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CARDINAL CHATTER

MAP TESTING TIME!

School has started and that means that the first round of standardized tests are beginning for our students. Earlham Schools uses two standardized assessments each year: the Iowa Assessments in early Spring, and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests which are given in a Fall, Winter and Spring session.

The MAP tests are taken online and are intuitive, meaning that as a student answers questions correctly, the next question’s level of difficulty is raised. If answered incorrectly, it moves the student back to their last positively answered question so the test really measures where a student is at in their learning progress. Teachers can analyze data immediately and differentiate instruction as the results (RIT score) are available as soon as a student completes a test in language, math, science and reading.

The middle school and high school took the MAP tests the week of August 29th. Secondary students do goal-setting through advisory groups in advance of the tests, and have incentives they can earn such as “first in the lunch line” or “technology choice time” if they achieve growth in multiple testing areas.

The elementary, grades Kindergarten through sixth grade, will be taking these tests beginning on September 7th and continuing for the following three weeks. Students should get a good night’s sleep, a healthy breakfast and be encouraged to give their best effort.

Upcoming Events

September 5

NO School
Labor Day

September 6

No School
Staff PD Day

September 13

School Picture Day!!
Time to SMILE :)

September 21

EARLY OUT
1 pm Dismissal

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

Haiku...now called PowerSchool!

As mentioned in the August Chatter, Haiku is the grade and communication system that all teachers in the school district will be using this school year. It was recently absorbed and will be called PowerSchool. In a standards-based learning environment where students demonstrate levels of mastery of content standards, grades take on a new meaning.

This is a system that allows teachers to communicate with students and parents in order to share details about a student’s learning rather than just a letter grade. However, if you cannot navigate through the pages, then not much communication can occur. You may contact your student’s homeroom/advisory teacher at any time to ask for clarification on how to use PowerSchool (formerly Haiku).

Additionally, on the district website, you can go to the “parents” tab, and one of the links there is “PowerSchool”, click on it, and it will direct you to an instruction page, as well as a parent introduction and a step-by-step screencast created by our technology integrationists, Bailey Gulley and Alli Waugh to help explain exactly how to access all the critical information about your student’s learning.

If you prefer a face-to-face training, we will be offering that as well on Tuesday, September 13th at 6 pm in the elementary computer lab (RSVP needed).

This is a wonderful, new grade management system, and will be a powerful tool for students, parents and teachers to be able to view individual components of a student’s learning so we can see exactly what the student is struggling with and provide guidance, or conversely, where they are excelling.

The system not only shows an overall grade, but levels of mastery (on a 1-4 scale) for standards and benchmarks within the course. Students and parents can see the calendar of upcoming projects, tests or activities, actual lesson material (videos, documents, rubrics, guidelines) and other announcements that are also on the class pages.

The former grade system, JMC, will be used as the district student management system, and your contact information is used to communicate with you. You may still access it to examine student attendance and lunch account balances.

PBIS BOOT CAMP

The first few days of school are often spent learning routines in classrooms to maximize learning and minimize lost time during transitions or for any behavior issues in the future. At Earlham, we believe in being proactive district-wide, and we use Positive Behavior Interventions and Support, or PBIS, to make sure that all students and teachers use a common language and have common expectations for behavior no matter where the student might be within the building in grades K - 8. Our school focus is on being “Respectful, Responsible and Proud”. To make the learning fun, our specials teacher hold a “boot camp” the first days and classes rotate through their stations getting reminders on behavior expectations that are also posted in each area.



Lunch in the Cafeteria!



Lunchtime is filled with the scents of good foods and the chattering of voices as students eat in one of four grade-banded lunch times. 3rd-5th eats first followed by Kindergarten - 2nd graders (pictured left). Then the 6th-8th graders from the 3rd floor arrive followed by the 9-12 high school students eating last. Parents are still welcome to come eat with their children as there is plenty of room between the rectangular and circular tables. Parents/guardians must simply sign in through the main office and get a “visitor pass” prior to heading to the cafeteria for lunch! The cafeteria also hosts breakfast each morning beginning at 7:30 AM. A reminder that no students should be in the building prior to that time unless they are with a teacher or coach.

FIRST WEEK ACTIVITIES

The first week of school is exciting for students, teachers, parents and our community. The first day, August 23rd, began with our annual district-wide flag-raising ceremony. All students surrounded



the flag pole, and local Earlham American Legion Post #158 donated a flag to the school and then did a formal flag raising with Kathy Hopkins, library associate, singing the national anthem. Mr. Wright, Superintendent, had a motivating message for students, teachers and others gathered and the school year officially began.

On Friday, all students and staff within the district wore red and went out to the football field for the annual All School picture. That photo will be available soon but a sneak peek at the middle school lunch shows the Cardinal spirit with a sea of red!



After a quick and smooth start to the year, students will enjoy a four day

weekend with Labor Day and the first full day staff professional development. The full day PD for staff generally falls on the first Monday of the month, but is pushed back one day due to the holiday weekend.

ADVANCE NOTICE ON DECEMBER CALENDAR CHANGE

The Iowa Energy has invited our Varsity Girls and Boys Basketball teams to play their games against Adair-Casey Guthrie Center (ACGC) on December 15th at Wells Fargo Arena. This means we will switch our Early Dismissal PD Day from December 14th to the 15th so that students will not miss any academic time in order to attend this event. More information to come in future Chatter issues.

From the Board Table

At their meeting on August 24, 2016, the Earlham School Board received reports from the building principals that the year is off to a great start! The professional development days were very successful and Back-To-School conferences and laptop rollout nights went very smoothly.

Mr. Sletten took the Board to the Band Room and displayed the new instruments that were purchased for the band this past summer. Those instruments included a tuba, a sousaphone, and a bass clarinet. The number of students in the high school marching band have increased to over 50 for this fall so additional instruments were needed. Mr. Sletten also displayed the piano that was purchased to be used for elementary music and the middle and high school vocal programs. Mr. Sletten also recognized Merry Johnson for her continued volunteering to repair the band uniforms. The uniforms are approximately 25 years old and will eventually need to be replaced.



Mr. Irving brought several FFA students to report on their recent activities and plans for future events to the Board. The students previewed a joint effort with the Winterset FFA for a Tractor Ride on September 10th . They recognized the FFA members who competed at the State Fair and updated the Board on sweetcorn sales. The FFA plans to donate the next picking of sweetcorn to the school’s food service program. The Board was also informed that a donation from Chicks with Checks will be used for some new tools for the shop. Finally, the Board approved an agreement for the FFA to work with Krause Holding apple orchard in which they plan to sell apples and make cider.

The next regular Earlham Community School Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14th at 6:00 p.m. in the school library.



Your 2016-17 School Board!
 Back Row (L to R): Julene Mutchler-McNeal, Jess Tiemeyer and Jan Fletcher. Front Row: Kathy Woolcott, Vice President & Teresa Waldron, President.

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.