

Volume 10 Issue 1
Fall, 2015 - 2016

District Events:**Nov 16**

No School-Prof Dev

Nov 16

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

Nov 23 & 24

1:00 Early Dismissal

Nov 25-27

No School;
Thanksgiving Break

Dec 21

School Board Meeting -
Independence 5:00 p.m.

Dec 23 - Jan 1

No School;
Winter Break

Jan 4

School Resumes

Jan 18

No School-Prof Dev

Jan 18

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

Inside this issue:

From the Desk of Jean Peterson	1-3
Technology	3
School Improvement	4-5
ECC/East News	6-7
West Elem News	8-11
JR/SR High News	12-14
Volunteer Mentor Program	15

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

The 2015-2016 school year has been super successful so far. We have had another excellent beginning to our school year with our students and staff settling into their teaching and learning routines once again. The ICSD has had a fantastic fall in terms of our activities program as well. All of our fall activities were very successful. It was so much fun to watch our students participate in their different events. The parent and community support of our school district has been outstanding too. We are extremely fortunate to have this kind of continued enthusiasm for our school.



**Jean Peterson,
Superintendent**

Certified Enrollment

We certified our enrollment with the Iowa Department of Education on October 15th. We have an increase in enrollment this year of 25 students. Last year our district wide enrollment was 1404.78. This year we are at 1430.44. Those numbers may look a little strange but if a student is only with us for a class or two, we cannot count them as a whole student. This is very exciting news for our school. Our student enrollment drives our school's budget. So, any time we can have an increase such as this is a great thing.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policies

All school districts in Iowa are to have an Anti-Bullying/Harassment policy in place. This is just a reminder that all of our buildings do have specific goals in regard to educating our students and staff about bullying/harassment and what steps we have in place to stop this kind of behavior from happening.

If you have questions or concerns on this issue, do not hesitate to contact your child's building principal.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

School Administrators of Iowa Executive Leaders' Meeting

I attended the School Administrators of Iowa's Executive Leaders' Meeting this fall in Ankeny on the Des Moines Area Community College Campus (DMACC). This meeting was for all of the superintendents in the state of Iowa.

One of the activities we were involved in was having conversations with business leaders from across the state. The purpose of these conversations was to find out from the business leaders what they were looking for in an employee. We asked what kinds of things schools can do better to help prepare our students for life after high school.

The following businesses were in attendance at this event:

Principal Financial Group	Farm Bureau
Red Oak Chamber of Commerce	MidAmerican Energy
Greater Des Moines Partnership	Iowa Business Council
United Way of Central Iowa	City of Waverly
Iowa College Aid	Mercy Medical Center
Central Iowa Workforce Investment Board	Rockwell Collins
Wells Enterprises	Fareway Stores
Wellmark	

What I took away from this meeting was that the vision for our Independence graduates must be that we prepare them to be work force ready. Our graduates need to be excellent problem solvers, be able to work as a team and collaborate with others, be able to communicate, have an understanding of all career pathways, and provide opportunities for internships for all students with our area employers.

Manufacturing skills are most needed right now. There are many excellent paying jobs with benefits for students after high school or after two years of college if they have the right kind of training. It is important for our students to be aware that they might not need a four year degree in order to secure a great job.

It is vital for our school district to establish a comprehensive career pathway system that will afford every student time to explore and pursue career and college learning opportunities. This system needs to include vibrant career guidance and relevant work-based learning. Our school district does have some of these things in place now but we can and will do a much better job in this area for all of our students in the future.

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

New Baseball/Softball Complex

The construction of the new baseball/softball complex is underway. We are making great progress with this facility. We have been very lucky to have had excellent weather this fall.

We are also very thankful to all of the volunteers who have helped with this project. This complex would not be where it is today without our volunteers' assistance. A special thanks goes out to John Behan, Bruce Neeley, Dave Wilson and Dave Niedert for their many volunteer hours and help. Brian Eddy has volunteered many hours of time helping to oversee the construction of this complex and the fundraising campaign as well. Brian has been of invaluable assistance!

Our school district is extremely fortunate to have this type of facility for our softball and baseball teams.

PowerSchool, Canvas, SchoolMessenger, Oh My...

PowerSchool, Canvas and SchoolMessenger are programs which impact students, staff and community in very different but sometimes overlapping functions. Please read my article to help understand the differences and more importantly why we need all three programs.

PowerSchool is an SIS (Student Information System). This program is student centered and keeps track of student enrollment records, attendance, grades, class schedule and reports our student-related information to Iowa. PowerSchool is also the official place for report cards and transcripts. For 2015-2016 we will be using PowerSchool for school registration. (I will have an article in the next District Newsletter explaining how this will work).

Canvas is an LMS (Learning Management System). This program is learning centered and keeps track of student assignments, teacher notes/helps, quizzes, and overall learning environment.

Even though both PowerSchool and Canvas keep track of assignments and grades they serve very different purposes in a student's academic life. PowerSchool's main purpose is to keep a list of assignments and a grade.



**Steve Noyes,
Director of Technology**

Continued on page 16

School Improvement by Danielle Meyer, Director of School Improvement

Teacher Leadership Compensation Grant

The Independence Community Schools has been awarded the Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) Grant for the 2016-2017 school year. The TLC rewards effective teachers with leadership opportunities and higher pay, attracts promising new teachers with competitive starting salaries and more support, and fosters greater collaboration for all teachers to learn from each other. The overriding philosophy of the system is multi-pronged, but boils down to this: Improving student learning requires improving the instruction they receive each day. There is no better way to do this than to empower our best teachers to lead the effort.



Danielle Meyer,
Director of School Improvement

The goals of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation are:

- Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and offering short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
- Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.
- Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

The ICSD has a TLC Committee who worked on the application to the Department of Education. This committee was comprised of teachers from each building (Bonnie O'Brien, Kelci Griswold from East, Sarah Thome and Erin Blasberg from West, and Joel Dinger, Jon Carey, and Sandy Hood from the Jr/Sr High School). All of the administrative team (Jean Peterson, Mary Jean Blaisdell, Dewey Hupke, John Howard, Josh Payton, and Danielle Meyer) were a part of the committee too. This committee is now working on criteria for selecting and interviewing the candidates for each of these teacher leadership positions.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

A professional learning community, or *PLC*, is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. “The three words explain the concept: Professionals coming together in a group—a community—to learn.”

The administrative team attended the PLC conference in Minneapolis this summer. Having the opportunity to hear the Rebecca DuFour, Richard DuFour, and Mike Mattos speak in person was fantastic. The passion they have for student learning and achievement is inspiring.

It was so great to have the entire team there to debrief and discuss take-aways right away. By offering a strong professional development plan we will be laying the foundation to challenge our teachers instructionally. All teachers will work collaboratively in teams to discuss students’ work and their achievement. I am looking forward to the progress we will make this year.

On August 20, October 12, and February 15, AEA267 hosts a Professional Learning Communities Conference. Each building has invited their Building Leadership Teams to attend with the building principal. The hope is this conference will help provide our teachers the background knowledge they will need to help the buildings start to create PLC’s.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in Iowa, also known as Response to Intervention or RtI, is an every-education decision-making framework of evidence-based practices in instruction and assessment that addresses the needs of all students starting in general education. All grades K-12 have structured their day to have some intervention time (Mustang Time). The department of education recommended this to us after our Site-Visit last fall. As a district we are using the time to not only help support out struggling learners but also to enrich our advanced students.

Principal's Corner

by Danielle Meyer

We are off to a great start at East/ECC! I cannot be more impressed with the staff we have here and their devotion to our students, it truly is inspiring. In a short time we have really started to come together as a staff. One goal we have this year is to teach our students how to *Live the Mustang Way*. We want our kids to be responsible, be respectful, be kind, and live gratefully. We are instilling this into everything we do. We want ALL students to be proud to be a Mustang! I look forward to serving East and the Early Childhood Center this year.



Danielle Meyer,
Principal

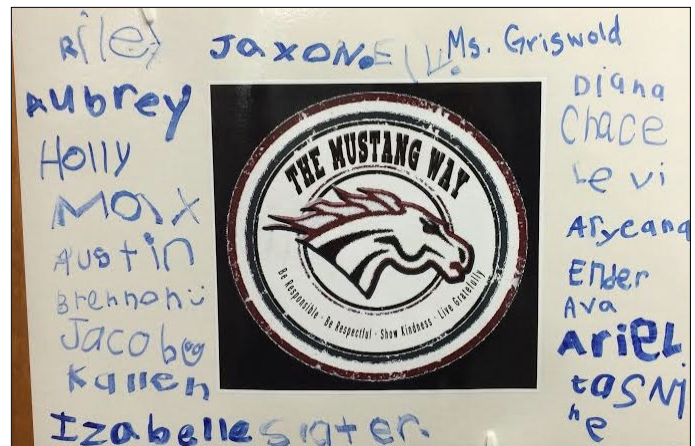
Early Childhood Center

Our ECC and Preschool sites had our annual Family Night in October. Students, parents, and siblings were invited to come and see Lisa Laird for a puppet show. We had a fantastic turnout and every child left with sock puppet to take home.



Living the Mustang Way

Students at East Elementary have taken a pledge to *Live the Mustang Way*. In efforts to reach our Bullying and Harassment Prevention goals, teachers have talked to students about what it means to *Live the Mustang Way*. This will also be a theme to our school-wide assemblies. We will be bringing in speakers to share what *Living the Mustang Way* looks like 😊 to them.



Teachers have proudly posted

October Bullying Prevention Month

In efforts to raise awareness of Bullying Prevention we asked the staff and students to dress in blue Monday October 5th. This was a successful event and allowed the teachers to talk to students about the importance of being an upstander vs. a bystander.

Bullying can only be stopped when the entire building makes a stand that we don't act that way here. This is reinforced through our *Living the Mustang Way*.



Positive Referrals

We started writing positive referrals at ECC/East Elementary. If an adult sees a student *Living the Mustang Way* they will write up the behavior and turn the slip in to me. I then call the student down to my office, read the referral to them, take their picture (which will be posted in the hall), and then give them the slip to send home. We have some amazing kids!



Mustang Time

October 6th we started our Mustang Time at East. All students are put into intervention groups according to their reading skills. We are using our FAST assessment data to write the goals and will be monitoring the progress and strategies used weekly. Our goal is to be able to provide support and academically challenge ALL of students during Mustang Time.

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:

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! There have been great things happening this year at West Elementary and I would like to share some of them with you.

First, our staff has recognized over 300 students for doing great things at West Elementary. These notices have been sent home as Mustang Pride Cards. Students receiving these notes have been recognized for doing something above and beyond what is expected of them in the classroom or in the building. We believe it is great to be able to recognize so many students for so many great behaviors.



Dewey Hupke,
Principal

Character Counts Assemblies have started and there have been over 60 students recognized for great character. The two traits we have publicly recognized are respect and caring. Nicholas Holt spoke to our students about making respectful decisions, acting respectfully and how to make others better. Students also were able to watch and listen to the Independence High School Band and cheerleaders perform.

Students were also made aware of a student in our building who showed a great act of respect and caring. This student brought in some money that had been lost near our school building. After a couple of weeks of no one claiming the money, he was given the money. The character trait of respect and caring he displayed is an example of the great character we want each and every one of our students to show in their daily lives.

As principal of West Elementary, I am very proud of the great things going on in our building. If you have any concerns or have witnessed any great things involving our students, please feel free to contact me at 319-332-0485. Thank you for supporting our staff and students!

~Mr. Dewey Hupke, Principal

Third Grade

Third graders have been working on writing narrative compositions and learning cursive letters. The students have been using Google docs to compose stories. They participate in Daily 5 and work on reading strategies in small groups. Students have completed math units on number sense, addition, and subtraction, and are currently studying measurement and area. Science has emphasized the study of the three types of rocks, as well as weathering and the layers of the earth. We invited Sondra to visit each classroom and conduct a hands-on rocks investigation. The students were able to create their own sedimentary and metamorphic rocks!



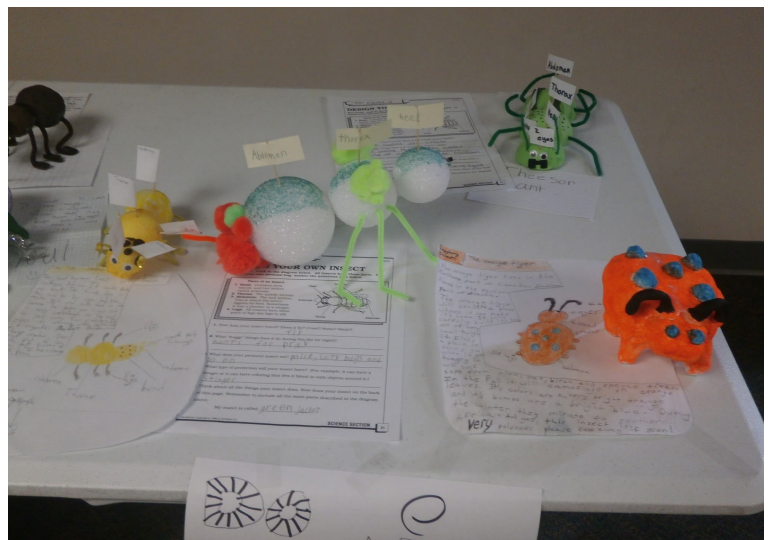
4th Grade

Fourth grade students have enjoyed learning about vertebrates and invertebrates in science. They were able to visit Fontana Park in October to learn even more about mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and birds. The Northeast region of the United States has been the focus in social studies. Math has consisted of geometry, addition and subtraction review, data collection, and multiplication. Any additional practice at home with multiplication facts is beneficial. We have been reading non-fiction and mystery books. Students have also been working on different types of writing. Fourth grade teachers expect students to read at least 100 minutes each week at home. There are incentives for students that meet their reading goals. Consider making a routine time for homework and reading.



5th Grade

Mrs. Kinseth's 5th graders have been engaged in many activities this fall. In Science class we learned about the prairies in Iowa. We researched and wrote a report on each of the following: a prairie plant, an animal and an insect that live in Iowa. For our culminating activity, we created a model of an insect (real or imaginary). We visited our own prairie looking for a variety of plants and insects. We pinned some of the insects that we collected. During literacy class we are learning about prefixes, suffixes, parts of speech and figurative language. We have also been reading selected books in small groups called Literature Circles. We are learning about historical fiction as we read, Weasel by Cynthia De Felice and Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare. We are learning about problem solving strategies, place value, exponents, prime factorization, computation and number patterns in Math class. Mr. Jones is a student teacher working with Mrs. Kinseth. He is a student at Wartburg College. He is working with students in Math and Reading and will begin teaching Social Studies and Science soon.



More 5th Grade

Fifth graders have enjoyed several outdoor activities this fall. We tagged Monarchs with Sondra Cabell, visited Fontana and made the journey to Living History Farms in September. We were involved in many activities at the 5th Grade Field Day at Fontana Park, including canoeing, energy, gun and hunting safety, archery, and bird watching to mention a few. We also learned a lot on our annual trip to Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa. We learned about the Ioway Indians, 1850 pioneers, and 1900 farm. We learned how people lived and farmed in these time periods. We also visited the town of Walnut Hill in 1875. We are so happy that PTO helped sponsor our trip to LHF in Urbandale. Thank you to all our parents for packing our lunches and making sure we were here on time to go on these great field trips. We are excited to be in 5th grade and learning so much. 5th grade presented their field trip experiences at the October School Board meeting.



Mrs. Holtzman's class has been working on applying the knowledge they gained about circuits and electricity to build electricity projects. The students are using circuits and also gaining valuable problem solving skills in the process. In math the students are learning about decimal numbers, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing. In reading and language arts, the students are learning about short stories and plot. They are finishing up their final writing project which was to create a short story with the short story elements and that was modeled after the Chris VanAllsburg text *The Widow's Broom*.

Mr. Abildtrup's class has been working extremely hard this year. In Social Studies, we have been learning about the life and culture of Native Americans. In math, the students have been learning about factors, multiplication of two digit numbers, and long division. For reading, students have been working on increasing their vocabulary level, using proper verb tense and punctuation in their writing as well as using predicting and sequencing strategies for comprehension. They have always completed their mystery unit and mystery quilt project will focus on the various story elements such as the plot and settings of their stories.

Mr. Nolan's class is off to a great start this year. In Math we have learned about prime and composite numbers, factors, arrays, and prime factorization. We have studied multiple addition and subtraction strategies and are now working on magnitude estimation with multiplication. In language arts we have discussed the various forms of figurative language such as similes, metaphors, alliteration, personification, idioms, hyperboles, and onomatopoeia. We have also been learning about how prefixes and suffixes affect the meaning of a word as well as the parts of speech. In Science we just wrapped up our Skeletal Unit Investigation where the students learned the names of bones and joints, along with other interesting facts about the skeletal system. For Social Studies we will be starting our Native American unit soon.

6th Grade

Where does 6th grade go on an all day outdoor adventure? To Camp EWALU, of course! On Wednesday, October 7th, 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 log and toxic waste, were quite challenging and we learned the value of sticking with it and encouraging our teammates. The toxic waste activity involved the entire team of 12-13 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, we did have some teams 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 seven 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.



Join us for a Monster of a Book Fair!

Books/Gifts for Preschool to Adult available.

West Media Center

November 23rd & November 24th

1:30-8:00

All in the community are welcome!



Just a reminder to parents- We will not have a fall book fair at East Elementary. This year the East book fair will take place during spring parent/teacher conferences. East parents are welcome to attend the fall book fair at West Elementary.

Our children can exhibit very challenging behavior at times. How we respond and reinforce the wanted behavior is important. I had a mentor that told me “You attract more bees with honey than you do with vinegar”. He stressed that you do not have to be “warm and fuzzy” person to make the people around you feel valued, appreciated, and supported. Recognize when your student’s efforts are what you expect or the student attempts an activity that is new or challenging.



Josh Payton,
JSH Assistant Principal

Say This <i>Praise the effort a student exhibits during a task</i>	Not That <i>Avoid statements that suggest a student is “smart”</i>
I like the way you tried all kinds of strategies on that math problem until you finally got it.	Wow, you did great on that math problem – you’re smart!
It was a long, hard assignment, but you stuck to it and got it done. That’s great!	See, I told you that would be easy – you’re smart!
For the student who gets an A without trying: “All right, that was too easy for you. Let’s do something more challenging that you can learn from.”	Nice job, you got an A without even trying.
For the student who works hard and <i>doesn’t</i> do well: “I liked the effort you put in. Let’s work together some more and figure out what you don’t understand.	Some people are just not good at math – don’t worry about it.

Carol Dweck, (2006) author of *Mindset* states, “By reinforcing the effort to get the end product, you will increase the likelihood of the behavior being repeated.” Process Praise promotes student to take more chances and move outside of their comfort zone.

Encourage your students to try new things and if they do not meet their expectations, recognize that they tried and gave it a good shot. Encourage students to pick themselves up and learn from their previous attempt.

Citation: Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.

“101 Ways to Praise Independence Jr/Sr High School”



John Howard,

Most educators (and parents) are familiar with a plethora of positive acknowledgements to recognize certain behaviors of children. In fact, there is no doubt a list of these could be virtually endless. But, for this Fall Newsletter 2015, the focus is on one extremely popular and well-known collection called “101 Ways to Praise a Child.” This collaboration of simple words and phrases such as wow, great, marvelous, you’re wonderful, you tried hard, etc., not only affirms but also definitely brings smiles to all involved. So, in keeping with this year’s mantra, please allow me to use some of the 101 to praise those associated with Independence Jr/Sr High School. Here goes. (Hint: The list words are in bold and underlined.)

- Staff is doing a **phenomenal** job utilizing Canvas.
- **Hip, Hip Hooray** to all the students with perfect attendance so far this year. What a **super** accomplishment!
- Many of our students are displaying a **positive** attitude and work ethic.
- Marching band had another **dynamic** season.
- Color Guard reached **remarkable** heights during competitions.
- Ryan A. had an **outstanding** cross country season.
- Our varsity football had another **spectacular** year. Two straight playoff appearances is **exceptional**.
- Volleyball had another **nice** run in the WaMac. **Great** job, players and coaches!
- Mr. Dan Putz and Mr. Barloon did a **spectacular** job in managing the volleyball and football concession stands.
- **Congratulations** to Adam and Ross for being named National Merit Semi-Finalists.
- A **terrific** baseball and softball facility is currently being constructed. Seven more months till we play there.
- JH/SH choir gave an **exceptional** performance at the fall concert.
- Our four all-state musicians displayed their **magnificent** musical abilities.

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

- Avery N. was recognized as all-state for her sensational singing.
- The administration was extremely proud of our students' sportsmanship and behavior at our extra-curricular activities.
- Thank you to the booster club members and all our volunteers who had other duties during the fall sports' season.
- Hurray to Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Doyle for helping bring Dueling Pianos to Independence. What a special night!
- The attendance at our extra-curricular events so far this year has been sensational.
- Our custodial staff deserves a high-five for all their work each and every day.
- Finally, our teaching staff, counselors, paraprofessionals, support and kitchen personnel and administrative assistants deserve an A+ for their commitment, enthusiasm, caring attitude and willingness to "go the extra mile" for students.
- Independence Jr/Sr High School is the BEST!

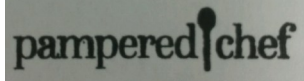
In short, there are a multiple of accolades that can be bestowed on others, whether children or an entire community like Independence Jr/Sr High School. However, the index of 101 Ways to Praise gives all of us many that can be used to affirm and bring a smile. Hopefully, that is exactly what happened with this edition. Go Mustangs!





Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor Coordinator

Independence Community Schools **Volunteer & Mentor Program Update** by Val Maximovich



First time ever Fundraiser!

For the first time ever, we are offering a "Pampered Chef" book party to anyone that is interested in shopping for those special Christmas gifts, and at the same time contributing a % of the sales to this program.

Since, the Mentoring Program is partly supported by private donations. We would like to offer you the opportunity to contribute to this great program! Call Val to ask for a book at 319-332-0626 or follow the direct link below to purchase items that will contribute to this fundraising effort:

<https://www.pamperedchef.com/pws/tammyrasmussen/guest-landing/8936635284635>

Let's Glow Back to School!



After a great summer break, it was time for the students to get back together with their mentor and mentees! So, we had a "Let's Glow Back to School" party! The night was full of surprises, everyone had a great time!

"Calling All Mentors"

Come join us on Mentor Mondays!

The first Monday of every month come meet with us at Em's Coffee Co., 324 1st St E, Independence, 4 to 5 p.m. Enjoy coffee and dessert on us – while you visit and share a mentor story!



Meet Maynard!

Hello! You may have already met "Maynard", the student that needs a mentor, on our Facebook page or in person at Arts Under the Oaks in September or in the entry way at West Elementary! Be sure to see him again on our facebook page, and share it with your friends!
<https://www.facebook.com/ICSD-Mentoring-Program>.



We have students waiting for that special adult to be a mentor for them. If you or someone you know would like to be a mentor or a volunteer, please have them 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! Contact Val at 319-334-7400 ext. 626 or email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us, or download the volunteer registration form at

<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-departments/volunteer-information/>

Canvas provides the actual assignment and the context of the assignment. As teachers use more features of Canvas, you will be able to follow your student through the learning process. You will be able to see class notes, class resources, the actual assignment, and how the student responded to an assignment.

We re on the Web
<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us>

For 2015-2016, Canvas is being used in grades 7-12. We plan to use Canvas for grades 3-6 for 2016-2017.

So, the Junior Senior High School is using both programs and leaning more and more on Canvas for classroom activities. PowerSchool remains the official place to look for grades and staff will update the grades once-per-week to make sure they are accurate. The grades in Canvas are per assignment. Even though Canvas shows a grade for the students, it might not include all grading factors and may not include everything for a particular grade.

Canvas might also be used to better break down assignments for students. For example, Canvas might show a separate score for an outline, research, a rough drafts and the final document. Then the final score will be transferred to PowerSchool as one letter grade. Canvas is not designed nor are we using it as the official letter grade for a student. Canvas is learning based and concentrates on the actual assignments and actual student work.

You need to create a separate account for PowerSchool and Canvas. There is more information at <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-information/publications/powerschoolcanvasschoolmessenger/>

SchoolMessenger is the district communication program. This program allows the district to contact students and parents with phone calls and email messages. By default your home phone, student email address, and the parent A email address are sent to SchoolMessenger. If you want to add additional phone numbers and email addresses, you must use PowerSchool Parent Portal to edit SchoolMessenger.

The three programs are distinct programs but work together to paint a better picture of everything happening within the school district.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The board will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status.

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.

The board is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Further, the board affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and harassment.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Independence School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, 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: Danielle Meyer, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644, (319) 334-7400 or dmeyer@independence.k12.ia.us