

# Iowa Valley Tiger Tracks

Education: A Community Partnership

## Special points of interest:

- Jan. 2 No School
- Jan. 3 School Re-sumes
- Jan. 16 No School
- Jan. 21 Speech Large Group

## Jr.-Sr. High News

I would like to welcome everyone to the second half of the 2016-17 school year! Once again I will have to “reteach” myself to write 2017 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! In 5 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.

As we began this last fall with a few challenges, as well as many new beginnings, we must now realize we just passed the halfway point! I’m someone who likes to look at things from an optimistic perspective in realizing “change” gives us a chance to “renew, start or simply refresh” things in the new year and the challenges that comes with it, and I see many of our seniors in the hallways with a

“glimmer” in their eye’s looking forward to graduation day this coming May and the “change” that lies before them.

Now switching “gears” to academic matters, our second semester starts with a few students experiencing new schedules, as some of them just completed their 1<sup>st</sup> semester classes. Many of our elective courses are one semester in length whereas the core classes (Math, English, Social Studies and Science) are year-long. This is where high school differs from junior high or middle school and begins to connect with our colleges and universities. I’m sure all of our students will be looking forward to warmer months ahead, but also making plans for what their schedule might look like this coming fall. Our fine arts students are preparing for their spring contests and events!

As we begin this New Year, our winter sports seasons are about at their halfway point. When this letter reaches households, our

wrestlers will have made it through another Christmas break by sweating and running off their holiday meals. Our basketball teams will be in the heart of their SICL conference schedule and mentally preparing for the post season that lies ahead.

I will close this month’s letter by maintaining that our staff will continue to engage and enlighten each student, instilling 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 and you will notice that many of our students’ pictures are posted to our webpage, either via Twitter, Facebook or simply a snap shot posted for your viewing! Let’s welcome 2017 and the new challenges that lie ahead!

Until next month, GO TIGERS!

Shawn Kreman,

Jr.-Sr. High Principal

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## First Grade Buddies

First graders have many opportunities to share their love of learning with others and serve the Marengo Community. Two of our favorite partnerships are with our buddies Rose Haven and our Agriculture class student buddies and Mrs. Kilgard. Both groups give attention and time to first graders by helping them complete crafts or writing activities, giving us a chance to be presenters to outside audiences, and helping our young students learn to communicate effectively with others.

Mrs. Gunzenhauser and I plan monthly trips to Rose Haven that involve students reading or singing about a current learning theme, as well as a craft for the residents to keep. In November, we made Patriotic Thanksgiving turkey thank you cards for Veterans with our Rose Haven buddies on Veterans’ Day. We also sang a song called “Let’s Celebrate Thanksgiving”, which we practiced as a reading fluency activity before learning the melody.

In October, Mrs. Kilgard’s Ag students visited and helped us make skeleton creations and Spider crafts. These keepsakes were a hit with the students, and we look forward to meeting with our “Ag Buddies” this month to make elves! We will visit with them in the spring to participate in the “Egg in the Classroom” program, during which we will incubate chicken eggs and learn about egg development.

# Iowa Valley Tiger Tracks

## January 2017 Superintendent Newsletter

*Mission: 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.*

### New Elementary Gym

The new gym at the Elementary is taking shape. With a slight delay at the beginning of the project and geopiers put into place, footings are currently being worked on. We are embracing each stage of the project and look forward to seeing the structure come out of the ground. We look forward to the endless possibilities this will provide for our students, staff, and community members.



October 11, 2016



October 19, 2016



November 18, 2016



November 30, 2016

### Chronic Absenteeism in Iowa

The Iowa Director of Education, Ryan Wise, has written several articles about student absenteeism. School districts are concerned when a student misses even one day of school, as students must be present to learn and grow at their highest potential. The Governor's office has developed a special council to address chronic absenteeism, a term used when a student misses 10% or more of school for any reason, excused or unexcused. It is the hope of this newly-established council that by raising awareness of chronic absenteeism, it might help families better understand the importance of making sure their son(s)/daughter(s) are in school.

There is data to support maximum learning with low absenteeism. A few of these supporting statements are listed below:

- Reading levels are better for students who are not chronically absent in preschool-first grade according to the Child and Family Policy Center.
- Students who cannot read at grade level by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. Hence, having good attendance in the lower grades, will help improve reading levels later on for students.
- Supporting struggling readers who are not in school makes it difficult to provide the supports needed to help students become better readers.

## Continued from page 2

We understand that students need to stay home when they have a fever, illness, flu, etc. We are proud of the chronic attendance data shown below for Iowa Valley Community School District but, like everything else, we can always improve. Parents, keep up the great work you are doing by making sure your child(ren) get adequate rest, healthy meals, exercise, fresh air, and relaxation time.

<b>IV Elem.</b>				
Sch. Year	# enrolled	# chronic. absent	% chronic. absent	% state ave.
FY14	254	6	2.4	8.3
FY15	275	14	5.1	8.8
FY16	283	10	3.5	8
<b>IV Jr./Sr. HS</b>				
Sch. Year	# enrolled	# chronic. absent	% chronic. absent	% state ave.
FY14	239	13	5.4	8.3
FY15	233	16	6.9	8.8
FY16	220	15	6.8	8

### **2017 IASB Legislative Priorities**

Delegates from each district in Iowa convened for the IASB (Iowa Association of School Boards) assembly. As a result of this assembly, they have established four top priorities as legislators meet after the first of the year. Here are the top IASB legislative priorities for 2017:

1. Standards and Accountability- provide funding to fully implement the Iowa Core and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, adopt high-quality assessments, support research-based professional development for staff members, and fund components of successful standards
2. School Funding Policy- provide sufficient and timely funding, provide funding mechanism to help reduce pressure on general fund for transportation costs, and include a mixture of property taxes and state aid
3. Supplemental State Aid (SSA)- set for FY 2018 by January 31, 2017, set for FY 2019 at least 14 months prior to the certification of the school district's budget, and provide support to plan, create, and sustain world-class schools
4. SAVE (Secure an Advanced Vision for Education)- supports repeal of the December 31, 2029 sunset on the state penny sales tax to be used for school infrastructure and also to provide continued growth for each student beyond the 2029 sunset date

Mrs. Donita Joens, Superintendent



## Fourth Grade News

Each year our fourth grade students get the opportunity to take several virtual field trips via Skype. This simple teleconference platform allows the students to have a live interaction with an expert in a certain field of expertise.

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, our students traveled to the island of Islamorada in the Florida Keys. Our goal for this trip was to learn about Aquarius. We had the pleasure of talking to Kathy, an aquanaut from the mission control center on shore.

Aquarius is the world's only re-

maining saturation diving facility. It is located 60 feet under the Atlantic Ocean's surface about 4 miles off the coast of the Islamorada. This facility allows scientists to study life on the coral reef for up to 9 hours a day. The saturation diving means they can stay under water for days or even weeks at a time without health issues. When their mission is done they have to go through 18 hours of recompression before returning to the surface.

This trip educated the students on what Aquarius is, why it is important, and how we all need to be

stewards of our planet. If you want to check out Aquarius for yourself check out this link or simply go to YouTube and search "A Tour of Aquarius Reef Base."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3qqO8yQswg>

Mr. Jergens and Mr. McAtee,  
Fourth Grade Teachers

## Instructional Coaching at Iowa Valley

With the second year of our Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) system underway, I still get parents, community members, friends, and students that ask, "Now what is it that you do as an instructional coach?"

My first answer is always . . . "Just think of me as a Personal Trainer for Teachers". Instead of just professional development, or training, once a month that is sometimes a long time between learning sessions, I work with teachers daily on what they need to help students achieve.

Whether we are principals, teachers, associates, students, parents, or community partners, we all like to succeed and become better at what we do; but we may not always know how or what we need to make that happen. That's where the instructional coach comes in.

Sometimes, I am just a listener, who tries to reflect on what a teacher is saying. My job is not to tell anyone the "right" way to do

something, but to listen, reflect, and ask questions to direct them in the direction they want to go.

There have been times where I listen, ask a question or two, and then find the teacher answered their own questions, then we work together to find resources, ideas, or other colleagues, to work out a plan to deepen their instructional process.

Our ultimate goal in education is always to help students succeed and achieve, but in this ever-changing and challenging world, we have to find new and engaging ideas and activities to keep them motivated and positive in their learning experience. I find that the instructional coaching position should be a resource for teachers to access so they can find those new and challenging resources, reflect on their own learning with a colleague, or analyze student data, assessments and classroom lessons. When we reflect on our own teaching and adjust it in order to make it the best environment for

learning, we can then provide our students with the aspiration for life long learning and prepare them for a bright and promising future where they know they can succeed.

Patty Miles PreK - 12 Instructional Coach

## FFA News

We have had a fantastic FFA fall season! Here is an update of some of the activities that members have participated or will be participating in. I am blessed this year with an active group and some really awesome attitudes. Thank you all for all you have done or will be doing in our chapter!

- We were motivated to be our very best at the National Convention in Indianapolis this year, 8 members and the advisor attended on an area chapter charter bus. We had a terrific time, check our Facebook page for pictures.

- 21 members attended the October FFA Meeting and 25 members attended the November FFA Meeting.

- 28 Ag students went to the elementary for our buddies program with first graders before Halloween. 21 members went to the Kindergarten classroom to read wildlife storybooks and share animal tracking molds. Kindergarten students also came over to the greenhouse and planted "spider-plants" for Halloween.

- We have had many guest speakers from the topics of horticulture and plants, veterinary science, beekeeping, swine production and leadership development. See our Facebook page for pictures and a listing off the speakers.

- 12 students attended the 212-360 Conference in Ankeny on Saturday, Nov 12. Members developed leadership and career success from this conference.

- Adopt A Highway took place on Wed. Nov 9. 12 members helped the environment by picking on trash and debris.

- We took our 2 teams of 8 students to the Iowa County Soil Conservation Banquet at Lake Iowa. These students were recognized for their accomplishments from the Quad County Soil Judging Contest

- State FFA Officers visited our classes on Monday, November 21th.

- Fruit was delivered during the 1st full week of December.

- Christmas Party on Sunday, Dec 11th at Vinton Skating Rink.

- Community Service Project will be the LOVE network Christmas Angel this year. Please consider giving \$1.00 to Mrs. Kilgard for the gifts.

- Beef Weigh-in is the first week of December at the Iowa County Fairgrounds.

Marcia Kilgard, FFA and Agriculture Education Teacher

# 2016-17 Emergency Bus Routes

## BUS #6 – JACK PATTERSON

	<u>PICK-UP</u>	<u>DROP-OFF</u>
Iowa Valley Trailer Court	7:45	3:25
Junction of M Ave (C road) & 210 <sup>th</sup> St	7:50	4:05
Junction of M Ave (C road) & 190 <sup>th</sup> St	8:00	3:55
Junction of M Ave (C road) & 170 <sup>th</sup> St	8:05	3:45
Junction of M Ave (C road) & 160 <sup>th</sup> St.	8:10	3:40
Plus all regular stops on these roads only		

## BUS #12 – RICK FRIMML

Junction of Hwy 6 & H Ave	7:50	3:30
Junction of Hwy 6 & HH Ave	7:51	3:28
Junction of Hwy 6 & KK Ave	8:05	3:25
Plus all regular stops on these roads only		

## BUS #8 – NAOMI WARD

Koszta	7:40	3:40
Junction of 212 & E Ave	7:42	3:37
Junction of 212 & F Ave	7:45	3:35
Junction of 212 & G Ave (V52)	7:50	3:32
Junction of 212 & I Ave N	7:55	3:30
Junction of 212 & I Ave S	8:00	3:28
Junction of 212 & KK Ave N	8:05	3:24
Car Wash Stop	8:07	3:20
Plus all regular stops on these roads only		

## BUS #5 – CARRIE BECKER

Junction of L Ave & 107 <sup>th</sup> St	7:35	3:25
Junction of L Ave & RR Ave	7:40	3:30
Junction of F15 & LL Ave	7:45	3:35
Junction of F15 & PP Ave	7:55	3:45
Junction of F15 & O Ave	8:05	4:00
Junction of F15 & MM Ave	8:10	4:05
Plus all regular stops on these roads only		