm – 8:00pm

Judy Olsen
K-12 Teacher/Librarian
East & West Elementary Schools

East's Respect and Protect (Anti-bullying) Program



At the beginning of the year, teachers present lessons on Respect and Protect. These lessons teach students:

- to know the rules & definitions
- to use conflict resolution & problem-solving skills
- to distinguish between bullying and normal conflict
- to understand the terms "entitlement" & "toleration"
- to understand Respect & Protect procedures & consequences.

As a follow-up, the students attend an assembly each trimester to review those skills. In addition, students are frequently given verbal & visual reminders of the rules and expectations.

When violence/disrespect occurs, actions are taken within the Violence/Disrespect Intervention Plan. The purpose of this plan is to instruct and encourage students to make good choices. Consequences are designed to teach students about how their choices can affect their life and the lives of others.

Next time: What parents can do to help

Coming up: Tattling vs. Reporting, Bucket Filling, STARS program

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!

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.

Nurse News

by Teri Schloss, RN and Rhonda Jasper, RN



As colder weather approaches, remember to dress your child in weather appropriate clothing. Hats, gloves or mittens, winter coats, snow pants and snow boots are a necessity for a child to be able to feel comfortable while outside for recess in the winter months. All students will go outside for recess unless the temperature is below zero.

During the cooler months we see an increase in the number of students who are ill. If your child is ill, please keep them home. We are again providing the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) with the number of students absent and what symptoms the students are experiencing. When you notify the school that your child is ill, please provide some basic symptoms that they are experiencing. No personal or identifying information is given to the IDPH.

Reasons to keep your child home from school include:

- **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 if they have been able to keep a full meal down.
- **Rash of unknown origin.**
- **Severe sore throat.** A minor sore throat without fever can be managed at school. You may send your child with throat lozenges and a written permission slip. The health office does not carry throat lozenges. Students with known strep may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy.

Not all illnesses will fit nicely into these categories. If your child appears ill to you, keep them home for their comfort and to avoid the spread of disease. As always, consult your health care provider with any questions or concerns you may have about your child's health.

Good hand washing and getting a flu vaccine are some of the best ways to avoid getting sick. It isn't too late for you or your child to receive an influenza vaccine.

Teri Schloss, RN

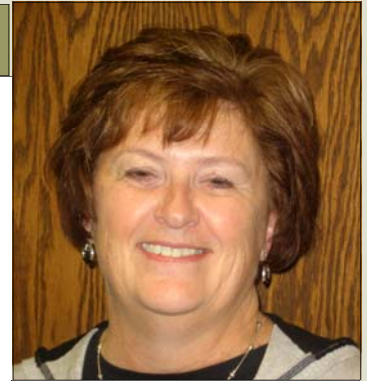
Rhonda Jasper, RN

News From West Elementary by Sandy Merritt, Principal

We are off to a great start to the 2012-13 school year! Our staff is committed to helping every student achieve to their highest potential, particularly in reading and math! We are implementing new math programs this year which we believe will provide our students with the experiences needed for them to excel. Students are learning reading comprehension strategies to help them understand what they are reading. Our At Home Reading Program provides an opportunity for school and parents to partner in helping students to improve reading skills.



We are also committed in providing an environment for learning in which every child feels safe and respected. Parents, teachers, students, board members, the counselor and the principal have signed a “Standing Up Against Bullying” contract to reduce bullying in our school. On October 3rd, students wore blue as a sign of their commitment to ending bullying at West Elementary. At each of our Character Counts Assemblies this year, students will put on skits pertaining to bullying and being a Kid of Character!



Sandy Merritt, Principal

Third Graders Celebrate Fire Prevention Week

In honor of Fire Prevention Week, two representatives from the Independence Fire Department came to speak to the third graders about fire safety and prevention. Charles Conklin and Roger Kremer demonstrated how the uniform that the firefighters wear keeps them safe from fires. They also showed the students how the fire tools are used. The students were able to see a halligan bar and a pike pole. The students asked questions and learned about all of the responsibilities of a firefighter. One clear message was the importance of having two ways out of a home during a fire. After the demonstration in the gym, the students were able to watch Charlie go out on the fire truck ladder. The students were amazed by the height of the ladder. Thank you to the Independence Fire Department for providing the students with this memorable experience!



Fourth Grade Love Learning About Animals

Fourth graders have been learning about the characteristics of vertebrates and invertebrates during science. They had a wonderful day visiting Fontana on September 25th where they were able to learn even more about animal characteristics. The hands-on experiences with the new math curriculum have proven to be enjoyable too. Ask your child what she/he has enjoyed the most during math so far this year. Make sure you visit our classroom websites for classroom information, photos, and updates. You can access our sites through the Independence website. Your child has visited each fourth grade teacher's website so let them show you how to navigate our sites! In November we will continue learning about the regions of the United States and animal adaptations. We will be going to the Waterloo Black Hawk Theatre to watch Stuart Little on November 15th. We look forward to seeing you at conferences at the end of November. Keep having your child READ at home!!!

Fifth Grade Begins Their Study of Iowa

5th graders have been working hard in math with our new math program, learning about our number system. We are learning about prime numbers, square and unsquare (square root) numbers, prime factorization, and more.

In social studies and science we are learning about the history of Iowa and prairies. We have been able to go on several field trips this fall. We went to Fontana, Jakway, the Rowley Fen, and Living History Farms. We were able to experience a lot about our great state and our rich prairie. We plan to utilize what we have learned from these experiences in our social studies and science classes throughout the year.

We would like to say a special thank you to our PTO for funding our trip to Living History Farms in Urbandale, IA. At the last PTO meeting, Mrs. Larson, Mrs. Kinseth, and 5th grader, Makenzie Homan, gave a short presentation of some highlights from our trip. We are so fortunate to have a great supportive PTO.

Mrs. Shaffer's class picked pumpkins from our school garden on October 4th. The pumpkins were used for a staff decorating contest. Students in Mrs. Shaffer's and Mrs. Jenkins' class will be using the pumpkin/fall theme through the end of October when they will be decorating a pumpkin in the theme of their favorite book character.



Mrs. Larson's class has been creating brochures about Iowa. The fifth graders are learning how to use research materials to find specific information related to Iowa's history. They will also be creating houses from popsicle sticks. These houses will be replicas of the Iowa homes during the 1700, 1800 and 1900 time period.

Mr. Abildtrup's class is finishing up their Iowa history unit by writing an Iowa ABC Book. Students are writing about Iowa heroes, tourist attractions, and state symbols that have great importance to the state of Iowa.

Mrs. Kinseth's class is learning about the skeletal and muscular systems. We are learning the names of the bones and how they are connected to allow us to move. We are putting together the bones that have the same characteristics and function. We are studying the bones of mammals to help us understand how they are similar to our human skeleton.



Making Memories in Sixth Grade

Where does 6th grade go on an all day outdoor adventure? To Camp EWALU, of course! Students and staff were excited to leave the books behind to have fun together working on team-building skills with a focus on communication, listening, and collaboration. A couple of the activities, such as the tarp and rock wall, were quite challenging and students learned the value of sticking with it and encouraging our teammates. The tarp activity involved the entire team of 11-12 students trying to flip the tarp over while standing on top. Although it was tricky, with perseverance and encouragement, some teams succeeded in the challenge. Kids were also given the option of climbing the rock wall to reach the top and ring the bell. This proved to be more difficult for the groups that got stuck with the slippery wall, but was by far the most memorable activity.

Another favorite activity of the students was the trust fall. Students had to put faith in their partner to catch them as they closed their eyes and fell back into the other person's arms. After falling and climbing, the adventure had to come to an end. On the ride home, students were exhausted but also laughing, talking, and discussing the day.



Mini Mustang Bank

The Mini Mustang Bank is open to all West students and teachers every Thursday morning from 7:50 – 8:20 A.M. It is a REAL bank, in partnership with Security State Bank. Parents and students, if you are not familiar with the Mini Mustang Bank, stop by the Commons some Thursday morning and see the student tellers in action. They help the student account holders make deposits and withdrawals, record all transactions in ledger books and must balance their books at the end of each MMB day. This is a great age for young people to learn the advantage of saving money on a regular basis. Small weekly amounts can add up to considerable sum by years' end. Mini Mustang accounts earn 2% interest! It's not too late to open an account for this year. New account applications are available every Thursday morning during Mini Mustang Bank hours. Stop by and pick one up!

Junior High News By Rob Arnold, Assistant Junior-Senior High School Principal

It has been a great fall in the Junior High School. The 7th graders are settling in and adapting to transitions of the Junior High. The 8th graders are providing good leadership in the hallway and in the lunchroom. Staff has been working diligently to provide a high quality educational experience to every student.



Rob Arnold, Assistant Principal

The Junior High has just completed the NWEA/MAP testing for all Junior High Students. Our new Guidance Counselor, Shalon Frye, did an excellent job of organizing our students and schedule to accommodate our need to have all students get computer access and be successful on the test. We utilized two computer labs and got the students tested over the course of two weeks. We will utilize the data from these tests to continue to evaluate our curriculum and analyze our instruction.

We have also completed our annual trip to EWALU for both the 7th and 8th graders. Although the weather was a bit cool, the students had a great day of learning. The students were able to benefit from some outstanding team-building sessions. We are very pleased to be able to provide an off-campus educational experience like EWALU for our students. The students learned valuable lessons of leadership, character, and teamwork through the activities.

We are also very excited by the creation of our Junior High Student Council this year. The focus with the Junior High Student Council is to provide quality leadership opportunities for our student body. One of the main responsibilities that Student Council has taken on is our Junior High response to bullying. The State of Iowa has developed a state-reporting site to track incidents of bullying in our schools. The Student Council has developed our way to track these incidents locally. They have created a Bully Box that is located in the Junior High Hallway and is used to anonymously report incidents so that we may respond appropriately. We developed the Bully Box so that we can respond without fear of reprisal.

Our hope is that by working through the Student Council, we can encourage proper response by the students who witness it. This allows us to deal with issues timely and to respond before it escalates. Our goal is to create a climate where students are comfortable and can concentrate on their education.

Rob Arnold
Assistant Junior-Senior High School Principal

Three Lessons from the Land of Chocolate

This summer I had the opportunity to visit my sister. I was very excited about this visit because my sister moved to Hershey, Pennsylvania two years ago. This was a dream come true, to visit the land of chocolate. I used to teach American History, so I knew about the Hershey factory, but I learned so much more. I would like to share the three most important lessons that I took away from my trip.



Jennifer Sornson,
Jr/Sr HS Principal

Failure is a part of every success.

Milton Hershey was born in 1857 in central Pennsylvania. He attended school through 4th grade before he became an apprentice. At the age of 18, Milton started a candy company in Philadelphia. He worked day and night but the business failed after six years. Then he moved to Denver and worked for a caramel candy company. After Denver, he tried to start his own business in Chicago, New Orleans, and New York. They all failed. Eleven years of hard work before he has any success.

Success, but then what?

From 1886 to 1900, Milton Hershey operated the Lancaster Caramel Company. In 1900, he sold his caramel company for \$1 million dollars. So what do you do when you have a million dollars? Milton had only been married for two years. Do you live the high life? Do you travel? Not if you are Milton Hershey and you have a vision. Risk it all and go for your dream. Mass-produce high quality chocolate and build a complete community where the needs of the worker would be met. Hershey, Pennsylvania has comfortable homes, recreation areas, transportation, and schools.

Go Beyond!

Milton Hershey was one of the wealthiest men in America. So what to do with it? His wife had passed away, he had no children, no siblings. So Milton created the Hershey Trust. He left controlling interest in the Hershey Chocolate Company and Hershey Resort and Parks to the Trust. The main function of the trust is to manage the Hershey School. The Hershey School is a private residential school for children in need. Last year the Hershey School had over 1800 students and they are planning on expanding to 2100 students. Because of Milton Hershey's vision and forethought, hundreds of thousands of children have been cared for and educated.

I was focused on the tour of Chocolate World but I learned so much more. I am not suggesting that any one could duplicate the success of Milton Hershey or even come close. But I feel the lessons I learned can apply to everyone. Don't focus on failure, you have to keep trying. If you have success, build on it for even more success. Finally, think about the future and what kind of positive impact that can be made.

Jennifer Sornson

Principal

Independence Junior-Senior High

Activities Newsletter by Activities Director Rob Arnold



Rob Arnold, Activities Director

We hope that you have gotten out to enjoy a wonderful fall here at Independence. Our athletic teams and fine arts groups have been working hard working hard since Summer to get better, compete, and learn valuable life lessons only these activities can teach.

Our Varsity Football team has had some big wins this year. They finished the year 3-6 with wins over Columbus, Oelwein, and Anamosa. They have shown great improvement over the course of the season. We are very excited about the future of this program. The athletes who have stuck with it deserve great praise for laying the foundation of hard work and perseverance.

Our Varsity Volleyball team has also competed hard this year. They were very committed over the summer to developing their skills and it really showed this season. What their record doesn't illustrate is the level of competitiveness that this team demonstrated throughout the season. They had great wins over Benton Community and Center Point-Urbana. They then faced Center Point in their first Regional Game and lost in 5 very close sets. Good things are on the horizon for this group as they continue to develop.

The Cross Country team has also had a great fall. Their workouts also started very early in the summer to prepare for the season. The team has had outstanding individual performances by Shae McEnany who finished 10th at the WaMac Conference meet and qualified for the State Cross Country Meet in Fort Dodge. On the boys side, John Morkel, who finished 25th at the WaMac Conference Meet earning Honorable Mention All Conference.

The Marching Band has continued to uphold the strong tradition they have created. The passion and dedication by our Directors and Band Members is illustrated by the success they have when they compete. I hope that the public was able to see the amazing fall show as the band performed at the halftime of our home football contests.

We held our first Fall Vocal Concert in October to a large crowd of attendees. The music was amazing and the performances at all levels were remarkable. We look forward to hearing these amazing voices in our new Auditorium next year.

There are a lot of amazing things at Independence to be proud of. It doesn't take long to look around and see all the amazing things that our students are doing.

Wellness...It's Your Choice!

by Susie Toale

It's all over the news and in the newspapers and magazines we read, but what do they mean when they talk about "wellness"? Sure, we know it's about feeling good, but in reality it is so much more! We are all faced with many choices each day from choosing to have that second cup of coffee, to committing to exercise or sitting on the couch. Wellness encompasses so many areas of our lives. The basics, fitness and nutrition have been talked about for decades. But playing a larger role in recent years are the emotional, spiritual and educational aspects of health. Giving ourselves that much needed and admired "time out" can go a long way in helping with our emotional health. Making even the small choices to change our lifestyle can make big differences as we go.

The Independence Community School District has shown its commitment to wellness by offering the Health 4U program to all staff. During September, 138 staff members volunteered to participate in this wellness program for the school. That is over 65%! This program will continue through the school year emphasizing all aspects of wellness with incentives in many areas including education, physical activity, nutrition, and health promotion.

Susie Toale

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Buchanan County Health Center

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Independence Community Schools Volunteer & Mentor Program Statistics Annual Report for 2011-2012 School Year by Val Maximovich

During the 2011-12 academic year, Independence Community School students & staff were able to benefit from the time and talents of approximately 101 school volunteers and 62 mentors who donated a total of 1,919 logged hours. This was a 3.5% increase over the '10-11 school year.

Many volunteers of all ages enjoyed time in our schools by reading with students 1 on 1, chaperoning field trips, starting off our mornings as door greeters, serving as lunch greeters, serving on the Parent Advisory Committees, facilitating the Fifth and Sixth Grade Group Reading Book Clubs, and much more!

Statistically, this gift of time, calculated conservatively at an average wage of \$8.25 per hour, means that our volunteers provided \$15,830 of services to the school district. But, even more, volunteers demonstrated in a meaningful, tangible way to our students how much our community values each one of them. Tales were told, smiles shared, and relationships that will continue beyond the lunch line or the morning greeting.

There are also many volunteer hours given to the school district that are not possible to count, such as all of those members of the community that sell tickets at sporting events and music activities, setting up for these events, as well as concessions. These volunteers also show the students they care, just by being there.

As our mentoring program is a branch of the Volunteer Program those hours are included in the total above. 15% of the mentors have been with their students for five years or more! They all invest in our students, interact with them one on one, and are the extra person in their life, becoming like a part of their extended family. They go to recess, play games, read, eat lunch, and just chat with their younger friends for a half an hour each week, some even attend their extracurricular activities. We are very fortunate to have the mentoring program and over 60 mentors in the district.

There are always students waiting for that special adult to come into their life. So, if you know of someone that would make a great mentor or volunteer, please contact Val Maximovich, Volunteer & Mentor Coordinator at 319-334-7400 ext. 626, email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us, or tell them about the program and have them complete the volunteer registration form on the School Web page. Start today to make a difference!

Independence Community Schools Volunteer & Mentor Program News and Notes *by Val Maximovich*



Have you heard about the **Silver Cord Volunteer Program**? Silver Cord is a distinguished volunteer service program/award that is now available to all Independence High School students. Students who earn a minimum of 50 hours of community service/volunteering during each year of high school, totaling 200 hours upon graduation, will receive a Silver Cord to wear with their robes at graduation in recognition of their achievement.

The mission of the Silver Cord of Service program is to *involve students as effective communicators, responsible citizens, and skilled problem solvers in a valued partnership with a successful, growing community.*

If you have an opportunity for students to volunteer be sure to let us know! You may send the activity through the school website, by going to the Activities tab, choose Silver Cord, then Forms. Complete the Volunteer Opportunity Submission Form and submit or go to <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Volunteer-Opportunity-Submission-Form.pdf>

OR by contacting Val Maximovich, 332-0626, email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us. Please give at least a 10 day advance notice of activity.

MENTORING SUMMER OLYMPICS

We have had a great start with the Mentoring Program – we had several of our students and their mentors get together at our “Start Up Parties” in September and October! We had an Olympic Event for the 3rd-5th graders and a “Root Beer Float” after school gathering for 7th & 8th graders!

It was fun and they made plans with their mentors when they should meet this school year!



We are still looking for male mentors – if there is anyone you know that would like to volunteer for 30 minutes a week during the school day or before or after school, please contact me!

GROUP MENTORING

It's time to READ!! In September the 6th grade reading clubs have had a great time reading and discussing their books! We thank Jenny and Sam our dedicated volunteers.

Our group mentoring reading clubs at 5th grade and 7th graders will be starting mid October! At 5th grade we will be reading “School of Fear” and “Sister’s Grimm”. We look forward to Wendy and Reagan coming to have lunch and book discussions!

We are excited to have some of our volunteers return plus new ones! It's a mystery for 7th graders next week as some of them begin with the book “The Hatchet”. We welcome LuAnn as our newest group leader!

Independence Community Schools Volunteer & Mentor Program News and Notes *by Val Maximovich*

Mark your calendar!!



The Independence Lions Club
and the



Independence Schools Mentoring Program
are partnering on
December 2nd, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Breakfast Brunch, Old Fashioned Cake Walk and Silent Auction
Buchanan County Healthy Lifestyle Center
(former Senior Center)**



The Old Fashioned Cake Walk will be a fundraiser for the Independence Schools Mentoring program beginning at noon until cakes are gone! Only \$1.00 per person, for each walk. *Cakes donated by Family Consumer Science Culinary Techniques 2 and 3 Classes.* So come out and enjoy breakfast and take home a cake for later. If you have any questions, contact Val Maximovich, 334-7400, ext. 626 or email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us

What else is coming up? We need volunteers for the following activities:

- ✓ Scholastic Book Fair at East and West, sign up for 1-2 hours, held the week of Nov. 14 or Nov. 21 and 22
- ✓ Reading Book Club 5th and 6th grade students meet over lunch for book discussion. You oversee the book discussion, starting now!
- ✓ Mentoring with a student, at any age K-12. We have the usual need for mentors, as we have many students on the waiting list! So don't be afraid to call or come by West Elementary and tell us you are ready to mentor! It's only 30 minutes a week, during the school day, during the entire school year to make a difference in the life of a child!

Thank you to everyone for your interest and dedication to the volunteer & mentoring program. Tell your neighbors, tell your friends about these volunteer opportunities.

If questions or comments, please call Val Maximovich, 319-334-7400, ext. 626 or email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us

INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VOLUNTEER MENTOR 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. 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 Mentor Program
1301 First Street West
Independence, Iowa 50644

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

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

Employer _____ Business Phone _____

Current Occupation _____

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

Association with Community Groups/Organizations: _____

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) _____ East Elem (K-2) _____ West Elem (3-6) _____ Jr/Sr High School (7-12)

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 _____

Home Phone _____ - _____ - _____ Cell phone _____ - _____ - _____ Orientation date _____

Volunteer Preferences

Please select any and all areas you where you are interested in volunteering.

Teacher Support

☐ In class assistance & clerical support

☐ Grade Papers

☐ Field Trips

☐ Sewing Assistant

☐ Classroom Special Events

☐ Specific Grade Request

Grade: _____

Student Enrichment

☐ Mentoring (lunch time)

☐ Material Preparation

☐ Reading Club for 5th Grade

☐ Reading Club for 6th Grade

☐ Reading Club for 7th Grade

☐ 1 on 1 Reading

☐ 1 on 1 Math

☐ Morning Door Greeters (K-6)

☐ After School Homework Help

Outside Assistance

☐ Drama Help

☐ Music Program Help

☐ Athletic Program Help

☐ Sew Costumes

☐ School Garden

☐ Farm to School Projects

☐ Library Book Fair

☐ Volunteer & Mentor Committee

☐ Other: _____

Additional Skills/Talents/Interests Not Mentioned Elsewhere: _____