

WESTERN SCHOOL CORPORATION

Home of the Panthers
Russiaville, Indiana 46979

Volume 23, Issue 4

May 2017

A Message From Our Superintendent: Mr. Randy McCracken

Dates to Remember

- **May 25, 2017**
Last Student Day
- **May 26—31, 2017**
Last Teacher Day
- **May 29, 2017**
Memorial Day (All Offices Closed)
- **June 2, 2017**
Graduation



PANTHERS

Inside this issue:

<i>Principal's Page</i>	2-3
<i>Golden K Kiwanis Aluminum Can Recycling</i>	2
<i>A Message From Your School Board</i>	4
<i>"Childfind" Search</i>	4

The school year is quickly coming to an end and the planning for next year has already begun. Before we close out this year, I would like to thank our staff for all of their hard work and dedication, and for all that they do to help our students to achieve to their full potential. I would also like to thank our students for always trying to do their best and our parents and patrons for your continued support. The combined efforts of all are what make our students successful.

As we look to the summer, we are bringing back our Summer School Extension for grades K-8 as we have had in the past. This is a great opportunity for students who need a little extra help to receive two additional weeks of instruction. These same students can also attend our two week Jump Start program before the start of the next school year in order to get a jump start on their learning. Principals will send out information in May on these two opportunities.

Looking to next school year, we are excited to add three new positions to our staff: a Primary Instructional Coach, an Intermediate Instructional Coach, and a Curriculum Director/Secondary Instructional Coach. These three positions are designed to support our teachers and student learning by providing job embedded professional development, small group professional development, large group professional development, and by analyzing and communicating student data to teachers. Continual professional development and opportunities for staff to collaborate are essential for school improvement.

A few years ago, the state eliminated the schools' ability to release students early for Parent/Teacher Conferences and staff professional development. As a result, we lost the opportunity to conduct Parent/Teacher Conferences during the school day and the ability to bring our staff together for extended periods of time throughout the year for professional growth and development. Under the new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, we now have that opportunity again through eLearning. The School Board recently approved a revision to our 2017-2018 School Calendar, which includes adding two half day early release days on October 9th and 10th for Parent/Teacher Conferences for the Primary and Intermediate and professional development for the Middle School and High School. By adding these two half-day early dismissals, we no longer need the "No School Day" on September 27th for Parent/Teacher Conferences and will now be able to start the school year for students on Wednesday, August 9th, one day later than originally planned. The dismissal times on October 9th and 10th will follow the students' lunches and will be at 12:00 p.m. for the Middle School and High School and at 1:00 p.m. for the Primary and Intermediate. In order to meet the requirements of the state for a full day of instruction, students will be assigned eLearning for only the classes or subject areas missed on campus at the end of the day. For those students without afternoon supervision or internet access at home, supervised study rooms will be available at school until the regular dismissal times, at which time parents of students who stayed at school will need to pick their children up since transportation will not be provided at that time. The revised 2017-2018 School Calendar is available on our website at <http://www.western.k12.in.us/>.

In addition to focusing on student learning, our Technology Integrators will be offering training for parents, guardians, and caregivers on August 8, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Topics to be covered will include; Skyward, eBackpack, navigating our website, Here Comes the Bus, and My School Bucks. More information on the training will be shared this summer.

Principals' Page...

Western Primary School

By: Steve Arthur

Kindergarten Enrollment for the 2017-18 school was held this past March. Please call our office at 883-5528 if you missed Round-Up and need to enroll your child for next year's Kindergarten class.

Walk-in enrollment for the 2017-18 school year is scheduled for the following dates and times:

July 20th from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

July 21st from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

July 24th from 12 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Please call 883-5528 if you have a question about registering your child for the 2017-18 school year.

Western Intermediate School

By: Pat Quillen

As we wrap up another successful school year, I want to thank our parents, students, faculty, and community for the hard work and support needed to make our Panthers the best they can be. The last few weeks of school are a busy time with ISTEP and all the exciting projects we have in store for our students.

Blasting off in May, our 4th graders head to Space Camp, while our 5th graders will build rockets to launch. Brain Game, DARE graduation, and Mini Mall are also huge events in which our 5th graders participate to showcase their newly acquired knowledge. Our most prized and valued event is the annual Penny Pitch in which students raise money for Community Howard Hospital and celebrate with a day of games and fun-filled activities.

Summer vacation is the most anticipated part of the school year, but parents should keep in mind this can be a great time for family fun and learning. Find local or "one tank trip" opportunities for your family to visit historical sites, events that celebrate art and theatre, museums, or even check out one of Indiana's many colleges and universities. Don't forget to have "screen free" days when the entire family puts away technology to play games, read books, or just spend time together. The WIS family wishes you a safe and enjoyable summer as we celebrate this school year and look forward to 2017-2018.

Golden K Kiwanis Aluminum Can Recycling

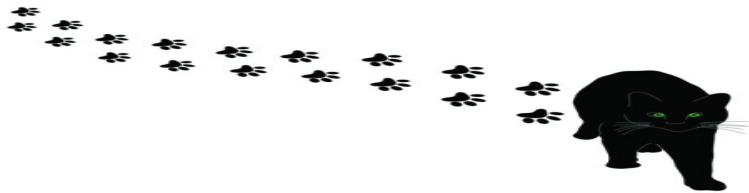
The Golden K Kiwanis club has put an aluminum can recycling bin at the east side of the athletic fields at Western High School. It is placed near the Howard county recycling bin. Kiwanis collects the cans as a fund raiser with the proceeds going to Riley Hospital for Children and local Howard County charities. In recent years Kiwanis has given \$1000 scholarships each year to 5 or 6 students of Howard County schools. We would appreciate your support in placing your aluminum cans in our bin so that we may continue to fund projects for youth in our community. The purpose of Kiwanis is to make a difference in the life of youth.

Western Middle School**By: Tracy Horrell**

It's been another fantastic year at Western Middle School. I can't tell you how proud I am to be a Panther and all of the accomplishments that our students and staff have been recognized for throughout the year. This is currently my 10th year in administration, and I believe that this has ranked as one of the best years that I have experienced. There hasn't been one thing that we have accomplished as a school that didn't require some level of support from you at home and in the community. For that, I would like to say thank you!

With summer right around the corner, Western Middle School will still be in working hard to attain excellence. Many students have been invited and will be attending our summer programs, extended summer session and jumpstart prior to the 17-18 school year. These programs offer time to fill in gaps in learning as well as prepare for a successful start to the school year. Office hours for the summer will be daily from 7:00am-3:00pm

Finally, I'm looking forward to welcoming back our Panthers for the Back to School Night on Monday, August 7th from 5-7 pm. Students can bring school supplies and organize lockers and find their new classrooms. I can't wait to meet our new group of Panthers that will be joining us in 6th grade for the 2017-2018 school year. I hope that you all have a safe and happy summer and remember: It's always a great day to be a Panther!

**Western High School****By: Rick Davis**

Even though I have been in education for 24 years, I am always amazed at how unbelievably fast spring rolls around. In just a few short weeks, we will be wrapping up a very challenging and also successful school year. While busy with all of the year-end testing, tasks, and preparations, we are also well underway in planning for the start of the 2017-2018 school year. It is a busy but a fun time of year when the joy of closing one school year is coupled with the excitement of planning for the next one.

I would like to take a moment in this brief article to formally and publically thank Ms. Cindy Lester for her many years of service to the students of Western High School. Ms. Lester has made the decision to retire at the end of this school year. Ms. Lester has had a tremendous positive impact on so many students, athletes, teachers, and staff over the years. She is a gifted educator who has worked diligently to help her students achieve great success in both math and life. Ms. Lester will be greatly missed and we wish her the happiest of retirements and many outstanding rounds of golf!

I would also like to say thank you and good luck to the Class of 2017 who will be graduating on June 2nd, 2017. On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, I thank you for the adventure we have shared over the past 4 years. The Class of 2017 has represented Western well and proven itself to be full of dedicated and talented young adults with very bright futures. For each member of the Class of 2017, we sincerely hope the next step of your life is filled with joy and success.

A Message From Your School Board President:**By: Harry Kenworthy**

Western School Corporation is a leader in utilizing technology for student learning. Occasionally, I have the opportunity to help my grandchildren with their homework, and it helps to be familiar with their iPad, Skyward, e-Backpack, and electronic textbooks. In the process of learning how to navigate this electronic world, I thought this is too difficult! Then, it hit me that our students are getting a great technology education in the process of completing their normal classes. It's like getting two educations simultaneously. The benefit to this "secondary" education is that our students have the skills needed to fill out electronic job applications, scholarships, and internships. They also may have the basic technology skills required for their careers.

I encourage parents to become knowledgeable of your student's iPad, Skyward, e-Backpack, and electronic textbooks, especially if your student is having some difficulty in school. Your students should be able to show you how to access their grades which may be broken down by homework, participation, tests, and projects as well as current, late and upcoming assignments, tests, and projects and possibly days that might have been absent. All of this can be done on the student's iPad, and also on one's own personal computer.

If you need help in learning how to navigate these electronic devices and programs, feel free to call our technology team of Melissa Deweese at 883-5576 Ext. 1106 for Kindergarten through 5th grade and Nate Schmidt at 883-5576 ext. 3006 for 6th through 12th grade.

"Childfind" Search

Western seeks to find children, ages 3 to 21, who are not receiving a free public education and who may have disabilities that interfere with learning. Whether the disability is a serious health problem, a mental disability, or a physical impairment, the Kokomo Area Special Education Cooperative welcomes calls with information that can be considered. If you have such information, please contact Suzie Reagle at 765-883-5930.

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