



# January/February 2015 Tri-Center Newsletter



**High School 485-2257    Middle School 485-2211  
Elementary 485-2271**

**[www.tri-center.k12.ia.us](http://www.tri-center.k12.ia.us)**

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## Superintendent's News and Comments

... Tony Weers

Ready, Set, Play! I recently read the following article by Amanda Morin. Ms. Morin's article discusses the importance of playing games for learning and practice of Math. I found this article a good reminder that all of us need to work with our students and children to make learning fun and exciting for the students we serve.

Ready, Set, Play! How Games Can Help Kids  
Who Struggle With Math  
Amanda Morin

Sitting down to another math worksheet or a set of flashcards can be discouraging for kids who struggle with math or have dyscalculia. And for parents who are trying to help, it can be troubling to watch that frustration. Not all math practice has to be on paper. In fact, playing math games can be a good way to teach math skills to kids who are struggling.

### About Math Games

There's a difference between a game and the math activities your child's teacher uses in the classroom. An activity is something all kids do together to try to learn a new skill. A math game involves trying to win by choosing strategies as kids move through the game. Unlike a whole-class math activity, a math game can support your child's individual needs in math.

Games come in many different formats. There are board games, card games, computer games, video games and even apps that provide math practice. No matter what the format, a good math game requires kids to problem-solve and make mathematical decisions. In games that have two or more players, those decisions have to take into consideration the

moves other players make, too. The most effective math games:

- Are challenging
- Have rules and structure
- Include a clear ending point
- Focus on specific math skills

### The Benefits of Playing Math Games

Math games are much more than a pleasant change from pencil and paper work. There are benefits for your child, too. The games are designed to be fun. When playing them, your child may be less likely to worry about failing or making mistakes.

That can reduce math anxiety and help your child develop a more positive attitude toward math. Other benefits of math games:

- Kids can discover practical, real-life ways to apply math skills.
- Kids who have different levels of skills and ways of thinking can learn from each other.
- Kids can explore math in formats they know and enjoy (such as on gaming systems or mobile devices).
- Kids can test new strategies and ideas without feeling the pressure of being graded.

Playing math games together can also help you get a better idea of your child's strengths and weaknesses without a formal assessment.

### Types of Math Games

You may not even know that some of the skills you use every day are math skills. Once you know what skills certain types of games work on, you can pick

games that help build the skills your child most needs.

- **Board games** help kids practice matching the sets of dots on a die, or a set of objects, to the correct number of spaces to move. A game like Candy Land, for example, would fit into this category.
- **Board books** also help kids match numerals and set of objects. In *Eric Carle's 123* pull-tab board book, for example, kids have to pull the right number tab to match the items on the page.
- **Matching games** ask kids to keep track of where they saw items and patterns. Dominoes also lets kids practice matching numbers and sets.
- **Mystery games**, such as 20 questions or Guess Who? ask kids to keep information in mind to use as a strategy for narrowing down to the correct answer.
- **Spatial strategy games** ask kids to come up with ways to move pieces in order to block or capture other pieces. This includes games like chess, checkers, Connect Four and Battleship.
- **Numerical strategy games** involve removing, getting rid of or rearranging pieces to win. This includes games like mancala and card games, such as Uno and trash.
- **Resource-management games**, such as Monopoly or Carcassone, ask kids to think about how much money or resources (such as property) they have and how they can use them to get to a goal.

If you want to get ready, get set and play math games with your child, it's not that hard to get started. You can begin slowly with games you already have and know.

### **Buses . . . Kids and Drivers**

Much is assumed and too much is taken for granted when it comes to our students, the buses they ride and most importantly, the drivers who are operating the buses. All students are expected to respect the bus driver and view them as the ultimate authority on the vehicle. Riding the bus to and from

school and activities is a privilege. Riding the bus can be revoked at any time and for any period of time depending upon the inappropriateness of the behavior. As a parent, please understand the role and responsibility of the driver and refrain from rushing to judgment if a situation arises that involves a conflict between your child and the driver. The ultimate concern of the driver is the safety of the children.

Tri-Center bus drivers are well-qualified and loyal employees of the district. They are under constant pressure to perform their duties without fail and many times in adverse conditions. They are to be appreciated for all they do to ensure the welfare of our kids as they very diligently haul them to and from home and school for 180 days each year. Please take the time to thank them and encourage your kids to admire them for the job they do.

### **Midwest Winter Weather**

Snow, ice, fog, wind chills, and days of below freezing temps are always a reminder and indication that winter in Iowa is back. In the event that we have school on a day when getting from home to school is too risky or impossible, please call the school and let us know your children will not be coming. Keep in mind that our district encompasses almost 200 square miles and there will undoubtedly be some spots that are impassable. Most of our kids live in town and therefore can ride the bus or drive in conditions that may be much better than those which exist on country roads or outlying areas. So, there may be times that the decision is based simply upon being able get most of our kids to school on a given day. We will do our best to exercise good judgment, but that does not mean it will be in agreement with every parent, student, or community member. This is Iowa and we all understand the adjustments that need to be made during a Midwest winter, so let's approach it that way. Thanks for your assistance and cooperation.

***“Keep your dreams alive. Understand to achieve anything requires faith and belief in yourself, vision, hard work, determination, and dedication. Remember all things are possible for those who believe”***

***--Gail Devers***



**From the Principal's Desk  
... Angie Huseman**

**“Advice is like the snow. The softer it falls, the deeper it sinks into the mind.”  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

Expectations are a powerful thing. When researchers look at what makes students successful, they always find that expectations play a key role. If parents and teachers hold high expectations, children usually live up to them. That's true in academics...in athletics...and it is true for behavior as well. Now, more than ever, decisions about the future really begin to take shape, and for some, the future is unsure. How about your teen? Are they ready for the “second half”? Will they give it their all, or will they skate by as much as possible? Have they planned for the future? Are they going to do what it takes to get the most out of this “second half”? Parents, you can help your child figure out what they need to think about while developing those goals using the questions below:

Parents, ask your teen:

- Have you decided what is important?
- Have you determined your role?
- Have you set realistic goals?
- Have you decided to influence the outcomes?

Encourage your teen to plan for success!

The good news for parents is that you can learn how to put the power of positive expectations to work for you. Expecting your child to develop good habits can be one of the best gifts you can give him/her. A habit is an automatic action that takes no conscious thought. Habits help most of us get through the day. When we get up in the morning, we don't stop to think, “Maybe I should brush my teeth.” We just do it.

Parents can help children develop positive habits, too. Show that you expect your child to develop the habit of doing homework at a regular time, for example, or the habit of spending some time reading each day.

Talk with your child about other habits you expect him/her to develop. A few possibilities include:

- **Writing** down homework assignments. They all have planners they are expected to use every day. This is also a good tool for you to know whether or not your child is getting his/her work done.
- **Remembering** to bring needed materials home from school.
- **Remembering** to take homework and other materials back to school.
- **Going** to bed on time.
- **Getting** up on time and being ready for school on time.
- **Making** his/her bed and straightening up his/her room in the morning.
- **Not making excuses.** Everyone has the same amount of time; if you do not get something accomplished, it is not that you did not have the time simply that you did not use the time you had well.

Here are some good ways you can encourage good habit formation:

- **Don't try everything at once.** Remember the year you made the 15 New Year's Resolutions? By Valentine's Day, you had given up on all of them. Your kids are the same. Choose only a few habits you would like them to develop.
- **Make sure your kids are involved.** After all, you are trying to change their habits. Talk with them about what you are trying to do. Let them know that positive habits can make their lives easier and more pleasant. Ask them to choose one or two things they'd like to work on first.
- **Allow 21 days.** Experts have discovered that if you repeat an action every day for 21 days, it is likely to become automatic. So, for the next 21 days, *expect* your kids to act on their new habits. After that, they will find they do it without thinking about it.

## **New Minor and Intermediate School License Holder Information:**

If you have a teenage driver, you probably already got this in the mail. If not, following are the changes that have occurred in the Minor and Intermediate Licenses:

### **Minor School License Changes:**

- Beginning January 1, 2014, you have to obey passenger restrictions while driving without adult supervision.
  - You can only have one unrelated minor passenger (under 18).
  - You can have more than one minor passenger if they are your brother, sister, step-brother, step-sister or if they are an unrelated child that lives in your household.

### **Intermediate License Changes:**

- You are required to hold your instruction permit for 12 months before upgrading to an Intermediate license.
- You must remain crash/conviction free during the six months immediately before application for Intermediate license.
- If your instruction permit is suspended or revoked, the 12 month period starts over from the day you reinstate.

When we took our daughter in to get her Intermediate License, we were asked if we wanted to put a condition on that license that said she could only have one unrelated passenger in the car with her (like the Minor license). You, as a parent, can accept or decline that restriction.

**“Not doing more than the average is what keeps the average down.”**

**William M. Winans**



## **Counseling Comments ...By Tami Harman**

Seniors: You should be in your final stages of planning for your post-secondary options. College visits, college applications, scholarship searches, etc. should all be in process or almost completed. I

have met with 24 seniors and their parents to go over college planning information. I would still like to meet with the remainder of seniors and their parents to finalize plans. I will begin meeting with those seniors that I have not touched base with individually here in the next week or so.

Senior Parents: The FAFSA applications can and should be completed and sent in as soon as possible.

This must be submitted in order for any financial aid packages for the fall term of college. The website is [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov). If you need assistance please do not hesitate to call the high school for assistance. Many colleges have priority deadlines, make sure you are aware of those deadlines for colleges your son/daughter may be applying to in the fall. Remember to make copies of your completed FAFSA and tax returns. You and your son/daughter will also need a PIN number before completing the FAFSA, go to [www.PIN.ed.gov](http://www.PIN.ed.gov) to get your PIN numbers.

Iowa College Goal is a free FAFSA event organized to give free assistance to Iowa families to complete this important financial aid form for students going to college. There will be a scheduled free FAFSA workshop on Saturday, February 28th from 9:00 - 12:00 noon at Iowa Western Community College in Clark Hall. Here is the link that students/parents can use to know what to bring to get a FAFSA completed.

[http://www.icansucceed.org/documents/filelibrary/materials\\_library/ICAN\\_ReadytoFile\\_Flier\\_ICAN\\_77BCB429C3187.pdf](http://www.icansucceed.org/documents/filelibrary/materials_library/ICAN_ReadytoFile_Flier_ICAN_77BCB429C3187.pdf)

If you need more information please call Tami Harman at 1-712-485-2257.

I will be holding a Senior Scholarship Workshop on Monday, January 26th from 6:00 - 8:00 in the high school computer lab. This is a time that seniors can research scholarships, apply for scholarships and receive some guidance about the process. Please inform your son/daughter of this important date.

Juniors: The junior class will be taking the ASVAB (Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery) here at Tri-Center on February 19th. This assessment is given to assist the students in career exploration and to gain knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses in relation to different careers. It also

helps students begin exploring future educational and career plans.

Juniors should be gathering information on the colleges they may want to attend, visiting with representatives from different schools and planning when to take the ACT test. Juniors should try to take the ACT test once their junior year and again in the beginning of their senior year. There will be an ACT John Baylor Test Prep course offered before the April 18th ACT test date this year for juniors and another in early fall of next year for those students wanting this extra resource to help with the format of the ACT test.

National Honor Society News:

The Tri-Center Blood Drive will be held Tuesday, February 24th from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm in the Middle School Gym. Mark your calendar!! Call 712-485-2257 and ask for Tami Harman to make an appointment.

Second semester sophomores, juniors and seniors that qualify for National Honor Society will be given an application in early February to complete and return. Students that fill out the application are then ranked by staff and those rankings are brought before a panel for final evaluation and a selection process is used to determine those students that meet the qualifications for admission into National Honor Society. Please watch the Tri-Center website for more information on National Honor Society applications.



## **Yearbook News and Information** **...Sarah Elliott**

**2014-2015 Semester 2 Publications Staff Members:** **Senior:** Stephanie Nelson; **Juniors:** Hannah Larsen, Meghan Marsh, Editor Whitney Matthews; and **Sophomores:** Allison Eikenberry, Christine Fisher, and Karly Smith.

**2014 YEARBOOKS!** The **2014 Trojan Yearbook, In Color: The Playlist of Us**, arrived

just after Christmas Break. We appreciate your patience with both the Publications staff and the publisher (Walsworth Publishing). We have extras which may be purchased, while supplies last, for \$55 each. Contact Adviser Mrs. Sarah Elliott at the high school at 485-2257, ext. 100 or selliot@tctrojans.org

**PAST YEARBOOKS!** In addition to any extra 2014 copies, we do have extras of other past yearbooks. Purchase any year's book at regular price and get \$5 off the second and on lower priced books. Past books costs are: \$40 for 2013, \$30 for the 2011 and 2010, \$25 for the 2009 and 2008 and just \$20 for the 2003. Sorry, we are completely out of 2012 books. **We need to clean out the closet and fund the printing of the current book; so get your yearbooks today.**

**2015 YEARBOOK SELLS!!!** Sells of the **2015 Trojan Yearbook (Trojan Survival Guide: Tips and Rules of 2015)** will begin the week of P-T Conferences, and we will also be doing on-line sales this year. Some specials and discounts will be offered to those purchasing their books at conferences and at events throughout the spring. **BUY EARLY AND SAVE!** Also, we do except a \$20 deposit if you wish to make payments. A yearbook could make **A GREAT GRADUATION GIFT.**

**SENIOR PICTURES:** Seniors and senior parents, pictures were due to the yearbook by Friday, January 23, 2015. These could have been in color or black and white, but they should have been wallet-sized, and head and shoulder shots work or look best. Don't assume your photographer sent them in to us. If the photo is not received soon, it may be difficult to include it – we are working hard to get back on a timely schedule of printing and publishing the book, and it is difficult to meet our deadlines when others don't meet deadlines. **GET PICTURES IN EARLY TO BE SAFE!**

**PARENT AND PERSONAL ADS:** Support the yearbook and honor your son/daughter, grandson/daughter, sibling, friend, or others at the same time. Parent and personal full-color ads will be \$35 (\$25 with the purchase of a 2015 yearbook) and include the honored person's name, a small photo, and a message limited to approximately 25

words. Senior parents can expect to receive a letter in the next few weeks. Parent and personal ads can be purchased from Publications Adviser Sarah Elliott at 485-2257, ext. 100.

**PICTURES ARE ACCEPTED:** The Publications staff is in need of and will accept pictures for possible use in the yearbook. Pictures can be submitted by email (sellott@tctrojans.org) or brought in to be scanned and returned ASAP. The staff is currently in need of sports summer (especially baseball), summer and/or weekend and free-time fun, fall sports (especially football), Homecoming,, and fun/candid pictures for all grades 9-12.

**SPONSORSHIP/AD CAMPAIGN:** We will be finishing our sponsorship/ad campaign soon. If you are or know of someone and/or a business owner o who may want to sponsor a spread and/or advertise, contact Adviser Sarah Elliott at 485-2257, ext. 100. Sponsors/Advertisers not only help fund a yearbook of which the district and surrounding communities can be proud, but have the opportunity to support an educational program that teaches students valuable skills in writing, design, photography, computer use, and business. The sponsorships/ads are \$50 and we are still in need. We would of course, accept tax deductible donations in any amount if you would like to donate less or even more than the \$50.00



**Tri-Center Middle School  
...Brian Wedemeyer**

MS students completed the Iowa Assessments in November. Those results were sent home with their 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report cards.

The JH girl's basketball team and boys wrestling team started practicing in January. All students need to have a current physical to participate. The girls basketball teams will be coached by Mike Larsen and Jerry Christensen and the JH WR team will be coached by Mark Hazen.

The End of Bullying Begins with Me. That is the message for this year's National Bullying

Prevention program. It's important for adults and students to understand what bullying is so they know how to respond to it. Bullying is when someone repeatedly and on purpose says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself or herself. If you are unsure if it is bullying, there is an easy rule of thumb: If it is mean, intervene.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be taking the NAEP assessment on February 12<sup>th</sup>.



**Elementary Principal  
...Diane White**

- Feb. 2 Groundhog Day
- Feb. 11 No PK  
Student Council Mtg 3:30
- Feb. 11 P/T Conferences 4:00-8:00
- Feb. 12 P/T Conferences 4:00-8:00
- Feb. 13 No School
- Feb. 14 Valentine's Day
- Feb. 16 No School - Teacher In Service
- Feb. 16 Presidents Day
- Feb. 18 Hearing Rechecks
- Feb. 24 Bloodmobile at Tri-Center
- Feb. 26 CPR Training for HS Students
- Feb. 27 No PK today

Mark your calendar:

- March 23 PK Child Find/Preschool Screening

### **The Annual Asbestos Report on the Buildings at Tri-Center Schools**

The inspection done at the Elementary, Middle and High School buildings shows no change. The inspection of Asbestos is done every six months by Kerry Courtier. Ames Environmental Inc. does a three year inspection.

## Special Olympics

. . . . Julie Theulen

The Special Olympic team competed in basketball skills at IWCC on Thursday, January 15. Elijah Bearley placed 1st, Cole Osbahr and Alanna Haubrich each placed 3rd. Elijah is eligible to compete at the State level in Iowa City on March 13.

The Special Olympic Track Meet is scheduled for April 14 at IWCC.



## Music Department

Reid Keller

### T-C Sensations are gearing up for contest season.

The HS and JH show choirs at T-C are putting the finishing touches on learning their set for the 2015 contest season. The HS show choir has been hard at work learning 5 pieces to perform for their set including songs by Styx, Pink, One Republic and The Beatles. They will be performing at the conference festival on January 22nd as well as the State Contest on February 2nd. Performance time for WIC at Iowa Western is 2:30 PM.

The group will finish its season with 3 back to back festivals on February 28th, March 7th, and March 14th. Those competitions are Sioux City Heelan, Lewis Central, and Westwood (Sloan) respectively. Follow the choirs on twitter at the handle @TCChoirs and make sure to "Like" the Tri-Center Vocal Music Dept. on Facebook for updates on schedules, times, and possible changes.

A huge thanks to the T-C community for always supporting the arts!

### Iowa Western Show Choir

The show choir from Iowa Western Community College will be visiting Tri-Center High School on February 5th for a morning performance. The show choir, named 1st Edition, is under the direction of Luke Johnson. Luke is the director of Choral Activities at IWCC and also directs the SW Iowa Women's Chorus. The choir will be presenting their 2015 set "All About the Green" at 8:30 AM in the HS gymnasium. Tri-Center's own T-C Sensations show choir will also be performing that morning prior to the college's show choir. The Sensations are heading into their 2015 competition season presenting their show, "Young and Fun". The T-C Sensations will take the stage at 8:15 AM. Community members are invited and encouraged to attend. We hope to see any and all music lovers that morning to enjoy a show and support the arts in our area!



## School Nurse

... Jennifer McGee, R.N.

### Family Winter Outdoor Activities:

1. Create creatures in the snow
2. Blow bubbles and watch them freeze
3. Ice Skating
4. Snowshoeing
5. Sledding
6. Snowboarding
7. Skiing
8. Have a snowball making contest-who can roll the biggest snowball
9. Snowball throwing contest-create a target
10. Build a snowman
11. Run a race in deep snow
12. Build a snow fort
13. See how far you can jump in snow
14. Have a snowball fight
15. Ice skating tag
16. Shovel the driveway and sidewalks
17. Snow art- allow kids to spray the snow with water colored with food coloring
18. Tic Tac Snow- use sticks, rocks, pinecones
19. Play freeze tag
20. Create an obstacle course in the snow

For more fun ideas please visit:

[www.livehealthyiowakids.org](http://www.livehealthyiowakids.org)

## Tri-Center Scholarship Foundation Annual Luncheon

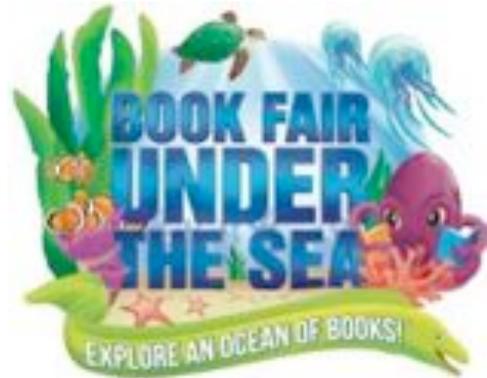
Tri-Center Scholarship Foundation's 18<sup>th</sup> annual theme luncheon will be held on March 28, 2015 in the Tri-Center High School gym. Mark your calendars now so you don't miss this annual scholarship fundraiser for Tri-Center High School 2015 graduates.

The doors will open at 10:00 a.m. for viewing of the theme decorated tables. Hosts and hostesses decorate their table with a theme of their choosing and invite guests to sit at their table. The cost to view the tables without lunch is \$3.00. The cost to attend the luncheon (including viewing of

tables) is \$10.00 and is by reservation only. Payment can be made at the door the day of the luncheon. If you don't know someone who is hosting a table, just contact one of the board members listed below to make a reservation!

Tri-Center Scholarship Foundation, Inc. is the non-profit corporation that was formed in July, 2013 to award scholarships to qualifying Tri-Center graduating seniors for post-secondary education. The new non-profit corporation was founded when the previous fund-raising organization disassociated from Scholarship America. Although the name has changed, the mission remains the same – raising scholarship money for Tri-Center students!

If you would like to attend the luncheon, please contact Abbie Benning – 402-312-4502, Roger Hall – 712-485-2245, Kathy Mark – 712-485-2423 or Heather Turner – 712-310-3214 as soon as possible for a reservation.



We will be holding our annual spring book fair in the middle school/high school library during parent teacher conferences this year. All purchases made will help to buy books for Tri-Center classrooms and libraries. Over the years, book fairs have provided thousands of dollars worth of books to Tri-Center libraries and classrooms.

We will be open for business on Monday February 9<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup> from 8:00am to 4:00 pm. We will be open Wednesday February 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday February 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:00a.m.-8:00p.m. Stop in and shop during Parent/Teacher Conferences!

We invite you to come and browse the wide variety of books Scholastic has to offer. There will be several displays of board books, story books and chapter books for elementary students. In addition, we will also be selling several widely read books for middle and high school age students.

Can't make it to the book fair? No worries! You can shop our book fair online! Just log on to <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/tc> and place an order. Your selections will be delivered to the school the week of February 24<sup>th</sup>.

We hope to see you at the book fair and we thank you in advance for your support.



**Who:**

Children ages birth to 5 who live in the Tri-Center Community School District and are ***not*** presently in Kindergarten.

**What:**

A developmental screening which gives you the opportunity to see if your child is playing, moving, thinking and talking at his/her age level. Screenings include: vision, hearing, speech-language, overall development, and a growth assessment.

**Why:**

The Preschool Screening can give your child a better educational start when they enter school and your child should attend the screening as a part of the preschool application process.

**When:**

Monday, March 23, 2015  
8:30 a.m. To 2:30 p.m.

***Must call for an appointment!***

**Where:**

Tri-Center Preschool Room  
Tri-Center Elementary

**For Appointment:**

Please contact the Tri-Center Elementary Office at 485-2271. Please bring your child's Immunization records, Birth Certificate and Social Security card to your appointment.

**Cost:**

It's ***FREE*** for all children, fun for all children and reassuring to parents.

***Preschool Programs***

If you are interested in signing your child up for the 4 year old Tri-Center Preschool Program, you should attend the Preschool Screening. This screening is also used to qualify children for the All Day Preschool Program.

***Kindergarten 2015-2016***

If you have a 5 year old not attending our preschool program, please call and make an appointment to come to screening.