



To Educate and Inspire Today's Students for Tomorrow's Opportunities

WESTERNVIEW—Volume 24, Issue 2

December 2017

A Message From Our Superintendent

By Mr. Randy McCracken

We started off this school year with a little different opening day for staff than in the past by celebrating our new employees and by sharing a common theme for the year: "One Team, One Mission." Our mission is "To Educate and Inspire Today's Students for Tomorrow's Opportunities."

Three messages were shared on opening day that all supported our theme. The first was to find your "Why." Why do we do what we do? When you know your "why," you know your purpose. The second message was that every staff member makes a huge difference in the lives of our students. We shared a video clip from the movie, *Hacksaw Ridge*, where one person, Desmond Doss, single handedly saved several lives. The question that was asked of all of us was, "Who will your one more be?" The final message was the importance of a team and building a feeling of oneness and dependence on one another, and how much more we can accomplish together. Every successful team has the oneness and has individuals with various roles working together, "One Team, One Mission."

To facilitate the oneness and working together, we started the formal Professional Learning Community process a few years ago, giving teachers time to collaborate. We expanded that focus and support this year with the hiring of Instructional Coaches who assist teachers in reflecting on their instruction and in fostering student achievement. We also implemented mini assessments to guide instruction and remediation, and we also brought back the data walls, in all buildings, that our Primary and Intermediate Buildings had used in the past. Stacey Brown, our Curriculum Director/Secondary Instructional Coach, offers the following information:

"Each and every student matters at Western, and we are committed to each student's success. As part of our effort to know every student and to make the best choices possible for him or her, we have created spaces in each building where every student's achievement is followed. These data rooms (which are secured so that information remains confidential) provide a student-focused collaboration space for teachers as we work as "one team" to meet the needs of all of our students. Since every student is visually represented, these rooms not only help us to focus our efforts on individual students, they also help us to understand whole-grade and whole-school patterns in achievement. By paying attention to these individual and collective outcomes, we can better tailor our efforts in the service of our students."

"One Team, One Mission" includes our parents and our students. We are all equal members of this team. Thanks for all that you do to support this mission.

Weather Related Information:

It is that time of year again when weather can cause delays, cancelations, and early dismissals. I know that these changes in schedules can create hardships for many families, but my main priority will always be the safety of our students first.

The process begins the night before by looking at the weather forecast. Even if it looks like all will be clear for the next morning, I still look outside each morning at around 4:30 a.m., just to make sure.

Weather Related Information—con't:

If there is any potential concern, I am generally out on the roads by 4:45 a.m., so I can personally see the road conditions. When driving the roads, I try to cover as much of our district as possible along with areas that often have problems. With the size of our district, we can have one area fine, while another is not. Ideally, I like to make the decision by 5:30 a.m. to 5:45 a.m., but in some cases, I need to wait to see if conditions get better or worse before making the call. The initial decision for a delay needs to be made by 6:15 a.m., which is when our first bus route begins. If we start out with a delay and conditions do not seem to be improving, the decision to cancel needs to be made by 8:15 a.m. at the latest. In addition to notifications by call or email through school messenger, students and parents can also receive notifications through Twitter @WSC_Panthers.

Western will continue to use eLearning as an option for days school is cancelled since we no longer have built-in make-up days in our calendar. Our teachers are prepared for up to three eLearning days in a row. In the event that we would miss more than three days in a row, the additional days would be added to the end of the school year. While we believe having students physically present at school is the best learning environment for our students, we also believe eLearning and the use of technology is a good option when weather prohibits our buildings from being open.

Western Primary School

By Steve Arthur

"Tis the Season".....Christmas is just around the corner. While the Christmas holiday is a joyous time for many families, it is a stressful time for others. Unfortunately, Western's poverty rate continues to increase, making it difficult for some Western families to provide Christmas for their children and families.

Western Primary and Intermediate have already begun to collect funds that will be shared with Western families in need of Christmas help. On November 22nd, the Primary building conducted a "Turkey Walk". Students who brought in a donation got to walk with the Turkey (Mr. Arthur dressed up in a turkey costume)! One hundred percent of these monies are used to purchase Christmas gifts and food for our families in need. We would like to say THANKS to those who donated and helped provide Christmas cheer to our students and families.



Parents and patrons, thanks for all that you do for Western.

Western Intermediate School**By Pat Quillen**

As we prepare to close on a great 1st semester, I would like to give you an update on what we have been doing to help our WIS Panthers become even more successful. We recently had a huge building-wide celebration to share the joy of our success with the 2016-2017 ISTEP results. WIS finished as the top elementary school in the county earning an A rating and improving scores in each category, some as much as 13%! Western School Corporation finished as the top corporation in the county earning another A rating. We are incredibly proud of our students, staff and community. Being on top presents us with new challenges as we strive to improve on our success and continue to "Be the Best!" Our teachers have implemented Success Pops and Success Time this year to further investigate student performance and provide more individualized instruction to meet students at their needs. Students take short assessments (Success Pops) every four weeks. The results of those quick checks are discussed with grade level teams in order to determine what students mastered concepts and which ones need a little extra help. Students are then put into smaller groups for 30 minutes of remediation or enrichment activities (Success Time). We also had performer Steve Seskin visit WIS to help our 5th graders write a musical celebration for what being a Panther means on our Pathway to Success and Panther Pride. You can view the video of the performance at: <http://kidswritesongs.org/home/>.

We at Western Intermediate School want to thank you in advance for all the support you provide in order to make WIS great because "Being a Panther Means Being the Best!"

Western Middle School**By Tracy Horrell**

Oh the weather outside is dreary, but inside WMS things are very cheery! Our students never stop impressing us with their generosity and determination to make everyday a great day to be a Panther. Take a moment to read through the many ways our Panthers are continuing the tradition of excellence every day.

The Student Ambassadors and National Jr. Honor Society spearheaded a successful Basic Necessity Drive. Students brought in various goods and personal hygiene products that were donated to families right here in our community. Students went above and beyond the normal generosity of the traditional canned food drive and truly gave items that will surely benefit many families within our community.

Weekly, our students look forward to the latest edition of the "Paw Print," our very own school newspaper. This newspaper is written BY students FOR students and most articles feature students. If you haven't checked out a recent edition, you can find them posted on our website. Their stories are both entertaining and inspiring and we are so proud of their efforts.

Our students also excelled, yet again, in the Indiana State Spell Bowl Competition. Our very own Kay Lazar was recognized as Indiana's State Academic Coach of the Year for 2017-2018 and has led her team to another Regional Spell Bowl win and into the state competition for the 12th straight year. Congrats, spellers and Mrs. Lazar!

Finally, our teachers are continuing the pursuit of excellent for all students by maximizing their Success time. During this time, students are retaught and reassessed on the standards where mastery had not yet been shown. We look at every standard by student by skill and provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate mastery. Some students are also participating in our C.L.A.W.S. class (Coached Learning Achieving With Students) which is providing on-going support from one of our teachers throughout the year.

Western Middle School continues to strive for excellence with all students and appreciates all of your support throughout the year. Thanks for helping us to make everyday a great day to be a Panther.

Western High School**By Rick Davis**

We have had a tremendous start to our school year and the holiday season is upon us! Students, faculty, and staff are all working hard to make this a successful year both in and out of the classroom. Western High School was once again rated an "A" school by the IDOE and our student athletes and coaches had a tremendously successful fall athletic season. Our world-class marching band and guard continue to be one of the best in the State with another State Finals appearance and a very close runner-up finish. The Western High School Spell Bowl team again made it to State, finishing in 4th place. Other accomplishments not quite as public would be the induction of 80 new members into National Honor Society and having two National Merit Semifinalists in our senior class.

Yes, we have had many successes, and are extremely proud of our school and school community, but we also know that with success come more challenges. We cannot and will not rest on our past accomplishments, but continue to look for ways to improve Western High School. We are far from perfect, and will make mistakes, but there are many wonderful and positive things happening at Western High School. While there is a great deal for which to be thankful, we are most thankful for the opportunity to work with awesome students every day in an outstanding school community. Thank you for your support of Western, we couldn't do it without you!

Civil Rights Statement

It is the policy of Western School Corporation to provide an equal opportunity for all students to learn through the curriculum offered in this corporation regardless of race, creed, age, disability, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or social or economic background.

If any person believes that Western School Corporation or any of the corporation's staff has inadequately applied the principles and /or regulations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, (2) Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, and/or (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, he or she may bring forward a complaint to the corporation's Civil Rights Coordinator, Lissa Stranahan. You may call Mrs. Stranahan at 883-5576 ext 5124.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Each Wednesday, we are on a 30 minute delay schedule

- **Dec 20, '17—Jan 3, '18**
Christmas Break (No School)
30 min delay Jan 3rd
- **Jan 15, '18**
MLK Day (No School)
- **Feb 19, '18**
President's Day (No school)
- **Mar 26—30, '18**
Spring Break

A Message From Your School Board

By Scott Gaskins

Hard to believe, but the first semester is almost done. It has been a busy semester for all but a successful one. The school corporation was again awarded an "A" rating based on our ISTEP results. The band was named runner-up at the state finals. The school robotics team qualified for the national tournament. The Spell Bowl team finished 4th in the State. Brian Caldwell was name a Top 25 Indiana Teacher of the Year. We also had several successful team and individual sports performances including sectional titles in girls golf, girls soccer and boys tennis. These results continue to highlight the quality of students, teachers and coaches we have at Western.

As the year comes to an end, the school board would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday Season.

**WESTERN SCHOOL CORPORATION
2600 SOUTH 600 WEST
RUSSIAVILLE, IN 46979**

**NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NUMBER 15**

BOXHOLDER