

Iowa Valley Tiger Tracks



by Donita Joens, Iowa Valley CSD Superintendent

Tiger Health & Fitness Donor Board

Thanks to everyone who helped make our new addition at the Elementary possible. The donor board is complete and looks wonderful thanks to Rich Cobb's woodworking skills and IPI for their help with the plaques. It took a community effort in making this new facility one we are very proud of!

Special points of interest:

- Feb. 7 Love to Read at Elementary
- Feb. 12 Parent-Teacher Conf. Elementary
- Feb. 13 Parent-Teacher Conf. Elementary
- Feb. 15 No School
- Feb. 20 1 pm Early Dismissal



ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) News at IVCS

The Iowa Department of Education recently released the new, online reporting website which describes how schools are performing as outlined by ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). The prior version of this similar federal law was called No Child Left Behind or NCLB. NCLB put into place punitive measures for school accountability. Under ESSA, however, schools are still designated as having met or not met the prescribed benchmarks but ESSA is designed to provide supports and assistance to districts that have been designated as needing comprehensive or targeted assistance compared to the feelings of failure that surrounded NCLB. ESSA supports improvement and growth.

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ESSA requires a performance profile from all of Iowa's school districts using multiple performance measures. As a result of these measures, the Department of Education released one single number, which is a snapshot of school performance. The DE also states that this single number "may not tell the entire story about performance of students in that school." Iowa Valley CSD met the goals for both comprehensive and targeted status! In addition, the Elementary received a comprehensive score of 63.03 and the Jr./Sr. High School a score of 56.43.

A school that is designated as needing comprehensive assistance means that the school has not met the prescribed benchmarks. Schools that receive targeted assistance would indicate that a subgroup is not meeting benchmark. The new model under ESSA places more emphasis on growth rather than proficiency. Over 50% of the single score number is based on growth. As a result, this is why some school districts could find themselves on this new list. In determining whether benchmarks are met, there are a number of factors in consideration. These factors are: graduation rate for four years and five years, average school achievement scores for reading and math, percent proficient for reading and math, growth for reading and math, and conditions for learning. The highest areas under conditions for learning were the adult-to-student relationships and physical safety. The lowest areas under this category were the student-to-student relationships and emotional safety. Found below is a table of how IVCS compares to the state average.

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	IVCSD	State Average
Graduation Rate 4-Years	89.29	90.98
Graduation Rate 5-Years	94.87	93.44
Average School Achievement in Reading	49.90	50.00
Average School Achievement in Math	53.29	50.00
Average Participation in Reading	100.00	99.35
Average Participation in Math	100.00	99.37
Percent Proficient in Reading	79.40	77.04
Percent Proficient in Math	90.03	78.26
Growth in Reading	50.00	50.00
Growth in Math	67.00	50.00
Conditions for Learning	44.76	47.46

The State of Iowa is also working to better

align what is being tested to what is taught in the classroom. The new statewide assessment will be implemented this spring to all students in Iowa. We anticipate this assessment will enable our district to further fine tune and target our instructional strategies in a manner that moves our achievement to the next level and further closes the achievement gap in all areas. Students, staff, and parents should be commended for their efforts and support in meeting our state goals. However, more work remains. We will continue to provide resources to move from good to awesome!

Love to Read



Love to Read has been an annual event for Iowa Valley Elementary students. A goal for our students is to become lifelong readers. In the past, students have participated in a variety of events to achieve this goal. We will celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday on Friday, March 1st by having green eggs and ham for lunch and cupcakes that afternoon. The cupcakes are graciously donated from the ladies of the American Legion Auxiliary. The students will celebrate reading throughout the months of February and March with special events, contests, and assemblies.

Family Reading Night

Family Reading Night will be held on Thursday, February 7th from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the elementary school. To go along with the theme "Every Hero Has a Story," we have an exciting speaker joining us. This year we are proud to have Phil Hester, a comic book author and illustrator. Phil has been writing and drawing comics professionally since his time as a student at The University of Iowa over thirty years ago. He has drawn memorable runs on notable characters like Green Arrow, Swamp Thing, Ant-Man, Nightwing, The Flash, Teen Titans, and many more. His recent drawing work includes Batman Beyond for DC comics.



He has also written many comics, including Wonder Woman, The Darkness, Deathstroke, and his co-creations The Coffin with artist Mike Huddleston, and Firebreather with Andy Kuhn, which became an Emmy-winning feature on Cartoon Network. His recent writing work includes Kamandi, The Last Boy on Earth for DC comics.

Phil lives and works in his home town of North English, Iowa.

Along with our speaker, families will be visiting different stations around the school. Centers will include: meeting your favorite superheroes, decorating a superhero mask, creating a comic book, making a tasty snack, playing superhero BINGO, and of course, visiting our Scholastic book fair.

Submitted by Kaley McElvain, Elementary Title 1 Reading Teacher

Speech Friends and Family Preview

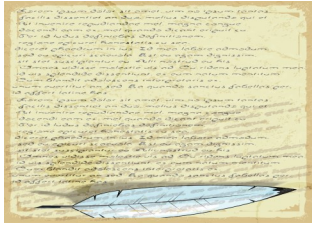
By Hannah Shade

On Sunday, January 13th, the participants in Large Group Speech at Iowa Valley High School held a Friends and Family Preview Event. Large Group Speech is a competitive extracurricular activity that allows students to work together on a project that they will perform in front of judges. There are many categories ranging from Television Newscasting to Group Improvisation. Students involved build confidence and public speaking abilities while participating. The Friends and Family Preview is held each year as a way to give the participants a chance to share or perform their pieces with the Iowa Valley community, as well as to help prepare them for the District Large Group Contest held the third Saturday in January. This year Iowa Valley will compete at Lone Tree High School on January 19th. During the Friends and Family Preview night, students were able to hear suggestions from the audience, other team members, and their coaches in order to smooth everything out before the competition. This year, over eighty people turned out to show support for Iowa Valley's thirty-three students performing in nine different groups. This year the Iowa Valley Speech team is competing in Readers Theater (1), Short Film (1), Television Newscasting (2), Ensemble Acting (2), and Radio Broadcasting (3). Depending on the rules of each category, students are involved in writing, editing, acting, and utilizing technology. Good luck to this year's participants.

Winter Survival for 6th Grade

Our first 6th grade field trip was at Lake Iowa. Mary Bulger, our Iowa County Naturalist, taught the students what to do to survive the outdoors if stranded. After discussing the Rule of 3, Mary showed us how to build a fire and then the students formed small groups to gather tinder and appropriate size sticks to build and light their own fire in a metal bowl (of course outside). Then it was time for their sack lunches inside. The afternoon was spent scouting for a place to build in the woods, then hunting for necessary branches to create a shelter big enough that all group members fit in and hopefully keep warm and dry as possible. Everyone was totally exhausted by the end of the day and gained winter survival skills!

Connie Howar



Old SCHOOL vs. “BOLD” School

Just as students are learning every day, so must teachers and administrators. Grant Wood Area Education Association (GWAEA) helps with this learning by bringing in national speakers to share their research and ideas. Weston Kieschnick was one of those speakers who shared some ideas at a recent speaker series event.

Mr. Kieschnick shared some ideas from his book, *Bold School: Old School Wisdom + New School Innovation = Blended Learning That Works.*

With all of the new technology out there in the educational field, his ‘aha’ statement was to “embrace a culture of ‘and’”. We, as educators, must find a way to incorporate new ideas [and technology], but not to take away from the learning and teaching that works. It’s about the outcomes and strategies of learning, and then use the technology, if, and only, if, that technology makes sense with that particular learning outcome.

One of the important takeaways I had from the speaker was a quote from Mr. Kieschnick, which relates to my old job as a library media specialist.

“It is a dangerous game when we determine in our innovation that the skills of our past have no place in our future”. -- Weston Kieschnick

He referred to cursive writing and how today’s students have a hard time writing or reading it. If you can’t read it, how can you decipher the historical documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, and make your own judgments on its meaning. You would have to rely on others to decipher it, which then may change the meaning or thinking of how you see or understand it, to how they might see or interpret it.

Hmmmm...something to think about?

So when you find that new app or game on your phone that makes everything better, remember the wisdom of the past and maybe do a little blending of old and new to make it even better and more meaningful and intentional.

Model Teacher of the Month

Mr. Neal Schwarting is our highlighted model teacher for the month of February.

Teaching strategies have a whole new meaning when you walk in a music classroom at Iowa Valley Elementary. You are not only expected to listen and learn about music content and vocabulary, such as melody, harmony, and syncopation, but Mr. Schwarting also teaches students how to work together in groups and respect one another. The music classroom is all about differentiation. He makes it look easy, as he moves from individual students needing practice with diction, small groups, such as altos learning how to look for their notes, and then bringing it all together as a whole group to make the song sound so good.

In addition to all of that, he brings in historical content to teach students where the music originates from and why.

So when you attend an elementary concert and listen to the music, remember it’s a final product of many lessons and learning from a model teacher who really knows how to multi-task.

Thanks for your multi-educational talents, Mr. Schwarting, as the Model Teacher of the Month!



Mr. Schwarting helps baritone section learn their parts in a new piece of music.

Submitted by Patty Miles, (Iowa Valley K-12 Instructional Coach)