# Valley Heights News & Notes



February 2018

# **The Positive Spin**

Let's take a look on the BRIGHT SIDE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS. Valley Heights is having an outstanding school year. Blue Rapids Elementary School has been recognized as a National Title I Distinguished School. The High School Girls Volleyball team placed third in the state this past fall. FFA members recently celebrated National FFA week and provided many services to the staff and community. Our newly formed Robotics team has qualified for a regional competition and proving to be highly competitive. We could list many more positive things occurring in all of our buildings. We are proud of our students and staff and we expect more positives to occur the rest of this school year.

In light of the positives, we recently had numerous negative incidents in public schools at the national and local level. Valley Heights recently dealt with one of these negative occurrences, and we have been successful in investigating and applying consequences for negative behavior. What we accomplished was to not only deal with the incident, but we were also able to change the direction of a student's life in a positive way. We were very fortunate that no real serious threat took place, and at no time were our students and staff in any danger of being harmed.

We live in a society that has abandoned mental health services that were commonplace not too many years ago. This has hampered efforts for families and youth to deal with mental illness issues. We now have a crisis in this country of under serving our emotionally disturbed. Schools are dealing with a number of issues that require intense emotional support for our youth and their families. Until we as a society decide to reverse this direction, unfortunately, more negative incidents will occur in our schools.

Valley Heights takes pride in the way we have ramped up security systems in our buildings with keeping doors locked and a central point of entry for visitors. We have video surveillance in two of our buildings and will continue to look to improve in this effort. We spent time this fall updating our crisis plan, and all staff members have access to documents to assist them in providing "what to do" in case of a crisis. Although not perfect, the crisis plan does address a number possible scenarios. We are always looking to improve our crisis plan as we always have the safety and welfare of all staff and students at the forefront.

We appreciate the support of parents and community members as we continue to look for ways to improve our school system. We believe we are providing the best and safest education possible for our students. We encourage everyone to help us continue to keep our precious commodity, our children, safe and happy not only in school but in our community.

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www.valleyheights.org

~ John Bergkamp
Superintendent of Schools

# Valley Heights Junior/Senior High School

# **Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences have been scheduled and will be held on Monday, March 5th, and Tuesday, March 6th. The conference scheduled for March 5th is by invitation where some parents have been invited to come and visit with teachers about their students. We invite all parents to come and visit teachers in the gym for conferences on Tuesday, March 6th, from 4:00—7:00 pm.

## **Driver Education**

Driver Education will again be hosted by Valley Heights High School. There will be a meeting for eligible students and their parents on Tuesday, March 6th, at 6:30 pm in the Valley Heights JR/SR High commons area. Students must be 14 years old by June 1, 2018, to enroll in driver education. The deadline to sign up for the course will be Tuesday, March 13th. The cost of the course is \$150, payment due by March 13th, and space is limited. Therefore, those who sign up and have paid their fees first will be given the first opportunity. The course will last for four weeks (ending April 20th) and will begin on Friday, March 16th. The driving session will begin in early June.

### **State Assessments**

The Kansas State Assessment dates have been set for Valley Heights JR/SR High School. Students in grades 7th, 8th, 10th, and 11th will be tested this year. Attendance and promptness to school is very important during this time. Also, please help make sure students are getting plenty of sleep and eating healthy meals to assure a focused mind. Classroom interruptions will also be very strict during the testing sessions. Below is a list of the testing sessions.

<b>Grade:</b> 8th, 11th	<b>Test:</b> Social Studies	<b>Date:</b> March 13, 15	Class Period: 1st, 3rd, 5th
10th	Language Arts	March 27, 28, 29	3rd, 6th
10th	Math	April 2, 6	4th, 7th
8th	Science	April 9, 12	2nd, 4th
7th, 8th	Language Arts	April 16, 19	1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th
11th	Science	April 23, 24	3rd
7th, 8th	Math	April 24, 25	2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th

# **Counselor's Corner**

# **Train the Brain**

There is a strong emphasis on social-emotional learning at Valley Heights as well as across the state. This is not just one more thing added to our plate. As I heard at one presentation, it IS the plate. Learning cannot take place unless students are emotionally ready.

According to an article published by the Kansas Counseling Association, there is concern that many of our kids today come to school emotionally unavailable for learning. They may be bored, feel entitled, and have little patience and have few real friends. There are probably a number of reasons for this including technology, a culture of instant gratification, and the desire to make our kids happy at all costs.

Where there is a concern, however, there are also solutions. We are identifying social emotional needs and implementing strategies as well as teaching all students social emotional skills. As a partner in the child's education, parents can help also. The following suggestions come from Victoria Proody, OT:

# Limit technology, and reconnect with your kids emotionally

- Surprise them with flowers, share a smile, put a love note in their backpack or under their pillow, dance together
- Have family dinners, board game nights, go biking

# Train delayed gratification

- · Make them wait!! "I am bored" can lead to creativity
- Gradually increase the wait time between "I want" and "I get"
- Limit constant snacking

# Don't be afraid to set limits. Kids need limits to grow happy and healthy!

- · Make a schedule for meal times, sleep times, technology time
- Think of what is GOOD for them—not what they WANT/DON'T WANT

# Teach your child to do monotonous work from early years, as it is the foundation for future workability.

- They can participate in age appropriate household chores
- Be creative. Initially make it stimulating and fun so their brain associates it with something positive.

# **Teach social skills**

Teach them turn taking, sharing, losing/winning, compromising, complimenting others, using "please" and "thank you".

Life is a learning experience. None of us is born with these skills—they have to be taught and modeled. We must train the brain.

# **Spring Events**

MARCH	
5-8	Spring Parent/Teacher Conference Week
	All School PLC Dismissal @ 2:05
	P/T Day   No School
	Daylight Savings Time Begins
14	BOE Monthly Meeting   5:00 pm
	Spring Break
	All School PLC Dismissal @ 2:05
	Good Friday   No School
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APRIL	
1	Easter
	All School PLC Dismissal @ 2:05
13	Spring Sports pictures
	JR/SR PROM/After-Prom
	All School PLC Dismissal @ 2:05
	BOE Monthly Meeting   5:00 pm
20	FFA Banquet
	FFA District Banquet
25	NHS Banquet
26	Highland Art Day
30	Kindergarten Parent Meeting   6:30 pm
MAY	
	All School PLC Dismissal @ 2:05
	HS Athletic Banquet   6:30 pm
3	Play Day
	Forensics Night   6:30 pm
4	Forensics Night   6:30 pm Staff MTSS Training   No School
8	Spring Fling
	Awards Night
	Seniors Last Day
	PreSchool & KinderPrep Last Day
	Graduation   2:00 pm
	End-of-Year Award Assemblies   PreSchool-6th
	Pre-School & Kinder Prep Enrollment
	BOE Monthly Meeting   5:00 pm
17	Junior High Awards   11:00 am
	Last Day   Noon Dismissal

# Bullying Prevention and Potential School Violence Hotline:

(877) 626-8203

or

Call the Marshall County Sheriff's Office (785) 562-3141

# USD 498 Mission Board of Education

USD 498 Board of Education's mission is to provide an education system that will develop the highest level of achievement for all students, educators, and patrons by managing district policies and efficient use of resources.

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# **WE ARE LISTENING!**

If you have questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions, please send them to:

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