

## *News from around the district at MSD114*

- **We have continued to work on firmly establishing our four new District Goals this year. The 4 goals the administrative team and our entire staff are focusing on this year are; *Becoming One, Literacy, Using Data to make decisions, and Professional Development for Staff.* In order to assure that these 4 Goals remain present in all that we do for our students, we have been working very hard on an Action Plan to guide us and hold ourselves accountable. I have included a link to a copy of the Action Plan on the Superintendent's Page.**
- Colleen Proffit and Maggie Wingate, speech pathologists, completed a three-day training on the Lindamood Bell LIPs program, a phoneme sequencing program for reading, spelling and speech. Both came back with rave reviews of the training and a renewed vigor in wanting to apply what they learned with students. The excitement was contagious! They are excited and even asked about future training in other Lindamood Bell programs. The students in Mrs. Tooley's classroom will be coming to Wilson Creek soon to read stories to the children at Wilson Creek. It is always great to see these students as confident readers sharing, modeling, and of course spending time with our youngest students. It is always a great day for all involved.
- Seven staff members will be attending a 2-day training lead by Toni Lidner, the guru of Play Based Assessments, on play- based assessments. This will be extremely helpful for preparing us to conduct our own Early Childhood Evaluations starting next school year.
- Alicia Tooley's class came to Wilson Creek to read to the younger students! This is always a great day! Teachers are amazed at how grown up the Jr. High students are, and the students walk away feeling grown-up, confident and proud of their presentations to the students. We are very happy this is an annual event.
- The Wilson Creek Art Show was success! Mrs. Boersma did a wonderful job planning a great evening for our students and their parents. Thanks to Mrs. Boersma for her hard work, to Mrs. Ambrosini for joining her to help that evening, and to several Wilson Creek staff and PTO members for volunteering their time.
- Thanks to our office staff, Kindergarten teachers, and Special Education specialists, our Kindergarten Information night was an informative experience for incoming Kindergarten parents. We had over 100 parents start the registration process. We are currently at 115 for the upcoming year. We anticipate a full class for the 2016-2017 school year!
- The Do You Want to Build a Snowman? Reading Incentive wrapped up. Mrs. Milosevich encouraged, counted and managed the program again this year, motivating students to read at home during the cold winter months. The students of Wilson Creek read 4,331 book! The winning grade level, our Kindergarteners, will have a celebration this month.
- The curriculum committees all enjoyed the activities during our district-wide Teacher Institute Day in February. Following the district meetings, the Wilson

Creek curriculum committees met to plan for professional learning for our staff based on their discussion and learning that day. Our writing and science teams presented at our February faculty meeting and math will present at the March faculty meeting.

- At Anna McDonald, the Student of the Month luncheon for CARING was held on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Extra recess with the principal for (6) classes held on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Continue to get positive feedback and attendance from parents. On average 21-22 (of 24) students per grade level have a family rep attend the luncheon.
- The Anna McDonald Reading committee continues to work on a plan for reading adoption. Last meeting was March 2<sup>nd</sup> to plan the March 18<sup>th</sup>; mid April; and end of May Journeys presentation to all staff. All staff will implement a couple of lessons in April/May to get a taste and feel for the new program.
- The Anna McDonald math committee will review the 8 Mathematical Practices with all staff on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- On February 19<sup>th</sup>, staff from Troy SD 30C visited Samantha Ramsey's 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom to observe how the iPads are integrated into the instruction. We followed the observation with 55 minutes of Q & A. Feedback from Troy staff was very positive and encouraging. Our staff continues to be recognized by peers from other districts and the greatest compliment is when they come to us and ask to see what our staff are doing in the classrooms and how we are structuring our organization.
- Judge Bobbi Petrunaro visited Ann Mac on March 21 as part of the One Book, One Judge initiative thru Will County Courts. She spent an hour reading to kids & sharing her experiences.
- Students at Anna McDonald School helped Knock Out heart disease and stroke, by collecting over \$8,000.00 this year.
- Mrs. Ciurej shares her message on the character counts pillar each month. See her present at <http://techyteachers114.weebly.com/ciurejs-character-corner.html>
- Congratulations to Kris Ambrosini, who was selected to feature students at TECH 2016 at the State Capitol this year hosted by Illinois Computing Educators (ICE). Her students will demonstrate and display their Cut Paper Self Portraits and Stop Motion Animation. The event will be on Tuesday, May 10, 2016 from 1:00-3:00pm at the State Capitol Building in Springfield. The proposal Kris submitted required technology integration and collaboration with our district technology people.
- The 2016-17 School Calendar was adopted by the Board of Education. The staff will begin with Institute Days on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed by the first Student Attendance Day on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Registration for the 2016-17 school year is currently open. The School Calendar for next year can be found on the main page of the district website.
- LWW sent four HS English teachers to collaborate and observe our 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA classes on Thursday, March 3. Our ELA staff continues to work to strengthen our curriculum and promote their knowledge to the rest of our staff.
- The 8th grade students had the opportunity to find out about occupations all relating to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math last Thursday. Eighth

grade parents gave 30-minute presentations on their job using demonstrations, slide shows, hands on, and question and answer sessions. JoAnn Marshall showed students careers in the transportation of goods field. Jeff Tolbert from the Will County Sheriff's detective unit gave students the opportunity to look at fingerprinting and evidence gathering. Jim Lebeau from Citgo showed students various forms of petroleum as he explained his job as an oil refinery operator. Mary Ellen Tolbert brought several of the devices that she uses in her job as an occupational therapist. Gene Evans explained his job as a pipefitter. Rob Harland discussed life-learned lessons as he described his job creating fire alarm systems for large Chicago-land buildings. Angela Rafac used displays and hands on activities to explain her job as an interpreter for the Will County Forest Preserve. Students gained a view into what their real adult working world will be like. Many students commented that they had seen a job that they had never even known existed. Paula Webb and Amy Goberville, 8th grade Science and Math teachers at Manhattan Junior High, coined the event STEM Career Day and hope to continue it as an annual enhancement for the 8th grade class.

- The Symphonic Band performed a concert at LWWHS with the LWW Band and Jazz Bands and Liberty JH for the first time ever on Thursday, Feb. 25. The students were able to have a pizza dinner and some time to mingle with the HS kids. The Choir Students did the same at their Choral Fest at LWW on February 23. The event was new to our students since the Manhattan population will now attend a new HS. Also, on February 13 Band, Orchestra, and Choir students participated in the Solo and Ensemble contest at Tinley Park, Hilda Walker School. In all, MJHS received 43 division I ratings and only 7 division II ratings.
- All students at MJH received education on Erin's Law this month during all gym classes. The focus of the presentation was on both online and offline sexual predators and how to stay safe. It was well received and presented by MJHS social worker Jan Nass.
- The Board of Education also adopted its regular meeting dates for next year too. The Board will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of the month with the Committee of Whole meeting at 6:00pm and the regular board meeting scheduled for 7:00pm.
- I have posted a copy of the PowerPoint on the district website under the Superintendent tab. It was a nice evening and I appreciate those members who were able to attend. Hopefully I was able to provide information that those who were in attendance found to be useful information. I mostly wanted to convey that our enrollment continues to increase and has for the past 6-7 years, that we continue to remain fiscally conservative and responsible, that our students are performing at a level that is equal to or better than other school districts in Will County and other areas, and that despite all the challenges we face, Manhattan SD 114 is still offering all of the same curricular and extracurricular programs with a staff that is second to none. No matter how great of a district that we have, we have the kind of leadership and committed staff that continue to seek out ways to become even better at what we do.

- On another note, I wish express how thankful I was to have the Principal of L-W West present to speak and welcome our students. I appreciate Monica Schmitt taking the time to share the many events and opportunities that her staff has provided and continues to provide this year in an effort to ease the transition for our students. The staff is very excited to welcome our students.
- Student Enrollment increased by another four students this month and our 2015-16 total enrollment now stands at 1413 students.
- This month, the Board of Education and I discussed the possibility of adding to the extracurricular events that are offered to our students. With the ever increasing enrollment, we want to be sure that we are offering enough activities that all of our students feel as though they have the opportunity to participate outside of the classroom as well. Activities that were discussed at the meeting included, Baseball, Softball, Scholastic Bowl, and Bowling. Mr. Pacheco will be surveying our students to see what level of interest there is in additional activities and what those activities are. In the meantime, I will be putting together information for the Board regarding the additional costs associated with adding new activites.

***Lastly, I want to remind our parents that the Online Registration is open and available. If there are any questions or concerns, then please contact Michele Zmigrodski at Wilson Creek Elementary.***

***Thank you,  
Rusty Ragon***