

Volume 9 Issue 2
Winter, 2014 - 2015

District Events:**Feb 16**

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

Feb 20

No School

Feb 23

No School-Prof Dev

March 9

No School

March 9-10

P/T Conferences K-6

March 10

2 hour late start

March 16

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

March 23

No School-Prof Dev

April 3

No School-Good Friday

April 6

No School

April 20

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

April 20

No School-Prof Dev

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***From the Desk of Jean Peterson, Superintendent*****Comprehensive School Improvement
Site Visit Report**

The Department of Education conducted their Comprehensive School Improvement Site Visit this past November 18th and 19th. We have now received their final report. This site visit was designed to assess the district's progress with its Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, provide a general assessment of educational practices within the school, make recommendations for improvement, and determine compliance with state accreditation standards and applicable federal program requirements.

Based on their findings, the Independence Community School District maintains the State of Iowa Accreditation. We were in 100% compliance with all of the state's accreditation standards. No non-compliance issues were noted and no corrective action plan was required to turn back into the Department of Education.

We are very pleased with this report. The Department of Education Site Visit Team noted many positive improvements to our school district since their last visit during the 2009-2010 school year.

The report is divided into seven categories:

- ❖ Vision, Mission, and Goals
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Collaborative Relationships
- ❖ Learning Environment
- ❖ Curriculum and Instruction
- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ Monitoring and Accountability



**Jean Peterson,
Superintendent**

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After looking at all of our school's information and interviewing staff, students, parents, community members, and board members, the Department of Education Site Visit Team indicated areas of strength and areas of recommendation under each of the seven categories in their final report. The areas of recommendation will serve as a road map for our school and will help us make the improvements needed as we move forward.

This report will be available on our school's website under the Announcements portion. If you would like a hard copy, please contact our Central Administration Office and we will get one sent to you. Our number is 319-334-7400. Contact Lori Flaherty at Extension 454.

Attendance Center Rankings

Iowa Legislators in 2013 directed the Iowa Department of Education through House File 215 to develop a system for evaluating the performance of all public schools in Iowa on certain measures and ranking the schools according to their results. The system is known as the Attendance Center Rankings.

As of January 30, 2015, this website will be available to look up information about any public school or district including ours. You may find the new website, <http://reports.educateiowa.gov/acr>, a good source of information.

This website was developed by the Iowa Department of Education as a first step in meeting the requirement of the 2013 education reform law. This law requires the Department to evaluate and rank schools based on their performance on nine specific measures and to post this information on its website.

This evaluation system is under development and we expect to see a more complete system next fall. According to the Iowa Department of Education, the system will be rolled out in phases this year and next year. It is important to note that the new website available now **does not** represent the complete evaluation system. Instead, it represents the performance of each public school and district on **two of the nine** measures required by law which are:

- ❖ **Student Proficiency Rate:** The percentage of students proficient in math and reading in grades 3-8 and 11 based on the state assessment results. Iowa's definition of "proficient" means performing at a basic level. Proficiency does not necessarily put students on the path to college and career readiness.
- ❖ **Growth Toward College and Career Readiness:** The percentage of students who met a growth target needed to be college and career ready. The Department has worked with our state assessment developer to link the Iowa Assessments (used to be called ITBS/ITED) to the college and career readiness benchmarks defined by the ACT. The growth measure sets an expectation that all students will make progress each year and will be ready for college by the end of 12th grade.

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The other seven performance measures are: attendance rates, parent involvement, employee turnover, community activities and involvement, graduation rate, college readiness, and closing achievement gaps.

This information can complement the conversations in our school district and community about our work to provide students a great education. However, student performance data only tell part of the story about how our schools are doing. To get the full story, I encourage you to stay connected with our schools as much as possible. Thanks for all of your support for our students and our school district.

WALKING HOURS

EAST ELEMENTARY:

6:45-7:45 a.m. Monday through Friday (Enter Main Doors)

WEST ELEMENTARY:

6:30-7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday (Enter Main Doors)

4:00-6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (Enter South Doors)

JR-SR HIGH SCHOOL:

6:00-7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday (Enter Main Doors)

Buildings will be closed to walkers when...

- * there is a school activity in the building
- * there is no school
- * there is a late start (morning walkers only)
- * there is an early dismissal (afternoon walkers only)



Due to safety and to keep floors clean and dry, please bring shoes other than your street shoes to walk in. Thank you.

School Improvement by Danielle Meyer, Director of School Improvement

Professional Development

Since we are well into the school year and are starting to look at a school calendar for next year, the administration has taken the time to discuss the benefits of having all day professional development (PD) once a month. From the staff and parents sampled, the overwhelming response is they prefer the once a month PD schedule that was used this year. This allows teachers the time to collaborate and plan the strategies presented. It also allows parents to plan for one day a month rather than multiple times throughout the month.

This year each building has focused on a variety of PD topics. Both East and West have taken the time to really dig into the Iowa Core. Our AEA 267 has been a tremendous resource for our elementary schools and has spent two entire days presenting new material to the teachers. Both schools commented that they walked away with strategies they could implement in their classes.

At the Jr/Sr High they have spent time on numerous topics. One of the changes teachers have seen this year is the implementation of Canvas. This program allows teachers and students to access materials online. The educational opportunities for this program are endless. Therefore the teachers have taken advantage of the all day PD's to learn more about the program and how it can benefit students. They have also focused on culture and climate of the building.

District-wide teachers will be spending time on establishing our Subject Area Committees. These teams of teachers will meet to better align their curriculum with the Iowa Core. Teachers will be discussing standards, objectives, instructional strategies, and assessments. This work will be valuable as we look to vertically align our curriculum K-12. The goal is for ICSD to have a guaranteed viable curriculum.

School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC)

The SIAC has met twice already this year, we had a great turn out of all stakeholders: educators, administrators, community members, parents, and students. The committee was reminded that Iowa Code Section 280.12(2) states the BOE appoints and charges SIAC with making recommendations to the Board on an annual basis. The following topics will be addressed this year:

- Major educational needs
- Student learning goals
- Curriculum, assessment and instruction
- Long range and annual goals
- Bullying and harassment prevention goals
- Any other issues which relate to school improvement

The focus of the February 23rd meeting will be addressing two of the goals improving communication with students, parents, and community and building partnerships with local businesses and community. We will be creating an action plan to see improvements in both goal areas.



Danielle Meyer,
Director of School Improvement

Principal's Corner

by Mary Jean Blaisdell



Mary Jean Blaisdell,
Principal

It's February and we will soon actually be thinking about the 2015-16 school year and incoming Kindergartners! February is the beginning of a very busy and exciting part of the year.

Please note that there will NOT be a Kindergarten Registration event this year...just Kindergarten Roundup.

Kindergarten Roundup at East Elementary

Thursday, March 19 8:30 - 11:00; 12:30 - 3:00

Friday, March 20 8:30 - 11:00

Kindergarten Roundup is designed to give teachers a chance to get to know your child and make recommendations regarding readiness for Kindergarten. Once again, if you know of any child who will be five years old on or before September 15, 2015, please fill out the form included in this newsletter and return it to the principal's office at East or West Elementary Schools. Also at Kindergarten Roundup you will have an opportunity to provide any missing information about your child to the secretary, talk to a nurse about any health concerns you may have and/or talk to the principal about any other questions you may have.

Winter weather continues to make it necessary for students to dress warmly. Even though our buildings are heated, children should be wearing warm clothing such as long sleeved shirts and/or sweaters or sweatshirts to keep them warm inside. This will serve as an extra layer to help them when they are playing outside as well! Just a reminder: if there is wet or snowy weather, students will be required to wear boots, coats, hats, mittens and snow pants to keep them warm and dry. Students do not go outside for recess if the temperature and/or wind chill is below 10 degrees.



Calling All 2015-2016 Kindergarteners!

We are trying to locate all children in the Independence Community School District who will be five years old on or before September 15, 2015 for entrance into Kindergarten in the fall of 2015. If you have a child who is of this age or know of a child of this age, please fill out the form below and return it to the Principal's Office at East or West Elementary School by February 13, 2015.

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Preschool Press

We have finally gotten back into the swing of things over here at the Early Childhood Center. The Junior Kindergarteners have been working hard on letter sounds in preparation for reading. They have also been studying hibernation, and learning about animals in the winter. We have also continued on practicing social skills such as solving problems, working together, and being a helpful and friendly citizen. Coming up, we have more visits from Angie at Fontana to help supplement our science and nature topics!



Junior Kindergarten students work together in the building center.

Kindergarten Corner

February is friendship month in kindergarten! We will celebrate by giving cards to our classmates during our Valentine's Day Party! February is also Dental Health Month. We will be learning about good dental health habits.

We just finished our winter FAST Test Assessments. Look for these scores in the coming weeks in your child's folder. We are now working on preparing for the spring assessments.

Our new focus will be sight word fluency.

We had fun celebrating the 100th day of kindergarten! The students enjoyed participating in many activities centered around recognizing numbers and counting.



Kindergarteners use iPads to help them learn reading and math skills.

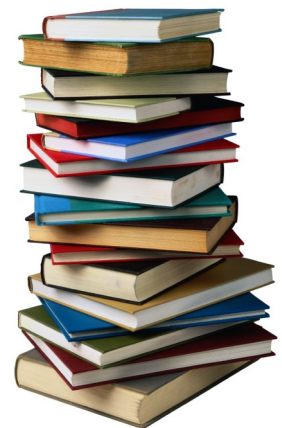


Book Fair Success!

Thanks to the support of parents, students and community members, the East and West Elementary Book Fairs held in November was once again a great success. The East book fair earned about \$1,100 in Scholastic dollars while the West book fair earned about \$1,600 in Scholastic dollars. A portion of these proceeds was spent on books given to students for the guessing contest and classroom drawings. The remaining Scholastic dollars will be spent on books to supplement each library's collection.

Thank you to those who participated in our Classroom Wish List this year. With your generosity, 43 books were given to teachers to use in their classrooms.

Mrs. Lake would like to especially thank the volunteers who helped make the book fair a success. Both adult and Silver Cord volunteers were greatly appreciated.



First Grade Focus

To go along with our winter weather, Buchanan County Naturalist Sondra Cabell presented a wonderful program on examining and making unusual snowflakes.

Valentine's Day brings an emphasis on friendship and kindness to our classmates. President's Day will shift our focus to our current and past presidents. We will learn about the duties of the president as well as some interesting facts about presidential families and their time in the White House. First graders are also continuing to work hard practicing their reading, writing, and math skills.



Second Grade Scene

Happy New Year!! Below are a few resolutions that our second graders composed.

"I want to stop drinking pop" -River

"I will read more chapter books and add details to my writing." -Emma

"I will take care of my dog and feed him and give him water." -Carter

"I am going to be honest." -Keenan

"I will do my reading before watching TV." -Cael

"I will not whine when my mom tells me to do something." -Tatiana

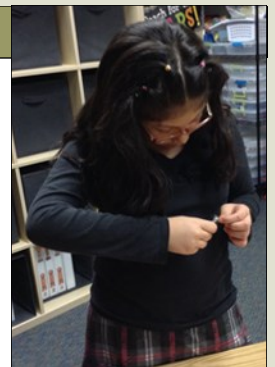
"I will not chew on my fingernails." -Nathan

"I will get better at reading and following directions." -Emma

"I will babysit my little sister when my mom says so." -Sam

"I want to be more gentle." -Nova

On January 21st the students will do some experimenting with Balance and Motion in Nature with Sondra Cabell.



2nd grade students experiment with balance and motion.



We will be celebrating the 100th day of school on Thursday, January 29th. Please ask your child about the activities they have done.

Mrs. Flickinger's class provided a food gift to the birds while studying cones in geometry.

Elementary Art Show at the Independence Library

The Independence Public Library is pleased to announce the February Artist Showcase, featuring artwork from students at East Elementary in Independence.

Friday through Sunday, February 13-15, the Community Room in the library will be transformed into a gallery for the exhibition. The artwork will be exhibited Friday, February 13th from 2:00 pm-5:00 pm, Saturday, February 14th from 10:00 am-4:00 pm, and Sunday, February 15th from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm.

Some of the K-2 students may be available for comment and photographs during the Meet the Artist Reception Sunday from 1:00-3:00 pm and refreshments will be served.



Kindergarten students work on holiday art!

Nurse News

“Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.” How many times in our lives have we heard that expression? Research has shown that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. A nutritious breakfast provides approximately one fourth of the recommended dietary allowances of many of our needed vitamins and minerals. Children who skip breakfast do not make up for lost nutrients later in the day. Yet, on any given day in the US, 50% of children go to school hungry. Not making time for breakfast, children left on their own to prepare meals, lack of appetite, and no access to nutritional foods is listed as some of the reasons that children skip this important meal.

Children who skip breakfast have trouble concentrating at school and can become inattentive and restless by late morning. Breakfast eaters are more likely to be calmer, less anxious, and more focused in school. Children that are hungry can have both physical and psychosocial symptoms. Physical symptoms of hunger include stomach pain, headache, muscle fatigue, and sleepiness. Psychosocial complaints can include anxiety, nervousness, anger, fidgetiness, hostility, confusion, and unhappiness.

A good breakfast is one that includes one type of cereal or grain, fruit, and a dairy product. A balanced breakfast provides a child with enough energy until lunch. It can be a quick and easy meal at home, at school, or on the go. Consider putting a breakfast together the night before that can be eaten cold or easily reheated. Try to avoid high sugar content cereals and breakfast bars that can rapidly increase and then decrease blood sugar levels.

We wouldn't start off on a long car trip with an empty tank of gas, yet many of our children start their school day with empty stomachs. Take time to “fill ‘er up!” before their school day starts.

Teri Schloss, RN

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.

From the Principal:

Greetings from West Elementary! Everyone at West Elementary would like to thank those of you who have contributed to a fundraising effort for our building. If you have brought in Box Tops, Milk Moola, or Pizza Ranch Tabs, you helped raise \$1,282.20 for student activities. Please continue to do this to aid our building in providing learning opportunities for our students. If you haven't contributed in this way, and you have no other organization to donate these items to, please consider West Elementary. West Elementary will again be participating in the annual postcard fundraiser. The postcard booklets will be sent home on January 26th. For every postcard booklet returned, West Elementary receives \$5. This money is used for student field trips, school activities, etc. Thank you for supporting our students!!



Dewey Hupke, Principal

Iowa Assessments: West Elementary will be administering Iowa Assessments to our students on February 3rd, 4th, 5th, 10th, 11th, and 12th. These tests will be starting at 8:45AM and should be finished up by 10:30 AM. Here are some small things parents can do to assist in their child's success. 1- Please make sure the students are getting plenty of rest. 2- Please help keep their morning as structured and free of added stress as possible. Getting to school on time is helpful. 3- Please help them get a good morning breakfast to allow them to focus on their assessment. 4- Encourage your student to do their best, but understand they may not know the answer to EVERY question. 5- If possible, please reschedule appointments so the student is at school during the testing time.

Again, we want to thank all of you in the community for your support of our students and staff members. We know it takes the support of the citizens in our community to help make a school be successful. Through the financial support, people bringing in items for students to use, the volunteers/mentors in our building every week, our students are able to achieve at higher levels. Everyone plays a role and we appreciate the support you provide to our students.

Go Mustangs!!

Mr. Hupke

Music

The 4-6 music students are starting to learn how to play classroom instruments. 4th grade students are beginning recorder karate, in which they will have a student-run classroom. 4th graders will learn the notes of the recorder, and create diagrams to help them remember how to play those notes, and then will be allowed to work in partners/small groups to achieve their recorder belts, playing more difficult music to earn higher belts.

5th grade students are learning the basics of playing piano. Like the 4th grade students, 5th graders will work in partners, and the class will be divided in half. While half of the class is practicing their piano skills, the other half will be practicing rhythm, note identification, and solfege (do, re, mi).

6th grade students have already started learning guitar. We have explored three chords so far, with four chords as our goal so that we can start learning strum patterns, and changing between chords.

Once we hit February, class time will be divided between instrument practice and preparation for the upcoming Spring Program which includes all students in grades 4-6 on March 26. Musical selections are made based on the instruments we have been working with in the classroom. The theme for this performance is "Music Matters" and will be a wonderful showcase of all of the hard work these young musicians have put in this year.

3rd Grade

Third graders recently completed an Our City Junior Achievement program. A local member of the community visited each classroom for five sessions on cities, city planning and zoning, entrepreneurship, saving money, and banking. Students are currently studying continents and oceans, writing skills, and multiplication and division. Grace Rathert, who works with the Food Corps, visits third grade classrooms to give students hands-on experiences with many things we are studying. Her lessons have focused on soil and the water cycle. We look forward to her visits, as they will soon be aligned with our digestion and nutrition unit.



4th Grade

In fourth grade, new reading genres continue to be introduced in guided reading. We are continuing to work on multiplication and division facts. The processes can be a struggle, but the students are eager to learn the steps involved. The respiratory and circulatory systems will be the focus in science. The upcoming focus in social studies will be the land, resources, and history of the Midwest region. We hope that the students are sharing what they are learning at home!



5th Grade

In Ms. Ferres' class, we have been working on Native American tribes. We are comparing five different tribes and discussing civilizations. We also are coming up with characteristics to describe each tribe and civilizations. The kids are also having a great time reading biographies and learning about different famous people from our past. We also have been working on the elements of a plot. The kids have been using children stories and nursery rhymes to discuss each part of a plot. In math, the kids are learning about fractions, decimals, and percents.

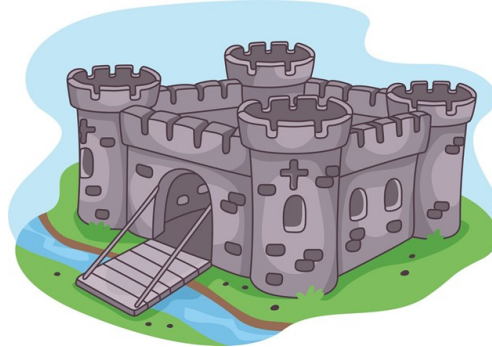
Mrs. Holtzman's class has just begun a geometry unit in math, where we are working on measuring angles using a protractor and classifying quadrilaterals. In Language Arts, we are finishing up our study of informational text. Recently, the students have been studying non-fiction text structures and writing paragraphs using the different structures. After finishing a mini unit on Vikings, the students are now learning about the Age of Exploration! During this unit, students will study famous explorers from Marco Polo to Robert La Salle.

Mrs. Kinseth's 5th graders began a unit on fractions in math class this month. They are using fraction kits and fraction circles to help them understand how to add and subtract fractions with unlike denominators. In Literacy, we are reading Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare. We are reading about how one boy, Matt, learns to survive in the wilderness with the help of Saknis and Attean, members of the Penobscots in the Maine Territory in 1769. We are also learning about Martin Luther King, Jr. We created a foldable to highlight the life of this great human rights activist. In Social Studies we are learning about the Age of Exploration in the Americas. We will culminate this unit with a Grand Encounter as we understand the impact of European Explorers on the Native Americans they encountered.

West Elementary 5th graders enjoyed a visit from Buchanan County Naturalist, Sondra Cabell. She presented an environmental footprint activity with our students. She took them through a web-based survey to allow students to understand the impact life choices have on our environment. They looked at how they use energy and how they could make choices that could help protect our environment for the future.

6th Grade

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Our 6th graders are very excited about the upcoming play called "Forgiven: A Fairy Tale." This fractured fairy tale explores how kindness and forgiveness can be shown to anyone, even those who have done terrible things. The play is being directed by Gina Homan. The performances will be on Saturday, April 11th at 7p.m. and Sunday, April 12th at 2:30 p.m. in our beautiful Junior Senior High School Auditorium.



As part of our genre study of
will be learning about the time period

student will read a novel set in that time period, and we will be learning about the elements of that particular time in history during social studies. This will include topics such as the feudal system, castles, knights, and medicine. We will compare and contrast historical fiction to other fiction in addition to biographies and nonfiction passages. Sometimes it is very difficult to differentiate among these books, but with practice, the students will learn to identify the key features of each!

historical fiction, the sixth graders
known as the Middle Ages. Each

New Year Resolutions

January 1st is a time of reflection of the previous year and anticipation of the year to come. The

New Year is a time to focus on areas of our lives to improve. This time of the year is no different

in education. Senior high students are finishing up first semester classes and other students in our district are halfway done with their school year. I encourage

parents to have a conversation with their students about how the school year has gone to this point, ask them for celebrations, and ask them what they could strengthen to finish the school year strong. At the Jr/Sr High, our staff is continuing to build positive relationships with ALL students. We have a great staff that works hard to meet the needs of students, we have committed to be reflective and continue to grow as a team and professionally, and this is our New Years Resolution! What will be yours?



Josh Payton,
JSH Assistant Principal

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream another dream"

C.S. Lewis

Independence Jr/Sr High School

John Howard, Principal

“Accepting and Accomplishing our Mission”

“Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is.....” Stop. Hold on. Read that slowly again. How many of you remember this powerful statement? A great many probably....and that is what I imagined.



**John Howard,
JSH Principal**

These nine words are a definite part of visual medium history, thereby producing highly vivid memories. For those who are “seasoned” enough, the focused images are of Jim Phelps (portrayed by Peter Graves) listening intently to The Voice on a small recorder detailing the latest covert operation for the Impossible Mission Force (IMF) while sifting through photographs of the primary “targets.” For others of us (including this writer), the memories are of Ethan Hunt (played by Tom Cruise) receiving the assignment on a CD or DVD in hopes to recover the NOC list, squelch a human virus, or extract a protégé from enemy hands. Both the show and movies provided unforgettable, iconic music, great action, and repeatedly a triumph over “evil.” All that being said, one may be thinking, “What does this stroll down Mission Impossible memory lane have to do with education?” Well, below is my thought-provoking answer.

Similar to the IMF, the Independence Jr/Sr High School has a mission. Our objective is not secretive in nature, expressed by The Voice or possibly disavowed by some “higher-up” in the event that something went awry. No, our goal was formulated by our building leadership team, is open, and supported by personnel, no matter their title. Put more specifically, our mission states: “Independence Jr/Sr High School is to provide a safe environment where students are provided the skills and opportunities to be productive and responsible citizens.”

No doubt this is (sometimes) an overwhelming task and places high demands on all, but there is reason for confidence.

The cause for this optimism is simply two words: the agents. Just as Jim Phelps had Cinnamon Carter, Barney Collier and Willy Armitage, and Ethan Hunt had “Max,” Luther Stickell and Franz Krieger, Independence Jr/Sr High School also has “special operatives.” Obviously, the creative, Hollywood-themed names are lacking but a short list would be teachers, aides, office staff, custodial personnel, kitchen workforce, bus drivers, coaches, administrators and other community supporters. Each component of our team provides a valuable service or commodity. And more importantly, no one person is any more valuable than another for our quest. In essence, the Independence Jr/Sr High School “agents,” in the view of this writer, have accepted the mission and continually strive to fulfill it on a daily basis.

Now, our comparison of the Hollywood and Independence Jr/Sr High School missions is over. The television show and movies provided a creative method to analyze the current objective for all of us. Some of the characteristics are slightly different; however, the premises are still identical---an accepted mission and quality personnel to achieve it. True, reaching our end will take more than twenty-eight minutes or even two hours, but there is no doubt that success is critical to future endeavors.

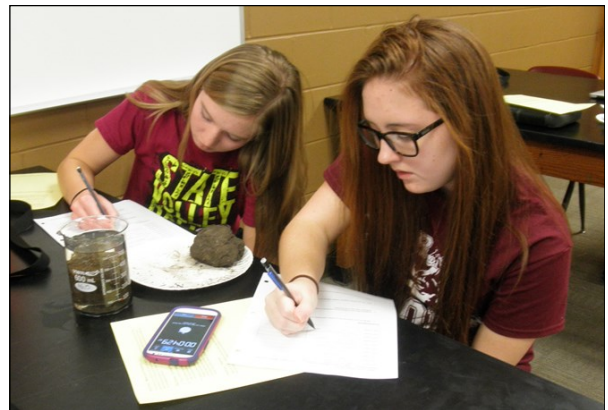
Further, I am positive this article “will not self-destruct in five seconds.” 5... 4... 3...2... 1... Mission being accomplished.

Independence Agriculture Education Featured in National Publication

The resources, community support and funding structure of the Independence Agriculture Education Program has caught national attention after being featured in The Agriculture Education Magazine, a national publication sponsored by the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

Highlighted throughout the article is an account of the multiple resources available to Independence Junior Senior High School students creating the opportunity for multiple experiential and hands-on learning experiences. Just a couple examples include students' work in studying pest pressures and growth stages of the soybeans planted in the 50-acre crop plot, taking soil samples following harvest to analyze soil and nutrient conditions. Coming this spring, students will be able to work in the program's greenhouse and plant the nearly two-acre garden. Courses also include many science application labs and industry speakers.

Course registration will begin in the coming weeks and the support of community members, school board and district administration will ensure such great resources continue to benefit and impact the learning experiences for our students.





Independence Community Schools Volunteer & Mentor Program Update by Val Maximovich 2014-2015 School Year



**Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor Coordinator**

January is National Mentoring Month!



It's National Mentoring Month, a time to recognize the value of our mentoring program and a great way to begin the new year! The students worked hard on thank

you notes to their mentors that they gave to them at the Starlight Theatre on **January 24th**! They watched the movie "Despicable Me 2". It was a great time together!

You may have seen the traveling quilt that was on display in various locations in January. The quilt was created by Norma Gates and quilted by Betty Hare. This was made in recognition of the 20th year anniversary of the mentoring program. Norma chose the "Heart in Hand" theme, and each individual handprints were outlined on quilt squares by all the mentors and students that attended the 20th year celebration. The "Heart in Hand" quilt block was chosen because it is a



symbol of friendship. It is also considered a natural symbol of charity, giving with the hands and from the heart. It represents all the sharing and caring given by mentors and their students the past 20 years. Thank you to all businesses that had the quilt on display, it was greatly appreciated!

In January new mentor training was held with Jill Gilmore, from Riverview Center, Waterloo, conducting the workshop entitled, *Nurturing Healthy Relationships*. This training is required by the Iowa Mentoring Partnership that certifies our school mentoring program.

We also celebrated with a past student that had a mentor, that is now mentoring. Jamie enjoyed having a mentor, and being a mentor while in high school, and she is now taking the time out of her work day to mentor again as an adult. Her student, Kara enjoys playing "Guess Who" or just visiting with her once a week. Jamie recently posted a photo on Twitter #Iamamentor! Be sure to follow us!



In February we will recognize another Mentor of the Year at the annual Chamber banquet, on Sat., Feb. 21st! Be sure to be watching facebook, twitter or the website for who will be honored this year!

Thank you to everyone for their continued support, and be sure to take just a moment out of your day to thank your mentor! *Be that someone who matters, to someone that matters.*

Every week we enjoy many volunteers supporting our teachers by taking the time to volunteer. Spend one hour a week reading to students, mentoring, making copies or putting up bulletin boards. It is all greatly appreciated!

*If you would like to be a **mentor or a volunteer**, please 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/>*



Independence Community School District

1207 First Street West , Independence, Iowa 50644



INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS VOLUNTEER MENTOR PROGRAM

If you would like to be a mentor or a volunteer, please contact Val Maximovich at 319-334-7400 ext. 626 or email Val at

vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us

or download the volunteer registration form at

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

We're on the Web

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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