

Board at Work

News from the Pattonville School District Board of Education

November 26, 2003

Evaluation of transfer program shows progress

AN evaluation of the student voluntary transfer program with the city of St. Louis shows a high level of satisfaction among Pattonville's transfer families. On a recent survey, nearly nine out of every 10 parents of students in the program indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied with the program. A majority also indicated their child felt welcome in school.

Pattonville has participated in the voluntary transfer program since 1982. The district currently has 338 students enrolled in the program in grades kindergarten through 12, which accounts for slightly more than 5 percent of Pattonville's student population.

The district formed an African-American Achievement Task Force in 1999-2000 to review performance data of minority students in the district, examine research regarding academic achievement within population groups and to implement strategies that would support raising the academic bar and closing the achievement gap that exists between white and black students.

The evaluation shows that Pattonville has been successful in narrowing that achievement gap at the elementary level, but more remains to be done for students at all grade levels, said Dr. John Heskett, assistant superintendent for pupil services.

These recommendations were made for continuing to improve the program:

1. Conduct follow-up surveys of transfer students who withdraw from the program and share information with school improvement teams;
2. Support school improvement teams' efforts as they develop strategies to implement the Minority Academic Achievement Report with emphasis on creating high expectations for students, encouraging students to take more rigorous coursework, establishing systems to identify early on students who are having difficulty and finding ways to support and recognize strong academic results for African-American students; and

Continue to emphasize African- American achievement in schools' MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) improvement plans.

Board meeting nets highest attendance yet

A recent meeting hosted by the Pattonville Board of Education with its constituents netted the highest attendance in its five-year history. Approximately 80 residents of the district – parents, non-parents and students – recently attended the Board Focus Groups, an event which began as a way to involve residents who might not normally attend discussions with the board. The participants were selected at random using the district's parent database, high school student database, as well as voter registration records from the St. Louis County Board of Election Commissioners. Invitees were sent a personal letter of invitation from the board. Those who attended heard an overview about the district before breaking into small groups with individual board members to discuss topics related to student achievement, parent involvement and other issues important to Pattonville.

Questions posed to the participants were developed by the Pattonville Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) Steering Committee to help in formulating an updated strategic plan for the district. Input from this evening will be shared with CSIP subcommittees, made up of parents, students and staff, as they formulate suggested plans to address student achievement, school improvement planning and critical issues facing the district. Input will also be shared with principals and other administrators in the district to use as part of evaluations conducted on various Pattonville schools and programs throughout the year.

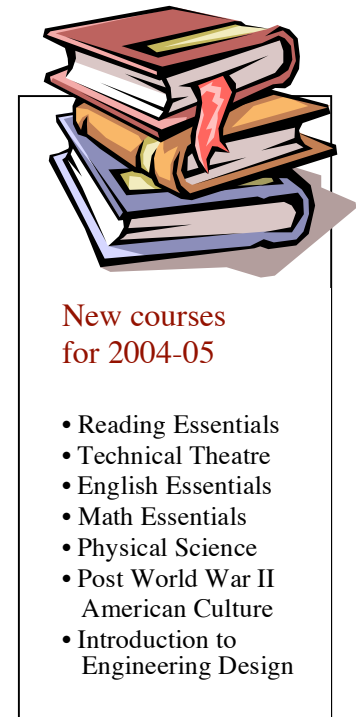
A survey of participants showed that 100 percent felt the topics of discussion were relevant and 97 percent felt the event was valuable. Out of several questions asked of the participants, one asked what participants liked about Pattonville. The greatest response centered on programs Pattonville offers for students – from the A+ program at Pattonville High School to technology in the schools. Second was the quality of the staff, followed by communication (whether through the media or between parent and teachers) and low class sizes.

High school course changes approved

The Pattonville Board of Education on Nov. 25 approved course changes for the 2004-05 school year for Pattonville High School. The changes included the addition of seven courses: Technical Theatre, Reading Essentials, English Essentials, Math Essentials, Physical Science, Post World War II American Culture and Introduction to Engineering Design.

The following courses were deleted: four Boys Town Reading programs, Power Reading I and II, Understanding Myself and Others, Math Analysis I and II, Introduction to Chemistry and Physics, Western Civilization and World History I. Courses receiving revisions were Advanced Health, Concepts of Earth and Universe, Concepts of Force and Motion, Topics: The Civil War, Themes in American History, Themes in World History and World History II.

The reading courses were deleted and Reading Essentials added as a required course for students in grades 9 through 11 who are more than one grade level below in reading. Technical Theatre was added as an elective. Math Analysis courses were phased out due to the new math curriculum. Introduction to Chemistry and Physics was replaced by Physical Science. In social studies, the Western Civilization curriculum is currently being taught in AP European History. In addition, students are currently required to take World History I for a full year and World History II for a full year. The revision of World History I and II will result in a new curriculum configuration so that ninth grade students will take Themes in American History and Themes in World History. Tenth grade students will take Modern World History. This curriculum alignment will support continued improvement of student performance on the Missouri Assessment Program. Finally, Introduction to Engineering Design is the second-year course in the new pre-engineering program at Pattonville High School.



MAP testing plan revised

The Pattonville Board of Education approved a revision to Pattonville's annual testing plan during its Nov. 25 board meeting.

Under the revisions, the following Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests will be administered in spring 2004:

- Elementary – Communication arts and mathematics;

- Middle School – Communication arts, mathematics and science; and
- High School – Communication arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

Pattonville established the new schedule after conferring with principals and staff members. Missouri stopped requiring testing in science and social studies due to budget cuts, and when the budget improves, Missouri plans to resume testing in these areas. Science will continue to be tested at the middle school and high school, as well as social studies at the high school, in order to continue the focus on improving achievement in those areas at those grade levels and in order to help the district meet state standards measured on the state’s Annual Performance Report (APR) for Pattonville.

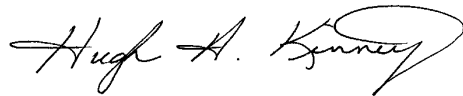
Kinney's Corner

An Update from Superintendent Hugh Kinney

Here’s a look at what’s happening in Pattonville:

- Congratulations to Pattonville’s newest National Board Certified Teachers: **Amy White** and **Phyllis Pasley** at Willow Brook and **Pat Stewart** at Pattonville Heights. They are among nine currently working in Pattonville. These teachers completed a rigorous development process that will have a great impact in the classroom. This is a wonderful growth opportunity for all teachers who undertake this process, and we commend you all.
- We had a great staff development day on Nov. 14. Staff took this time to review test data to determine our strengths and weaknesses and work on ways to improve instruction for increased student achievement. Thanks for all your hard work.
- Kudos go out to our student vocal performers from Pattonville High School and Parkwood Elementary who are entertaining the business community at the Maryland Heights Chamber of Commerce Holiday Gala on Dec. 10. This event will help the chamber’s education foundation raise funds for scholarships for Pattonville students.

This week our schools are filled with our students’ grandparents and special friends making their annual pilgrimage to our schools to help celebrate Thanksgiving a little early. This is a great time for our community to come and see what wonderful things are happening in our schools for our children and for us to show our appreciation – our thanks – to our community for its support throughout the year. As we go into the Thanksgiving holiday, I wish everyone a peaceful respite with family and friends.



Business Bits

Paying the bills

The Pattonville Board of Education on Nov.25 approved paying:

- \$3,817.75 to Kohn, Shands, Elbert, Gianoulakis and Giljum for legal services.

Policy/procedure updates

The Pattonville Board of Education on Nov. 25 approved the following:

- **Policy EBBA (First Aid)** – The second paragraph was reworded to read, “Each principal is responsible to have a process in place in the building for the care and supervision of ill or injured persons. The nurse or other qualified personnel shall provide immediate care of any ill or injured person and administer emergency first aid.”
- **Policy EBBB (Accident Report Forms)** – The first paragraph was reworded to read, “In order that proper measures may be taken to avoid recurrence of accidents, written reports will be prepared by the school nurse on all accidents occurring on school premises during the school day and by the designated sponsor of a school-sponsored activity after school hours.”
- **Procedure GDBC-R-5 (Support Staff Workers’ Compensation)** – A minor word was changed.
- **Procedure GDCA-R (Vacancy Postings and Employee Selection/Transfer)** – A minor word change was made.
- **Procedure GDFH-R-2 (Procedures for Transportation Department Field Trips)** – The following sentence was removed: “All field trips are subject to the approval of the assistant to superintendent for curriculum/instruction.” Item number four in the list of procedures was reworded to read, “Every effort shall be made to schedule day field trips between 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to utilize regular drivers. Evening field trips on weekdays will normally depart on or after 4 p.m. On early dismissal days, evening field trips may leave earlier.” In item number seven, “assistant to superintendent for curriculum/instruction” was replaced by “building principal or secretary.” Item number 14 was reworded to read, “When a field trip exceeds the specified time by 15 minutes, it should be reported by the driver in writing on the trip sheet to the router/dispatcher.”

Other Actions

The Pattonville Board of Education on Nov. 25 approved:

- Revisions to the middle school family and consumer science curriculum.

Bid Awards

The Pattonville Board of Education on Nov. 25 approved the following bid awards:

- \$8,130 to McCann Pest Control for the renewal of a pest exterminating and rodent control agreement;
- \$8,352 to Tech Electronics for fire alarm testing and inspection;
- \$5,400 to Industrial Soap for electric burnishers (high speed buffers);
- \$17,820 to Interface Security for alarm system monitoring and maintenance service; and
- \$19,482.55 to D&H Distributing for calculators.

New Hires

- **Jon Cordes**, Title I paraprofessional, Bridgeway
- **Sara Haag**, paraprofessional, Parkwood
- **Anne Freeman**, Title I paraprofessional, Remington
- **Joy Floyd**, paraprofessional, Rose Acres
- **Gregory Adam**, paraprofessional, High School
- **Amy Fitzgerald**, paraprofessional, High School
- **Angela Huckaba**, paraprofessional, High School
- **Colleen Mahon**, paraprofessional, High School
- **Karolyn Florence**, TV production teacher, High School

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