

# FOCUS

## Ashland Independent Schools

### Superintendent's Letter

#### Hager Elementary Named a School of Distinction

The recently released state-wide test results have further strengthened a statement that I have made many times over the past few years, "Our teachers are working harder than ever before, the expectations for them are higher than ever before, and the accountability factor for the performance of our teachers is higher and more demanding than ever before."



Our instructional staff and administrative leadership have risen to the challenge. Hager Elementary finished as the 10th leading elementary school in the entire state of Kentucky...Tenth out of 733 other elementary schools. The Ashland Schools and our community are so very proud of Hager's "Distinguished" honor.

All of Ashland's scores are based on the new accountability system called "Kentucky's Unbridled Learning" which stems from Senate Bill 1 in 2009. The first assessments under Unbridled Learning were given to students last spring. The new system is so different from the previous Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) that it is impossible to compare this year's results to last years. No matter what assessment scale is used for accountability, Ashland Schools will do "whatever it takes" to prepare it's student for a successful future.

As a district, Ashland Schools ranked in the 77th percentile with a 40th ranking out of 174 school districts. This placed us in the top 25 percent in the entire state. We are proud, but we know that much more needs to be done in areas denoted as needing improvement. Five of our seven schools were classified as "proficient" with two as "needs improvement." The fact is that each of our schools has reflected marked improvements which shows that committed and dedicated teaching efforts are in full evidence. This is what we are about in the Ashland Independent Schools..."Student Achievements and Student Successes," and we remain committed to doing "Whatever It Takes" to ensure continued progress and improvement for every student under our charge. In our school district, it really is "all about our students."

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# District News

## Reading Fluently for Success

by Linda Calhoun

By the time most children enter kindergarten, they have naturally developed language skills and knowledge. Because children have been learning language since birth, most are ready to move to the next step-mastering conventional reading. Although there are many facets to learning to read, becoming a fluent reader takes time and requires intentional instruction. Reading fluency is truly a bridge between the two major components of reading – word decoding and comprehension.

At the basic level, reading fluency refers to the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with good expression. When reading silently, fluent readers recognize words automatically. They group words quickly which helps them gain meaning from the text and maintain a high level of comprehension. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural as if they were speaking. Fluency is important because it allows students to focus on making meaning rather than devoting time and energy to sounding out words.

Research over the past two decades has identified repeated reading as the key strategy for improving students' fluency skills. Repeated reading has two essential elements:

- 1) Giving students the opportunity to read and then re-read the same text and
- 2) Having students practice their reading orally with an opportunity to receive corrections and guidance.

How can you help your student become a more fluent reader? Simply, follow the research. Fluency can be developed and improved by modeling fluent reading and by engaging students in repeated oral reading. Set aside time each day to read to your student. This provides students with models of fluent reading. Repeatedly reading passages, poems, and short stories can be part of the reading time. The key is to select reading material at the child's independent reading level. Your child's teacher can help you determine the appropriate level. This will help eliminate frustration during reading and allow for success. You can begin by reading the passage to your child and then allow him/her to read the passage to you. Incorporating one minute quick reads can also increase fluency and be fun. Set goals with your child and celebrate when the goal is achieved!

Reading is a critical element in the overall academic success of our students. By working together and being strategic in our approach, we can help our students become more fluent readers and on the road to success!

## Accolade in Order

Shawn Crump, district social worker, was selected as the 2012 School Social Worker of the year. He was recognized at the Kentucky Association for School Social Work Annual Conference Luncheon on October 5, 2012, in Louisville. He was also recognized on the national level at the 44th Annual Midwest School Social Work Conference on Green Lake, Wisconsin. Congratulations, Shawn!

## Medical Information for Students with an IEP

The Ashland Independent School District is pleased to provide your child with the special education and related services as listed on their Individual Education Program (IEP). These services are provided at no cost to you. If your child has a medical card with a Medicaid number or KCHIP card, it is possible for AISD to obtain Federal funds to help support the cost involved in providing some of these special education services. The quality, type or amount of services provided by AISD through your child's IEP will not change as a result of participation in this program and services provided through the School Based Program are not counted against other medical plans. The school district cannot send claims to Medicaid without parent approval. Parent permission forms will be available at your child's IEP meeting and explained by your Admissions and Release Committee Chairperson or you may call the office of Lisa Henson at 327-2706 ext. 2728 for more information.

## AISD Celebrates Patriot Day

by Eric Edwards

On September 11, 2012, Superintendent Steve Gilmore, KEA Local 127 President Eric Edwards, and Vice President Delbert Burton celebrated Patriot Day by recognizing military personnel in the school system. Each of the following Patriots were given a certificate of appreciation:

- E4 SrA Valerie Hund, US Air Force
- Donna Dudley
- CW3 Gary Payton, US Army
- Sgt Jeff Carroll, US Air Force
- Cmd SgtM Paul Royster, US Army
- E3 Delbert Burton, US Army
- E5 Buck Sgt. Donald Bolt, US Army
- Cpl Michael Walters, US Army

Remember, the defense of our country and our freedoms are the duty and privilege of every citizen, and for this we give our thanks for those who have stepped up to that task.



# Ashland Head Start

## Great Things are Happening at Head Start



**Mrs. Steele's** class is having fun riding their new tricycles that were purchased through the Kentucky Heart Foundation in partnership with the Healthy Kids Healthy Communities Coalition. The students have been riding the tricycles on our new bike path that was expanded over the summer. With the addition of our new

tricycles, it allowed us to increase the amount of time each child has on the tricycle. Gross motor development is very important for our children, and the tricycles have helped improve these skills. Laura Patrick from the Kentucky Heart Foundation came for a visit to see our tricycles in use! We are so thankful to have the addition of new tricycles for our program!



**Mrs. Rutman's** class is enjoying eating "family style" at our new cafeteria tables. The children have been learning about the importance of eating healthy foods and interacting with our peers as we get to know each other.

Openings are available for children  
who were four years old by  
October 1, 2012.

Come by and pick up an application  
or call (606) 327-2715.

## JR. BETA CLUB

On September 19th, students from the Jr. Beta Club from Hager Elementary visited Head Start. The Hager students spent time in the classrooms and participated in activities such as singing and dancing, reading stories, and learning games.



BETA club members also brought outdoor activities for the students, and the Head Start children really enjoyed drawing with sidewalk chalk, playing ball games, and playing tag with the "big kids." A fun time was had by all!

**Mrs. Whitt's** class enjoyed the day with our Grandparents on September 24th. We played, read a story, took pictures, and created keepsake picture frames!



# Crabbe Elementary School



Mrs. Coleman's kindergarten class visited Lowe's on September 20, 2012. Students engaged in a hands-on activity by building crafts from the movie Shrek. The girls built the onion carriage, and the boys built

the dragon from the movie. They used mini hammers and nails to complete their projects. After the projects were complete, students were given a tour of the store and were able to take turns sitting on the fork lift. The store also donated flowers for students to bring back to school and plant. A thank you to Lowe's and all of their associates for a well planned and fun experience for the children!

Ms. Bare's class skyped with a first grade class in South Carolina on October 4th. The students have introduced themselves and read a book aloud to each other. They have upcoming plans to take virtual tours of each other's schools.



The third grade students are getting excited about reading. The year is off to a great start. Students have been working hard on meeting their AR goals. Also, verbs have taken over the third grade classrooms. We have been

making lists of past, present, and future verbs. Ms. Clemons' reading group was able to make a list of 70 past tense regular and irregular verbs. Both classes have also created narrative poems using various parts of speech.



Ms. Platt, a first grade teacher, and Levi Edmonds, a third grader in Mrs. Suman's class, ran in the Holy Family 5K on September 29th. They both came in first in their age category. Way to go!

Mrs. Bowling's computer classes have been polishing their typing skills to become successful in typing! The following is a guideline that shows the words per minute (WPM) that students are expected to type at the end of the school year.



1st Grade 5 WPM	4th Grade 30 WPM
2nd Grade 10 WPM	5th Grade 40 WPM
3rd Grade 20WPM	6th Grade 50 WPM

Alabama, Alaska, and Arkansas....all 50 states AND capitals! Yes, that is what Kyesha Johnson recited to be the first 4th grader to earn bonus social studies points and a United States map puzzle. Way to go, Kyeasha!!! The SS classes have also been learning the Preamble as well as participating in a



and Mrs. Barber's classes toured W-Hollow, homeplace of renowned Kentucky writer and poet laureate. The field trip, which was coordinated by Suzanna and Tony Stephens of the Jesse Stuart Foundation,

culminated in the writer coming to life via a performance of "Songs of a Mountain Plowman" performed at the John P. Stephens Cultural Arts Center at Raceland High School. On the way to the Cultural Center, the students stopped at the Greenup County War Memorial. Since the trip, students have been very busy reading the various Jesse Stuart books which were donated to them by JSF Board Members, Carl & Buzzy Leming.



Award winning actress and playwright, Mitzi Sinnott, visited Crabbe through the Paramount's artist-in-residence program. Ms. Sinnott provided the 4th graders with acting instruction, hands-on participation activities, terminology, improvisation, and much more.

Mrs. Minton 5th grade class has been working on spellingcity.com which is a free educational website that enables teachers to add vocabulary and spelling lists. They can use the lists in a variety of learning activities that help reinforce and correct



spelling and word meaning through fun learning games. The students have also been working on scootpad.com which is a free online practice platform for math and reading practice. Scootpad enables mastery through gradual practice which is personalized to each students and is standard-based.

# Hager Elementary School

The kindergarten classes at Hager had a great time at The Library this month. Each class enjoyed the playground and a snack. Ms. Deborah gave a demonstration on how to use the self-checking machine and a tour of the children's section. Students listened to a story and completed crafts as well. Parents watched a DVD, Read To Your Bunny, and received information on the importance of reading. Adults also were given important tips on how to help young readers at home. Each child received a free book, sponsored by AFRC. It was a wonderful experience for everyone.



First grade at Hager Elementary is off to a great start. We have been practicing letter sounds and learning a lot about nutrition. We have researched and found a variety of foods that begin with each letter of the alphabet. Did you know there is actually a fruit called an Ugli fruit? ABC Nutrition has been an exciting unit of study.

Students in second grade enjoyed activities in the friendship unit. Students read and participated in group activities for Rainbow Fish, Henry and Mudge stories, George and Martha stories, and Frog and Toad books. Students created a friendship web which promoted self-esteem and encouraged students to look for good characteristics in others.

Third grade students are completing projects about their community. They will display their projects and present them to the class.



Fourth grade students attended Paramount Arts Center for the production of "School House Rock." Students enjoyed the music and acting and wrote reflections on the performance. Fourth grade students have also been studying about space and the

phases of the moon. Each child created an original space creature to share with the class. Students also reported on each creature's adaptations according to their assigned planet.

Fifth grade has been chirping away with the addition of the class Twitter boards. Students get to "tweet" fun activities throughout the day or share any accomplishment they have on this board for



all of 5<sup>th</sup> grade to read. The students really enjoy this and use it as a way to communicate with their friends!

Sixth grade students have been working on their informative writing piece. Students are researching an animal and taking that information and putting it into a brochure. Students have also been reading about Anne Frank and will be completing a variety of activities as they explore the events that occurred during the Holocaust time period.

Students in Mrs. Hawker's physical education classes have been learning about the techniques and benefits of jump roping. Students have learned a variety of individual and partner skills. Here, students view a short clip of a competitive jump rope team. Hager students will have many opportunities to use their newly learned skills when Hager participates in Jump Rope for Heart this February.



Hager students welcomed many first responders and community leaders to their Career Fair celebration on October 11. This was a fun event for all students to hear from respected community members and ask questions. Hager would like to thank all of our guest presenters for taking the time to share with our students.



On Wednesday, September 19, 2012, Hager's Junior Beta Club students spent part of their day assisting in Head Start's classes. Our Junior Beta students had a wonderful time interacting with this wonderful group of preschool students!



During September the Hager Student Council led the school through a community service project for Food Feud. Hager students brought in over 5,000 non-perishable goods that were donated to Hillcrest Bruce Mission. Students really focused on the importance of giving and serving others. They really wanted to reach out to the community and help those in need. The Hager community is very proud of their students' efforts.

# Oakview Elementary School

We are off to a great start here at Oakview this year! I am so thrilled to be the new principal. Everyone has made me feel so welcome! As always, the students are working on exciting things in their classrooms. Thank you for allowing us the privilege of working with your children!

Debbie Diamond



Oakview's back to school theme for this year was "Oakview students are out of this world." Teachers dressed as astronauts and outerspace creatures and welcomed the students back to school on opening day.

## K

Kindergarteners have been learning fire safety. They have also been learning about apples. They made applesauce and measured how tall they were with apples.

## 1st Grade

First grade classes are studying the ABC's of nutrition. They will be making an ABC book on fruits and vegetables, using proper nouns and plural nouns.

## 2nd Grade

Second graders took a trip to Jones Farm. They collected eggs from chickens that were hatched when they were in kindergarten. They took a hayride and saw orchards and beehives. They also grilled out hotdogs and had a picnic by the pond. They had an awesome time.

## 3rd Grade

Third graders have been working hard studying place value and will be starting multiplication.

## 4th Grade

Fourth graders have been studying states and capitals. In science they are studying plant and animal cells and just completed a scientific experiment.



## 5th Grade

Fifth graders are working on their informational reports on animals. They are also studying Native Americans and will be making artifacts from different regions. They are also studying multiplication facts through rapping and learning multi-digit division.

## 6th Grade

Mr. Anderson's social studies class spent some time discussing and watching the first Presidential debate. Mr. Anderson and his fellow teachers held a school wide election to see who Oakview would elect as President of the United States.

# Poage Elementary School

## Kindergarten

During the month of September, we were very busy in kindergarten. We are continuing to meet the letter people and are learning to identify letters and the sounds they make. We are also learning numbers and calendar skills. On



September the 24th, we celebrated Clifford the Big Red Dog's 50th birthday. We read many of his books and talked about the valuable lessons that Norman Kidwell teaches through his writing. We joined millions of children around the country by watching a Scholastic simulcast of Clifford's birthday party. We were able to see children asking the author questions about his Clifford books and how the character for Clifford began. We also learned all about apples and apple trees as we celebrated Johnny Appleseed's birthday on the 26th.

## First Grade



Ms. Lowe's first grade class came in one September morning to a tent in its classroom! Students were excited to learn they were going on a two-week camping trip right inside their school. During those two weeks, students took part in several camping-themed activities across the curriculum. Woodland animals were studied and created, such as stinky skunks and sleepy bears. Teddy bears were brought for a sleepover, but before they could stay the night in the classroom, they had to be graphed, measured, and compared. The bears had a great time at the sleepover, and the students documented it with a writing activity. Students also went fishing for sight words, and outlandish fish stories were written. At the end of the camping adventure, the five senses were explored through a tasty s'more treat! Yum!

## Second Grade

Second grade has been eagerly learning all about animals and their surroundings. An activity we did while learning about the desert was looking at a variety of cactus plants under a microscope. We were amazed at the vast differences among the plants. We would also like to thank Mrs. Nash for the Forestry Day. We not only learned so many amazing facts, we also had an awesome time doing it. Some of our favorite activities were learning about the different animal prints and leaves. However, our favorite was feeling like we were camping by roasting marshmallows. We love science!

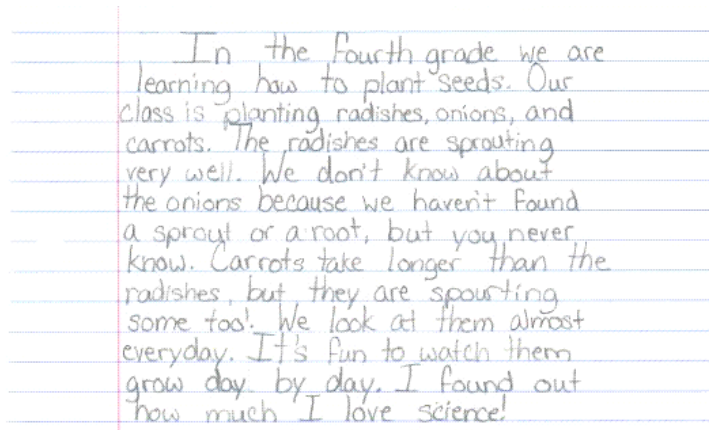


## Third Grade

Poage's third grade classes are getting acquainted with what it takes to be successful third graders. Students are learning to take responsibility for keeping themselves organized while doing their work independently. This is an ongoing process, and students are making some progress toward this goal. The third graders have also been busy learning about different styles of narrative reading. They will utilize what they have learned through the models and relate that information into future writing pieces.



## Fourth Grade



By Kate Hanni—Mrs. Damron's Class

## Sixth Grade



6th graders in Mrs. Nash's class at Poage are studying the eye and animal adaptations. Lora Felty, the teacher for the visually impaired students in our district, visited giving each child their name in braille and gave the history of braille and showed the adaptational technology available for people

that are blind. Students also dissected eyes to view parts of the eye that they have studied in class.

## Forestry Field Day

Poage's Forestry Field day included following sessions: Tree tour, tree and wildflower identification, wood carving, tree rings, camping, forestry firefighter, animal tracks, animal population games, and mammals of Kentucky forests and products of the forests. These sessions were provided by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, Marshall University, KY Soil Conservation, Ashland Area Woodcarvers, community volunteers, 4-H Extension and our conservation officer. We thank those who presented.



# Charles Russell Elementary School



**Dental Hygiene**—One day in September, the 2<sup>nd</sup> grades learned about dental hygiene. The ladies, Mrs. Salyers (Mr. Salyers' wife) and Mrs. Grayson (Leah's mom), from KDMC came to talk to the kids about how to keep their teeth clean and healthy. They showed them how to clean their teeth correctly. The children

enjoyed the lesson, raising their hands to talk about what was good and what was bad for your teeth. The kids also added a few things that the ladies didn't say. When the ladies were getting ready to leave, the students said thank you and the ladies left with a you're welcome. Afterwards the students couldn't stop talking about dental hygiene. Paige Kelley & Gabby Talamantez

**My Plate**—On September 10, 2012, Mrs. Teresa Salyers and Mrs. Missie Grayson from KDMC came to Charles Russell to teach third graders how to make and eat a healthy plate for each meal. They came to help kids stay healthy. Dear third grader, you need to eat as healthy as you can. To do that, you need to eat vegetables, fruit, some meat, grains, and some dairy. You should eat cereal or something including grains for breakfast. For lunch, you should eat some green beans (or some other kinds of vegetables), an apple (or other fruit), and some milk or water to drink. For dinner eat some meat like steak (steak is one of our favorites) and water to drink. If you're wondering about sweets, probably eat just a little bit of dessert a couple times a week. —Kimmy Hayes & Taylor York



**Stuffy**—On Monday, September 17, 2012, Mrs. Salyers and Mrs. Grayson of King's Daughters' Medical Center visited the kindergarten classes to teach the students about the inside body parts, the heart, and also about eating unhealthy foods and how it can affect your body. They brought in a life-size stuffed kid named Stuffy. The ladies told the kids what Stuffy's lunch was, and the students got to choose which was healthier for Stuffy to eat.



Then Mrs. Salyers and Mrs. Grayson would show the students Stuffy's body parts and explain what they did to make the body function properly. They all had fun learning with Stuffy! -Miranda Martin

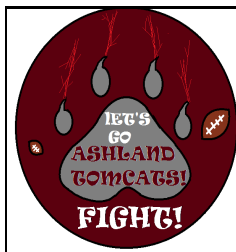
**Dental Health in First Grade**—On Wednesday morning, September 19, 2012, there were two ladies from KDMC, Mrs. Salyers and Mrs. Grayson, in the first grade classrooms. They were teaching the kids to brush their teeth. You want to brush your teeth because when you get older you don't want yellow teeth. It was really interesting because they had a giant toy mouth with a tooth brush to show how to brush their teeth. The kids loved it.

They were giggling and had so much fun. -Sarah Brison, Raegan & Jaden Stevens



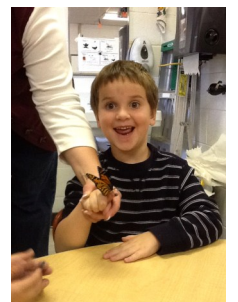
**ThinkQuest Competition**—This year three teams will be showcasing their projects at the Regional Showcase at Morehead State University in November. One is the SOS (Save Our Skin) team with Olivia Allen, Braedon Ward, Jake Damron, and Kyle Webster, a website format to raise awareness about skin cancer and how to prevent it. Another team, The Paper Savers, made up of Maddy Greene, Kimberly Hayes, Anna Heineman, and Shalayna Rice, created a PowerPoint that teaches about the importance of recycling paper to save trees with CRS implementing a pilot program this year. The final team is called What's On My Plate? with Sarah Brison, Bethany Ledford, Zach Francis, Preston Ledford, Miranda Martin, and Chloe VanHorn, who created a lesson with four centers to help students learn how to make a healthy plate at fast food restaurants. Good Luck at the Regionals! -Mrs. Elkins

**STLP New Project**—STLP is making badges with the new badge machine Mr. Salyers purchased for the school. So far the STL's have made badges for the September Students of the Month (SOM), the Tomcat Kick-off for a Cure football game (half the proceeds went to the American Cancer Society), and the Tomcat vs. Boyd County football game. Many more badges are planned for the year. Some badges will be for fundraising such as the Tomcat games



and special events, and sell for \$1 each; and others will be a service for the school like the SOM badges and 9-weeks awards. This design is by Riley Dixon. We hope to see CRS students displaying their badges on their book bags or wearing them on their clothing throughout the school year. Watch and see! -Mrs. Elkins

**Butterflies**—The Charles Russell first grade classes have been studying butterflies and observing their life cycle. We brought in milkweed from our local area and observed the eggs hatch and progress from itty bitty caterpillars to beautiful butterflies. After being held by classroom friends, this beautiful butterfly escaped through our classroom window to enjoy the sunny day. -Mrs. Bocook



# Verity Middle School

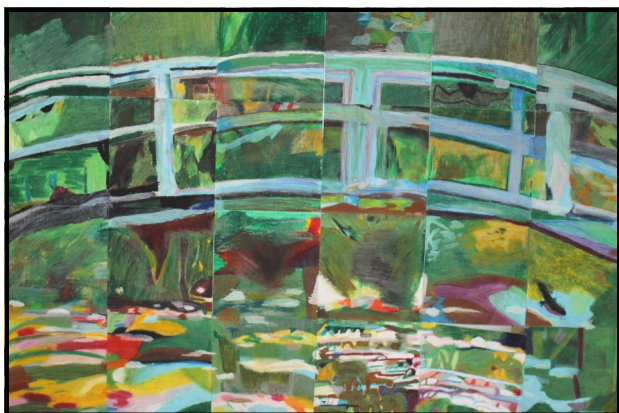
On Friday, September 21, Verity students elected student council representatives for the 2012-2013 school year. Congratulations to Chase Goodrich, Zach Stafford, Abby Crites, Lydia O'Nan, Connor Hutchinson, Mykasa Robinson, Ashby Johnson, Cole Wright, Sydni Pierce, Alannah Molenda, Alexa Craft, Tyriq Duckwyler, Blaine Collins, Skylar Compston, Cassandra Menshouse, Ashby Foutch, Marcus Lazear, Whitney Porter, Emily Hollingsworth, Rodham Kinner, TJ Love, Laken Prince, Hannah Reese, Courtney Wheeler, Noah Roberts, Hannah Layne, Riley Neill, and Wesley Whelan. The representatives jumped right into their duties by organizing spirit week and collecting food donations for the annual food feud. Our theme days included pajama day, extreme patriot day, go "Greene" day, and extreme tomcat day. Members of the student body also participated in singing karaoke during lunch. Thanks to everyone that participated in the festivities and supported a great cause!



This year, Verity Middle School's YFC (Youth For Christ) sponsored this year's SYATP (See You At The Pole). Verity had over 200 students voluntarily participate in this year's event. Special thanks to Mrs. Hopkins and her choir class. Also, Tom Richter from Queens, NY, was our guest speaker and our own Molly Baldock gave the closing prayer.

Verity's STLP is producing a news segment called "Trash Talk" which will be broadcast weekly on Verity's morning announcements. The segment will feature Niah Andueza, Luke Hinderliter, Kenadre Jordan, and Wesley Whelan. The purpose is to educate the student body on the benefits of recycling. STLP is expanding its current recycling program of ink cartridges, cell phones, old computers, and cables to include paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, and metal cans.

Students in the yearbook class have been video conferencing via Skype with their Balfour yearbook representative once a week. During the Skype sessions, students receive feedback on their assigned spreads, brainstorm coverage ideas, and gain valuable, real-world collaboration experience.

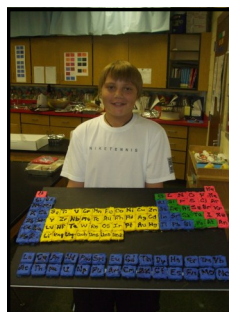


The 8th grade art classes worked together to recreate a collective drawing based on Claude Monet's *The Japanese Footbridge*. Each student was responsible for a 1x1 inch square, for which they enlarged to a 1x1 foot square. Their individual drawings were pieced together like a puzzle, which in turn formed the image.

Congratulations to the boys soccer team on a great season. The team roster had a near record of 24 players. The boys will have the added treat of playing four games in the spring of 2013. The 8th grade boys: Ike Acha, Derek Baer, Jacob "McGruff" Duncil, Luke Hinderliter, Cameron Sanders, and Wesley Whelan were honored at the last home game.



*Seventh grade student council representatives made signs to support the boys soccer and girls basketball team for the last game of the season.*



*Explorers made edible models of Atoms and the Periodic Table.*

On Sept. 28 the Verity Middle School 8th grade students traveled to Cave Run Lake near Morehead, KY, to hear great storytellers weave their magical yarns. This was their annual trek to the Cave Run Storytelling Festival. The students packed into huge tents in the forested areas of Twin Knobs in Daniel Boone State Park to hear the tellers share sensitive and thought-provoking stories with a dose of side-splitting humor added in. Their performances gave new perspective to cultural diversity, healing, and conflict resolution. One story teller said, "Words spoken from the mind are quickly forgotten; words spoken from the heart last forever." I'm sure the Verity students won't soon forget the tellers they heard on that rainy Friday at Cave Run!

The girl's advanced physical education took part in a powder puff football game at Putnam Stadium on Friday, October 12. The Adventurers' Team and Dream Team challenged each other in the game with a final score of 18-18. The students learned positions and skills in physical education class. The boy's from the two teams were cheerleaders and even had a dance-off during halftime. Verity's band performed throughout the game. All of the students enjoyed the afternoon!

# Paul Blazer High School



Mrs. Spade's art classes participated in Peace One Day activities, including Pinwheels for Peace. Pinwheels were created by students and installed on campus for Peace Day. The meaning of inner peace, tolerance, and anti bullying were topics of conversation in conjunction with this project. Digital Design/Photography students created images that expressed peace.

## ACT DATA REPORT

On behalf of the staff of Blazer High School, it gives me great pleasure to share with you the released ACT data report for the recently graduated Class of 2012. As a class, its ACT composite score was a 19.8 for the March 2011 state-required test as juniors. The final composite average they achieved a year later was a 20.4! Below are the results for each content area with accompanying state averages:

	2011	2012	2012 State Averages
English	20.0	20.2	19.5
Math	19.5	19.6	19.4
Reading	20.9	21.1	20.2
Science	20.3	20.4	19.8
Composite	20.3	20.4	19.8

I am so proud of the efforts of the students, teachers, counselors, assistant principals, and all other support staff for their efforts in helping these graduates attain these great results with the goal in mind of all students being college and career ready. Since 2008 when the state mandated that every junior take the ACT, Blazer has seen the graduating class results improve every year. Thank you for your continued support of Blazer High School, its staff, and most importantly – its students!

-Derek Runyon, Principal

Blazer High School's String Orchestra program received the Kentucky Music Educators' Program of Excellence "Gold" Level again for the 2011-2012 school year. This is the highest level each year since the awards inception. One of the highlights of the criteria for the year included "Distinguished" ratings for both the school's Intermediate and String Orchestras at the Large Ensemble last Spring.

Student Council sponsored the Homecoming Dance on Saturday, Sept. 29. The theme was Enchanted Atlantis. Homecoming Court members were: Jessica Sutton – Queen, Morgan Canty – Sr. Attendant, Amy Carpenter – Sr. Attendant, Peyton Paluch – Jr. Attendant, Rachel Redman – Jr. Attendant, Brandace Walker – Soph. Attendant, Ragan Neill – Soph Attendant, Gabby Ingram – Fr. Attendant, and Jenna Cook – Fr. Attendant. Banner Contest Winners: Most Humorous – Beta Club, Most Original – Class of 2015, Best Use of Theme – Class of 2016, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Human Relations Club, 1<sup>st</sup> Place – FCCLA, and Grand Champion – Art Club.



Ms. LeMaster's AP Spanish 5 class just finished translating Lazarillo de Tormes. Since the translation was really difficult (similar to translating Middle English Canterbury Tales) the class had a picnic/story time to hear the modern version of the story. This is the first year for AP Spanish V. They are currently writing a theme on Societies in Contact: Racial Pluralism and Economic Inequality.

FCCLA Region 10 Officers for 2012-2013: Vice President of Finance – Gabby Ingram and Vice President of Peer Education – Maddie Fosson. Region 10 officers are focusing on Cancer Awareness as a community service project for the 2012-2013 school year.

On September 25, 2012, as part of state accountability and state testing, all sophomores took the PLAN test. ACT Plan serves as the midpoint measure of academic progress in ACT's College and Career Readiness System. ACT Plan helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and beyond. Whether students are college-bound or plan to enter the workforce directly after high school, ACT Plan can help all students.

The following are the benchmark scores for the PLAN test followed by the National Average for these tests:

	Benchmark	National Avg.
English	15	16.2
Math	19	17.6
Reading	17	16.7
Science	21	17.8

Blazer's results for the past four years can be viewed on page 11.

# District News

## State Accountability Testing Results

By Richard Oppenheimer

In the 2011-12 school year, the Kentucky State Department of Education completely changed the way that students in Kentucky are assessed and how school and district accountability is determined. The expectations of our new Kentucky Core Academic Standards are much more demanding than the previous curriculum, and the tests measuring success are much more rigorous. This means that getting to proficiency requires a higher level of achievement for our students and for our schools. The accomplishments of our students and schools on this new assessment are a testament to the hard work completed in the past two years in preparation for these challenging new standards.

In the chart below, you will see the overall score achieved by each school and the district. This score is determined by combining several elements of the accountability system (Achievement, Gap, Growth, College/Career Readiness, and Graduation Rate) into one total. The maximum score is 100.

The percentile rank is found by ranking each school in that level (elementary, middle, and high) by their overall score. A school with a ranking of 77 would have an overall score that places them above 77 percent of the other schools in Kentucky at that level.

The classification listed for each is determined by the percentile ranking. Schools and districts that rank at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher are classified "Distinguished." Proficient schools and districts are from the 70<sup>th</sup> to the 89<sup>th</sup> percentile. Schools and districts below the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile are classified "Needs Improvement."

2012 Accountability Results			
School	Overall Score	Percentile Score	Classification
Charles Russell Elementary School	65.1	79	Proficient
Crabbe Elementary School	48.2	17	Needs Improvement
Hager Elementary School	76.3	99	Distinguished
Oakview Elementary School	63.0	72	Proficient
Poage Elementary School	63.7	75	Proficient
George M. Verity Middle School	56.4	59	Needs Improvement
Paul G. Blazer High School	58.9	73	Proficient
Ashland Independent Combined Score	59.1	77	Proficient

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The following are the PLAN test results for Blazer High School for the past four years:

	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
English	17.7	17.1	16.1	16.2
Math	17.3	17.2	16.4	16.7
Reading	17.7	17.5	16.6	16.7
Science	18.6	18.6	17.5	17.9
Composite	17.9	17.7	16.7	17.0

The national composite average is 17.2.

## Before the Bell Tolls

By Dr. Patsy Lindsey

Tardiness is defined by Webster as 1: moving slowly, sluggish; 2: delayed beyond the expected or proper time, late. Those are pretty simplistic definitions but the implications in the school setting may be huge. Punctuality is important throughout life. It is especially important to be on time for school.

Truancy in Kentucky schools is made up of a combination of unexcused absences and unexcused tardies. Unexcused absences and tardies may accumulate faster than expected. A total of six unexcused absences and/or tardies results in a child becoming habitually truant.

It is the responsibility of parents to help their children get to school every day on time. The vast majority of parents are superb at doing just that. However, there are many who struggle with habitual lateness. Below are some suggestions to help you avoid the traffic jams at many of the schools just prior to the tardy bell.

- Check how long the trip takes if you drive your child to school. Allow extra time for unexpected conditions including traffic and weather.
- Get up fifteen minutes earlier than you think necessary.
- Pick out all clothing for your child the night before, including shoes and accessories.
- Save time in the mornings by making sure all items your child needs are placed in their book bag the night before including lunch money, books, homework and supplies.
- Know what time your child must leave every day to be on time.

All AISD schools are taking steps to encourage parents and children to be on time. Won't you help?

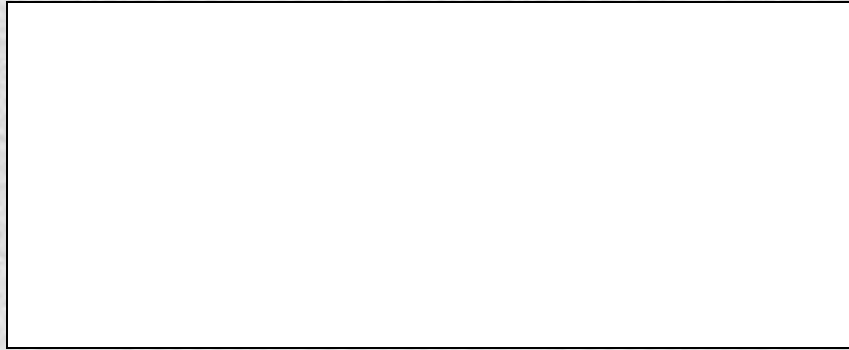


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## School Principals

Derek Runyon, Blazer High School  
David Greene, Verity Middle School  
Brad Greene, Crabbe Elementary School  
Phillip Caudill, Hager Elementary School  
Debbie Diamond, Oakview Elementary School  
Bob Blankenship, Poage Elementary School  
Steve Salyers, Charles Russell Elementary School  
Jacqui Thornburg, Head Start Director

## Central Office Personnel

Steve Gilmore, Superintendent  
Linda Calhoun, Instructional Supervisor  
Joe Fraley, Director of Transportation/Maintenance  
Lisa Henson, Director of Student Services  
Janice Ledford, District Consultant  
Patsy Lindsey, Director of Pupil Personnel  
Richard Oppenheimer, Director of Student Achievement  
Tim Walters, Director of Finance  
Cary Williams, Director of Instructional Technology



Mrs. Smith's kindergarten class celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> day of school with a sock hop. Dressed in poodle skirts and white t-shirts, they made records and hung them from the ceiling and also made a juke box. They even had a root beer float to celebrate the special day.

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