

SPRING WOOD NEWS

Letter from the Principal

NCLB – No Child Left Behind

NCLB (No Child Left Behind) is the law that has behind it the intent to establish high standards for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, family background or disability. NCLB focuses on reading and mathematics, the two essential building blocks of education. NCLB requires every student (100%) across the country to be at grade-level in reading and math by 2014. This is a very ambitious goal and a tight timetable. The test scores must be reported separately for all the subgroups in the school and if only one falls below the AYP (**Annual Yearly Progress**) goal, the entire school will be considered as not making AYP for that year – even if all other student groups make the goal.

The overall scores reflect the school's attainment of state standards, not individual performance. It is important to realize that different students learn at different rates and the school must try to accommodate them and hold them to the same high standards.

Spring Wood Middle School did quite well overall on the ISAT tests. **85%** of all of the Spring Wood students met the ISAT reading standards and **84%** met the ISAT math standards.

Two years ago Spring Wood Middle School failed to make "**annual yearly progress**" due to the performance of our students with disabilities (special education students) in the area of math. With a huge focus on math, especially for our special education students, and with the creation of our math support classes and co-taught math classes, we found success. We had only 38% of our special education students meeting the math standards in 2008-09 but increased that percentage to 58% in 2009-10.

Unfortunately, this success came with a price. The same students who showed such growth in math, showed a loss in reading. We had only 49% of our special education students meet the reading standards in 2009-10, compared with 52% in 2008-09. With a renewed effort to help our special education students do better in reading, we saw an increase – 55% of the special education students met or exceeded the standards in reading in 2010-11.

Spring Wood Middle School failed to make "**annual yearly progress**" in math this past year, due to the performance on the ISAT tests, of our African-American student at 76%; our Hispanic students at 74%, and our Economically Disadvantaged students at 77%.

After examining all the data, especially the demographic data, we feel we are on the right path. Our low-income population has been increasing rapidly (**59%** increase in the past five years). Our African-American population has seen a 20% decrease since 2006-07. Our Hispanic population has seen a **27%** increase in the same time period. Our overall ISAT scores have been relatively stable through these changing times. We are pleased that with our changing population we can continue to maintain stable performance on the ISAT reading and math tests.

In an effort to raise our reading scores we have:

- Tier II reading support classes to start in November.
- Spent \$2,000 on new library books this school year.
- Family Reading Night – Oct 26
- PTO sponsored book fair.
- Modified the format for our special education students- the creation of reading support classes.
- Students will write extended responses at least quarterly.

Our staff development to help us teach:

- Teams discuss the Common Core Standards weekly.
- Teachers work to develop Professional Learning Communities
- Problem solving team meetings to determine areas of most need.

The school is providing the **Reading Connection** articles you find in each of the monthly newsletters and want to encourage parents to read these important inserts so they too can help with our goal of improving reading.

In an effort to raise our math scores:

- Math Support classes continue for special education students and some regular education students who may be struggling with math.
- Teachers will collaborate in order to observe and share best practices.
- Teachers are working with a math expert on more effective lessons.
- Staff will look at new math textbooks/materials to help guide these changes.

Our staff development to help us teach math:

- Staff development will be provided so teachers are more familiar with the Connected Math Program and the new Common Core Standards.
- Teachers work to develop Professional Learning Communities

Every department utilizes the Wednesday earlier release time to work together to provide your child (ren) with improved instruction. District-wide institutes are provided for the teachers to increase their awareness of formative assessments.

We are aware that you might perceive these days as "short" days for your child (ren), but we are using these times to better prepare ourselves to meet their needs.

We ask that all parents make a special effort to avoid trips or vacations during the first two weeks of ISAT testing. Our goal is to have 100% in attendance for those tests. Students should come to school well rested and having eaten a good breakfast.

Please feel free to call the school and speak with Mr. Barringer, the principal, or your child's team if you have any questions.

7th Grade Math

The next unit in your child's course of study in mathematics class this year is ***Accentuate the Negative: Positive and Negative Numbers***. Your child will work on problems involving many contexts and learn how to compare integers; to add, subtract, multiply, and divide integers; and to use integers to solve problems. The class will begin by looking at a game (similar to the game show Jeopardy) in which some scores are negative and others are positive. They will work with temperature readings, both above and below 0, on a thermometer. They will also look at business-type situations that speak of being "in the red" or "in the black" and use colored chips to model operations with integers.

Unit Goals

In this unit, the focus is on understanding and developing systematic ways to add, subtract, multiply, and divide positive and negative numbers. Students will develop algorithms for computations and will use the order of operations to solve problems.

Helping with Homework

You can help with homework and encourage great mathematical habits as your child studies this unit by asking questions such as:

- How do negative and positive numbers help in describing the situation?
- What will addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division of positive and negative numbers tell about the problem?

- What model(s) for positive and negative numbers would help in displaying the relationships in the problem situation?

In your child's math binder, you can find worked-out examples from problems done in class and notes on the mathematics of the unit from handouts in their notes section.

Here are some strategies for helping your child work with the ideas in this unit:

- Look at your child's mathematics binder. You may want to read some of the explanations that have been written and, if they aren't clear, talk with your child about why you think they may need more explanation.
- Encourage your child's efforts in completing all homework assignments. Look over your child's work, and help your child make sure all questions have been answered and that all explanations are clear.
- Ask your child to describe some real-world situations in which integers are used. You can help by noting the daily temperature or talking about changes in temperature during the day.

7th Grade Language Arts

In seventh grade, we are writing formal business letters to various companies about our personal experiences. In order to improve writing skills, seventh grade has been studying the 6+1 writing traits.

7th Grade Science

7th Grade Science teachers want everyone to remember to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Thank you. Our planet thanks you.

7th Grade Social Studies

Social Studies has completed the Jefferson Era which includes the Lewis and Clark Expedition as well as the War of 1812. Lastly, the main topic we will cover to conclude October is the growth of the United States after 1812 with the Industrial Revolution and the different types of growth among the regions of the U.S. during this period.

What is ahead for 7th grade Social Studies? We will be diving into Chapter 12 which is all about Andrew Jackson, his Presidency, Jacksonian Democracy, States' Rights, Jackson's Policy Towards Native Americans, and Jackson's war on the banks.

There will be a project on Andrew Jackson that the students will be working on fairly extensively.

Important Notice

New Change in School Immunizations

As of September 27, 2011 the Child Health Examination Code Part 665 was amended to require proof of receiving a dose of Tdap vaccine starting school year 2012-13.

Beginning with school year 2011-12, any child entering sixth grade shall show proof (see Section 665.250(b) of receiving one dose of Tdap (defined as tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose.

Students entering grades 7 through 12 who have not already received Tdap are required to receive 1 Tdap dose regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose.

Backpacks

Backpacks must be able to fit in the lockers so please be cautious of backpacks which have wheels as these typically do not fit.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Spring Wood is to work together to provide a safe and orderly environment that inspires and challenges the whole individual to become a contributing citizen and a life-long learner.

Cell Phones

House Bill 72, states, "A person, regardless of age, may not use a wireless telephone at any time while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in a school speed zone established under Section 11-605, or on a highway in a construction or maintenance speed zone established under Section 11-605.1..." This bill came into effect on January 1, 2010. We have been made aware that several individuals have recently received tickets for this. ***Please refrain from using your cell phone when driving near the school.***

Lake Park Testing of 8th Graders

Please mark your calendars. All Spring Wood 8th graders are expected to go to Lake Park East Campus on Saturday, Dec. 3 to take their placement tests (EXPLORE test). The students should arrive by 7:45 AM with two #2 pencils with erasers and a calculator. They are expected to be done by 11:15 AM. No buses will be provided for this testing.

Reminder that it is so very important to keep your grades up as 8th graders must maintain a cumulative grade point average above 1.5 and a grade point average above 1.5 fourth quarter to be eligible to participate in the promotion ceremony at the end of the school year.

Student-Led Conference Dates

Monday and Tuesday, November 21 & 22 are Student-Led Conference Days. Students will be dismissed at 11:30 AM on Tuesday, November 22.

These are scheduled conferences so please call your child's team if you would like to schedule a conference. Thank you!

The purpose of these conferences is for students to: Share their portfolios of quality work, practice communication skills, report on their school progress, practice organizational skills, assess their work honestly, and become accountable for their work and behavior.

This is an opportunity for you, as a parent, to show a positive interest in your child's progress, accept his or her assessment of the work and accomplishments as well as show your support and encouragement for his or her class work.

The student-led conferences put the child right where he/she should be-the center, the focus of the conference. The teachers will be present to address any small concerns or any confusion. Larger concerns need to be addressed at another time- at a time when the teacher and parent can arrange a meeting with an appropriate amount of time. If you feel you need a more in-depth meeting, please call and arrange a meeting with the team.

Calendar

Tuesday, November 1	3:45 PM - Girls' Basketball @ Home vs. Medinah
Thursday, November 3	3:45 PM- Girls' Basketball @ Home vs. Roselle
Friday, November 4	Vision & Hearing Screening
Monday, November 7	3:45 PM – Girls' Basketball @ Wood Dale
Wednesday, November 9	7:00 PM-PTO Meeting
Thursday, November 10	3:45 PM – Girls' Basketball @ Roselle
Monday, November 14	3:45 PM – Girls' Basketball @ Home vs. Westfield
Tuesday, November 15	3:00-3:30 PM – Market Day Pick Up
Thursday, November 17	7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting
Monday, November 21	Parent-Teacher Conferences- Evening only
Tuesday, November 22	11:30 AM Dismissal- Parent-Teacher Conferences
Wednesday, November 23-Friday, November 25 – No School	
Monday, November 28	Vision & Hearing Re-screening 3:45 PM – Girls' Basketball @ Peacock
Thursday, December 1	3:45 PM- Girls' Basketball @ Home vs. Wood Dale
Friday, December 2	Boys' Basketball tryouts can begin
Saturday, December 3	7:45 AM – 11:15 PM EXPLORE testing for 8 th graders at LPHS East

Thursday, December 8	7:00 PM- Winter Band Concert	Monday, March 12	3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Wood Dale
Monday, December 12	7:00 PM – 5 th grade Band Concert	Tuesday, March 13	3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Home vs. Peacock
Tuesday, December 13	3:00-3:30 PM – Market Day Pick Up	Wednesday, March 14	7:00 PM – PTO Meeting
Wednesday, December 14	7:00 PM – PTO Meeting	Thursday, March 15	3:45 PM- Volleyball @ Roselle
Thursday, December 15	7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting		7:00 PM – Music in Our Schools Concert
Friday, December 16	11:30 AM Dismissal- Parent Teacher Conferences	Friday, March 16	End of 3rd Quarter
Monday, December-Friday, December 30- Winter Break		Monday, March 19	3:45 PM- Volleyball @ Peacock
Monday, January 2	School Resumes	Tuesday, March 20	3:00-3:30 PM- Market Day Pick up
Tuesday, January 3	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Peacock		3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Home vs. Roselle
Thursday, January 5	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Home vs. Medinah	Thursday, March 22	3:45 PM- Volleyball @ Westfield
Tuesday, January 10	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Westfield		7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, January 11	7:00 PM – PTO Meeting	Friday, March 23	11:30 AM Dismissal
Thursday, January 12	End of 2nd Quarter		Parent-Teacher Conferences
	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Home vs. Wood Dale	Monday, March 26-Friday, March 30 – Spring Break	
Friday, January 13	Teachers' Institute Day- No School	Wednesday, April 4	Butter Braid Bread deliveries
Monday, January 16	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day- No School	Friday, April 6	6:30 PM- Band Boosters Meeting
Tuesday, January 17	3:45 PM-Boys' Basketball @ Home vs. Peacock	Monday, April 9	Day of Non-Attendance
Thursday, January 19	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Home vs. Westfield	Wednesday, April 11	Day of Non-Attendance
Friday, January 20	8 th grade Pictures	Monday, April 16 –Friday, April 20 – Book Fair	7:00 PM – PTO Meeting
Monday, January 23	3:45 PM-Boys' Basketball @ Medinah	Saturday, April 21	8:00-11:00 AM- Band Pancake Breakfast
Tuesday, January 24	3:00-3:30 PM- SW Market Day Pick Up	Tuesday, April 24	3:00-3:30 PM- Market Day Pick up
Thursday, January 26	7:00 PM – Board of Education Meeting	Thursday, April 26	7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting
	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Home vs. Roselle	Tuesday, May 1	7:00-8:00 PM- Orientation for 5 th grade Parents
Monday, January 30	3:45 PM- Boys' Basketball @ Wood Dale	Wednesday, May 2	6:30 PM- Band Boosters Meeting
Thursday, February 2	3:45 PM-Boys' Basketball @ Roselle	Wednesday, May 9	7:00 PM-PTO Meeting
Friday, February 3	Volleyball Tryouts can begin	Thursday, May 10	7:00 PM- Spring Band Concert
Wednesday, February 15	7:00 PM – PTO Meeting	Friday, May 11	11:30 AM Dismissal – School Improvement Day
Thursday, February 16	6:30 PM-7:30 PM Solo & Ensemble Recital	Wednesday, May 16	Concert Band Trip
Friday, February 17	11:30 AM Dismissal	Thursday, May 18	Waterbury Explore More Day
Saturday, February 18	Parent-Teacher Conferences	Saturday, May 19	Symphonic Band Trip
Monday, February 20	Solo & Ensemble Contest	Tuesday, May 22	3:00-3:30 PM- Market Day Pick Up
Tuesday, February 21	President's Day- No School	Wednesday, May 23	7:00 PM- Jazz & Percussion Concert
	3:00-3:30 PM-Market Day Pickup	Thursday, May 24	7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting
	3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Home vs. Westfield	Friday, May 25	End of 4th Quarter
Thursday, February 23	3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Medinah		Last Day of School if No Emergency Days Used- Last Day is Half Day
	7:00 PM-Board of Education Meeting	Monday, May 28	Memorial Day- No School
Monday, February 27	3:45 PM-Volleyball @ Home Vs. Wood Dale	Thursday, June 14	7:00 PM- Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, February 29	6:30 PM-Band Boosters Meeting		
Thursday, March 1	3:45 PM- Volleyball @ Home vs. Medinah	Track - Season yet to be determined	
Friday, March 2	Teachers' Institute Day- Students do not attend		
March 5 – 19	PTO Butter Braid Bread fundraiser		

***Please note that this calendar is not to be considered all-inclusive and is subject to change.**