

OCT.
2019



SCENE 415

A newsletter for the patrons of Hiawatha Schools.



USD 415 makes it a priority to provide professional development to its teachers which helps promote positive outcomes for students today and in the future.

Teachers apply summer training in the classroom

Hiawatha Elementary Title I Reading Teachers Stacie Newell and Gretchen Oldham are hoping the skills they learned over the summer in the 95% Group training will help their students who struggle with reading to find success.

Oldham and Newell were among several USD 415 teachers who kicked off their summer vacation engaged in various professional development sessions related to literacy and instructional strategies.

The 95% Group products and strategies help schools and school districts improve reading instructional practices and ensure success for struggling readers.

During the training at the Greenbush Education Service Center in Girard, Kan., teachers gained the skills necessary to administer diagnostic assessments and drill down to the specific literacy learning needs of individual students. They also were trained on how to use various intervention and instructional materials to

address those identified needs.

"95% group will allow us to pinpoint exactly what each student needs in order to be a successful reader," Newell said. "The group learned it is very important to diagnose kids properly, otherwise, they can lose a month of instruction."

Oldham added: "I feel the 95% Group products will be a great resource for our teachers to help develop lessons that meet specific students' needs. The assessments will show us the skills our students have mastered, as well as where we should start instruction for intervention."

In August, Oldham, Newell and others trained their fellow teachers on the techniques and resources they learned. And now, the resources are organized and ready to be used with individuals and small groups, based on results from the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) – which helps teachers

Continued on back page.

A LOOK INSIDE

*Superintendent's
message*

*Orientation day
helps freshman
ease into high
school*

Save the date

Superintendent's message

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year and to *Scene 415* – our new district newsletter that can be found every other month as an insert in the print version of *Hiawatha World*.

The goal of *Scene 415* is to highlight all the great things happening across our district and to start a conversation about them with you, our patrons.

And a lot is already happening on the Scene at a breakneck pace – new teachers replacing retired ones, current teachers starting new positions, a new principal starting at Hiawatha Elementary School, and a previous principal taking on a new teaching role. We also have added new schedules, tiered interventions and programming.

As you may know, the USD 415 Board of Education spent last year developing a new strategic plan and goals, based on your feedback in the "State-of-the-District Survey." This information combined with the Kansans Can Vision for Education – higher standards in academic skills, as well as employability and citizenship skills, and the need to move away from a "one-size-fits-all" system that relies exclusively on state assessments – were the emphasis of the district's new vision, Board goals and indicators. The goal areas, which will be highlighted in future newsletters, are student learning and success, teacher quality and retention, community engagement, and facilities.

Work related to these goals is already happening:

- New Pre-K program for at-risk 4-year olds to ensure kindergarten readiness.
- Individual Plans of Study for all seventh- through 12th-graders to help ascertain their career interests and develop a road map for success.
- Restructure of our tier support system for academics and behavior, including the adoption of universal screening procedures, diagnostic assessments, intervention resources and progress monitoring tools.
- New procedures for community engagement, including patron surveys, a virtual citizens advisory committee (VCAC), partnerships via the Hiawatha Early Childhood Commission, business and industry partnerships through the USD 415 Business Roundtable, and informal discussion groups, such as Red Hawk Talk.
- Working with a consultant to create a long-range facilities plan.

These are just a few ways we are all working together as a district to fulfill our vision – "Pioneering Pathways to Success." We look forward to hearing from and working with you. Together, we can better ensure our students are prepared for their future – and are Red Hawk Ready!

Lonnie Moser
Superintendent



Orientation day helps freshmen ease into high school

Navigating the halls, class schedules and everything else of high school can be an intimidating experience for any new student, especially incoming freshmen.

However, for the past several years, Special Education IRC Teacher Chris Diller and others have worked together to help settle students' nerves and to make it less scary – through Freshman Orientation Day.

For the program – which is sponsored by Diller but led by STUCO members – freshmen come to school one day early and experience a full day of school, without the rest of the student body around.

"It provides incoming freshmen with a less intimidating opportunity for them to get acclimated to high school," said Lori Fordyce, Hiawatha High School principal. "It also allows them to ask questions, meet their teachers, and learn the lay of the land in a less stressful environment."

Freshman Hannah Twombly added: "I liked how it helped me prepare for how to get to each class, without the other grades in the hallway at the same time."

To help the freshmen easily navigate the day, it was broken down into segments including a general session

with ice breakers and introductions. Then students completed group rotations that included a building tour, computer checkout, locker practice, group talk on freshmen survival skills and an IMPACT Test, which measures a student's memory, reaction time, speed and concentration. Students also reviewed lunch procedures and practiced their class schedule.

"We really have a multiple-tier system for the day," Diller said. "We have the entire Student Council involved with the planning and execution of the program."

Student mentors were on hand to help guide the freshman through the day.

"We also have a mentoring system where each Student Council member was assigned three freshmen to be their mentor," Diller said. "On Orientation Day, the mentors are with their students the entire day, getting to know them and answering any questions."

And Fordyce feels the program has had a positive impact on the students. "Our STUCO and sponsor, Chris Diller, do an outstanding job with this program," she said. "I believe it greatly benefits our incoming freshman."

Freshman Sutton Diller agreed: "It was welcoming and helped with the transition to high school by making me feel more comfortable."



Freshman orientation allows new high schoolers to get the lay of the land in a less stressful environment.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Oct. 14 & 17 | Site Council Meetings

All USD 415 school-level site councils will meet on the following dates and times:

- Oct 14: Middle School, 5:15 p.m.
- Oct 14: High School, 6 p.m.
- Oct 17: Elementary, 5:15 p.m.



Oct. 17 | Red Hawk Talk - Coffee and Conversation

Join Superintendent Lonnie Moser and community members for an informal conversation about school district happenings at 9 a.m., October 17, at the district's administrative offices.



Oct. 28 & Nov. 4 | High School Scholar's Bowl

Scholar's Bowl is a competitive game, testing students on their knowledge and skill about specific or random questions. Join high school junior varsity 4 p.m., October 28, at Sabetha, and high school varsity 4 p.m., November 4, at Nemaha Central.

Continued from cover.

screen, monitor progress, and analyze reading skills of students from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Additionally, the Greenbush Service Center led groups from each of Hiawatha's schools in activities designed to build Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE), which is the belief the teachers can positively influence student outcomes through their collective action.

"Educational Researcher John Hattie concludes CTE is strongly correlated with student achievement," said Lonnie Moser, superintendent of schools. "His series of books based upon his first, *Visible Learning*, became the framework for the work done during the week of training. Teachers worked together to explore the use of resources to truly impact student achievement, particularly with literacy and math."

During the training, staff members explored the new FAST system as well as intervention materials, such as "Six-Minute Solution," which helps to improve students' reading fluency by pairing readers of the same skill level to read age-appropriate, nonfiction passages and record each other's progress on fluency and accuracy for just six minutes per day. The week ended with staff members building planning sessions to implement key elements associated with the new initiatives they learned.

"It is important we continually find new ways to teach and engage our students," Moser said. "Providing applicable professional development to our teachers helps promote positive outcomes for our students and will help them to be successful today and in the future."

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Hiawatha Lady Red Hawks take first place in the Hiawatha Invitational Tournament on Sept. 21.



Junior and senior students read to the second-graders as part of the Reading with Red Hawks program.



Third grade teachers show their school spirit by wearing custom T-shirts during Hiawatha Elementary School Spirit Week.

**Hiawatha Schools
USD 415**

706 First Street
Hiawatha, KS 66434

(785) 742-2266
hiawathaschools.org

