

Volume 13 Issue 1
Fall, 2018 - 2019

District Events:**Nov 12**

No School-Prof Dev

Nov 19

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

Nov 20

1:00 Early Dismissal

Nov 21-23

No School;
Thanksgiving Break

Nov 30

No School

Dec 17

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

Dec 21

1:00 Early Dismissal

Dec 24 - Jan 2

No School;
Winter Break

Jan 3

School Resumes

Jan 14

No School-Prof Dev

Jan 21

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

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***From the Superintendent's Desk...*****From the Superintendent's Desk...**

Let me take this opportunity to "Thank" everyone for their support and commitment to the students of the Independence Community School District. My wife Debbie and I are excited to be a part of the Independence community and we would like to thank all of you who have made our transition a smooth one.



**Russell Reiter,
Superintendent**

We are midway through the first semester and we're off to a great start for the 2018-19 school year. We're seeing great success in and out of the classroom. Our HS Marching Band won each of their weekend competitions this fall and they will be competing in Indianapolis at the national competition. The girls' volleyball team competed at the State VB Tournament, the Varsity Football team had an excellent season, the Independence FFA Chapter earned the right to compete for national recognition in the Veterinary Science CDE event at the 91st National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, and the fall play, "Jolly Rogers and the Pirate Queen", was outstanding.

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I'd like to report a slight increase in our certified enrollment for the Fall of 2018. This is good news because one-half of the formula for determining our budget is based on the number of students we serve. The issue our district will have to address is that we've seen an increase in the number of Open-Enrolled Out students. The actual number of students we are serving in classrooms is down less than ten so our enrollment numbers remain stable.

We have several committees that are busy, including our School Improvement Advisory Committee or "SIAC." This committee is made up of teachers, administrators, parents, and students. They formulate goals and have discussions on how to reach those goals for the good of the district.

The district has also formulated a secondary scheduling committee. We are looking at our current JSH schedule and looking at how we can increase student opportunities, become more financially efficient, and provide the best instruction within the classrooms. Finally, the Calendar committee will be meeting soon to start looking at the 2019-2020 calendar. It's becoming more important each year to look at our sharing opportunities with neighboring districts. Because of this, we're holding conversations to look at each other's calendars to share staff and resources.

I'd like to thank all of you who spend countless hours and volunteer your time for the students here at Independence. You need to be commended for your commitment and dedication to our kids and their future.

Russell Reiter

Go
Mustangs!



For 2018-2019 I am continuing my series about what it means to teach and learn in a 21st Century environment. In the of Spring 2017-2018, I wrote about the “Four C’s of a 21st Century classroom”. As a reminder, here is a summary from the spring:

- We have better Collaboration.
- We are able to Communicate.
- We have greater opportunities for Creativity.
- We are able to think Critically and solve problems.

As it turns out, there are many other words that start with the letter “C”:

- Character
- Child (Student)-centered learning
- Child (Student) development
- Citizenship
- Community
- Connection
- Continual Learning
- Cooperate
- Copyright
- Culture

Maybe you can even think of additional words and concepts relating to education. If you have other words, please contact me. I might use your word in a future newsletter.

One of the best ways for students to experience 21st Century Skills is by creating video.

The district is well equipped to provide video opportunities for our students. All 3-12 students may use WeVideo with their email and password. WeVideo is web-based. Video is always backed up and available from anywhere with an Internet connection. Students can work collaboratively on video projects, publish for viewing, and edit as needed.

All Chromebooks have cameras on them. All Media Centers have Chromebooks with reversible cameras and stand alone video cameras for checkout. Some students choose to use cell phones to upload video to WeVideo. For more advanced video projects, the district offers iMovie and Adobe products for editing and producing video.

Why is video so important to 21st Century skills? The first “C” is Content. It takes more research, more material, and more knowledge to make a video compared to a PowerPoint.

The next “C” is Collaboration. Very few students are able to research, storyboard, edit, direct, or act to create a video without the help of others.

The third “C” is Creativity. For video projects to be effective, they must be creative. There are so many different formats of video: drama, comedy, public announcement, and everything else. Creativity can show point of view, narration, lighting, and story elements. Students want to show their creativity.

Another “C” is Control. Video projects can quickly become too complex and never actually get completed. Students must exercise self-control and discipline to carefully plan video projects. Students might spend too much shooting video and complete a poor project because of poor planning.

Think of the opportunities students have to think critically and solve problems with video creation: shooting video, sound, lighting, narration, technical difficulties, and the list is almost endless of potential problems.

I have loaded this article with words beginning with the letter, “C”. Think about all of the skills this article would have needed if I created a video for you to watch.

Video models many of the 21st Century skills students need and Independence is going to put more emphasis on video creation for the current year and future years. Watch for videos from our students in the coming months and years.



**Steve Noyes,
Director of Technology**

School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement



**Erin Burmeister,
Director of School Improvement**

Mission: Educating (ALL) people to be life long learners and respectful, responsible citizens.

Vision: Creating a climate in which (ALL) individuals of the Independence Community School District will strive to become effective communicators, problem solvers, responsible citizens, and productive people.

In the past, I have often started this article with a quote, this time I am choosing to begin with our mission and vision. As you may have noticed I took the liberty of inserting a word that, in my opinion, is missing. I often wonder if it is missing simply because it is assumed to be understood or implied. Regardless, I believe that we have a responsibility to ALL students. This mission and vision are the foundation and the guide to all the school improvement efforts highlighted below, which are taking place in the Independence Community School District.

Continuous School Improvement

The main purpose of continuous school improvement is to ensure that all students learn at high levels. As noted in my last article, we are focusing on five areas or big ideas. Assessment and data-based decision making, universal instruction, intervention systems, leadership, and infrastructure. The first area I want to talk about is universal instruction. Currently, we have two teams of elementary teachers attending Literacy Workshop Training. They are learning about best practices for literacy instruction and then bringing this learning back to staff during professional learning time. Many of these same practices work in other academic areas as well. Additionally, we purchased a new resource for teachers to use during literacy instruction. This resource is Lucy Calkins' Units of Study in Reading and Units of Study in Writing. I have had the privilege of seeing literacy workshops up and running in many of our classrooms and it is truly wonderful. Students are learning at high levels.

This year, work is also continuing in the area of science. We have spent a significant amount of time learning about the new standards for science and teachers have been using this knowledge to create engaging science lessons for students. One resource that many of the elementary teachers are using is called Mystery Science. Each lesson contains a central mystery, discussion questions, reading activities, and a hands-on activity. It is great to see students curious and excited about science. At the secondary level, teachers are creating units and piloting resources that will help students learn science at high levels and ultimately be college and career ready.

This is certainly not everything that is going on with regards to universal instruction but two things worthy of recognition. Staff's commitment and hard work toward continuous school improvement is evident.

New State Assessment

Both formative and summative assessments are necessary in order to determine what students know and to design instruction. Another area of continuous school improvement is Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making. The district constantly looks at what we are assessing and how we are assessing student learning. Iowa was the last state to adopt statewide standards in 2008. Since that time, educators have been asking for a state assessment that aligns with those standards. We are very hopeful that we will finally get that for the 2018-2019 school year. The Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP), is a suite of summative assessments in reading, language and writing, and math for grades 3-11 and in science grades 5, 8, and 10. It is our hope that the information we get from the ISASP will help us continue to make school improvement decisions that ensure all students learn at high levels.

The ISASP will be given to students in Spring 2019. This test will be given in an online format and will consist of a mix of item types including technology-enhanced questions as well as open-ended essay questions. The new assessments should provide us with actionable information about each student's learning.

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No Rest Behind the Scenes **by Travis McBride, Auditorium Manager and Technician**

Hello and thank you for reading my first newsletter article! As some of you reading know, I have been fortunate to be with the Jr/Sr High School for the past five years. It has been a fantastic opportunity for me to work with so many great students, whether on stage or behind the scenes. As an alum (class of 08'), it has been fascinating to see how our district's facilities and programs have evolved in recent history. Now in my sixth school year, I want to highlight some of the daily events in the auditorium and some of the great events we've hosted this fall and those still to come in the near future.

So far this fall, the auditorium has been extremely busy during the school day and between district events. Currently on a daily basis, the auditorium hosts several classes from Jr. High English classes coming in for presentations, movies, collaborative group projects needing a larger work space, study halls, music rehearsals, extra curricular rehearsals, and full building guest presentations. While the auditorium doesn't host many public or after school events during the fall quarter, we host a lot of sessions that prepare our students for fall and winter events. This fall we've hosted our district's fall vocal concert and our marching band has been rehearsing frequently in the gym and auditorium to prepare for their first ever trip to the Grand Nationals Competition in Indianapolis as well. Our largest project this fall, as is each year, our High School Fall Play, "Jolly Rogers and the Pirate Queen", rehearsed nightly after school sharing cast and crew between athletics and arts programs. We hosted many nights and weekend sessions for set building and organizational activities for this production. From August 1st to today, the auditorium is and continues to be a living and breathing venue.

While we focus heavily on student achievement and performances inside the auditorium, we do host public events with our most notable being held this past August as US Senator Joni Ernst held a community town hall meeting. This event was supported and staffed voluntarily by our AV tech students who worked hand in hand with the Senator's local Iowa staff and the local media who attended. We continue to seek future stops with notable community and public figures and performers. One caveat to public events, however, is the process for bringing in community events. Many of you reading this may wonder why we have not had the number of community performances that we have come to see at other area venues similar to ours. This is by no fault of trying to bring shows in, rather, it is a state policy that the district can not spend district tax payer funds on these type of shows. Ultimately, the district can be an outlet for these type of events by renting the auditorium, equipment, and support staff to promoters and private entities who wish to hold public events in our community. As we continue to evolve these opportunities, we hope to develop and publicize expanded marketing content in the coming months. As these events come and go, it's a great opportunity for community but also for our student technicians. These community events offer additional hands on opportunities for our students to learn technical skills, collaborative work skills, etc. As the AV Tech advisor, it is wonderful to have so many students asking for more opportunities and wanting to volunteer for what are some times long work shifts from setup to wrap up.

I want to encourage you and yours to attend an event in the auditorium soon. If you haven't seen a performance or don't currently have a student in a performing group, we'd love to host you for an event soon. Our auditorium just wrapped up three consecutive performances of the Fall Play. As one set is dismantled, the next show will begin building and rehearsing. Coming late this fall with the holidays, will be the district's four annual Holiday Performances by our bands, choirs, and general music groups. If you are not able to attend these events, we invite you to tune in and watch the High School holiday concert, once again on KCRG, or listen in on 94.7 FM KMCH radio this December. As always, our students and staff are designing some unique sets and stage productions to put on a show most schools could only dream about. The auditorium will also host a portion of the two day Indee Wrestling Invitational where the stage will be converted into a two wrestling mat arena. Our tech students will also be participating in this year's Independence Area Chamber's "Jingle on Main", providing audio and lighting services for the event. We look forward to this event and getting our students out into the community and serving those who have supported us. Again, myself, our staff, and our students hope to see you at an event this fall and winter. Go Mustangs!

Upcoming Event Schedule:

November 30th, December 1st - Indee Wrestling Invite (Gym & Auditorium)
November 30th - (Community Event) - Jingle on Main 5-8pm downtown
December 6th - 5th & 6th Grade Band/Vocal Holiday Concert
December 10th - High School Band/Vocal Holiday Concert
December 11th - Jr High Band/Vocal Holiday Concert
December 13th - Kindergarten, 2nd Grade, 4th Grade Holiday Concert

We are off to a great start to our 2018 school year at East and the Early Childhood Center. We have already had many exciting accomplishments to celebrate. You may have seen on Facebook students are being "caught" by their teachers for Living the Mustang Way. Principal Donnelly calls them down to the office to congratulate them and gives them a note and a treat. Students have been recognized for trying their best on fall assessments to letting another student have their fun reading so they could try it out. They are so excited when they learn why they have been called to the principal's office. Nominations are on a google form and any adult can nominate at student.



**Danielle Donnelly,
Principal**

Preschool

On October 18th, the Early Childhood Center hosted a Preschool Family Night Out! They had police in to talk about Halloween safety, 3 crafts for families to do together, books read to the families in the library, and each family left with a bag, book, and coloring sheet to take home! It was such a great family event.



Kindergarten

Kindergarten has had an exciting few months of school. They were able to attend their first homecoming assembly as a mustang! Kinders were also fortunate to be able to travel to the fire station for Fire Safety Week. The students love this experience and East Elementary is so appreciative of our local firemen for taking the time to educate our students. In the classroom, students are working hard on their Jolly Phonics as they become readers!



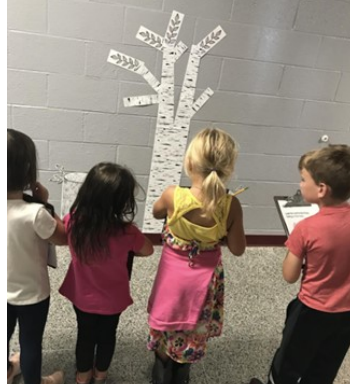
First Grade

Mystery Science

First graders continued their unit about animals and how they use their structures to help them survive. The lesson was called, "Why are polar bears white?" We learned how animal camouflage helps prey and predators hide from one another. Parents were encouraged to continue to support their child's curiosity at home! At the end of the lesson, the child was encouraged to go for a walk in nature to find some camouflaged animals.



First grade also had a special guest from Fontana. Each student was able to pet a skunk and learn about their habitat.



Second Grade

Second grade was able to make homemade applesauce for the class (and office) to enjoy. Each student got to have a hands-on experience on how applesauce is prepared. And Mrs. Van Raden's class had Joe Olsen come in to help students make kale. It was a great day of learning.



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 Val Maximovich at 319-332-0626 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 Val at 319-332-0626 and let her know!

Wanted: Substitutes

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

We need YOU!

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

We continue to collect Pizza Ranch Wagon Wheels, Donuts to Dough, 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.

Greetings from West Elementary!

At West Elementary, we continually teach our students that we are here to help keep them safe, healthy, and happy by providing them with the tools, the support, and the education *to be life long learners and respectful, responsible citizens*.

Our West Elementary students are proud to be Mustangs and to be *Living the Mustang Way* by being responsible, being respectful, showing kindness, and living gratefully. When asked about what makes being a Mustang at West the best, our students had this to say:

Our teachers make all of us Mustangs at West the best. Olivia Alber, 3rd Grade.

Living the Mustang Way makes being Mustangs at West the best. Jackson O'Loughlin, 3rd Grade.

Being Mustangs at West is the best because we are kind to each other, and we do not bully. Emma Szopinski, 4th Grade.

West is the best because the teachers are nice and the food is great. Phillip Thompson, 4th Grade.

West Elementary is the best because of all of the nice people, and I do not get too overwhelmed. Jordan Larson, 5th Grade.

West is the best because it is a friendly environment where everybody is respected. Ethan Wilcox, 6th Grade.

West Elementary is the best because our teachers teach us what we need to know, and we have a lot of fun activities. Alaina Paris, 6th Grade.



Cheri Reed, Principal

Third Grade

The third graders have been composing personal narratives during writing workshop. Students completed math units on number sense, and addition and subtraction. Currently, we're working on measurement and area. Our first social studies unit was about communities and natural resources. To support our students understanding of communities, each 3rd-grade classroom will be hosting a volunteer to teach five Junior Achievement lessons. Students have been enjoying the hands-on learning in science about forces, motion, and magnets.

Students constructed paper bridges during science to learn about balancing forces and engineering.



Fourth Grade

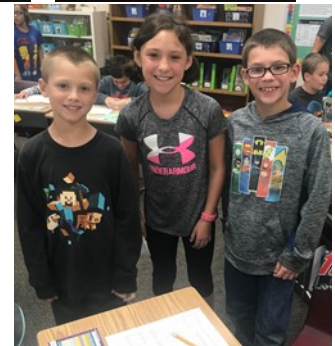
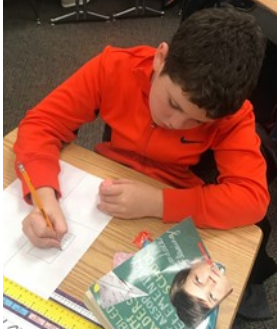
Mystery Science materials are new this year. Fourth grade students loved the hands-on activities in the first unit: *The Birth of Rocks*. They also enjoyed a lesson about the three types of rocks that was presented by Sondra Cabell (Fontana naturalist). The northeast and southeast regions of the United States have been the focus in social studies. Math has consisted of geometry, addition and subtraction review, data collection, multiplication, and decimals. Any additional practice at home with multiplication facts is beneficial.

Continued on next page...

Fourth Grade continued

Read, read, read! All students have a 10 point Accelerated Reading goal each month. There are incentives for students who meet their monthly reading goals. Consider setting aside a specific time each night for homework and reading.

In September, we went to the Black Hawk Children's Theatre in Waterloo to see one of our own Independence fourth grade students in *The Stinky Cheese Man & Other Fairly Stupid Tales*. It was hilarious and everyone enjoyed it!



5th Grade

Fifth grade students visited Living History Farms in September. Students met storekeepers and skilled craftsmen in the 1875 Walnut Hill Village, such as the Blacksmith, Broom Shop, Newsprint Office, and General Store. Fifth graders were able to make small purchases. They especially liked the sarsaparilla. Students also visited the Flynn Victorian Mansion and 3 other historic farms on a 300 year walk. We were able to experience farm life from the 1600's of the Ioway Indians, walking into the future 200 years later, we learned about cabin life of the early settlers of Iowa in 1860. We eventually wound our way around to a 1900 farm, where we saw more modern conveniences. It was a great field trip experience. One we will never forget. We will enjoy discussing our LHF experiences in our Social Studies classes throughout the school year.



Continued on next page...

5th Grade continued

Math - Fifth graders have studied number theory in Unit 1: Facts, Number-line patterns, factor arrays, divisibility rules, square numbers, and prime/composite numbers. We have also studied estimation and computation in Unit 2: Addition/Subtraction whole number and decimals, Multiplication/Division of whole numbers, decimals, and by powers of 10. In Unit 3 we are learning about geometry: angles, line segments, polygons, and tessellations. In some upcoming units, we will be studying division and fractions.

Social Studies and Science - Some classes are working on Native Americans and Explorers. Fifth graders are learning about Spaceship Earth utilizing our new curriculum with Mystery Science. We started the year constructing marshmallow/spaghetti towers with only noodles, string, tape, and a marshmallow to work with. We used problem-solving skills to help us in this activity. We will be learning about Chemical Magic soon.

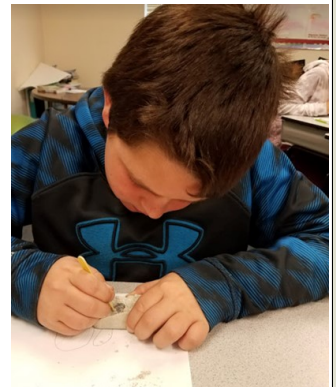
Reading/Writing and Language Arts - Fifth graders are working towards taking charge of their reading life. Our 5th grade classrooms are implementing a new reading curriculum this year, Units of Study for Teaching Reading. Students are learning how to respond to their reading by thinking analytically in their independent reading. Students will be thinking about the important parts of their book and supporting their ideas with evidence from the text. One thing for sure is 5th graders will be doing a lot of reading every day! Thank you for all your support!

SPARK! - Igniting Health in Kids is a program developed by the Buchanan County Health Center. Fifth grade students will be engaged in nutrition education and physical activity instructed by Buchanan County Health Center staff for 25 minutes once each month. They will have the opportunity to taste various fruits and vegetables and learn fun ways to play and stay active. Fruits and vegetables will be included in a healthy snack prepared by the students. Everyone will bring home a handout of important information about important health topics.

Sixth Grade

Where does 6th grade go on an all-day outdoor adventure? To Camp EWALU, of course! On Thursday, September 27th, 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 toxic waste, were quite challenging and everyone learned the value of sticking with it and encouraging teammates. The toxic waste activity involved the entire team of 10-11 students trying to use strings connected to a bungee cord to pick up small logs and carry them out of the toxic waste area and into a pit.

Although it was tricky, with perseverance and encouragement, some teams did succeed in the challenge. Kids were also given the option of zip lining. This meant overcoming fears for some, but was by far the most memorable and enjoyed activity. Another favorite activity of the students was the trust falls. Students had to put faith in their partners to catch them as they closed their eyes and fell back into the other person's arms. After several different stations of team-building activities, the adventure had to come to an end. On the ride home, students were laughing, talking, and discussing the day, wishing for an opportunity to return.



During science, students have been learning about the types of rock and layers of Earth. On Wednesday, October 17, we traveled to the Brooks (Bruening) Rock Quarry to learn about rocks and fossils found in our area. We were shown some of the most rare and most interesting discoveries from the quarry with explanations. Students were able to search for unique rocks and fossils before returning to school. Several days later, two naturalists from Fontana came into our classrooms and had students work to uncover fossils embedded in plaster. As a result, students have a better understanding of the precision and patience taken by archaeologists. This was great application after our visit to the quarry.

Greetings from the Independence Jr/Sr High School! The school year is off to a fantastic start. Many of our students are participating in several very successful programs and seeing the benefits of the hard work they have put in well before this season. To those students, parents, and activity sponsors, I say congratulations!! Keep working at improving your craft and I am confident you will continue to see great success.

In the past several years, many concerns were brought up about different substances which have long lasting health effects. Some of the most known are tobacco, both chewing tobacco and cigarettes. Now, there is new device out there that is causing health concerns. These devices are known as ‘vaping devices.’ Most of these concerns are only known as short term because this is so new to the health professionals.



**Dewey Hupke, JSH
Assistant Principal**

I have included links to 2 articles we received at school from Nora Kurtovic from Pathways Behavioral Services of Buchanan County.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6232429/FDA-seizes-thousands-documents-Juul.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/oct/02/e-cigarettes-vaping-study-teenagers-smoking-cigarettes>

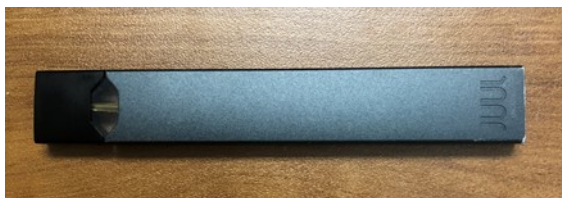
Something else you may be interested in was taken directly from Iowa Code pertaining to **possession** of vaping devices. These devices are illegal to possess for anyone under the age of 18. Please see the following:

Possession/purchase/use of “vapor products” by persons under age 18 is prohibited by 453A.2(2).

Sale/distribution of “vapor products” to anyone under age 18 is prohibited by 453A.2(1).

“Vapor products” means “any noncombustible product, which may or may not contain nicotine, that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit, or other electronic, chemical, or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce vapor from a solution or other substance . . . [including] an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, or similar product or device, and any cartridge or other container of a solution or other substance, which may or may not contain nicotine, that is intended to be used with or in an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, or similar product or device.” Iowa Code 453A.1(29).

Here are some of the devices students may have and you may be unaware of what they are.



I hope you found this article useful.

Go Mustangs~

Mr. Hupke



Recently, I was conversing with a long-time staff member. The identity of this person and the initial topic shall remain anonymous (as they say in Hollywood, “to protect the innocent”). But this candid, serious, memorable exchange ended with the teacher saying, “Let’s focus on the positives.” I replied quickly with, “Yes. We have a lot to be proud of at Independence Jr/Sr High School.” And it is these two statements that provide the basis for this edition of the Mustang Pride Newsletter.

Just stop and think about all the “positives” that we have at our great institution. I’ll wait. Not too much else to do at this moment.

Done?

If you are like me, the list is quite lengthy if not almost endless. But, due to time and space constraints, allow me to list just a few:

1. Our students do a very good job day after day, Living the Mustang Way.
2. Our staff continues to be some of the most dedicated, knowledgeable, and caring individuals I have worked with during my time in education.
3. Our parental support is outstanding. Even when I have to contact a parent for a discipline situation, I am both surprised and blessed with the encouragement.
4. The varsity football team just finished one of the best fall campaigns in recent memory with a 6-3 record. We are looking forward to even bigger and better results next year.
5. The marching band just completed one of the top seasons in history with their 27th consecutive Division I rating at State Marching Band. To put that into perspective, the last non-division I accolade was when I was a senior...in high school! The band also was the champion of Class 3A at ValleyFest and won every other competition in its class during the fall. Soon, the band will perform at Bands Across America in Indianapolis, a first for Independence.
6. The volleyball team made the trek to Cedar Rapids for the state tournament for the second consecutive year earning the #5 overall seed. Great job ladies and coaches!
7. The cross country participants worked tirelessly throughout the season, and the expectations for next year (and beyond) are high. On a personal side note, I commend each and every one of them. Running is hard!
8. We had Kathy Bresnahan, former volleyball coach at Iowa City West, come and speak to our students about “Living like Line.” Her team at Iowa City West was the basis of the movie “The Miracle Season.”
9. We submitted another student’s name for National Merit Scholar Finalist recognition. If selected, he would be the 4th finalist in the last five years!
10. There is great expectation for all our winter activities. Good Luck to all involved.

So, as we continue with the 2018-2019 school year, may that one anonymous faculty member’s words become the mantra for all: “Let’s focus on the positives.” If you just stop and think, trust me, we have a lot to be proud of at Independence, if you just stop and think.

Go Mustangs!



**John Howard, Jr/Sr High School
Principal**

As we start getting into November, it is time to transition from fall activities to our winter activities. This time always brings new excitement as we move indoors and start new seasons. With that in mind, I wanted to write my column on the importance of the parent-coach/sponsor relationship. I feel that between seasons is a good time to hit the reset button and take another look at a few things.

I believe that we have tremendous coaches, sponsors, kids, and parents that are involved with our programs. Each year, I am impressed with the coaches and sponsors that work with our students. Each of our coaches and sponsors want what is best for the entire student population, not just the portion of them that are involved in activities. The Positive Coaching Alliance has put out guidelines for how parents can contribute to the Coach-Parent Partnership, which I have shared. Additionally, I have added some of my thoughts behind them. While many of these are “common sense”, I wanted to share these thoughts with you. We have had a tremendous fall with our sports and activities and the great relationships between our parents and our coaches/sponsors are very important in that success.



**Justin Putz,
Activities Director**

Recognize the Coaches Commitment- Coaches make a commitment that goes well past in-season practices and games. Additionally, some coaches, especially youth coaches, are volunteers and do not get paid at all. At our levels, no coach is a full time coach. They coach because they like working with students and are trying to make a difference. Coaches sacrifice to help kids out. Many take vacation time off work, time away from their families to attend practices, games, clinics, and meetings to coach or sponsor an activity. Make sure you keep that in mind as the season goes on.

Make Early, Positive Contact with the Coach- Get to know your student’s coach and sponsor and offer any assistance that you can provide. Getting involved in the program is a great way to be a part of the program and be active in your student’s activities. From a coaching standpoint, any help is greatly appreciated. Ways parents can help is coordinate rides for your student and others who may not have rides, team meals, snacks for road games, volunteer to film the games, be a positive advocate for the team and program (social media, in the community, and with other parents), keep stats, and other areas that you may be able to help.

Fill the Coaches Emotional Tank- Many times, coaches only hear from parents with complaints or deal with negative issues. Based on experience, well over 75% of parent communications I receive are when there is some type of issue. If you or your child had a good experience in an activity please take the time to write the sponsor an email and share that. It is always a nice change to hear positives.

Don’t Put the Player in the Middle and Let Coaches Coach- In activities there are many strategies or ways to do things and coaches/sponsors pick the one that they feel gives the team and your student the best chance to be successful. Sometimes it works great and other times things do not go as planned. With that in mind, it can be confusing for a player when a parent coaches from the stands. This is especially true when parents are offering instruction that differs from the coaches. In addition, when questioning a coach in front of your child, often times the child is put in the middle of two people that they respect. Try to avoid making negative comments in front of your participants.

Contribute to a Positive Environment- Parents, coaches/sponsors, and participants all want the same thing. Each wants the participant to be successful, grow as a person, and have a great experience. Do whatever you can to provide an all around positive environment for that to happen. Get involved, be supportive, demonstrate good sportsmanship, and anything else you can do to help provide the best environment possible.

For more information visit <http://www.positivecoach.org>.

Information from your School Nursing Department



Tips for Moms, Dads and Kids from your school nurse:

Start off strong with a healthy breakfast. A good breakfast provides energy and will help keep you alert and attentive in class. Highly sugared foods leave you feeling tired soon after eating.

Remember: Your school performance is directly related to what you eat!

Drink plenty of water. Water is the best fluid to stay hydrated without the added sugar found in some juice and soft drinks.

Don't forget to wash your hands often. Keep hands away from your face, mouth, and nose where germs can enter your body.

Eat nutritious meals. Choose foods from all the food groups. Different food groups supply our bodies with energy to think, move, and grow.

Cut back on sugar and salty snacks. Limit sodas, sport drinks, candy, and chips – they add on extra calories, can harm your teeth, and leave you feeling tired and weak.

Get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day – at recess and at home. Exercise helps our bodies to be strong, flexible, and resilient.

Encourage your child to turn off the TV and video games at least one hour prior to bedtime. Take time to relax, take a bath or shower, brush your teeth, and pack up for the morning.

Medications: If your child takes medications, has nursing needs, or you have other concerns, please visit us in the nurse's office! All Medications, prescription and over the counter, must be signed into the nurse's office. Antibiotics should be given at home before and after school.



Immunizations: Each student must remain in accordance with the State of Iowa's immunization requirements.

For more information, contact your school nurse.

****** Talk about the day with your child, what was good, bad, fun, funny, and hard and so on. Communication is comforting!**

Influenza (Flu)

Flu season is just around the corner! Last year we had a high number of positive flu tests in our schools. We hope that this year is better and here are a few things that you can do to help keep your child/children healthy this flu season!

The first line of prevention is getting your **flu shot**. Although getting the flu shot is not 100% effective, studies have shown that it decreases the severity and the duration of illness. If your child/children become ill with the following: high fever, headache, extreme fatigue, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, or stomach symptoms, have them evaluated by their primary care provider (PCP).

Although there is no medication to cure the flu, if you are evaluated and diagnosed within a certain amount of time, the PCP can, at their discretion, prescribe antiviral medication.

The most important things that you can do if your child/children get sick is to **stay home from school and extracurricular events, get a lot of rest, drink plenty of fluids, and use over-the-counter medication for symptom relief.**



As always, please contact your school nurse with questions, concerns, needs, or changes with your child's health.

Molly Beatty, RN
East Elementary
319-332-0533

Kelsi Donnelly, RN, BSN
West Elementary
319-332-0589

Rhonda Jasper, RN
Jr/Sr High School
319-332-0720

Is Volunteering Good for Your health? Let Us Count the Ways.

Doing Good is Good for You: Health and Volunteering Study was done as part of UnitedHealthcare's continued effort to support and encourage volunteerism, understand its impact on health, and strengthen connections to communities. It found that volunteering isn't just good for nonprofits, it's good for people, and it's good for workplaces.

Good For You

About a quarter of the people who have volunteered in the past 12 months say that volunteering has helped them to manage a chronic illness.



76%

of people who volunteered in the last twelve months say that volunteering has made them feel healthier.



94%

of people who volunteered in the last twelve months say that volunteering improves their mood.



95%

say they are helping to make their community a better place.



80%

of the people who have volunteered in the past 12 months say that they feel they have control over their health.



78%

of people who volunteered in the last 12 months say that volunteering lowers their stress levels.

Good For Employers

Nationally, over half of employees have volunteered.

Professional Job Skills

49%

of people new to volunteering said that volunteering has helped with their career in the paid job market.

56%

of new volunteers felt that volunteering would help their career.

Stronger Colleague Relationships

64%

of employees who currently volunteer said that volunteering with work colleagues has strengthened their relationships.

81%

of employed volunteers who volunteered through their workplace agreed that volunteering together strengthens relationships among colleagues.

People and Teamwork Skills

87%

of people who said that volunteering helped their career responded that volunteering has developed their people skills and teamwork skills.



Time Management Skills

More than three-quarters of people who told us that volunteering helped their careers said that volunteering has taught them about time management.



Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor
Coordinator

Independence Community Schools Volunteer & Mentor Program Update by Val Maximovich

HAVE you heard???? That volunteering is a great way to stay healthy?

No, we aren't making this up. Studies have found that when you stop thinking about your own problems and focus on someone other than yourself, your stress levels start to decrease, your immune system is strengthened, and your overall sense of life satisfaction increases. This is because helping someone else interrupts tension-producing patterns and replaces it with a sense of purpose, positive emotions, and high confidence levels. Don't believe us? Take a look at this infographic from UnitedHealth Group on this page!



Calling all volunteers! There is always a need for more volunteers to come and spend time with our students! Junior Achievement volunteers, reading with students, testing, door greeters, and more!

Volunteers also needed for mentoring. Do you have a lunch hour? You can easily mentor over lunch! It only takes 30-45 minutes a week, during the school day, during the entire school year to make a difference in the life of a child, contact Val at 319-332-0626, email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us, or download the volunteer registration form at <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-departments/volunteer-information/>

Don't forget! With cold and flu season and winter weather approaching, be sure to call ahead to see if your student is in school that day. Also check the weather and school closing announcements before you come to mentor!





Thank you for taking the time to volunteer and make a difference in the lives of our students.

Have a great Thanksgiving!



Please like our Facebook page
Independence Mustang Mentoring!

The findings presented here are based on a national survey commissioned by UnitedHealth Group and Optum Institute, and conducted by Harris Interactive, an international leader in population research and survey methodology. To read the full Doing Good is Good for You: 2013 Health and Volunteering Study, visit <http://www.unitedhealthgroup.com/SR>

Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC)

The 2018-2019 marks our third year involved in Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation system. According to the Iowa Department of Education website, "Iowa's Teacher Leader and Compensation (TLC) system continues to strengthen the teaching profession and improve classroom instruction, with a significant increase in school districts reporting they met local goals for student achievement in the 2017-2018 school year". We continue to see many benefits of having paid teacher leadership positions. Currently, we have four instructional coaches, twelve curriculum leaders, and six mentor teachers. These individuals have helped to move our school improvement efforts forward. These people are leading professional learning communities, learning about better instructional practices, leading work with teachers to unpack the standards, and so much more.

I continue to be excited about all of the school improvement efforts and am looking forward to another great year!

Building Walking Hours begin December 3rd!

Access Cards will be required this year.

Check the District website for details!



EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Independence Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644, (319) 334-7400 or eburmeister@independence.k12.ia.us

The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Independence School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact: Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644, (319) 334-7400 or eburmeister@independence.k12.ia.us

ANNUAL NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Independence Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following areas of study:

Agriculture
Business
Family and Consumer Science
Industrial Technology
Marketing

It is the policy of the Independence Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Equity Coordinator: Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644 Telephone Number and Email Address): (319) 334-7400 or eburmeister@independence.k12.ia.us