

November 2014 Tri-Center Newsletter



High School 485-2257

Middle School 485-2211

Elementary 485-2271

www.tri-center.k12.ia.us



Superintendent's News and Comments ... Tony Weers



Community...

Community, as defined by the dictionary, is a group of people living together and having interests, work, etc. in common. As a school community, our interests are the kids, the educational process, and growth over time. We have much in common and most of our activity and concern revolves around the youth and families of the school district. Let's continue our efforts in developing this sense of community by promoting respect, trust, service, and unity. The success of a school community hinges on these qualities, the people who make them happen—and most importantly, a positive and constructive attitude.

Thanksgiving...

I recently read a list of 10 ways to give thanks on Thanksgiving and found many of the ten ideas simple, refreshing, and practical. We all have many reasons to be thankful you may want to

consider using some of the ideas listed to show your thanks this season:

1. Express thanks in your decorations and traditions.
2. Donate to a favorite charity.
3. Visit and/or volunteer at a hospital.
4. Send a care package to a soldier overseas.
5. Volunteer at an animal shelter.
6. Provide Thanksgiving dinner for a family in need.
7. Donate money or volunteer at a women's shelter or an orphanage.
8. Volunteer at a senior center or a veteran's home.
9. Sponsor or mentor a child in need.
10. Invite extra guests to join your family for dinner.

This list could easily go on and on...as we begin the holiday season consider the big and small ways we can show our thankfulness to the students, families, and community we serve.

American Education Week

November 17th – 21st

Tri-Center Community Schools maintains an open invitation to all members of our community to visit the schools at any time during the year; and we would especially like to extend an invitation to the people of the district to stop by during American Education Week. This is just another opportunity to see how well public education is working and how our tax dollars are being utilized on a daily basis. We hope that by being at school while it is in session you will gain a better understanding of what really takes place and hopefully develop a greater appreciation for the students and staff that makes things happen. The administration, staff, and students will be involved in special activities throughout the week to celebrate American Education and we encourage your involvement, as this would be one way to show ownership in your

school. If you choose to visit the campus, we would ask that you stop in one of the office areas, sign in, and obtain a visitor's sticker simply as a security precaution.

Helping Your Children Achieve

All families want their children to succeed. Much of the list below is taken from an article I read recently offering practical ways families can help their students succeed. It would be impossible to do all 20 of these things at once, but with some reflection in planning it is very easy for families to do most of these at some point during the school year.

20 Ways You Can Help Your Children Succeed in School

By: Colorín Colorado (2008)

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. When parents and families are involved in their children's schools, the children do better and have better feelings about going to school. In fact, many studies show that what the family does is more important to a child's school success than how much money the family makes or how much education the parents have. There are many ways that parents can support their children's learning at home and throughout the school year. Here are some ideas to get you started!

Develop a partnership with your child's teachers and school staff

1. Meet your child's teacher. As soon as the school year starts, try to find a way to meet your child's teacher. Let the teacher know you want to help your child learn. Make it clear that you want the teacher to contact you if any problems develop with your child.

2. Get to know who's who at your child's school. There are many people at your child's school who are there to help your child learn, grow socially and emotionally, and navigate the school environment.

3. Attend parent-teacher conferences and keep in touch with your child's teacher. Schools usually have one or two parent-teacher conferences each year. You can also ask to meet with your child's teacher any time during the year. If you have a concern and can't meet face-to-face, send the

teacher a short note or set up a time to talk on the phone.

Support your child academically

4. Find out how your child is doing. Ask the teacher how well your child is doing in class. If your child is not keeping up, especially when it comes to reading, ask what you or the school can do to help. It's important to act early before your child gets too far behind. Also be sure to review your child's report card each time it comes out.

5. Apply for special services if you think your child may need it. If your child is having problems with learning, ask the school to evaluate your child. The teacher might be able to provide accommodations for your child in class. If the school finds out your child has a learning disability, they can receive extra help at no cost.

6. Make sure that your child gets homework done. Let your child know that you think education is important and that homework needs to be done each day. You can help your child with homework by setting aside a special place to study, establishing a regular time for homework, and removing distractions such as the television and social phone calls during homework time. If you are reluctant to help your child with homework because you feel that you don't know the subject well enough, you can help by showing that you are interested, helping your child get organized, providing the necessary materials, asking your child about daily assignments, monitoring work to make sure that it is completed, and praising all of your child's efforts. Remember that doing your child's homework for him won't help him in the long run.

7. Find homework help for your child if needed. If it is difficult for you to help your child with homework or school projects, see if you can find someone else who can help. Contact the school, tutoring groups, after school programs, churches, and libraries. Or see if an older student, neighbor, or friend can help.

8. Help your child prepare for tests. Tests play an important role in determining a student's grade. Your child may also take one or more standardized tests during the school year, and your child's teacher

may spend class time on test preparation throughout the year. As a parent, there are a number of ways that you can support your child before and after taking a standardized test, as well as a number of ways you can support your child's learning habits on a daily basis that will help her be more prepared when it's time to be tested. Some of these include but are not limited to: discussing subjects covered daily with your student, asking your student how and why things are in addition to encouraging students to explain a topic or idea to you.

9. Learn what the school offers. Read the information the school sends home. Talk to other parents to find out what programs may be offered.

10. Volunteer at your child's school and/or join your school's parent-teacher group. Teachers appreciate it when parents help out at the school! There are many ways you can contribute. You can volunteer in your child's class or in the school library. You can make food for a school event. If you work during the day, you can attend "parents' night" activities or your child's performances.

11. Ask questions. If something concerns you about your child's learning or behavior, ask the teacher or principal about it and seek their advice. Your questions may be like these — What specific problem is my child having with reading? What can I do to help my child with this problem? How can I stop that bully from picking on my son? How can I get my child to do homework? Which reading group is my child in?

12. Learn about your rights. It's important to know what your rights are as the parent regarding special services, English instruction, and more.

13. Let the school know your concerns. Is your child doing well in school? Is he or she having trouble learning, behaving, or studying? Is there a problem with another student, teacher, or administrator? If you have a concern, let your school know.

Support your child's learning at home

14. Demonstrate a positive attitude about education to your children. What we say and do in our daily lives can help our students to develop

positive attitudes toward school and learning and to build confidence in themselves as learners. Showing our children that we both value education and use it in our daily lives provides them with powerful models and contributes greatly to their success in school. In addition, by showing interest in their children's education, parents and families can spark enthusiasm in them and lead them to a very important understanding—that learning can be enjoyable as well as rewarding and is well worth the effort required.

15. Monitor your child's television, video game, and Internet use. American children on average spend far more time watching TV, playing video games and using the Internet than they do completing homework or other school-related activities. Consider setting reasonable limits for "screen time" in addition to goals related to academic and leisure reading time.

16. Encourage your child to read. Helping your child become a reader is the single most important thing that you can do to help the child to succeed in school—and in life. The importance of reading simply can't be overstated. Reading helps children in all school subjects. More important, it is the key to lifelong learning.

17. Talk with your child. Talking and listening play major roles in children's school success. It's through hearing parents and family members talk and through responding to that talk that young children begin to pick up the language skills they will need if they are to do well. For example, children who don't hear a lot of talk and who aren't encouraged to talk themselves often have problems learning to read, which can lead to other school problems. In addition, children who haven't learned to listen carefully often have trouble following directions and paying attention in class. It's also important for you to show your child that you're interested in what he has to say.

18. Encourage your child to use the library. Libraries are places of learning and discovery for everyone. Helping your child find out about libraries will set him on the road to being an independent learner. Remember that libraries also offer a quiet place for students to complete homework, and are often open in the evening.

19. Encourage your child to be responsible and work independently. Taking responsibility and working independently are important qualities for school success. You can help your child to develop these qualities by establishing reasonable rules that you enforce consistently, making it clear to your child that he has to take responsibility for what he does, both at home and at school, showing your child how to break a job down into small steps, and monitor what your child does after school, in the evenings and on weekends. If you can't be there when your child gets home, give her the responsibility of checking in with you by phone to discuss her plans.

20. Encourage active learning. Children need active learning as well as quiet learning such as reading and doing homework. Active learning involves asking and answering questions, solving problems and exploring interests. Active learning also can take place when your child plays sports, spends time with friends, acts in a school play, plays a musical instrument or visits museums and bookstores. To promote active learning, listen to your child's ideas and respond to them. Let him jump in with questions and opinions when you read books together. When you encourage this type of give-and-take at home, your child's participation and interest in school is likely to increase.

Tri-Center Transportation

... A Daily Task Well Done



Transporting kids is a tremendously important aspect of the total school program, and one that we too often take for granted.

Each day twice a day and on most evenings and Saturdays, we entrust the well-being of our kids to those who operate our school vehicles—most often the yellow school bus. Although the school bus is still cited as the safest vehicle on the road, it still demands the attention and skill of a driver on each and every trip. Each year, the month of October contains a week that is designated as National School Bus Safety Week, but every week should really be recognized as school bus safety week.

Please keep your school bus driver in mind as he/she hauls your child to and from school, contests, or games; and be thankful that we have safe, caring people behind the wheel.

Thanksgiving is Giving Thanks

“Thankfulness is the soil in which joy thrives.”

**SCHOOL DISMISSED AT 1:30 on Wednesday,
November 26th**

Inclement Weather...

As the seasons continue to progress, cold weather, and the chance for inclement weather are increasing. We will make every effort to make decisions related to school cancellation, late starts, or early dismissals as timely and effectively as possible. We will post announcements to our website, facebook page, twitter feed, the local tv and radio stations, in addition to sending automated e-mails and phone calls to families that have given us their contact information. Parents please remember the final decision is always yours. If you feel your student should stay home due to weather or other reasons please keep your student home and call your school office. If you believe you have not been receiving school messages please call one of the school offices to confirm your contact information.

“Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.” --Rita Pierson



From the Principal's Desk ... Angie Huseman

“Good intentions are like checks that men/women try to draw from a bank where they have no account.”

Reminder about Lesson Plan Links

This year, every teacher in the high school will be using www.planbook.com to organize and post their lesson plans. Many of the teachers have a link to these plans on their webpages, and the rest will be working to get that link working. However, you might find it more efficient to simply go to the www.planbook.com website, click on the **Student View** (under the log in information at the top right hand corner) and in the user name at the top, type in the teacher's email (first initial and last name@tctrojans.org), for example, charris@tctrojans.org (for Cassie Harris) and in the **Student Key**, type trojan. You can follow the same steps for any teacher in the high school. On this site, you will also be able to see what Iowa Core Standards are being taught during any lesson.

If you have any questions regarding this process, make sure you ask a teacher or Mrs. Huseman.

Update on new High School D/F Policy

The numbers on the D/F list continued to decrease when it was last pulled at the end of 1st quarter. Compared to the previous list, the number of students on the list decreased by 2 to 38. The number of ineligible students decreased by 9 to 26. I appreciate the hard work the students are doing and look to the parents and community to help the kids continue their hard work. When you see the kids on the street or at the dinner table, ask them about their grades. Tell them they are important. Thanks.

Positive Expectations

The following article is one that I received in a weekly newsletter from Jon Gordon (<http://www.jongordon.com/newsletter.html>). I

have read several of Mr. Gordon's books, and they always remind me how important one's attitude is in daily life. I thought the following article is a good reminder that serves everyone, regardless of age.

5 WAYS TO THINK LIKE A CHAMPION by Jon Gordon

I meet and learn from Champions every day. Not just in locker rooms but in classrooms, hospitals, homeless shelters, homes and office buildings. I've learned that to be a champion you must *Think Like a Champion*. Champions think differently than everyone else. They approach their life and work with a different mindset and belief system that separates them from the pack.

1. Champions Expect to Win - When they walk on the court, on the field, into a meeting or in a classroom they expect to win. In fact they are surprised when they don't win. They expect success and their positive beliefs often lead to positive actions and outcomes. They win in their mind first, and then they win in the hearts and minds of their customers, students or fans.

2. Champions Celebrate the Small Wins - By celebrating the small wins, champions gain the confidence to go after the big wins. Big wins and big success happen through the accumulation of many small victories. This doesn't mean champions become complacent. Rather, with the right kind of celebration and reinforcement, champions work harder, practice more and believe they can do greater things.

3. Champions Don't Make Excuses When They Don't Win - They don't focus on the faults of others. They focus on what they can do better. They see their mistakes and defeats as opportunities for growth. As a result, they become stronger, wiser and better.

4. Champions Focus on What They Get To Do, Not What They Have To Do - They see their life and work as a gift not an obligation. They know that if they want to achieve a certain outcome they must commit to and appreciate the process. They may not love every minute of their journey, but their attitude and will helps them develop their skill.

5. Champions Believe They Will Experience More Wins in the Future - Their faith is greater than their fear. Their positive energy is greater than the chorus of negativity. Their certainty is greater than all the doubt. Their passion and purpose are greater than their challenges. In spite of their situation, champions believe their best days are ahead of them, not behind them.

If you don't think you have what it takes to be a champion, think again. Champions aren't born. They are shaped and molded. And as iron sharpens iron, you can develop your mindset and the mindset of your team with the right thinking, beliefs and expectations that lead to powerful actions.

Encourage Persistence in Your Teen for Success in School, Life

It's always easier to give up on a tough job than it is to push through and complete it. However, that's not going to get your teen very far in life. Life's full of tough jobs, so the sooner your teen learns to be persistent, the better.

Persistence can also lead to success in school. Large projects will look less daunting to your child—and his grades will probably improve as a result. You can encourage persistence in your teen if you:

- ✓ **Notice his progress.** Say things like, "You're really coming along with that," and "That wasn't easy, but you kept at it. Well done." Your teen will love the pat on the back.
- ✓ **Teach your teen** to cheer himself on. Positive self-talk, such as, "I am going to do this," can keep him going through the most difficult tasks.
- ✓ **Be a role model.** If your teen is struggling to complete something, a little help will motivate him to stick with it.
- ✓ **Treat your teen** to something special when he finishes a challenging task. Consider watching a movie together or cooking a fun dinner. Celebrate!

*Previous article taken from *Parents Still Make the Difference* newsletter, 2004.

We need to teach our children to do the right thing, even when no one is looking. That is the type

of responsible person—the one who does not make excuses—who will always be sought after to be a part of a team, a friend, an employee and a leader. I believe we all want that for our children.

“Success lies not in achieving what you aim at but in aiming at what you ought to achieve.”



Counseling Comments ...Tami Harman

November is a great month for seniors to really work on college material because we have a break between sporting events and the next sport practices. It is also a month that we give Iowa Assessments.

Seniors:

There are still quite a few seniors and parents that I have not met with in regards to graduation requirements, scholarship materials, and post-secondary planning. Please call 712-485-2257 or email tharman@tetrojans.org to set up an appointment. My goal is to have 100% of the seniors with parents set up this meeting.

Reminder: Tri-Center's Guidance Counseling Department will be hosting a Financial Aid Meeting on November 12, 2014 at 7:00 in Underwood. This is a great meeting for senior parents to get information on the financial aid portion of college planning. Please mark your calendar and hope to see you there!

Juniors:

It is time to look at your schedules and make plans to ACT test. My recommendation is to take the December 13th test to establish a baseline and then take the John Baylor Test Prep here at Tri-Center before the April 18th test date. The common recommendation is to take the ACT twice junior year and twice senior year. Depending on the score,

then parents/students will need to determine if more testing is needed.

Juniors will be taking the ASVAB (Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery Test) on February 19th here at Tri-Center. This assessment gives them good career information.

Iowa Assessment Testing will be during the week of November 10th. Please encourage your son/daughter to do their best on these assessments. It is a great measurement tool for the student, parents and the school.

November College Representatives:

- November 4 EQ School of Hair 1:00
- November 5 Peru State College 9:00
- November 13 Air Force Lunch Display
- November 13 Graceland University 9:15

The 6th grade students went to the State Capital, Science Center and the Hall of Pride on October 22nd.

Bullying, if its mean, intervene. Bullying needs to be addressed for students and their futures, and for a healthy school climate.

Children need to know the difference between tattling and telling. Tattling is done to get someone in trouble, telling is done to protect someone. **The secrecy of bullying serves to protect the bully and perpetuate the behavior.**

Let children know if the behavior hurts or harms them, either emotionally or physically, it is bullying.



**From the Elementary Principal
...Diane White**

November Highlights

- Nov. 1 Turn your clock back one hour.

- Nov. 2 Daylight Saving Time Ends
- Nov. 3 Babysitting class 3:30 p.m.
- Nov. 4 Election Day
- Nov. 7 No Preschool
- Nov. 7 1:30 Dismissal – Inservice
- Nov. 10-14 Iowa Assessments Testing Grades 1-11
- Nov. 10-11 Hearing Tests
- Nov. 11 Veteran’s Day
- Nov. 12 No Preschool
- Nov. 13 Thanksgiving Dinner for Lunch
- Nov. 7 & 8 Variety Show at the HS 7:00 p.m.
- Nov. 17-21 American Education Week
- Nov. 25 Soup ‘n Shop w/Student Council at HS Café.
- Nov. 26 1:30 Dismissal
- Nov. 26 Grandparents Day at Preschool
- Nov. 27 Happy Thanksgiving
- Nov. 28 No School - Thanksgiving Vacation



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

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills will be given the week of November 10-14th. We will only test in the areas of Math, Science and Reading this year. Please encourage your students to do their best on these exams, the results will be included in several documents and will ultimately be used as one of the gauges of how well Tri-Center is doing in educating the youth of our school district.

NWEA Fall tests are completed and results will be sent home with your 4th quarter report card after the Spring tests are completed. If you would like to know how your student did on the Fall tests you can contact the MS office.

MS Boys basketball has started practice; those teams are coached by Kurt Spomer and Mike Larsen.

The IHSAA came to Tri-Center and presented their Pride Academy to the students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. Their presentation was on leadership, traits of leadership and being a good leader.



School Nurse
... Jennifer McGee, R.N.

Ebola in the news...

The Ebola Outbreak in West Africa continues to be in the headlines and recently, there has been extensive media coverage of a handful of cases in the United States. It's understandable that parents and students may be concerned about this serious disease. Here is some information about what the risk of Ebola is here in our community and our state.

Tri-Center School District is in close contact with the Iowa Department of Public Health and Pottawattamie County Public Health. We are confident in Iowa's health care and public health systems and their ability to handle and control a case of Ebola if it were to happen here. Even so, health experts stress the likelihood of a case of Ebola happening in Iowa is extremely small.

We encourage you to talk to your children about the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, and the cases that have been reported in Texas and New York. Take time to learn together about this disease. It's important to know that your child is much more likely to get the flu this fall and winter than to contract Ebola. If you and your children haven't already been vaccinated against influenza, please consider doing so. The CDC and Iowa Department of Public Health encourage influenza vaccinations for every Iowan aged 6 months and older. It's important to remember Ebola is not transmitted through water, air, food or casual contact. Ebola is spread through direct contact with bodily fluids of a sick person, or exposure to objects such as needles that have been contaminated. People are not contagious after exposure unless they develop symptoms. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

For more information about Ebola, visit the CDC's web site at www.cdc.gov/ or the IDPH web site at www.idph.state.ia.us/EHI/Issue.aspx?issue=Ebola%20Outbreak&pg=Ebola%20Outbreak%20Home.



**Elementary Music
Information**
...Jessica Blakesley

Mark your Calendars!

The 2nd & 3rd grades at
Tri-Center Elementary Schools
Present:

The Elves' Impersonator

Thursday, December 4, 2014
T-C High School Gymnasium
2:00 pm matinee
7:00 pm evening performance

Santa's Workshop at the North Pole is abuzz with excitement and activity. Christmas is right around the corner! The Elves are busily preparing for Santa's annual *North Pole's Got Talent* show in only 2 days! All of the extra rehearsals are not enough to keep them from gossiping about the new Elf on the block. Poor Elfis is the target of their ridicule and jokes because he looks unusual and acts differently than all of the other Elves. They even accuse him of being an Elf Impersonator! Feeling unloved and downtrodden, Elfis sings the blues and runs away from Santa's Workshop. When Santa, his reindeer and Mrs. Claus learn what has happened, they are outraged. Santa sends the reindeer out to find Elfis and bring him back. Meanwhile, he and Mrs. Claus remind the rest of the Elves that they should accept others for who they are, no matter what their differences. Will the reindeer find Elfis in time for the big show? Will the elves realize how much they hurt Elfis' feelings? Find out December 4th, 2014, as the 2nd & 3rd grades perform, *The Elves' Impersonator*. Performances will be held in the Tri-Center High School Gymnasium at 2:00 pm and again at 7:00 pm. More information will be sent as the performance gets closer. If you have any questions feel free to contact me by email at jblakesley@tctrojans.org, by phone at (712) 485-2271, or check out my website <https://sites.google.com/site/tricenterelementarymusic/> for up to date concert information. We hope to see you all there.



Music Department
...Reid Keller

TRI-CENTER VOCAL DEPARTMENT
PRESENTS:

“Home”

November 7th & 8th

The 7-12 Vocal Music Department has been hard at work preparing for this year's Variety Show entitled "Home". Groups featured this year will be the JH and HS Show Choirs, the HS Concert Choir, and the JH Concert Choir. The event will take place in the HS gym on Friday, November 7th and Saturday, November 8th. Both shows will begin at 7 PM and the cost is \$4 for students and \$5 for adults. Popcorn and pop will be available to purchase and will help support the Music Boosters.

We hope to see many parents, friends, family, and community members there to support our musical students.



6TH GRADERS ENJOY TRIP TO
DES MOINES

The 6th graders traveled to Des Moines on Wednesday, October 22nd. They were able to enjoy the Science Center of Iowa, The Iowa Hall of Pride, and the Iowa Capitol Building. Thanks to our chaperones Joe Munch, Michelle Nelson, Art Brockhoff, Melody Osbahr, Pat Dalton, and Lori Lehan! Thanks to you the trip was a great success.



Student Council's Soup and Shop
November 25, 2014
5:30 – 8:00 PM

Tri-Center's Student Council's (Elementary, Middle School, and High School) would like to invite you to our annual "Soup and Shop" on Tuesday, November 25th from 5:30-8:00 in the high school cafetorium. There will be a free will donation Soup Supper from the student council and local vendors for you to shop for all your Christmas needs. Tri-Center music students will provide you with some evening entertainment as well. Hope to see you there!

Grandparents & Special
Relative Day!



...Paula Heck, Pam Schroder and
Susie Fah

- Who:** Grandparents or Special Relative Day
(Aunt or Uncle/ Family friend)
What: A Thanksgiving Brunch
When: Wednesday morning, November 26
(The day before Thanksgiving)
Where: In our preschool classrooms