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CARDINAL CHATTER

EARLY LITERACY by Jason Hammen

This is an update on the early literacy state law that is making sure that children in kindergarten through third grade are on track with their reading skills.

While Iowa’s early literacy law emphasizes identifying and addressing reading difficulties early on, it also requires schools to make decisions, beginning in the 2017-18 school year, about summer reading programs and possible retention for some third-grade students who are not reading on grade level by the end of the school year.

Some of you are aware, schools across the state must begin providing an intensive summer reading program in May 2018 for third-grade students who struggle with reading as determined by screening assessments throughout the school year as well as the state assessment. As of 2018, a third-grader who has been referred to a summer reading program must complete the program to avoid consideration for retention unless the student qualifies for an exemption.

Retention will not be considered for any third-grade student who is eligible for, and completes a summer reading program, nor for any student who qualifies for an exemption. Earlham Elementary is focused on prevention, not retention. While our school will be required to follow recently issued state guidelines for deciding whether to retain a student in third grade, the final decision rests with schools, in consultation with parents. Reading performance will be the main consideration in retention decisions, although other factors will be considered as well. *(Continued on p. 2)*

Upcoming Events

February 4

Jack Oatts Jazz
Festival all day

February 6

No School Day
for Students!
PD Day: Staff

February

7-10
Iowa
Assessments

February 15

Special Board
Meeting @ 6 pm

February 17

PIE Carnival
5 - 8 pm

See the master calendar at home.ecsdcards.com for more

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We have taken a proactive approach in preparing our students to be successful readers. Last year we offered a summer school program for students in grades 1st through 3rd grade and will continue this year. We are using Reading Recovery, Title 1 Reading, Benchmark Assessments, Guided Reading strategies along with a built in, set intervention time each day to help our children become successful readers. Additionally, as part of the state's early literacy law, our school has been screening K-6 students for reading difficulties (FAST), making adjustments in instruction based on results, and then monitoring the progress of our students. This "early warning" approach gives us valuable information so we can remedy reading difficulties before they progress. This is important because making sure students have the skills they need to succeed starts with the ability to read.

We will continue our efforts to reach out to parents when a child is struggling with reading. Please continue to engage with your child's teacher regularly and ask how you can help at home.

A FAQ about the early literacy law, and an early literacy fact sheet are listed below. You will also find information, including the state guidelines on retention decisions, on the Iowa Department of Education's website: www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/content-areas/literacy/early-literacy-law

As always, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact me, Jason Hammen, elementary principal at jhammen@ecsdcards.com.

Other Resources:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yt4v2cu5xq016ua/AADaaPS0o5Z1xs5_hGp_VLQRa?dl=0&preview=Common+Questions+from+Parents.pdf

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yt4v2cu5xq016ua/AADaaPS0o5Z1xs5_hGp_VLQRa?dl=0&preview=Early+Literacy+Fact+Sheet.pdf

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES will be held on February 28th and March 2nd from 4 - 8 pm. School will be dismissed at 1 pm each day!

TIME FOR KINDERGARTEN?

Do you have a child, or know someone who has a child, that will be 5 years old on or before September 15, 2017? If "YES", we would like to invite you to our **informational kindergarten parent meeting held on Wednesday, February 15th at 6 pm at Earlham Schools** (in our choir room...just come in through the main doors). Please bring a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization records with you to start the registration process. Any questions, contact Megan in the main office at 515-758-2214.



PIE Carnival February 17th from 5 - 8 pm at the School. Food, raffle, games and lots of fun for a good cause!

Student Showcase? Parent University?

Parent-teacher conferences are a time-honored tradition, and an information sharing session where both parents and teachers can share insights, progress and growth, as well as struggles, of each student so that everyone is on the same page and can all team together to help a student reach their full potential at school. The Earlham district hosts these in the Fall and in the Spring, however, a parent, or a teacher, may request a conference at any time to get feedback or to clarify questions, grades, behavior and so on.

The elementary school always has a tremendous turn-out with almost 100% attendance by parents at their student's scheduled conference time. Even at the middle school level, attendance at M & M advisory conferences tend to average 95% by parents. More and more, students are involved with student-led conferences at the upper elementary and middle school grades. However, high school conferences see a dramatic drop in attendance to less than 20% of parents coming to the school to meet with teachers. Busy schedules, lots of data including grades and feedback can be found online via PowerSchool and a quick e-mail to a teacher may clarify an issue before it becomes a problem so that there doesn't seem to be a need to spend an evening in the building.

After research, data collection and discussion, the high school is changing things up for Spring Conferences. The first night, Tuesday, February 28th will be a traditional evening to meet with advisors and teachers. However, Thursday night, March 2nd will be a combination of a Student Showcase and a Parent University evening. Later this month a schedule will be sent out so that you will know what "classes" and student items will be on display and you can choose what sessions you want to attend.

The Student Showcase sessions will include your students and/or their work. For instance, you might attend a small ensemble choir session or hear jazz band members playing a tune or view one act plays from theatre arts courses or even projects and presentations led by students. The Parent University portion includes classes that might interest you such as learning about PowerSchool, cell phones and apps, or cyberbullying. Or, you might prefer attending sessions that are like academic classes to help you with your student such as GeoGebra or Khan Academy or even learning some chemistry that you can do in your own kitchen with your child. It is the fervent hope of the high school staff that seeing students sharing their learning, or taking part in your own learning to help your teenager be even more successful, will make the parent-teacher conferences in the high school more meaningful and better attended.

IOWA ASSESSMENTS

Winter MAP testing, the mid-year test for Measures of Academic Progress, was just done in December with results e-mailed out to all parents the last week in January. Now it is already time for our district's second standardized test, the Iowa Assessments.

The Iowa Assessments used to be known as the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and as ITEDs before they were restructured and re-normed a few years ago. Unlike the MAP tests, these are not done on the computer, but rather, with number two pencils and bubbling in circles for responses on a scantron answer folder. As parents, these are the tests that you probably remember taking when you were in school. Additionally, these tests are timed (the MAP tests allow unlimited time for students). The tests will include reading, mathematics (and computation) and science.

We will be taking the Iowa Assessments in grades 2-11 next week, February 7 - 10th. There is no school Monday for professional development for staff. Then, tests will begin with testing each morning. Please help us insure that your student is able to give their best effort:

- by making sure they get a good night's sleep each night,
- by trying to get them to eat a nutritious breakfast each morning,
- and by stressing the importance of trying their very best each day on these tests so we all can get the most accurate picture of what each student knows and what they might need extra instruction in going forward to be successful in school.

SPEECH TEAMS LEAVE US SPEECHLESS!

The Earlham High School Large Group Speech team traveled to Perry two weeks ago to compete in the IHSSA Large Group Speech Contest. Huge congratulations to the 37 team members on their 8 Superior and 4 Outstanding awards. The following received Superior I ratings and will advance to State at Valley High School this Saturday, February 4th:

- One Act Play - Ruby of Elsinore - Jenna Hardenbrook, Kaylee Hohertz, Madi Young, Michael Allen, Joshua Woolcott, Jordan Reynolds.
- Short Film - You - Kamilla Brindley, Haley LeGrand, Sage Richman
- Ensemble Acting - I Know Your Handbag's Fake - Alexis Huls, Eva Fisk, Taylor Hipsley
- Ensemble Acting - Who's On First - Karl Heimberger, Collin Volz
- Musical Theater - Chicago - Alexa Losee, Dani Geneser, Kat Neese, Kaylee Hohertz, Lauren Thomson, Natassja Reed
- Musical Theater - Male Duets - Stephen Woolcott, Grant Becker
- Improvisational Acting - Eli Kasap, John Tibben, Mason Madren, Peyton Boyle
- Readers Theater - Brothers and Sisters - Haley Le Grand, Kamilla Brindley, Maggie Luong, Sage Richman.

The following received Outstanding Division 2 Ratings: Readers Theater - Stories of the Three Little Pigs - Elliot Groves, Courtney Hohertz, Ehlana Brown, Olivia Nicholson, Skyler Jensen; Musical Theater - Waitress the Musical - Alexis Huls, Eva Fisk, Grace Zobeck, Meredith Hochstetler, Renea Johnson; Improvisational Acting - Collin Volz, Karl Heimberger, Christopher Montgomery and Improvisational Acting - Michael Allen, Joshua Woolcott, Elizabeth Northrup, Luke Varner.

CENTRAL COLLEGE SINGFEST

On Thursday February 9th, 19 members from the High School Chorus will be singing in the 2017 Central College SingFest. They will rehearse all day with singers from schools around Iowa and perform a free concert at 7:00 pm! This concert will be live streamed at <https://portal.stretchinternet.com/centraladmin/>.

Soprano singers include: Lauren Thomson, Alexa Losee, Kaylee Hohertz, Meredith Hochstetler, Dani Geneser and Jenna Hardenbrook. Alto singers include: Alexis Huls, Natassja Reed, Kat Neese, Kaylie Johnson, Kamilla Brindley, and Sage Richman. Tenor singers include: Jordan Reynolds and Nick Coon. And finally, Bass singers include: Grant Becker, Harrison Miller and Stephen Woolcott.

WCAC JH HONOR CHOIR FESTIVAL

On February 28th, Earlham Middle School will be well-represented as many singers qualified for the West Central Activities Conference Honor Choir to be held at AC-GC High School.

Soprano singers include: Chloe Schaffer, Kirsten Boyle, Alissa Stiles, Cheyenne McDaniel, Clare Kasap, Grace Sweers and Kaitlyn Knight. Alto singers include: Jenna Conry, Macy Reynolds, Brittany Scar, Riley Doud, Mia Terry, Brooklyn Cutting and Grace Porter. The Baritone singers include: Hunter Dobbins, Seth Follmer, Garion Brown, Zac Logemann, Luke Ramsey and Dominic Braet .

OTHER CHOIR NEWS

On Sunday February 12th and Monday February 13th, Grant Becker will participate in a highly select auditioned Honor Choir Festival at Iowa State University. Students from across Iowa auditioned for this opportunity back in October, including several of Earlham's finest singers. The concert is Monday February 13th at 7:00 pm and will be live streamed at <http://music.iastate.edu/feeds/recital/>.

The 7-12 Variety Show will take place on Thursday March 9th! We have a spectacular evening full of music from Broadway and Hollywood! It all starts at 7:00 pm! Don't miss it!

BASKETBALL HIGHLIGHTS



BOYS BASKETBALL

The 2016-17 boy's basketball team is having some success this year on the court. The varsity currently posts a record of 13-5 overall with a conference record of 12-4. The conference record has the Cardinals sitting in third place in the WCAC. The JV team has a record of 11-1 while the Froshmore squad is 6-4.

There are still three regular season opportunities to get out and see the Cardinals with home games on February 3 against Woodward Granger (Senior Night) and February 10 versus I-35. The Cardinals will also travel to West Central Valley on the 7th. Seniors on the team include: Joey Harkins, Mason Madren, Drew Williamson and Stephen Woolcott (pictured in the front row). The team is coached by Kevin Williamson, James Severson and Tim Harskamp.

The Cardinals are currently awaiting their postseason assignment and are looking to have a solid tournament run.

SIGNING DAY

On February 1st, Joey signed his official letter of intent to attend Drake University and play for their football team for Fall 2017. Pictured to the right is senior Joey Harkins with his parents, Rhonda and Jeff Harkins and his younger brother, T.J.. Behind them are football coaches Cory Houghton, Justin Johnson and Chris Caskey.



GIRLS BASKETBALL

The girls are 5-13 so far this year. This Friday, February 3rd is Senior Night. Our seniors are Mikailyn Holtry, Alexis Jensen, Kennedy Morris, and Sadie Waldron (pictured above in white uniforms in the front row). We play our first round tournament game at Madrid on Saturday February 11th.

The team is coached by Dion Braet, Bailey Gulley and Jon Peterson. Managers include Katie Steward and Rowen Fisk.

Both boys and girls basketball photos above were taken by Shannon Payne. A huge thank you for not only taking the team photos, but also for all the action shots taken at the home games.



From the Board Table

At their meeting on January 18, 2017, The Earlham School Board, Mr. Hammen and Mrs. Knight presented information from the Winter Measures of Academic Progress testing. The MAP tests were taken in December and they are used to assess reading and math. The chart to the right shows the score in reading and math for each grade as well as the national average scores for these assessments. The scores are shown in Rausch Units which is an estimation of the students' instructional level.

Grade	Earlham Mean - Reading	National Mean - Reading	Earlham Mean - Math	National Mean - Math
K	155	151.3	154.2	151.5
1	178.3	171.5	178.9	173.8
2	193.3	184.2	199.4	186.4
3	198.8	195.6	203.2	198.2
4	206.4	203.6	214.5	208.7
5	211.2	209.8	224.3	217.2
6	216.5	214.2	227.3	222.1
7	218.6	216.9	233.2	226.1
8	224.9	219.1	241.9	229.1
9	225.9	221.3	239	232.2
10	224.6	221.0	238.3	231.5
11	228.7	222.7	240.9	234.4

As the chart indicates, the Earlham students scored above the National Mean scores in both reading and math at each grade level on this assessment. The MAP assessment will be administered again in the spring to determine student growth.

Ron Paskach from SVPA reviewed the design documents with the Board that showed the work that will need to be done to build the new gym and locker rooms. These plans included the need for grading of the property for proper water runoff, new roofing and placement of items within the facility. These design drawings will be used to develop construction documents and will be reviewed by the School Board at their March 22nd meeting.

The Board approved the official calendar for the 2017-18 school year. The full calendar is available on the school website, home.ecsdcards.com. Highlights from the calendar include:

- First Day of Classes – August 23rd
- Winter Break – December 25 – January 3 (Teachers have Professional Development on January 2nd)
- Spring Break – March 12-16
- Graduation – May 20th
- Last Day of Classes – May 24th

The next School Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 15th at 6:00 p.m. in the school library.

Get the *Cardinal Chatter* delivered to your mailbox or inbox!



We will publish this newsletter monthly throughout the school year to keep our school community updated on our progress as a district. Copies will be available at local businesses and it will be posted on the school website, but you can elect to have the Chatter delivered directly to your home via email or mail! Simply go online to <http://goo.gl/dJ08ds> or call the district office at 758-2214 to get signed up to receive all future issues!

Looking for more information about our school? Check out our school website at home.ecsdcards.com for additional announcements, a calendar of events, the staff directory, program information and more.