

# USD #377 Weekly Update

For Parents, Patrons and Staff

Steve Wiseman, Superintendent

Monday, November 3, 2008

## Good Things are Happening at Atchison County Community Schools!

Congratulations to Gentry Linscott who placed 5<sup>th</sup> in Class 3A at the state cross country meet held at Wamego on Saturday.



*Deb Falk, Effingham Elementary Secretary* - Ronald McDonald House Charities NE Kansas invited our school to participate in this year's Pop Tab Contest. Collecting pop tabs is a wonderful way to teach kids about recycling and how they can have an impact on their community.

By collecting tabs our schools will help support families who travel to Topeka with children needing medical treatment. Here they will find a comfortable and compassionate home at Ronald McDonald House. Families are asked to donate just \$15.00 a night; however no family is ever turned away for financial reasons. Families who are dealing with the stress and pressure of caring for a sick or injured child must have a home away from home in their time of need. At the Ronald McDonald hour they are provided with a warm environment and emotional support of other families in similar situations.

We will start collecting tabs November 3<sup>rd</sup>

*USD #377 Veterans Day Program to be held this Friday, November 7, 1:30 p.m. in the High School Gymnasium*

All local veterans, family and community members are invited to join us as we honor our Veterans!

### USD #377 District-Wide Technology Night!

Parents and patrons are invited to the USD #377 District-Wide Technology Night that will be held this Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Atchison County Community High School and Middle School. You will have the opportunity to experience the many innovative ways students use technology.

#### Middle School Technology Night Schedule

Room 14 - Joyce Thompson will be demonstrating the Micro-Vision (this is a video imaging device)

Room 28 (VPL Lab) - Natalie Leseberg will be demonstrating the A+ Learning program

Room 33 (Wireless lab) - Renee Potter will be demonstrating Google Earth

Room 12 - Charles Watkins will be demonstrating the Ainsworth Keyboarding program

Library - Linda Boos will be demonstrating the Accelerated Reading program

*Mrs. Wiseman, Technology Director* – PowerSchool is up and running!

*Paula Hall, Kindergarten Cummings* - The three Kindergarten classes enjoyed a wonderful Study Trip to Kaleidoscope and Carolyn's Country Cousin's Pumpkin Patch. At the Pumpkin Patch they learned how pumpkins grow and saw many different kinds of pumpkins. They got to go out to the pumpkin patch in a wagon and pick their own pumpkin. At school this week they weighed and measured their pumpkins and compared them to their selves. They also had fun cleaning them out and making them into Jack-o-Lanterns.

*Charles Watkins, MS Business* - After some changes with the A+ learning room and some instructional changes, I have had several student that have gone from passing less than five test in the first quarter to passing more than 5 test in a week.

*Noelle Walters, HS Science/Drama* - **Practices for "Guys and Dolls" are coming along well.** Our first performance will be Friday, Nov. 14 at 1:15 p.m., which will be a matinee for ACCMS and open to the public. Our other performance will be Sat. Nov. 15 at 7 p.m. and Sun. Nov 16 at 2 p.m. For all the performances we are offering \$1 off the price of admission with the donation of a canned good or non-perishable food item. These will be collected and donated toward the Friends of Rachel "Can the Principal" food drive, which is being held Nov. 10-21 at the high school.

*Tom Hinrichs, Department of Curriculum and Instruction* - A team of USD #377 teachers recently completed Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) training in Lecompton including: Dr. Kevin Peters, Vicki Hegarty, and Natalie Leseberg from ACCMS; Mark Preut, and Karen Benson from ACCHS, and Jamie Wetig, Rita Eckert, Alison Ostertag, Jennifer Gigstad, Anita Stutesman, and Kelli Bottorff from the elementary schools.

*Marci Feldkamp, Secretary HS* - We are working fast and furious on the Veterans Day Recognition to be held Friday, November 7 at 1:30 in the High School Gym. Middle School and High School students will attend the assembly.

*Jennifer Hansen, HS Government/Social Sciences* - The ACCHS students completed their first voting experience. This past week they voted on Tuesday and Wednesday for President, US Senator, US Representative, Key issues, and which past president they would like to see in charge today. The results were great. We had 48% of the student body register to vote and 78% of those actually voted. We are way above the national average of the mid to upper 20%. The students elected Barack Obama, Jim Slattery, Nancy Boyda, and Abraham Lincoln to come back. They chose the economy as the most important issue to them. **We don't have the national results yet, because of a computer glitch with a few states on their reporting (I think it might have been on purpose to match the real elections from the past two presidential years!).** We will let you know how we match with the rest of the US next week.

*Mr. Wiseman, Superintendent* - Curriculum Director, Tom Hinrichs, has been selected to present on the topic, *Working at Impact*, at the Kansas Staff Development Annual Conference this February in Wichita.

*Jane Halling, Secretary Lancaster* – Lancaster Students of the Week: Kindergarten - Charlie Miller, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade - Marcus Hetherington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade - Hayden George, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - Wyatt Doty, and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - Joseph Chapman

*Tina Wagner, Secretary Cummings* - Cummings Star Students of the Week: Kindergarten – Jacob Lee, Grade 1 – Hailey Lewis, Grade 2 – Bryce Fowler, Grade 3 – Lanai Meyer, and Grade 4 – Dylan Birkinsha

*Deb Falk, Secretary Effingham ES* – Effingham Students of the Week: Preschool – Autumn Gann, ECH – Colby Smith, Kindergarten – Rebecca Statler, Grade 1-Conner Razo, Grade 2-Jacob Hamilton, Grade 3-Erin Hamilton, Grade 4-Coulter Bisel

*Joe Worthington, HS/MS Instrumental Music* - We had a great performance from the mass band made up of 7-12 grade band members, on Thursday at the football game. Also, the 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade band marched in the Halloween parade on Oct. 25 and did a spectacular job.

*Amy Pound, Pre-school* - Mrs. Amy and Miss Mass's preschool classes got to go to the Atchison Public Library for a day at "Candyland". There were many different hands-on stations for the preschoolers to engage in, as well as, finger plays to learn and stories to listen to.

Mr. Wiseman came and presented a challenge to each preschooler as a get to know you activity. All preschoolers did very well with this activity. ☺



Notices:

The K-4 **“Go Wild for Reading/Science Assembly”** will be on Wednesday, Nov. 5 at ACCHS at 9:30 a.m. Two buses will leave Cummings and two from Lancaster at 9:00 a.m. Three buses for Effingham will leave at 9:15. They should leave the HS for the return trip around 10:20-10:30. All should be back to class no later than 11 a.m. – Mrs. Erickson, K-12 Librarian

KSHSAA High School Fall Athletic Buffer Week – November 10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>

There shall be no athletic practice, off-season conditioning, informal basketball shooting, working out on wrestling mats, etc., in school-owned facilities during the Fall Athletic Buffer Week. Athletic activities of this nature may not be held under the supervision of a school staff member in non-school facilities. This means a moratorium on all school-sponsored athletic activities during this week.

Gymnasiums shall not be open to the students during the Fall Athletic Buffer Week for the purpose of shooting baskets, working out with weights, etc., outside of school hours. Noon hour and physical education classes are considered part of the school day. The Fall Athletic Buffer Week does not eliminate football practice for those senior high schools who qualify for football play-offs until such time their football season is over. The same applies to the gymnastics program.

Promethean Demo Scheduled for Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 PM in the USD #377 Board Room – A teacher representative from each building is asked to attend this demonstration.

## Five Minutes to Fire Safety, Kansas State Fire Marshal

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To access this and previous topics online, visit us online at

[www.accesskansas.org/firemarshal](http://www.accesskansas.org/firemarshal)

### Topic: Propping Doors Open

One of the most frequently asked questions from teachers and school administrators alike **is why classroom doors can't be** propped open. The answer to this (and almost every inspection related **question**) is, **"it depends!"**

The question of classroom doors is one of separation. A quick glance at any life safety, building, or fire code will reveal some discussion or requirement for fire-rated separation in some specific location. The intent of the rated separation is to limit or control fire spread in such a way that it aids life safety, whether by protecting exits or allowing for some sort of sheltering.

When a fire-rated wall is designed by an architect, any hole in that wall - **whether it's for** electrical wires, plumbing, or a door or window - takes away from the integrity of that protection. This is why fire-rated caulk is required for filling any small holes in rated walls, and also why doors and windows in these walls must bear a specific fire-rating. If a door or window bears a fire-rating, you will be able to find the label somewhere on the assembly. Doors will typically have a metal plate screwed on to the top of the door or on the hinge side. Older doors may exhibit a small colored plug in one of these locations, instead of the metal plate.

In order for a fire-rated door to function, it must be closed. This is why fire-rated doors can only be held open by magnetic hold-open devices that are tied into the fire alarm system. If the fire alarm goes off the doors will automatically close and latch, allowing them to function properly. They cannot be held open by wedges or kick-downs. If the doors are propped open with wedges or kick-down devices, they cannot function properly in the event of a fire.

So, in a nutshell, fire-rated doors are there for a reason: they help protect the occupants and the building from fire spread. If a fire-rated door is between your classroom and the corridor, it can only be held open by a magnetic hold-open device that is tied to the fire alarm system, and the door must be able to latch at all times.

### Topic: Propping Doors Open II

**Last week's edition of "Five Minutes to Fire Safety" explored the** question of whether or not classroom doors can be propped open. What we learned was that fire-rated doors have an important function during fires, and that in order to work they must be closed. We also learned that they can be held open by magnetic hold-open devices that are tied to the fire alarm system. This way the doors will close and latch when the fire alarm system is activated and the separation protection will be in place. We also learned how to tell whether a door or interior window bears a fire rating.

What about non-rated classroom doors? Since that separation was not designed or required by the architect or building codes, these doors can be propped open – but only when the room is occupied. Unoccupied rooms must still have closed doors. Although the

doors do not provide rated separation within the building, they still act to limit the spread of fire and the products of combustion and they aid in the fire suppression effort.

This also means that wedges and doorstops can be used to block open non-rated doors - as long as the room is occupied. If your classroom has non-rated doors, get in the habit of always closing the door behind you when you leave the room. This way, you **don't have to** worry about whether or not the room is occupied or unoccupied - the door is getting closed whenever you leave the room.

Is this confusing? It can be, especially in older schools with recent **additions**. **It's not** uncommon to find a school where part of the building has no fire-rated corridors and the classroom doors can be propped open, and just around the corner is a newer addition with a rated corridor – where the doors cannot be propped open. In schools like this, administrators may choose to require all doors be kept closed in the interest of equity.

Editorial: Numbers Games

*The New York Times, Oct. 30*

NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. -- Americans should be deeply alarmed by new data showing that the country is continuing to lose ground educationally to its competitors abroad. The United States once had the world's top high-school graduation rate. It has now fallen to 13th place behind countries like South Korea, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Worse still, a new study from the Education Trust, a nonpartisan foundation, finds that this is the only country in the industrial world where young people are less likely than their parents to graduate high school.

Most American parents never see these damning international comparisons, which are based on census figures and labor force statistics. Instead, parents who want to know how their schools are doing in terms of vital statistics like graduation rates must rely on phony calculations cooked up by state governments that are determined to hide the truth for as long as possible.

With these problems clearly in mind, Margaret Spellings, the secretary of education, has issued new regulations for how school graduation rates are calculated and reported to the public under the No Child Left Behind Act. States will now be required to keep track of students from when they enter high school until they receive regular diplomas, counting as non-graduates any students who choose to leave school before that time.

### **New rules require states, schools to reduce dropouts – USA Today**

WASHINGTON (AP) — One in four students quits high school, a grim rate that will have to improve under new federal rules.

Schools and states will now have to track and lift the graduation rates for all students, including minorities and students with disabilities, under regulations being announced Tuesday by Education Secretary Margaret Spellings. Among black and Hispanic kids, one in three drops out of school.

A school might have a high graduation rate but still have a low rate for black or Hispanic students or for kids with disabilities. Making schools responsible for progress in every group of students puts pressure on schools to improve.