

# Iowa Valley Tiger Tracks

Education: A Community Partnership

www.iowa-valley.k12.ia.us



by Donita Joens, IVCS Superintendent

## Special points of interest:

- Jan. 3 School Resumes
- Jan. 14 Speech Preview Night
- Jan. 15 No School
- Jan. 20 District Speech Contest
- Jan. 31 Jr.-Sr. High Parent Teacher Conferences

### High-Achieving Boards Follows Standard and Set Goals

The Iowa Valley Community School District Board is guided by six IASB (Iowa Association of School Boards) standards. These six standards that our school board follows are:

- Operate as a visionary governance team in partnership with the superintendent
- Provide effective leadership for quality instruction and high, equitable student learning
- Foster a culture that enables excellence and innovation
- Lead through sound policy, ensuring transparent, ethical, legal operations
- Sustain and enhance district resources through planning and fiduciary oversight
- Advocate for public education and the needs of Iowa students

To further support the work of these standards, goals are compiled and discussed. Found below are the goals for the upcoming school year and you will notice that many of these facility goals have been completed already while others are in progress. Goals are malleable and changed based on needs. Some of these goals may be changed throughout the school year, some eliminated, and others added. These academic and facility goals are fluid and open for discussion, the very work our school board does with professional discussions and fact-finding. We are proud of the work our school board does for the Iowa Valley Community School District!

#### Mission Statement

To provide a safe, comfortable, clean and caring environment where community and staff work together to provide an education that will maximize each individual's potential, instill a sense of self-worth, and prepare them for life-long learning.

#### District Long-Range Learning Goals

1. Proficiency in reading, math, and science will improve for all students, K-12.
2. All students, K-12, will be proficient in the use and application of technology.
3. All students, K-12, will experience a learning environment that is safe, drug-free, and conducive for learning.
4. All buildings will develop, promote, and sustain partnerships among students, parents, staff, and community.

#### School Board Student Learning Goals

1. Annual goals
  - a. Continue to provide and improve support programs for students to improve scores in reading, math and science
  - b. Implement technology into the classrooms to:
    - i. Improve student achievement by creating more engaging classrooms
    - ii. Enhance communication
  - c. Support CAKE (Community and Kids in Education) partnerships to improve 21<sup>st</sup> Century employability skills
2. Long-range goals (2017-2022)
  - a. Support programs to improve conflict resolution skills for our students
  - b. Improve communication, both oral and written, skills in activities such as:
    - i. PRIDE assemblies
    - ii. School board meetings
    - iii. City Council meetings

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## School Board Facility Goals

1. Short-term goals
  - a. Elementary gym facility and fitness center- completed
  - b. Press box at the football field/track- completed
  - c. Updated security system at Elementary and Jr./Sr. High School- completed
  - d. Boiler at Jr./Sr. High School- completed
  - e. Bleachers at the Jr./Sr. High School- under discussion
  - f. Baseball and softball grounds improvements- in progress
2. Long-range goals (2018-2026)
  - a. Energy efficient lights in the Jr./Sr. High School
  - b. Improvements to the west entrance at the Elementary- completed
  - c. Parking lot updates to the Jr./Sr. High School, north lot at the Elementary, and bus parking lot
  - d. Windows at the Jr./Sr. High School and four at the Elementary
  - e. Kitchen updates at both buildings
  - f. Roof updates at both buildings
  - g. Energy efficient lights in classrooms
  - h. Door from superintendent's office to central office
  - i. Art room air conditioning unit
  - j. Restroom partitions at the football/track complex

## Jr.-Sr. High News

Shawn Kreman, Principal

I would like to welcome everyone to the second half of the 2017-18 school year! I need to remember to write 2018 on my checks, or am I the only one that forgets to do that? We will begin this second semester by showing our seniors the "light at the end of the tunnel!" I like to look ahead, as in the future, and acknowledging that this is our senior's last semester of school! Five months from now many of them will be joining our workforce, some the military and the remainder will be starting their fall semester at a chosen post-secondary institution.

In education we need to pride ourselves in looking at the positives around us as we need to be thankful for the opportunity to work in a profession where we can make a daily impact on students. For some of our students, we might possibly help them make a career choice, others simply help make their day a little more positive or enjoyable. The same cannot always be said about change. I know in education we question change. Why change something that we feel works al-

ready. Others may look at change and the challenges that come with it. When I look at our seniors in the hallways, I notice a "glimmer" in their eye's as they are looking forward to graduation day this May and I believe many of them are encouraged by the "change" that lies before them, but others may be questioning what lies before them.

As we begin this New Year, our winter sports seasons are about at their mid-point. When this letter hits households our wrestlers will have made it through another Christmas break by sweating and running off their holiday meals and look forward to the state tournament series. Our basketball teams will be in the heart of their SICL conference schedule and mentally preparing for the post season that lies ahead.

Now switching to academic matters, our second semester starts with a few students experiencing new schedules, as some of them will have had a few semester classes. Many of our elective courses are one semester in length whereas the core classes are year-long.

This is where high school differs from middle school and begins to connect with our colleges and universities. I am sure all our students will be looking forward to warmer months ahead, but also making plans for what their schedule might look like next fall. Our fine arts students are preparing for their spring contests and events, our FFA chapter is preparing for the State FFA program in late April.

I will close this month's letter by maintaining that our staff will continue to engage and enlighten each student, harnessing direction and providing guidance every day, and we simply ask all parents to continue to be involved in your child's experience. Check out our district's website as well as the events on our rSchool calendar. Let us welcome 2018 and the new challenges that lie ahead!

Until next month, GO TIGERS!

## Elementary News

Cindy Miller, Principal

Happy New Year and Second Semester!

Welcome back to school everyone!

We will be kicking off the new semester with Tiger Pride review of our common area expectations. Re-teaching will take place on January 3rd. Go Tiger Pride!

Report cards will be going home on January 9th. Please look these over and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

January 15th is all day Professional Development for our teach-

ers. Our teachers will travel to English Valleys and participate in priority standards work, technology opportunities and listen to a panel of mental health personnel.

January and February our students will be taking their screening tests for reading and math. These screenings will provide teachers with information on how our students are progressing and guiding instruction for our students.

Please remember with winter here to have your child dress for the weather inside and outside.

The students appear to have really enjoyed the new gym for PE. It

offers so much more space for activities. Thank you for providing gym shoes, this helps to protect our new gym floor.

Thank you to the 3rd of July Committee for helping sponsor our PBIS movie in December!

Have a great month!

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## Technology in the Classroom

Greg Jergens and Curtis McAtee,  
Fourth Grade Teachers

As the state continues to make changes to science and social studies standards teachers are making adjustments to their teaching. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade this means trying to incorporate more technology and hands on learning in these subjects.

For many years, science classes have used special kits to teach units. With these new standards this will continue as the kits are made to fulfill those needs. In addition to these kits using iPads and the computer lab, video conferencing is a vital resource to add to that learning. This year the students have already visited the Thomas Edison Museum in New Jersey as well as talking to a scientist about coral reefs in Bermuda.

Social studies has many changes on the way also. We are going away from textbooks and relying more on project based learning. The students will be using questioning to find out what they need to learn to fill in the gaps. When we Mystery Skype with other classrooms we get to incorporate this style of questioning as well as learn about other parts of our country.

We have found that by adding different technologies to these subjects the students are much more engaged. They are actually asking us when our next virtual tour or Mystery Skype is going to be and have become excited to learn in these subjects. Accepting and incorporating these technologies is helping the students learn

and our classrooms meet the needs of the state standards.

# Iowa Valley

## Professional Learning

January 2018



2017-2018

### Professional Learning Targets

To provide an engaged educational environment that promotes student investment and continued learning.

#### Vocabulary:

**Collective Teacher Efficacy** - a staff's shared belief that through their collective action, they can positively influence student outcomes.

**Document Based Questioning (DBQ)** - a teaching technique to help students understand the process of close analysis, interrogation of documents and argument writing. It may be used in social studies for students to engage in historical thinking and writing, as they examine actual primary and secondary source documents.

**Science & Engineering Practices** - eight behaviors that scientists engage in as they investigate, build and design (one of three dimensions within the Next Generation Science Standards). They are:

1. Asking questions & defining problems
2. Developing & using models
3. Planning & carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing & interpreting data
5. Using mathematical & computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations & designing solutions
7. Engaging in arguments from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating & communicating information

### Opportunities are Always Available for Teacher Learning

#### Introduction to Iowa's Social Studies Standards

Elementary and secondary social studies teachers attended a two-day training in Cedar Rapids to learn about the newly adopted Iowa Social Studies standards. Each grade level contains a set of inquiry standards that outline disciplinary skills within social studies; and a set of content standards that outline what students should know and be able to do within that given content. This is the first year in a four-year plan of implementation, so be watching for more information as teacher's learn and roll out these new standards.

#### Next Generation Science Standards & Assessment

Secondary science teachers attended the first of a two-day workshop that focused on assessing the Next Generation Science Standards. These new standards feature a three-dimensional view of learning that involves: science and engineering practices (see vocabulary section to the left), cross-cutting concepts (which are themes that can be connected to all areas of science and engineering), and disciplinary core ideas (which consist of Physical Science, Life Science, Earth/Space Science and Engineering Design).

#### Train Ugly with Trevor Ragan

Trevor Ragan is the founder of Trainugly.com. His website and workshops focus on discovering, understanding and sharing the science of learning and performance. Trevor's speaking style is engaging and motivating. A few of his inspirational ideas include: Believe in yourself. You are a learning machine. With time and hard work you can get better at anything. Try new things. Take risks. Make mistakes. Ask questions. Embrace the pressure. Feel the fear, and Dare greatly.

**Next month** look for more teacher learning focusing on Goal Setting, Intervention and Math Literacy.

Submitted by Patty Miles

(Iowa Valley K-12 Instructional Coach)