

Western School Corporation

Home of the Panthers Russiaville Indiana 46979 *Western View* Volume 20, Issue III August 2011



A Message From Our Superintendent Randy McCracken

I would like to begin by saying how blessed I am to have the opportunity to serve the Western community as your superintendent of schools. Western has a proud tradition of excellence and that tradition is the result of our community, parents, students, and the hard work and dedication of Western's staff, both present and past. I look forward to serving with each of you as we continue this tradition and continue to make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

I would also like to thank Dr. Peter O'Rourke for his service to Western and for the many contributions he made. His leadership has provided direction for the school and also the development of the Strategic Plan. While the five year Strategic Plans ends in 2014, the Values, Vision and Goals of the plan will continue to provide direction for Western for many years to come. In addition to the Strategic Plan, Dr. O'Rourke's implementation of Reading Specialists has and will continue to benefit our students. This initiative is critical in ensuring that all students will read at grade level by the time they reach grade three and also in passing the State's third grade Reading Assessment. As a patron and colleague, I am most appreciative of his devotion to kids and his conviction to always put kids first.

I have had the good fortune now to have worked at Western for 17 years. I have also had the good fortune to be a part of this community for the majority of those years, and after next year, will have had both of my children graduate from Western. I take pride in Western and what it stands for and am proud to call Western and Russiaville my home.

Sincerely,

Randy McCracken

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Visit the Western website: http://www.western.k12.in.us

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Western Middle School

By Julie Pownall

WMS is looking forward to August 17th, as students fill the halls with energy and excitement. A big welcome to our incoming 6th graders! We have been working hard this summer to assure that our kids have a wonderful start to the school year.

It is my pleasure to introduce to two new faces to the staff; Ms. Walker, 6th grade LA teacher and Mrs. Pressgrove, 7th Math teacher. We are blessed to add them to our Four-Star Staff!

We hope to see all of you on August 22 from 6:00 -7:00 for our annual "Back to School Night" where you will have the opportunity to meet our staff and tour the facilities.

If we can be of any service to you or your child throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to contact the WMS office!

Western Intermediate School

By Dr. Heather Hendrich

Western Intermediate is in full swing as preparations for the 2011-2012 school year are underway! The staff at Western Intermediate is looking forward to our sixth annual Back to School Night on Monday, August 15th. Parents and students are invited to come and meet their teachers and see their classrooms before school starts. A general session will be held in the Intermediate gymnasium (West Gym) at the following times:

Monday, August 15th: 5th grade @ 5:30 p.m. 3rd grade @ 6:15 p.m. 4th grade @ 7:00 p.m.

After the general session, students and parents will be dismissed to their assigned classroom(s) to learn more about the upcoming school year.

We will have a new staff member joining Western Intermediate this school year. I would like to welcome Madison Briscoe as our new 5th grade teacher. Please help me in welcoming her to our school family. We look forward to a successful 2011-2012 school year!

Western High School

By Rick Davis

Wow, it seems like it was just yesterday we had a wonderful Commencement for the Class of 2011 and now we are gearing up for the first day of School. I want to congratulate the members and families of the Class of 2011 for a wonderful high school career and wish them the very best in their future.

As many of you may have read, Western will be starting an alternative School this fall. We are thrilled about the opportunities this alternative school will provide to our students. Mrs. Sharon Fields will remain an Assistant Principal, but will move into the role of the administrator of this alternative school. Mrs. Lissa Stranahan has made the move from the Middle School to serve as our other High School Assistant Principal. We also have welcomed Mr. Ryan Berryman as our new Athletic Director. Additionally, Mrs. Allyson Gordon (English), Ms. Jamie Chapin (math), Mrs. Jessica Austin (math & science), Mr. Andrew Bowers (French), Mrs. Judy Dickey (choir maternity leave), and Mr. Quentin Brown (social studies maternity leave) join our staff as teachers this fall.

We are excited about all of the changes and look forward to an awesome year!

Western Primary School

By Steve Arthur

School attendance is a critical ingredient for school success and learning. It is so important that the State of Indiana uses a school's attendance rate along with Reading and Math performance to "grade" a school's success and rank their performance as compared to other schools in the state. Western Primary's attendance rate is consistently around 96 percent. While this is a good attendance rate, it is slightly below schools that receive 4-Star recognition. Western Primary is looking forward to partnering with parents and our community to improve our attendance rate and ultimately the learning of our students.

Kokomo Area Special Education Cooperative (KASEC) By Superintendent Randy McCracken

Western would like to welcome the Kokomo Area Special Education Cooperative (KASEC) to Western. On July 1, 2011, Western became the Local Education Agency (LEA) for the special education cooperative. We have now hired teachers and therapists, and are in the process of hiring aides. Staff joining us includes:

Cheryl Harshman – Director

Suzie Reagle – Assistant Director/Western Special Education Director

Melody Courtney – Secretary

Pat Cunningham – Secretary

Carol Graf – Computer Organized Data Administrator

Gena Harshman – Life Skills Teacher at Western

Emily Clark – Life Skills Teacher at Western

Sherry Riley – Life Skills Teacher at Western

Johnalyn Burns – Life Skills Teacher at Eastern

Janet Leeder – Life Skills Teacher at Eastern

Mary Evans – Life Skills Teacher at Eastern

Dave Anderson – Pre Vocational Education (PVE) Teacher at Taylor

Kathy Roberts – School Psychologist

Amy Auzins - School Psychologist

Judey Budenz - School Psychologist

Melody Marley - School Psychologist

Jean Barrett – Occupational Therapist

Laura Isaacs – Occupational Therapist

Tammy Norman – Occupational Therapist

Trish McClain Certified Occupational Assistant

Karen Fisher – Physical Therapist

Susi Schieman – Physical Therapist Assistant

Life Skills classrooms will be located at Eastern and Western this year for KASEC Students from Eastern, Maconaquah, Northwestern, Taylor, Tipton, Tri-Central and Western. PVE will remain at Taylor.

In Early August an Open House for the Life Skills Program will be held at both Eastern and Western, so parents and students can visit their new classrooms and meet their teachers. Letters will be sent in the near future with details.

Western and the other participating schools are excited about this change and the opportunities it will bring for our students.

Please contact me at 883-5930 if you have any questions.

Special Education

In order to accommodate the schedules of those attending case conferences at Western School Corporation, elementary case conferences may begin as early as 8:00 a.m. and should conclude by 4:00 p.m. Middle school and high school case conferences may begin at 7:00 a.m. and should conclude by 3:00 p.m.

<u>Western View</u> is published quarterly for the purpose of informing all patrons of the Western School Community about the educational programs and progress of their school corporation. Comments or questions may be directed to Rhondalynn D. Rushing, Editor at 883-5576. ext. 5000.

Message From the BoardBy Jeff Davis



It is hard to believe we are approaching a new school year. 2011-2012 brings new leadership and staff to Western. We would like to congratulate Randy McCracken on his new role here at Western as Superintendent. We are looking forward to his leadership as he continues to direct this school into the future. We also would like to welcome all the new staff that is joining us. Your addition to the school will only enhance the good qualities that already exist. We anticipate a great year ahead.

Parents Right to Know

The "No Child Left Behind Act" (NCLBA) is an extension of a previous Federal Program titled the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act" (ESEA). NCLBA requires schools to notify parents of students in the school that they may request, and the Corporation will provide the following information on the student's classroom teachers:

- A. whether the teacher(s) have met the State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas they are teaching.
- B. whether the teacher(s) is teaching under any emergency or provisional status in which the State requirements have been waived
- C. the undergraduate major of the teacher(s) and the area of study and any certificates for any graduate degrees earned
- D. the qualifications of any paraprofessionals providing services to their child(ren)

In addition, the parents **shall** be provided:

- E. information on the level of achievement of their child(ren) on the required State academic assessments:
- F. timely notice if the student is assigned to a substitute teacher who is not "highly qualified" for the subject they are teaching for more than four (4) weeks.

Licensing information for teachers is also available at www.doe.state.in.us under the K-12 school data section. Should you have any questions, please contact Randy McCracken at 883-5930.

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