

Teacher Talk

Department of Instruction

September, 2004

Volume 2, Issue 1



WELCOME BACK



The Department of Instruction welcomes you to a new school year! We are looking forward to working with and serving our teaching staff to further the academic achievement of our students.

The alignment of state standards with our courses of study in the four core content areas was completed last year. Our challenge now is to implement those standards focusing on formative classroom assessments to increase student learning.

How are formative classroom assessments different from state and national standardized tests? Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to promote student learning. This differs from assessments which are designed to serve the purposes of accountability and competence control in Ohio's classrooms.

Both types of assessment are important and proven effective in raising the standards of student achievement. Finding the proper balance between these necessary assessments is a difficult proposition for all educators in Ohio this year, especially in the 4th and 6th grade where students are still being tested on the old model curriculum.

As Rick Stiggins states in the most recent Phi Delta Kappan publication, "Classroom assessments provide a continuous flow of evidence of student mastery of the classroom level learning targets that lead over time to attainment of the desired achievement standards. As assessments *for learning*, they inform instructional decisions along the way to success. Standardized tests, on the other hand, provide periodic evidence of student mastery of the standards themselves."

That being said, the attached link for the 04/05 Ohio testing schedule will give you a clue to the extent of standardized assessment necessary for our school district this year.

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/proficiency/proficiency/dates2004-05.asp>

DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION

Director:
Lori Chandler

Program Coordinators:

Michelle Keller

Dale McRitchie

Barb Palmer

Carol Starrick

Secretary:

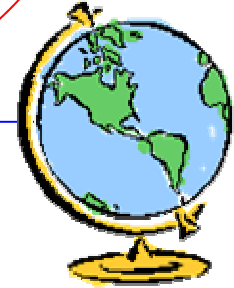
Laurie Hykes

NEW TESTS



Our **new tests** will be in grades:

- 1-3 Diagnostics
 - 3 Math
 - 4 Reading & Math
 - 5 Reading
 - 7 Math
 - 8 Reading & Math
 - 9 Practice OGT—all areas
 - 10 OGT — addition of Science, Citizenship and Writing
- 6th grade students will still receive all 5 areas of the Proficiency tests.



STANDARDS

Barb Palmer

Student-Involved Assessment:

A key piece of formative assessment is the involvement. All students need to know:

- * **Where am I?** (What do I know in this area? Teacher can provide pre-assessment).
- * **Where am I going?** (Teacher provides the target, indicator, or example of what it looks like).
- * **How do I get there?** (Teacher and student develop the path or steps to follow to get there).

Strategy change for science:

KWL is now THC!

- * What to you **Think**? In science we really don't know much, but we continue to build hypothesis. Research shows that this encourages students to freely share their ideas.
- * **How** can we find out? Although teachers have a plan it is important for students to be involved. How will they find out if what they think is "correct"?
- * What do we **Conclude**? What was learned based on the results of the activity. Student's conclusions can be used by a teacher to evaluate student understanding.

Preschool Science! *Peep and The Big Wide World* is on PBS (WGBH Boston) and has a corresponding interactive website developed for ages 3 to 5.

<http://www.peepandthebigwideworld>

Model Curriculum Lessons in Social Studies and Science Grades K-12 can be found on the ODE website under "Quick Links" in Academic Content Standards not in model curricula (IMS)!

ATTENTION TEACHERS

Medina County Library Can Make Your Life Easier

You want your students to read and research their assignments. We have tons of books and reference resources. A natural partnership? We think so !!

Here's a few resources the Medina Co. Library provides to help teachers.

Educator Cards allow you to check out items for professional use for up to 28 days.

CORE Collection, a list of more than 100 popular and classic titles that we carry dozens of copies of, so you can borrow from us for your students to read.

Call the Reference or Children's Department at 330-725-0588 with large assignments. We'll be ready for your students when they come in with a bounty of appropriate titles.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Carol Starrick

Don't forget.....

1. Staff Development Leave Grant **deadline is October 1st**. Forms are available in your building's office or from the Department of Instruction.
2. Five great opportunities for **study groups** (with or without graduate workshop credit) are being offered now. They are: *Research That Works in Schools*, *Student-Involved Classroom Assessments*, *Literacy/Fluency*, *Literacy/Word Study*, and *Pacing Your Social Studies and/or Science Curriculum*. Registration deadline is Sept. 20th. Registrants are responsible for purchasing their own books. Titles were listed on the flyers. Those flyers were sent through email this year. Additionally, each building should have one master copy posted in their office. Check with your building principal or contact Carol Starrick, ext. 3074.
3. Mark October 11, 2004 for a full day of professional development! It's going to be *terrific!* We are most fortunate to be able to welcome **Dr. Debra Pickering**, author and researcher, as our guest presenter. She will be speaking on Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement. If you want to check out her book, it's entitled *Classroom Instruction that Works*, published through ASCD. Full details for the day will be coming soon.



DISCOVERY TEAM

Michelle Keller

- * In late September, elementary and middle school teachers will be attending a workshop by Sally Duncan to learn how to create problems that address multiple indicators and how to implement common assessments in Math, assessments that can be used to promote student learning.

Changes in Discovery TEAM:

- * Sue Scalia will be serving sixth graders at Claggett and Root
- * Elementary consulting teachers will be traveling to middle schools to coordinate contests and competitions for seventh and eighth graders and to teach a math acceleration class and math compacting for 6th graders.

Discovery TEAM Goals:

1. Use data to improve identification, programming and services for gifted students.
2. CIP Goal– Assist teachers in the implementation and differentiation of standards based education with a focus in the content area of science
3. Integrate guidance lessons/activities with content areas.
4. Collaborate with **P.A.C.E.-T.E.A.M.** to facilitate communication with the community

TECHNOLOGY

Dale McRitchie

The district has been approved to participate in Ohio SchoolNet Plus round 7. SchoolNet Plus is the program that has provided the funds for the majority of the district's classroom computers. This year the program will fund the replacement of some of the grade 6 and 7 work stations at Root and Claggett Middle Schools. The units will be ordered this fall and placed in the classrooms that have the older machines. The replacement will happen when technician time is scheduled for your building.

The new technician schedule is located on the web @:
<http://www.mcsoh.org/boe/technology/techsched.html>

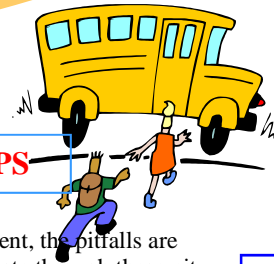
Teacher Talk

Department of Instruction

November 2004

Volume 2, Issue 2

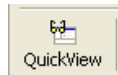
E-BUGS.....VIRUSES...SPYWARE...SPAM...POP-UPS



Let's face the facts of today's electronic environment, the pitfalls are here to stay. The problem is that we need to navigate through these pitfalls to accomplish our daily work. Users need to be aware of these terms and do their best to avoid them. If users cannot avoid them, then the reality of our situation is bleak. We have certainly experienced the results of a multi-virus/spyware/spam/pop-up attack. It left our system unusable (for some of you) for up to two weeks this past September. This problem was so extreme; we had to disable the network to clean each machine so it would not be re-infected by other infected machines on the network. E—bugs are gregarious, just as real bugs/viruses are in nature, they like to share and spread. Ironically, the best way to defeat these obnoxious critters is education. E-mail from your best friend,

spouse or your supervisor is not exempt from passing on a problematic bug. Web surfing, just like real surfing, has plenty of dangers and they are lingering; just out-of-sight, beneath the surface or in the background. A few simple rules to follow to lesson the possibility of getting infested/infected:

1. Never open an e-mail attachment from anyone unless you are expecting it.
 - a. Especially if it is a "Re:" or "Fwd:"
2. Delete all spam e-mail without opening it. Consider spam email to behave like weeds in your lawn or garden...you don't want or need them; however they keep coming back until you remove the entire root and then a bird flies by and it starts all over again.
 - a. One way to fight this is, do not use GroupWise QuickViewer. (It is located in the right side of the GroupWise window and when it is highlighted, it will automatically open your e-mail). The button looks like this



or this



To close QuickView click the button.

- b. To delete mail without opening it, when it is highlighted choose the delete key on your keyboard. It will find its way to the recycle bin.

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3. Never click anywhere in/on a Pop-up window, close it by holding down the Alt key and hitting the F4 key.
4. Avoid web sites that have numerous advertisements.
5. Follow the AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) guidelines.
6. [Get your own Virus posters from Central Command and study/post them.](#)
7. Ensure your Vexira VDF (virus definition file) is up-to-date.
 - a. Open Vexira, choose Help/About. A product information window will open, the fourth line down will read: VDF: v6.28.0.49, 02.11.2004. The last number in this line is the date. It should always be within a day of the current date. If you are outside of this date perform a manual update. Tools/Start Intranet Update...A blue hashed line will streak across the bottom of the Vexira window, indicating that you have started the update. To ensure your computer has been updated, wait about a minute and go back to the Help/About as above and check your VDF date.
8. If your computer is running slow or sluggishly, it may be advantageous to run a spyware software.

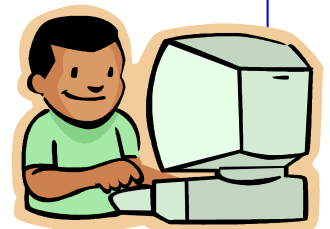
i.e. Adaware



spybot



Sky Sweeper



Checkout the following link, <http://www.mcsoh.org/boe/technology/ppt/ebugs.pps> It details our latest efforts to defend our system from outside attacks. Thanks—Dale By the way———choose open



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLANNING
LORI CHANDLER

As a result of the district’s Continuous Improvement Planning directives, the Department of Instruction has developed three major action plans relating to the most intensive improvement initiatives. All teams will begin their projects in November with a completion goal of March 25.

Projects 1 & 2—The Development of Common Assessments for Language Arts and Mathematics:

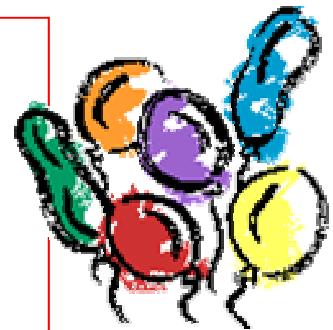
Two Language Arts development teams, K-4 & 5-6 and two Mathematics development teams, 5-7 & 8-10 will be established to develop common assessments. The purpose of these assessments will be to give formative assessment data to drive instruction and provide additional sources of student achievement data.

Project 3 – The Development of a District Intervention Plan for At-Risk Students:

A district committee has been formed to accomplish two tasks. The first goal is develop a plan for documenting our new diagnostic and achievement test results. The second goal is the development of a district-wide intervention plan which would standardize services and provide district accountability as required for No Child Left Behind.

LANGUAGE ARTS FLIP BOOKS ARE IN !!!!!

We have received the Language Arts Standards Flip Books and they will be distributed to all regular and special education teachers of language arts (K-12) through a variety of meetings. They are an excellent resource tool!



KEYS TO QUALITY CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

BARBARA PALMER

Assess accurately and use assessment to *benefit students*, not merely to grade and sort them. When designing assessments ask:

Why Asses?

- ~ What’s the purpose?
- ~ Who will use the results?

Assess What? What are the learning targets?

- ~ Are they clear?
- ~ Are they good?

Assess How?

- ~ What method?
- ~ Sampled how?
- ~ Avoid bias how?





THANK YOU

THANKS !

MICHELLE KELLER

- * Thanks to all of the consulting teachers and P.A.C.E.—T.E.A.M. representatives from each elementary building for their role in presenting at the parent meetings that were held for parents of gifted students to discuss gifted identification, the consulting teacher model, changes in services, the impact of further staff reductions, parent involvement and resources available.
- * The elementary consulting teachers will soon begin practice with the middle school academic challenge teams comprised of seventh and eighth grade students. The county competition will be held at Wadsworth Middle School on Saturday, March 12.
- * The Martin Essex School for the Gifted offers Ohio's top students a unique opportunity to participate in a one-week residential program that emphasizes leadership and social responsibility. The school will be held July 31—August 6 at The Ohio State University. Eleventh grade gifted students are eligible at no cost to them if selected to participate. Applications will be available in mid-December. Please contact me at ext. 3075 to recommend gifted eleventh grade students who demonstrate high levels of potential leadership, intellectual curiosity, academic ability and commitment to social responsibility.

Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities:

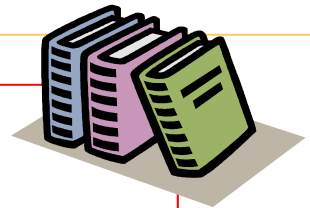
(Watch for individual flyers regarding each coming to your mailbox soon)

CAROL STARRICK

January 14—Study Group Formation—Just like we've run in past years. Select a book to study. Gather together a group. Meet on January 14 to learn requirements and to register for credit. Report out to entire group on May 9th. 1 hour credit available. Participants may take this open Study Group only twice.

February 12—Spend the day with Tim Rasinski, the author of *The Fluent Reader* and co-author of *From Phonics to Fluency* and *Effective Reading Strategies: Teaching Children Who Find Reading Difficult*. No credit is available for this one-day session; however, 6 Contact Hours are available for your professional development plan.

February 26—Spend the day with Dr. Evangeline Newton, co-author of a new word study series and director of the **Reading Section of the OhioRC** website. No credit is available for this one-day session; however, 6 contact hours are available for your professional development plan.

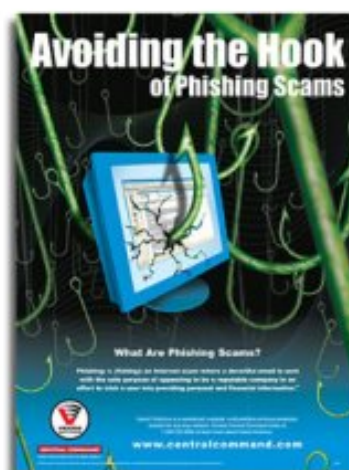
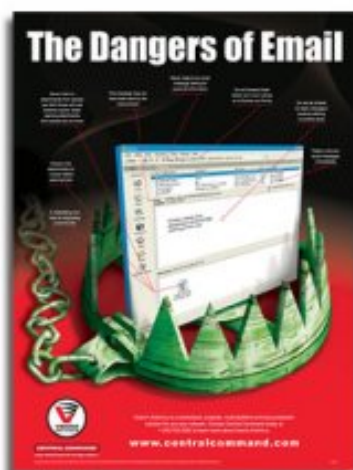


HAPPY HOLIDAYS



safe@school

EDUCATION PORTAL



Get All 3 Security Awareness Posters FREE! Register Below!

All information entered into the form must be complete and accurate in order to receive the 3 free posters.
Incomplete forms will be disregarded.



Contact Information

First name:

Last name:

Telephone:

Email:

School Information

Name:

Department:

Street address:

City:

State:

Zip/Postal code:

Country:

Telephone:

Fax:

Number of school computers:

Other Information

Where did you see this ad?

What antivirus software are you running?

For more information on the [Safe@School](#) educational program, please contact the Vexira Antivirus sales team at sales@centralcommand.com or by phone at +1 330 723 2062.

Back to [Education Portal](#)

Teacher Talk

Department of Instruction

January 2005

Volume 2, Issue 3



ASSESSMENT UPDATES

Lori Chandler

Welcome Back !! We are starting the new year with a variety of activities and opportunities relating to instruction and professional learning. First we would like to update you on our ongoing committees established as a result of the implementation of our Continuous Improvement Plan.

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Language Arts Common Assessments:

A committee of teachers representing 5th and 6th grades has been meeting to create several assessments which may be given each year prior to the March testing dates in order that students have the opportunity to practice taking achievement-type tests. In addition, these assessments will help us monitor student achievement of grade level indicators. Those working on this committee are: Judy Robinson, Carol Parsons, Terry Taylor, Terri Tye, Jeff Knox, Carol Starrick, Barbara Palmer

5th grade assessments are close to completion and 6th grade is well on its way. Assessments will be ready for piloting next school year.

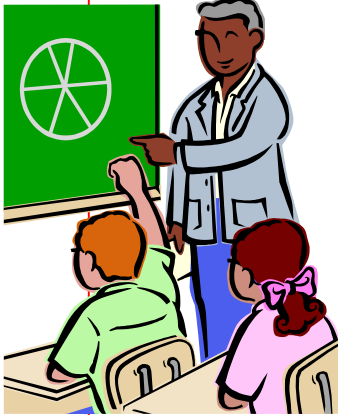
Mathematics Common Assessments:

A committee of 5th, 6th, and 7th grade teachers has been meeting to design a common assessment to be used prior to the achievement test in March. These tests will be based on the Sally Duncan Short Cycle Assessment style of questioning. Assessments will be piloted next year. Teachers involved in this project are: Vanessa Shriver, Drew Phillips, Craig Komar, Cindy Grice, Pat Sciarini, Jessie Pritchard, Karen Feskanovich, Barb Palmer, Michelle Keller.

District Intervention Plan

The Intervention Committee has been meeting and has created a new student accumulative record folder. This folder makes room for the new state-mandated testing requirements: kindergarten readiness tests, K-3 diagnostic tests, 3-8 achievement tests, OGT. The folder will be introduced with the new incoming kindergarten class next year. For all other students, insertion cards will be provided as needed for the recording of diagnostic/achievement test data. The Intervention Committee is now being expanded to look at all intervention services being provided across the district and to recommend the establishment of a coherent, consistent array of options for those students needing intervention. Committee members are: Peggy Poepelman, Janeen Ruprecht, Shayna Samosky, Jennifer Phillips, Tina Cassidy, Allison Aukerman, Kris Quallich, Julie Root, Mike Pallini, Mike Petrasek, Pat Paidas, Ed Roshong, Kathy Wetta, Carol Starrick, Julie Burke, Lori Chandler





ACHIEVEMENT PRACTICE TESTS

Barb Palmer

* Practice achievement tests for grades that will give the achievement this March are being developed by ODE and will be on their website this month or next.

[Http://www.ode.state.oh.us/proficiency/samples.asp](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/proficiency/samples.asp)

* In the meantime, the Sally Duncan Math Short Cycle Assessment Books are now in your media centers and can provide excellent practice on standards based questions in math. These questions are based on standards by grade level and cover grade 1 through 10. High School (9-10) teachers each have a copy of this book.

*

BALDWIN WALLACE COLLEGE FIELD EXPERIENCE

Looking for cooperating Teachers in the following areas: (25 hours—March 28 through April 29, 2005)

- * *Adolescent Literature* (EDU 341) - Grades 4-9
- * *Reading Instruction* (EDU 343) - Grades 4-9
- * *Assessment in Teaching and Learning* (EDU 340) - Grades 4-12
- * *Reading in the Content Area* (EDU 348) - Grades 4-12
- * *Middle Childhood Methods*
 - Social Studies (EDU 345) - Grades 4-9 and Special Ed. 4-9
 - Science (EDU 347) - Grades 4-9 and Special Ed. 4-9



GIFTED EDUCATION

Michelle Keller

- * Professional Development Opportunity—Dr. Jim Delisle will be presenting an educator workshop “Meeting the Needs of Gifted Children in School” on Friday, April 15 from 8:00—3:00 at the Galaxy Restaurant in Wadsworth. The registration fee is \$75.00. Consulting teachers have registration forms.
- * A “North East Ohio Winter Enrichment Opportunities For Students and Families” booklet is available in the Discovery TEAM display case in each building and on the Discovery TEAM web page. Included are toy and game lists, upcoming museum, theatre, nature, art and music experiences and opportunities for children and families.
- * The Medina City Schools Discovery T.E.A.M. and P.A.C.E.-T.E.A.M. (Parents Advocating Challenge in Education) have together produced the first issue of Discovery TEAM Dialogue—an electronic newsletter. This newsletter includes information, book reviews, parent tips, resources, upcoming programs, and website links parents may find useful. The newsletter is posted on the Medina City Schools website. The first issue is available by clicking on the following link: <http://www.mcsoh.org/boe/instruction/Gifted/Newsletters/0412.pdf> or go to
- * <http://www.mcsoh.org>, open Curriculum and Instruction, click on Gifted Education, click on Discovery TEAM Dialogue newsletter.
- * Iowa and CogAT testing for grades 2 & 5 will be held sometime during January 18-28. If you have any questions, you can contact Michelle Keller at ext. 3075 or Kris Quallich at ext. 3105.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Carol Starrick

1. We still have a few openings for the two Saturday workshops in February. If you are interested in attending, please contact Connie Kubis immediately at ext. 4390 to register. If you need information regarding the workshops, please contact Laurie Hykes, Department of Instruction (ext. 3070) to obtain a flyer.

Tim Rasinski on Fluency
February 12, 8:00—3:00, Blake Elementary

Evangeline Newton & Word Work/Vocabulary
February 26, 8:00—3:00, Blake Elementary

2. **Last call this year:**

Staff Development Leave Grants are **due February 1, 2005** in the Department of Instruction, Attn: Carol Starrick. Grant applications are available in all building offices or call Laurie Hykes, Dept. of Inst. (ext. 3070) for an application.



TECHNOLOGY

Dale McRitchie

Web developers who would like to continue using the district web server should visit the following link. Please fill out the form on-line then print the filled-out form and pass it on to your tech representative, technology mentor, or building principal for signature. Then it should be forwarded to technology. If not completed by February 1st, your Novell user rights to create web pages will be disabled.

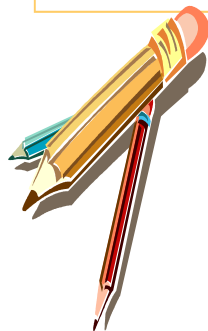
<http://www.mcsoh.org/boe/technology/Forms/WWWAUP.pdf>

TITLE NEWS

We recently underwent a review of all Title programs by state personnel. We were found to be in compliance with all legal mandates! A public thank you to all involved in getting ready for this on-site visit and for everyone's on-going efforts year-round to make our program the quality program that it is!

Fluency Guideline—from Gail Tomplins, *Literacy for the 21st Century: Teaching Reading & Writing in Grades 4 through 8*.

“Struggling Readers Need to Read and Write Fluently: Many struggling readers do not read fluently....It is essential that students have books to read at their instructional & independent reading levels and that they become fluent readers as quickly as possible so that they can focus their reading energy on understanding what they're reading....”



JAZZ UP NOTE-TAKING WITH COMBINATION NOTES

Even though your students may be intently taking notes during class, this doesn't mean that they're processing, storing or able to apply new information. That's why educational researcher and consultant **Robert Marzano** suggests students take combination notes.

This type of note-taking requires students to write down the definition for a concept as given by the teacher, draw a picture to remember it, and then summarize the concept in their own words.

You could also encourage students to include any questions that they have about the concept being discussed.

To the right is an example of how students can divide paper to accommodate combination notes.

Concept: In this space, students write down the exact definition given to them for a word or concept.	Picture example: Here, students draw their own picture about the concept. This gives them a visual way to remember it.
Summary: Students complete their notes by summarizing the concept in their own words.	



Teacher Talk

Department of Instruction



March 2005

Volume 2, Issue 4

TEST SECURITY Q & A

Lori Chandler and Julie Burke

As we enter the month of March and the process of implementing 21 state assessments in grades 3,4,5,6,7,8,9 and 10, it is important to review the security rules associated with Proficiency/Achievement testing. If you are in a grade/content area administering the test, please make sure you read your administration manual several days before the test and clarify procedures with your principal.

What security provisions are associated with state-wide testing?

Except for practice test materials or released tests, all state-wide tests while in the district (including any and all material developed for use in any operational test) are secure. It is not permissible to reproduce any of this secure material or cause it to be reproduced in any format. It is illegal to reveal test questions known to be on the state-wide tests to students who will be taking the tests. It is unethical and illegal to alter student responses or to assist a student to cheat in any other way. No secure material from any operational test may be released to students, to the media or to general public. Unauthorized persons may not be present during the state-wide test administration.

Regardless of the release of state-wide tests as public records, security while state-wide operational tests are in the district remains the same as in past years.

Who may see the actual tests during the administration period of the state-wide tests?

Tests will be serial numbered and wrapped in sealed packages. Only those people identified by the district as authorized should ever see the tests before, during, or after the administration of state-wide tests. Those individuals may include test coordinators, test examiners, and monitors, as well as students taking the tests. Unauthorized persons may not see the tests, nor may they take the tests. Coordinators are required to account for and return all secure used and unused materials. State-wide tests remain secure until the July 1 or July 16 release of the previous year's tests as public records requests.

May school districts keep copies or make photocopies of tests during the administration of state-wide tests in the school district?

No. All test booklets administered during the school year are subject to the same strict test security procedures as in the past—i.e., all tests are kept sealed until the day of the testing, serially numbered and tracked, and then returned to the scoring contractor.

Is it still ILLEGAL to release test questions to students who will be taking tests?

Yes. It is ILLEGAL to release to students any test questions known to appear on a test students will take. Persons who violate this prohibition will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law (e.g., teaching license may be suspended).

How do I prepare my room for testing?

Depending on the test being administered, staff should check for charts, maps, and other materials in the classroom that could assist students with test items. Those items should be removed or covered during testing. The guidelines follow the student indicators for a particular grade and subject being tested. What might be acceptable for a reading test might be unacceptable for a mathematics test.

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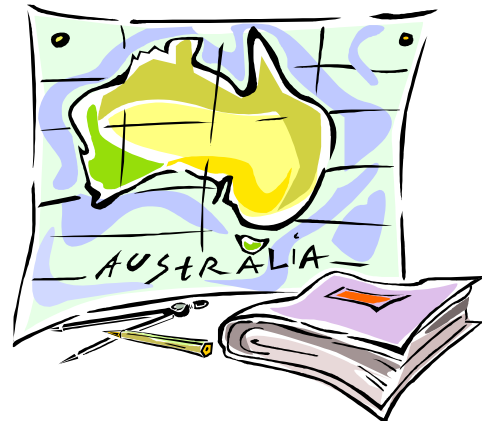
Carol Starrick

Secretary:

Laurie Hykes

Depending on the test you are giving, as a general rule—cover or remove:

- All maps, including weather maps with keys
- All math tables, charts, number lines, measurement conversions
- All vocabulary or grammar charts
- Governmental branches and responsibility charts
- Nutritional charts
- Science charts



Your do NOT have to remove:

- An alphabet chart
- General pictures and posters not related to student indicators
- The Ohio or American flag
- Test taking reminders or study skill charts

What are the consequences of test security violations?

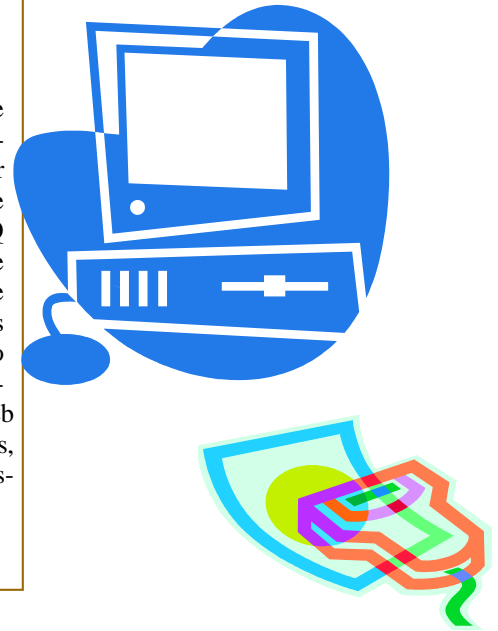
Any alleged test security violation is investigated by the local district and reported to the Department of Education within 10 days of determining that a test security violation has occurred. If it is determined that a violation occurred, any of several consequences may follow: one or more students' answer documents may not be scored; student scores may be invalidated; the district board of education, after appropriate procedures are followed, may suspend or terminate an employee found guilty of cheating or helping a student to cheat; the State Board of Education, following appropriate procedures, may suspend a certificate/license; and a law enforcement agency, following an appropriate investigation, may prosecute under the state criminal code.

MARCH 2005 - TESTING SCHEDULE						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Grade 6 Writing Proficiency Grade 7 Math Achievement Grade 8 Reading Achievement	8 Grades 3 & 4 Reading Achieve- ment	9 Grade 5 Reading Achievement Grade 6 Reading Profi- ciency Grade 8 Math Achieve- ment	10 Grade 3 Math Achieve- ment Grade 4 Writing Achievement	11 Grade 6 Math Proficiency	12
13	14 Grade 4 Math Proficiency Grade 6 Citizenship Profi- ciency Grade 10 OGT Reading	15 Grade 10 OGT Math	16 Grade 4 Citizenship Profi- ciency Grade 6 Science Profi- ciency	17 Grade 10 OGT Writing	18 Grade 4 Science Profi- ciency	19
20	21 Grade 10 OGT Science	22	23 Grade 10 OGT Social Studies	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

TECHNOLOGY

Dale McRitchie

In an effort to improve computer productivity and reducing risk while using district technical resources, the district will be moving to a new web filtering product. Technology will begin to deploy [NetIQ WebMarshal](#) upon our return from spring break. For most users/computers, this transition will be transparent. Acting as a gateway between the Internet and the network, NetIQ WebMarshal allows or denies access to the Internet. Computers that have problems accessing the internet will need to be adjusted by a technician before they will be able to gain access to the web. Following the deployment of this software, all systems requesting web access on the MCSOH network will go through the filtering server. This comprehensive solution supports Virus Scanning, URL Blocking and unique Real-time Content Analysis (RCA) of web pages. NetIQ WebMarshal is also fast and totally transparent for end users, even with on-demand virus scanning. This software upgrade will keep the district compliant to the [Children's Internet Protection Act \(CIPA\)](#).



GIFTED EDUCATION

Michelle Keller

- * "Summer Enrichment Opportunities" links for students in elementary, middle and high school are available on the Discovery TEAM web page. Go to <http://www.mcsoh.org> open Curriculum and Instruction, click on Gifted Education, click on Summer Enrichment Opportunities 2005. Please refer parents and students to these resources for the summer. Descriptions and contact information for the camps and institutes are available.
- * Medina High School's Academic Challenge Team earned second place in the Medina County's Nineteenth Annual Academians' Tournament hosted by Medina General Hospital. Congratulations to Matthew Patrick, Ashley Johnson, Craig Sanford, John Ward, Elizabeth Rapalee, Trevor Dasch, Nick Hansen, and Bridget Kelley and their advisor Jessica Niemantsverdriet. The Medina County Middle School Academic Challenge Competition will be held at Cloverleaf Middle School on Saturday, March 12th. We have a team from Claggett and from Root who are meeting with consulting teachers before school and at lunchtime to practice for the competition. You are invited to attend this event. Round 1 begins at 8:45 AM and the awards assembly begins at 1:15 PM.
- * Coordinator meetings with Kindergarten teachers are taking place to discuss the state mandates for gifted identification and the procedures for identification of students. This year kindergarten teachers will be making referrals as they have always done. As a result of the levy failure in November, there has been a reduction in using individual testing at the kindergarten level to identify students. Instead, students referred will be tested in small groups by consulting teachers using a group ability test. This will occur sometime in the fall of first grade.

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

We have recently completed our first session of diagnostic assessments for all students in grades 1-3. Without a doubt, this has been a learning experience for everyone involved. We will be pulling our grade level trainers back together during the month of March to evaluate the process and to clarify questions and concerns.

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Carol Starrick

Coming this week to certificated and classified mailboxes are informational flyers for teachers about our summer school camps for elementary and middle school students. The flyers offer summer work opportunities for teachers and paraprofessionals to teach/assist in one of our camps. We are also looking for coordinators for each camp. This summer we will be offering the following camps:

- * **Camp READ** (for Pre-K through Pre-3rd)..... **June 13—July 1**
(plus Pre-1st—Pre 3rd only return for one week jump-start
prior to the start of school).....**Aug. 15—19**
- * **Camp SUCCESS** (for Pre-4th through Pre-5th).....**June 13—July 1**
- * **Camp ACHIEVE** (math & reading for Pre-6th through Pre-9th)
June 13—June 24



Please make sure to read these memos carefully and to return the sign-up portion as soon as possible if you are interested in working this summer.

Elementary teachers will be asked to nominate students for Camp READ and Camp SUCCESS prior to spring break. Fifth grade teachers and middle school counselors will be asked to nominate students for Camp ACHIEVE in early April.

SOME TIPS FOR GETTING KIDS INTO A HEALTHY TEST MODE

Barb Palmer

- * **Breakfast**—Good nutrition for test day starts with a protein packed breakfast. Recommend to your kids that if at all possible they start the day with eggs (if not allergic) and whole wheat toast and save the *Captain Crunch* for weekends!
- * **Physical Activity**—We have known for some time that brain responses are better after a period of physical activity. Physical activity especially movements that *cross the body's midline* elevate brain chemicals and provides oxygen to the brain. Perhaps before a test, teachers could initiate a little up and out of your seat activity. Your P.E. teacher may have many suggestions.
- * **Breathe**—Deep breathing exercises may help reduce stress and tension. An old fashioned tension reliever is just to stop what you are doing, sit down, close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing for a minute. (This works for teachers as well!)
- * **Read Aloud**—This stress relieving tip works especially well with younger students. Try to schedule a short read-aloud to calm kids before beginning a test. The idea is that they relax their muscles, concentrate on breathing and visualization. These ideas come from *A Boy and a Bear: The Children's Relaxation Book*.

LPDC INFORMATION

Guidelines for accepting credit for course work taken outside the United States

*Any credits derived from university-sponsored tours/travel within or outside of the United States **must** be pre-approved.*

Credit will be granted for course work taken at a university outside of the United States after a course-by-course evaluation has been completed by World Education Services (WES) and submitted to Medina City Schools. WES is a nonprofit organization specializing in foreign credential evaluations. The Ohio Department of Education Office of Teacher Certification recommended the use of WES. In fact WES is the agency that ODE requires individuals to use to have foreign transcripts evaluated. The URL for WES is: <http://www.wes.org/evaluations/certification.asp> The course-by-course evaluation report will show the amount of credits converted to semester hours to be granted for the foreign credits received. If you are in a program that will confer a degree such as a master's degree or a doctorate, movement on the salary schedule will only be granted after a credential evaluation has been completed by World Education Services and the United States equivalence of that degree is documented.

It is the sole responsibility and financial obligation of the employee to work with World Education Services and the foreign university to have the credentialing work completed and the proper documentation submitted to Medina City Schools. All contractual timelines remain the same

Teacher Talk

Department of Instruction



May 2005
Volume 2, Issue 5

BEST PRACTICE IN STANDARDS BASED LESSON PLANNING

A committee of teachers and administrators met this year to look at our current administrative guidelines and practices regarding lesson planning. As a group, we reaffirmed that lesson plans are primarily a tool for the teacher, but do document instruction and serve as an accountability tool for administration. The format of lesson plans will look different according to a specific grade level, content, targeted student indicator(s), duration of lesson, and individual preferences of the teacher. However, certain components support the instructional needs of all students.

District instructions for lesson plans are currently a part of the MCS administrative guidelines #3270. The majority of the guidelines will remain the same and the change in components will be highlighted in red.

DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION

Director:
Lori Chandler

Program Coordinators:

Michelle Keller

Dale McRitchie

Barb Palmer

Carol Starrick

Secretary:

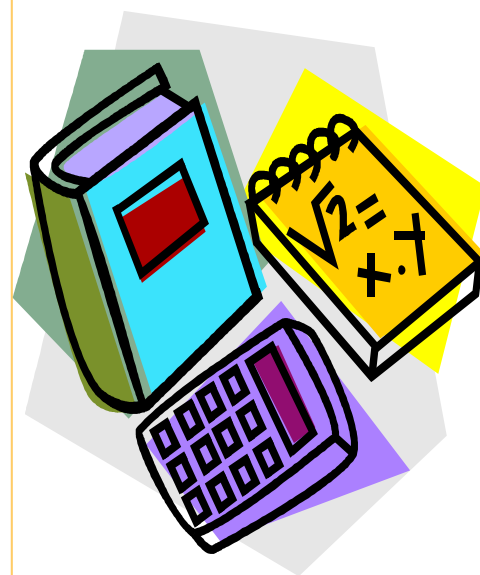
Laurie Hykes

Parts B., C., & D., remain the same as in the past.

- A. Each lesson plan should contain, in addition to whatever else a teacher may wish to include, the following elements:
1. **Pre-assessment information for understanding of prior knowledge***
 2. **Student indicator (s) addressed** (change from outcomes)
 3. **Evidence of differentiation**
 4. **Tasks/Resources** (change from needed resources)
 5. **Post-assessment information***
- B. Lesson plans for individualized programs should reflect a general overview and purpose of the instructional program based on the Course of Study and appropriate student indicators. Individual student records may serve as an integral part of the lesson plan.
- C. A copy of the weekly plan is to be submitted to the principal prior to the following week for review by appropriate administrative and supervisory personnel.
- D. Lesson plans as well as adequate directions are to be provided for substitutes so they can continue the ongoing program as closely as possible.

* Pre/post assessment can be for a single lesson or part of an extended unit.

Check our the MCS web page for a variety of lesson plan templates you can download and use. They are located under Curriculum and Instruction and then Teacher Resources.



KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Julie Burke

Kindergarten registration is scheduled for Medina City Schools the week of May 16-20. All registration will take place at the Medina City Recreation Center.

This school year, the state of Ohio has developed a brief assessment tool that we will use during our registration process. The assessment is called the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L). The assessment is made up of activities that include:

- * Answering who, what , when, why and how questions
- * Repeating sentences
- * Identifying rhyming words
- * Responding to a given word that sounds the same (rhyming production)
- * Identifying letters
- * Listening and identifying the beginning sounds of words

The KRA-L has been designed to provide kindergarten teachers and districts information about children entering kindergarten in order that they may prepare to support the growth of all students. Scores from the KRA-L will be reported to the Ohio Department of Education. All districts in the state of Ohio are required to administer the assessment by the end of the first six weeks of school. Many districts across the state are using the KRA-L as their screening tool for kindergarten registration.

Make-up KRA-L screenings in Medina City Schools will occur on the afternoon of August 29th in the kindergarten student's home school. Kindergarten teachers will be scheduling these appointments with families that register over the summer.

COMPUTER HELP EDICATE/COMPUTER 101

Dale McRitchie

1. Please refrain from emailing technicians directly and from stopping them in the halls to request work to be done. Go through the proper channel and advise your technology mentor, secretary, etc....and have them complete a work request with all of the pertinent information.
2. Keep track of your passwords; we don't know them.
3. When logging on at school.....DO NOT place a check in the "workstation only" box (under your user name and password).

Web Marshall Stats:

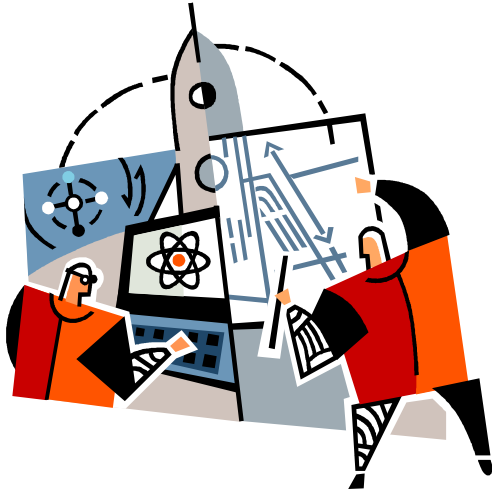
Web Sites visited the week of May 2nd: **148,516**

Top Three Visited Sites:

- #1. www.google.com 1066 users visited it 4069 times,
spending 134 HRS: 44 MIN: 18 SEC on the site
- #2. www.yahoo.com 371 users visited it 1364 times,
spending 19 HRS: 12 MIN: 03 SEC on the site
- #3. www.addictinggames.com 143 users visited it 786 times,
spending 31 HRS: 58 MINS: 43 SEC on the site

* btw # 3 has been blocked





DO YOU LOVE TEACHING SCIENCE?

Barb Palmer

Are you interested in becoming a “Science Curriculum Expert”?

- * Next school year, I am planning to meet once a month for 1/2 day with a primary and an intermediate teacher from each elementary building who would like to work on science curriculum. Our goal will be to raise the science understanding of our students along with science achievement. Subs will be provided for this work.
- * Middle school 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science teachers from both middle schools will also be invited to participate.
- * If you are interested in representing your building please let your building principal know as soon as possible so that we can set the wheels in motion. Any questions, please phone or email Barb.

LITERACY

Carol Starrick

DRA Scores are due in the computer by June 1st. If you need help, please contact your Technology Mentor, your Literacy Mentor, or the Department of Instruction.

Diagnostic classroom score sheets must be turned in to your building secretary on check-out day in June. Diagnostic scores should also be recorded on individual student record cards which should be inserted into the permanent accum folders. These scores are required for:

- ~ Kindergarten = only on new move-in students (within 30 days)
- ~ 1st & 2nd grade = on all students (including new move-in students)
- ~ 3rd grade = on all students (including new move-in students)

Camp Read (Pre K-Pre 3rd), Camp Success (Pre 4th-Pre-5th), and Camp Achieve (Pre 6th-Pre 9th)
all begin June 13th

Registrations are still being taken for each of these camps. If you have someone you recommended for camp but they have not yet enrolled, perhaps a personal phone call or note might encourage them to register. We want to maximize our summer support for students. Camp Coordinators this year are:



Camp Read—Traci Swantek, Blake
Camp Success—Erin Simpson, Blake
Camp Achieve—Cindy Farver, Claggett

Questions about these camps? Call Carol Starrick for Camp Read and Camp Success questions and call Barb Palmer for questions about Camp Achieve.

SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Several professional development opportunities are available in the district this summer.

June 20-23, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.—SIRI-Focus on the First R, A.I. Root

June 20-23, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.—SIRI-Standards, Diagnostics & Lesson Design, A.I. Root

June 20-23, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.—SIRI-Adolescent Literacy, A.I. Root

August 12 & 19, 8:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m.—Two Fridays in August: Literacy, Canavan 1st Friday with **Dr. Tim Rasinski** on Fluency and 2nd Friday with our own In-House Experts on multiple literacy topics

Registration for SIRI must be made through the East Regional School Improvement Team. Registration forms are available in the Dept. of Instruction. Information regarding *all* SIRI Institutes in Ohio may be found online at <http://webapp2.ode.state.oh.us/STARS/>.

Informational flyers and registration forms for the workshop entitled Two Fridays in August including Dr. Tim Rasinski's presentation on fluency will be distributed in mailboxes in mid-May.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Michelle Keller

The Group Testing Committee met on April 13, 2005. Members of the committee included Marlene Argabright, Julie Root, Renee Albright, Traci Lynn, Gail Wagner, Jodi Dobben, Diane Petrusek, Terri Noe, Jo Maurer, Kathy Wetta, Kris Quallich, Mitch Keller, and Ed Roshong. The purpose of the committee was to look at all mandated testing that occurs in the district and make decisions regarding grade levels and best times during the year to administer the Iowa/CogAT.

We reviewed reasons for using nationally normed tests and the Ohio Administrative Code for Identification of Gifted Children. Criteria we used for making decisions regarding whole grade levels to test included: equal access to screening and assessment by all district children, testing areas that correspond to gifted service, testing when there is a major transition and when service begins. We considered equity issues, state mandated criteria for identifying gifted children, and usefulness of the information to stakeholders in terms of learning.

Committee Decisions:

Iowa/CogAT testing will continue in grades 2, 5, and 7. These decisions will remain in effect for two years after which time the committee will reconvene to review.

Second grade teachers will test students in January as students are more mature and research indicates that results are more reliable the closer the student is to eight years old. Cognitive, reading and math areas will be tested. Reviewing the data, we determined that testing in science and social studies was not cost efficient in terms of identification and service in 2nd grade. This decision will reduce the time needed for testing from 440 minutes to 345 minutes.

Fifth and seventh grade teachers will test in the fall. Reasons include: Teachers could use test results along with common assessments to determine if and what kind of intervention is needed for learning before achievement tests in March; Iowa/CogAT schedule of testing will not conflict with the achievement testing; and January and February are the best times to capitalize on instruction and prepare students for ODE achievement/diagnostic testing in March and the group testing takes time to administer at this crucial teaching time. Testing in all areas in fifth grade and seventh would provide educators with several years of normed test information to make valid comparisons across content areas and over time periods to assist with decisions regarding service options and course selections in content areas for students transitioning to middle and high school.

We brainstormed ideas to improve the testing procedures and how to use the information gained more effectively. The representative from your building has that information to share if you are interested and can answer questions you may have regarding the decisions discussed. Thanks to all those members who contributed their time and expertise to this process.

Iowa/CogAT testing schedule 2005-2006 school year

2nd grade:

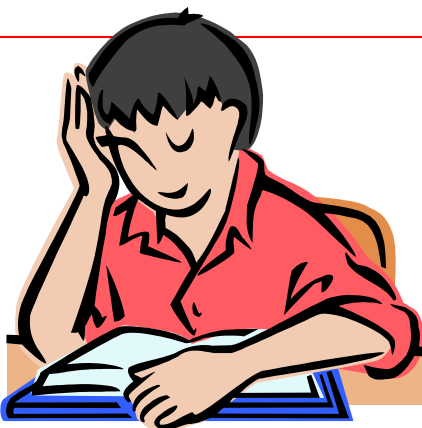
January 9-13, 2006 Testing

January 17-19 Makeups
January 20 Test pick-up

5th and 7th grade:

October 3-7, 2005 Testing

October 10-14 Make-ups
October 17 Test pick-up



ENTRY—YEAR PROGRAM

It appears that we will probably have a few new teachers next year and therefore we will be looking for mentors for each new teacher. Interest flyers will be distributed in your mailboxes mid-May. If you are interested in being a mentor next year, please complete the form and return to Carol Starrick in the Department of Instruction. Remember you **must** have completed Pathwise Training in order to apply. The New Teacher/Mentor Meeting will be held on August 17, 2005.

HAVE A WONDERFUL
SUMMER