

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY BOARD REPORTS

PRIMARY SCHOOL – submitted by Lori Casey, Principal

- The staff received numerous positive comments about the “Welcoming Time” and the first week of school. It worked very well to have Early Childhood begin school two days before Kindergarten. This allowed our office and transportation to focus on those students and ensure a smooth start. Our staff was extremely organized regarding our students’ transportation needs.
- Another successful “first” this year was our Kindergarten Kick Off for parents. We had approximately 100 parents in both am and pm sessions. The Foundation and PTA spoke about recruiting members. Mrs. Anderson and I spoke about how to work together so their children would have a successful Kindergarten year. An iMovie was shown featuring our Social Worker, Literacy Specialist and Math Specialist.
- We are very excited to have our Test Tracker system up and running for this school year. Test Tracker is a web-based system that allows us to input all of our assessment data for Kindergarten. This system is a very efficient way to track progress of our student’s assessments throughout the year
- All Kindergarten students are assessed during their Welcome Time. The Kindergarten Plus teachers are now further examining students for placement into the Kindergarten Plus program. Kindergarten Plus is scheduled to begin October 19th
- Our First School Improvement Day was September 25. Topics include Test Tracker, sharing and discussing results from the FY09 Climate Survey, Primary Parent Phone Directory, Curriculum Meetings, Articulation with First Grade and ESPED which is our new web based special education reporting system.
- As we are no longer doing our classroom phone trees our staff felt that parents would benefit from a school directory with student’s names and numbers in case they wanted to contact other families outside of school. A permission form was filled out at Welcome Time. Teachers input all of the names and it will be distributed in October.
- Kindergarten teachers Peggy Goettsch and Kathy Opal have been accepted to present at the Illinois Kindergarten Conference in March. They are presenting “Amazing Alphabet Adventures.”
- Stacey Anderson and I were also accepted to present at the conference. We are presenting “Collaborations, Motivations and Celebrations.”
- We are excited that Primary School has paired up with students from Warren High School’s Students of Service Program. Students from the Almond campus volunteer in Kindergarten and Early Childhood classrooms every Tuesday and Thursday.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS – submitted by Dr. Ken Hyllberg and David Brown, Principals

Student Achievement

- School Improvement Plans - Curriculum Meetings
As part of our School Improvement Plan, grade level teams will meet to review data in order to monitor students who are at risk and students who may need acceleration. This year the team curriculum meetings will be called

Data/Intervention meetings. Teams will meet during the school day in their team planning block. The purpose of Data/Intervention meetings is to provide team discussion focusing on assessment data, individualized interventions, and brainstorming ways to increase student achievement. Since this is a smaller setting, teachers can focus on what is working and problem solving areas for growth for their students. Teams meet once a month for 45 minutes. Our Data/Intervention meetings will begin in October.

- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

MAP assessment for 2nd and 3rd grades began on September 16th. Second grade students received instruction on the format of the assessment from the technology advisors. The technology advisors used real examples of the test to familiarize students with the types of questions, scrollbars and changing difficulty level of the questions. This year MAP testing concludes on October 2nd.

This fall MAP assessment data will be used as we implement our School Improvement Plan. Elementary staff will use this additional data to assist them in goal setting and differentiating their instruction for all our learners. Also, new teachers will receive training on MAP data analysis and goal setting.

- Assessment

During the month of September, Teachers, Reading Specialists and Math Specialists focused their time on administering assessments that will be used to drive instruction in reading and math.

In Reading, all first and second grade students were given the Words Their Way and benchmark book/running records assessments to highlight strengths and weaknesses in phonics, spelling, reading accuracy, fluency and to determine guided reading levels. Third grade students were given the baseline assessment that accompanies the new reading series to determine leveled reading groups.

In Math, all first grade students took their unit one baseline assessment from Trailblazers, as well as, the ‘Changing Numbers’ assessment. These assessments are given on an individual basis and will act as universal screeners to identify student deficiencies in number sense and counting.

- School Improvement Day

School Improvement Day was September 25th. Reading Specialists, Math Specialists, Bridges, and Reading Recovery Teachers attended grade level articulation as needed. Special Education Staff also took time to practice and familiarize themselves with the new ESPED (electronic IEP) system. Specials Area Teachers (PE, Music, Art, Computer, and Library) met with their subject area teams to work on curricular and budgetary tasks.

- Summer Reading Program

Over 350 East and West students from all three grade levels participated in the “Seeds

of Summer” summer reading program. The reading specialists provided information about this program at the end of last school year. A watermelon party and certificates were provided for students. Students had to fulfill the requirements for the program reading about 60 minutes per week during the summer.

Internal Learning Community

- Respect Talks

The administration visited every classroom to discuss respect to school, adults, peers and self. Teachers are reinforcing these core values with students in classrooms through modeling and discussions. Core Value and Good Citizens’ programs at the elementary school help to create a common language, reduce discipline issues and build a safe learning environment.

External Learning Community

- Curriculum Nights

Curriculum Nights were held September 8th through the 10th. Parent attendance for these three nights was excellent due to effective communication using handouts, and teacher newsletters.

Before the 3rd grade curriculum night (6:00 – 6:30 p.m.), Cindy Hughes and Nancy Goodwin presented information to our 3rd grade parents about the Challenge Math class.

Parents followed the schedule below:

6:00-8:00 PTA Book Fair

6:30-7:15 Classroom teachers’ presentations

7:15-8:00 Special Area teachers were available to answer any questions

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL – submitted by Dr. Kent Ashton, Principal and Ana Fuhrer, Associate Principal

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

RtI

This month, our teachers have received various levels of professional development on the Tier 2 interventions we are implementing this school year, as well as on progress monitoring. The Reading Specialists, ESL Teachers, and Bridges Teachers are conducting small reading groups during our morning academic Flex Time as a Tier 2 intervention for students who scored just below the proficiency level on the ISAT test. Through the expansion of the RtI process, we are working to address the needs of all struggling readers.

Positive Behavior Intervention Service

As we continue our implementation of PBIS at Intermediate, the First Quarterly Event has been planned for October 8th. The event will consist of a variety of activities from which the

students will choose to participate. Those activities range from the creation of friendship bracelets to the active involvement of open gym. The primary purpose of this quarterly event is to celebrate the success that we have experienced thus far. The timing of the event closely follows one of our monthly Boost Lessons, which includes an activity for our students and a refresher of Cool Tools for our teachers. These refresher courses take place, during our Tuesday Team Time meetings.

Our data has indicated that office referrals have been significantly reduced, as compared to this time last year. In addition, we have been able to identify trends in the data, and have found that our few incidents have taken place primarily on the bus or at recess, and involve the behavior of keeping our hands and feet to self. Thus, we are emphasizing, throughout October, the re-teaching of the *Cool Tool* that addresses the importance of “keeping hands and feet to self.”

Fall MAP Testing

As we continue our journey toward becoming a professional learning community that maximizes the use of data, our September MAP testing time is a very important event for our teachers and students. We are benefiting from the new laptop computers we received during the early part of 2009, as we are able to set up our Multipurpose Room as our MAP testing station with the old laptops. This allows the new laptops to be available for uninterrupted classroom use during testing. On the October 9th in-service day, teachers will create individual goals in reading and math for their students.

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMMUNITY

Student Leaders

The Intermediate Student Leader Program is up and running. This year will provide the leadership opportunity to 120+ fifth graders. Each quarter, a new student leader will be chosen to represent their class. The group meets every Thursday during recess time to discuss student issues and to work on community service projects. The program also includes two after school meetings per quarter for the purpose of creating a student-voiced newsletter for distribution to the Intermediate students and their families.

“Parents as Partner”, Volunteers for Guided Reading

At the Intermediate School we have always valued “parents as partners”. We are excited to have parents come in and work with small reading groups this year. We piloted the program last year and found it to be an overwhelming success with parents, teachers and students. Because of its success, we have opened it to all interested parents.

Over the past few weeks the Intermediate Reading Specialists have held several in-depth training sessions. They have modeled for parents how to work with the Scott Foresman literacy materials in a small group setting. We are proud to say that we have had 37 fourth grade and 40 fifth grade parent volunteers complete training, and are ready to begin in our classrooms. We extend a thank you to our parent volunteers because we know that this time invested makes a difference in the lives of the students and the richness of our classroom.

MIDDLE SCHOOL – submitted by Scott Snyder, Principal

Student Achievement

RtI / Problem Solving – We have made significant strides thus far in the implementation of Response to Intervention and Problem Solving in our school. Among the initiatives accomplished or underway are:

- This summer a committee of staff members met to realign our Intervention Team Meeting process with the Problem-Solving model.
- Prepared overview packet of the problem-solving process including updated forms for staff to utilize as a tool throughout the process.
- Created and disseminated to every team preliminary lists of students at-risk based upon their 2009 ISAT results.
- Each team has created individual RtI folders for students identified as at-risk either academically or behaviorally. Record of interventions and resulting data will be maintained and reviewed throughout the course of the year to determine their effectiveness.
- Members of the administrative team are in the process of meeting with each team to review the problem solving procedures. These regular meetings will keep RtI at the forefront of our staff's attention.
- Members of our administrative team as well as several staff members will be attending three separate workshops and participating in a series of three webinars on RtI in the coming month in order to bring back resources to our staff that are specifically geared for middle school-aged students.

MAP Testing – All WMS students have been involved in taking the MAP mathematics and reading tests between September 16th and 30th. Due to the joint efforts of our Technology Department, Tech Advisor, C.I.A Department and WMS staff and administration, testing has been going very smoothly. Staff will utilize the October 9th institute day to review their students data, formulate goals, and plan for instruction.

Internal Community / Climate & Culture

School Improvement Leader Positions – We have restructured our two school improvement leader positions this year. We will have one position for PBIS and one position of Student Learning/RtI. Responsibilities of the PBIS SIP Leader include among other things:

- Serve as a resource to staff
- Prepare the monthly PBIS newsletter for staff
- Plan and chair ROAR Team meetings
- Collect, analyze and disseminate behavioral data to staff
- Lead the preparation of weekly ROAR lessons for staff to utilize

Responsibilities of the Student Learning/RtI SIP Leader include:

- Plan and chair school-level RtI Committee meetings

- Review NMSA's *This We Believe* and work towards implementation of recommendations likely to positively impact student learning
- Review the *Middle School Concept Audit* conducted in FY09 and work towards implementation of recommendations likely to positively impact student learning
- Work collaboratively with WMS administration to provide training and support to staff members in the area of RtI and Tier I & II interventions for students

WMS Mission Statement – Our volunteer writing team has been reviewing the input provided by every staff member during our August in-service date on our school's mission. It is our intent to compile the common themes provided by staff and compose one succinct mission statement for WMS.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY – submitted by Dr. Anne Swanson, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Accountability

NCLB

Woodland Elementary and Woodland Intermediate have completed their School Improvement Plans with the support of CIA and RESPRO. Upon Board approval, the plans will be electronically submitted for review to the ISBE via the Interactive Illinois Report Card website maintained by Northern Illinois University.

Steve Thomas and I attended the Title I Directors meeting in Springfield September 29-30. Presentations included guidelines about auditing, school-wide vs. targeted assistance programs, parent involvement, non-public schools, supplanting vs. supplementing, homeless students, grant applications, as well as changes in funding and reporting.

Intermediate School has been identified as a piloting school for the 4th grade ISAT writing test. The piloting will take place October 5-8th.

Individual ISAT student score sheets have arrived. Scores for 4th-8th graders will go home with the 1st quarter report card. ACCESS scores for ELL students will go home in the same manner.

Dates for FY10 ISAT are: 3/2 – 3/12

MAP/Assessment

Fall MAP testing ends on Monday, October 5th. Teachers in grades 2-8 will spend a portion of the day on October 9 setting individual student and team goals.

Remaining testing dates for FY10 MAP are:

1/11 – 1/15 (Grades 4-5 reading, special education Grades 6-8)

4/13 – 4/28 (Grades 2-8 in math and reading)

Testing dates for 1st and 2nd grade FY10 Otis Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) are: 1/25 – 1/29 (Grades 1 and 2, verbal and non-verbal cognitive testing)

Staff Development

Plans are underway for the October 9th Institute Day. MAP goal setting will occupy a portion of the day.

Curriculum

PE and specials teachers at Elementary will have time throughout the school year to make adjustments to their curriculum based upon the new schedule. Changes will primarily focus on adjusting pacing, and either compacting or adding based upon changes in frequency and duration of lessons.

Middle School language arts teachers have meetings scheduled throughout the year with the Intermediate School reading specialists in order to eliminate redundancy and improve 6th grade growth scores in reading.

HUMAN RESOURCES – submitted by Kim Burke, Director of Human Resources

Flu Shots – Through our Benefit Cooperative flu shots were offered to District #50 employees as part of the wellness feature of the health insurance benefit. This is a free benefit for all employees who are “eligible” to participate in District Health Insurance and not just to those who are enrolled. Flu shots are scheduled for September 24th, 29th & 30th, October 1st and 5th. Each session is being offered at a different Woodland location.

Educational Support Staff Training (Office Staff) – On September 25, 2009 approximately 23 office staff and paraprofessionals participated in the Basic Spanish Plus training that was conducted by Maria Hernandez our School Psychologist from the Primary School. The training was well received by all who attended.

Illinois Local School District Annual Report for Non-Highly Qualified Teachers – Annually school districts are required to submit a report regarding non-highly qualified teachers who are employed. Additionally each non-highly qualified teacher is required to submit a roadmap of the progress they are making toward becoming highly qualified. The district monitors this progress on an annual basis to ensure roadmap completion. Presently we have four (4) bilingual teachers who are in the process of attaining their highly qualified status. Of these four (4) teachers three (3) are bilingual teachers who hold a Type 29 Transitional Bilingual Certificate. Type 29 certificate holders have six (6) years to complete the requirements to hold a Standard Elementary or Secondary Teaching Certificate. Roadmaps for these teachers are complete and the report has been successfully submitted.

Compliance Preparation – We have received the checklists from the Regional Office of Education to prepare for our upcoming compliance visit that will be conducted in February. The checklists are broken down into five (5) categories of administrators, certified teaching staff, paraprofessional staff, educational support staff and substitute teaching staff. For each

of these categories we are reviewing personnel files to ensure the information is current and on file.

OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES – submitted by Don Selzer, Director of Operations & Facilities

- O&F department had the Regional Office of Education conduct their Annual Building Inspection with no major discrepancies.
- The District's public service program realized 841 hours of work for the month of September. The work accomplished consisted of: mowing all District properties, turning over playground mulch, various grounds tasks throughout the District in support of Sneak Preview, trash pick up throughout the District and vehicle cleaning/inspections as weather allowed.

PUPIL PERSONNEL SUPPORT SERVICES – submitted by Penny Dagley, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services

- We continue to manage the ARRA grants and have submitted a first amendment in accordance with guidance from SEDOL to be sure all of the proper accounts are identified.
- Woodland will once again be participating in the "Let's Talk" initiative sponsored by the Healthy Community/Healthy Youth Organization of which Woodland is a member. Containers with conversation starters will go home with our Elementary students next week.
- We held our first Special Education Parent Meeting on September 15, 2009. Our presenter was Dr. Kristin Kronn, one of our Occupational Therapists, whose topic was Sensory Integration.
- Julia Plescia, our head nurse, and myself attended a conference on Pandemic Planning sponsored jointly by Lake County Health Department and the Regional Office of Education. The information will be helpful in putting together our plan.
- In conjunction with Healthy Community Healthy Youth including Warren Township Youth Services and Districts 56 and 121, we are planning a youth summit. The summit will be held in February 2010. The purpose of the summit is to engage our youth in discussions about the strengths and weaknesses of our community based on the Search Institute's 40 developmental assets.

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT- submitted by Dann Giesey, Director of Technology

Technology Update

- Computer Replacement Project
 - In September the Board approved the purchase and lease agreement to replace computers at the Elementary East School, Elementary West School and the Middle School mobile carts. We will be taking advantage of \$426,000 from the AARA stimulus funds to purchase the bulk of the computers.
 - The computer order will be placed immediately to take advantage of the Apple Corporation fiscal year end discounts that were negotiated. The deployment will begin in October with the completion of the rollout planned for Friday November 20.