



INTERCOM

Bismarck Public Schools weekly employee newsletter

May 20, 2010

All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten: The sequel...

In last week's intercom article I provided an overview of how the district Kindergarten program has changed over the past 5 years. My focus was on how the move to all-day, every-day kindergarten benefited students, and how the move affected the socialization aspect of teaching 5 and 6 year old students. This week my focus is on how the standards-based curriculum, teaching, and assessments of 5 and 6 year old children have changed.

Tanya Mueller wrote that the skills students bring to the classroom have changed very little from when she started teaching kindergarten 10 years ago, but the academic expectations have changed greatly. Kelly Griffin reinforced that notion stating that kindergarten has really become the new first grade.

Nicole Schneider has noticed that children are ready for the challenge, and kindergarten teachers begin by meeting each child at their readiness level and starting the educational journey from there. Data from formal assessments have increased, and between DIBELS, Scott Foresman - Baseline, MAP and standard based report cards, a solid knowledge of each child's strengths and weaknesses are identified.

As Tina Pletan mentioned in my last intercom article, kindergarten teachers are held accountable to teach the academic standards, and Bismarck Public Schools recognizes three equally important domains in kindergarten education:

And it is still true, no matter how old you are - when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

creative, cognitive, and emotional. They intersect, knit together, and reinforce one another every day. There is more academic rigor in today's kindergarten classrooms than in the past. Every day teachers are amazed to see just how much and how quickly these children with curious minds learn. According to the data, the majority of students are hitting or exceeding their learning targets by year's end. District kindergarten teachers were the first educators to develop a standards-based report card, where each child is assessed on end of year expectations.

Kindergarten teachers were also the first to work their way through the district curriculum alignment process to ensure all K students receive a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Lori Ronningen attri-

butes the impact of Reading First, No Child Left Behind, and a host of other reasons for the more well-rounded rigorous kindergarten curriculum.

Vocabulary knowledge is the single most important indicator of a child's success with literacy and mathematics. Developing language in the child's first school, the home, is so very important to the child. Kindergarten teachers continue to develop language and provide rich experiences to enhance background knowledge. Talk is highly valued in district kindergarten classrooms, as it is the underlying thread of literacy. Talk facilitates retention and enhances comprehension. Talk also motivates and engages children in their learning, and strengthens their sense of community. Talk empowers the child.

Language is a skill that comes full-circle; what we think, we can say; what we say, we can write; what we write, we can read; and what we read, we think about.

Once again I want to thank the educators who contributed to the two articles and the 43 district K teachers who truly provide the springboard upon which all future learning is built. I will close my last *intercom* article for the year with a quote from Robert. "And it is still true, no matter how old you are - when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together." Robert Fulghum, author of *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* and *It was on Fire When I Lay Down on It*.

John Salwei
Assistant Superintendent

Help Desk

May:
Monday - Thursday: 7:30 am-4 pm
Closed: 12:30 pm-1:30 pm for lunch
Fridays: 7:30-9 am (will periodically check voicemails, emails, and online requests the rest of the day)

Summer hours:
Tuesday, June 1-Friday, August 6.
Monday - Thursday 7:30 am-12:30 pm. Fridays: 7:30 am-9 am (will periodically check voicemails, emails, and online requests the rest of the day)

Calendar Call

- May 20 **Retirement Party**
BHS, 3:30 pm, Connie Lund, Larry Rehn & T.C. Stavn
- May 21 **Retirement Party**
Elks, 4-7 pm, Kristy Haisley & Sonja Mahlum
Retirement Party
4:30-7 pm, Kelly Inn, Tim Fogderud
- May 24 **Speech/Lang. Pathologists**
3:30 pm Hughes #2
School Board Mtg.
5:15 pm City/Court Bldg.
- May 25 **Retirement Party**
4-6 pm, Elks Deck, Mike Ahmann, Mary Rose, and Cindy Wetzel
- May 26 **Farewell Party**
3-6 pm, Hughes Gym, Paul Johnson
- May 27 **Last Day of School**
South Central Graduation
7 pm Belle Mehus
- May 30 **CHS Graduation**
1 pm Civic Center
BHS Graduation
5 pm Civic Center
- June 2 **Secondary School Admins.**
7:30 am Hughes #3
Elementary Principals
9:00 am Hughes #1
- June 14 **School Board Mtg.**
5:15 pm City/Court Bldg.
- June 16 **Secondary School Admins.**
7:30 am Hughes #3

Job Opportunites

- Deadline: May 23**
Secondary Special Education Strategist
 - English - South Central High School (Grades 9-12)
 - Deadline: May 25**
Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools and Instructional Services
 - Deadline: May 26**
Special Education Coordinator - 11 month position.
 - Hearing Impaired Teacher (50% Custodian Supervisor II - Horizon Middle School - Step 8 - full-time position (6:30 am-3 pm).
 - Deadline: May 27**
Secretary - MREC - Step 5 - 8 hours per day/11month position.
- For a detailed job description and to apply, go to bismarckschools.org "Job Opportunities" link.

Credit Courses

√ **Essential Understandings Workshop:** Tuesday, June 1, 8 am-4 pm HEC conference rooms 1 & 2, may count as a FSDD for 2009-2010; register in the staff tracker. This session is offered by the Sheltered Journey program. Drs. Carole Barrett, U-Mary, and Cheryl Long Feather, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, will present their ND Essential Understandings document. For teachers exploring, implementing, and articulating Native American socio-political and cultural concepts in the classroom, this course will deepen and broaden your understanding of issues surrounding the American Indian people in ND, past and present. Intervention and differentiated teaching techniques will be highlighted. Stipend offered by the Sheltered Journey program for the approved completion of a lesson plan incorporating the teaching techniques and the essential understandings. Bring a laptop. Contact melanie_bernier@bismarckschools.org or call 323-4800, ext. 6210.

√ **University of Mary - Offering Online Graduate Course: Edu 631:** Supervision of student teachers, 2 graduate credits, June 14-July 23. To register, contact Leona Friedig, 355-8058.

√ **Geographically FIT (Forestry Institute for Teachers):** 2 graduate credits, August 2-5, in Western ND. This four-day learning experience sponsored by the ND Geographic Alliance and ND Forest Service that will take place in a classroom on wheels. The charter bus will travel to many sites so teachers can learn about the geography, geology and forestry of the region. Begins in Belfield and includes a trip to the Ponderosa Pine Forest, the Logging Camp Ranch and north unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. US Forest Service staff, on site in the National Grasslands, will discuss management, energy and grazing issues. A trip through the Killdeer Mountains is included on the way to Dickinson where the city forester will lead a "walk about" town to observe Community Forestry. To register, contact ND Geographic Alliance, marilyn.weiser@minotstateu.edu, 838-6835, 721-6248, 858-3063, 1-800-235-1948.

Kudos

Four BPS teachers received Teacher Incentive Grants for the coming school year in the amount of \$300 each from the ND Council on the Arts. They are Michelle Lingle-Riehl, Will-Moore; and Barbara Sandstrom, Donna Nestoss, and Janel Spaeth of Roosevelt. In addition, Rita Murphy received an Artist in Residence Grant from NDCA.



Michelle
Lingle-Riehl



Barbara
Sandstrom



Donna
Nestoss



Janel
Spaeth

Mini-Grants

The Bismarck Public Schools Foundation awarded \$4,934.60 in teacher mini-grants for the fall semester of the 2010-2011 school year. Eight teachers were awarded funds for projects that will enhance the curriculum at their schools.

The following teachers received mini-grant awards for projects at their schools: Tania Schroeder, Grimsrud Elementary; Rick Tidd, Myhre Elementary & Kurt Weinberg, Pioneer Elementary; Maria Neset, Northridge Elementary; Misti Werle, Saxvik Elementary; and Gail Beaudoin, Century High School.

Since the inception of the mini-grant program in 2001, the Foundation has awarded \$145,853.74 to BPS teachers for projects in their classrooms. Mini-grants are funded by the beverage contract with Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola, proceeds from Apple Dash Run/Walk 4 Education and private donations.

Back-to-School Walk/Run

Start the new school year at the district's Back-to-School Walk/Run and breakfast on Wednesday, August 25 from 6:15-7:30 am at Sunrise Elementary School. This fun event is for all BPS employees.

Individual participants are eligible for great door prizes. The elementary and secondary school with the highest percentage of participants will have some great snacks for a staff meeting and bragging rights for the year.

Registration and breakfast will be in the Commons on the east side of the school on Nickerson Avenue. The walk/run will start right in front of the school. Registration starts at 6:15 am and continues until 7:30 am.

The breakfast will be served from 7-7:45 a.m. Even if you don't walk/run join us for breakfast.

Community Corner

√ **Carpentry House for Sale:** built by BPS students, the open house will be Monday, May 24, 6:30-8 pm at the Technical Center on the BSC campus. Call Dave Peterson, 224-5492, for more information.

√ **JA casino night:** Friday, June 11, 6-10 pm, at Apple Creek Country Club. Limited number of tickets available. Register online at www.bismarckmandan.com/events or www.bismanja.org.

√ **To view School Board or other local candidates for the June 8 election:** go to www.freetv.org and look under the Gov't. Access photo and click Channel 2 Video on Demand Search.

√ **Summer employment opportunity:** Totten Trail Resort, Lake Audubon, is looking for summer help. Bartending, cooking, bussing/cleaning tables, motel/cabin housekeeping, grounds work. Room and board is provided or a full hookup for an RV or trailer. Work 2 weekends, get third off. Two days off during the week if work a weekend for golf, fishing, hiking, water sports, etc. Ideal for moms/dads with teens or singles. Competitive wages, good tips see Curt at complancahdahl@aol.com

√ **Neighbor Network:** Needs a treadmill. If you have one to donate, contact Brenda Bergan at 527-4626.

√ **Neighbor Network:** Needs a queen size bed frame and bunk beds. To donate, contact Sylvia Hauck at 527-8464.

OPEN HOUSE

High School 2009-2010
Carpentry House for Sale



Monday, May 24, 2010
6:30 PM to 8:00 PM



For more
Information Call
Dave Peterson
224-5492

BISMARCK
TECHNICAL
CENTER
1200 College Drive

Congratulations

Joann Miller, English teacher at BHS, for being named Teacher of the Year by the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce!

