

Carbondale Attendance Center / Santa Fe Trail Junior High School 104 N. 4th, Carbondale KS 66414

To: Dr. Steve Pegram, Superintendent
From: Mr. Michael Flax, Principal
Date: 3 April 2014
Re: April BOE Report

Activities – We have just completed another successful scholars bowl season at SFTJH. For the fourth consecutive year we have brought home the league scholars bowl championship. (I am sure the Big Seven schools are glad we are leaving the league.) The eighth grade, coached by Mrs. Pat Lira, finished in the finals at every single scholars bowl meet this year, winning first place in most of them. The championship match of the league championship came down to a single question with our group winning by five points. The seventh grade team made it to bracket play a couple of times, and medaling once. Seventh grade is coached by Mrs. Tina McIver. The track season is about to begin, as the first meet is next Thursday, April 10 at Central Heights. That meet has been moved back to a 3:00 starting time rather than the time posted on the district calendar. Between the seventh and eighth grade we have approximately 80 students participating in track. Mrs. Pat Lira and Dr. Steve Pegram are the head coaches for track.

Assessments – As of this writing the state assessments are underway at CAC. The first day of our scheduled testing was less than good, with only three students being able to successfully navigate the test site, and one student completing the assessment session. This morning (Thursday, April 3) both the seventh grade science students and the eighth grade language arts students are engaged in the testing. We have had two sessions so far and everything loaded and is working at this time. We are hopeful that all will be able to complete testing this spring, as per our testing schedule.

Next Year – Mrs. Kristy Hamit and I are working on the master schedule for a 6-8 junior high for next year. We believe that we are on track and will have it ready to publish in the next two weeks. I alerted the parents of our students about the change, and am going to schedule a parent meeting to explain the changes and what they can expect. We will also be speaking to the students during the transition day, so they will get that information from me as well. During our planning sessions, we believe we will be able to facilitate this transition with less change for sixth graders than originally thought. I would be glad to address how we can manage that at the BOE meeting if requested. One of the most exciting facets of this change, in my opinion, is that almost every teacher will have a change in assignment of some sort. We asked teacher opinion regarding what they might like to teach and their requests for consideration. I think we have been able to get everyone near their first choice for the assignments. There are challenges to making this schedule, but some new rewards might also come out of this change.

BYOC – The last work sessions for the school year will be in April, as teachers work to map our curriculum through the BYOC format. The fifth and sixth grade teachers have completed the math curriculum work and have begun putting the reading into the program. I am going to provide time for the junior high staff to finish up during the last week of school, as our eighth grade students will be out of the building. That frees up staff to cover while department/grade level partners work on BYOC. The documents that we are finishing will be of great help as teachers switch grade levels and content area assignments with the change to 6-8. These documents will provide something solid and organized for reassigned teachers to follow. I am hopeful that fifth and sixth grade teachers will have time to complete their other subject areas (after reading and math) during the course of next year.

8th Grade – We are making all the end-of-year plans for eighth grade. This has been an extraordinary group, and so far we have not seen any “eighth-grade-itis” from them. Several of the eighth grade

activities left are listed here: the 4th quarter celebration to the Ed and Gretta Hug farm, eighth grade recognition practice and ceremony, class trip to Worlds of Fun, and the league track meet (held the week after graduation). This is a group where when nominations were being made of the Overbrook Rotary Award 36 students received votes among the faculty. Usually we have fewer than a dozen who are nominated. 20 girls and 16 boys all were listed as worthy of this award. That speaks to the general “good character” of these students. The six finalists will be interviewed next week by the Overbrook Rotary Club, with the winners announced at the recognition ceremony. I wanted to invite all of you to participate in the recognition ceremony. Please let Theresa in the office know if you will be attending. I have promised Dr. Pegram that we will be in and out in less than two hours.

Field Trips – The sixth grade classes are scheduled to attend three activities in Topeka for their annual field trip. They are visiting Forbes Field to start their day, followed by a trip to WIBW studios. At the studio they will tour and then stay for a live action of Midday in Kansas. When that is done they will head to Cedar Crest for a tour. As those venues will not accommodate large groups, each teacher is taking her class independently of the others. Mrs. Jewelie Ullery has scheduled these trips, and the groups will be traveling to Topeka on the next three Mondays. The fifth grade teachers have opted to not go away from the building for a field trip. Instead they are planning a pizza and soda day with games and activities for the students to celebrate the end of the year. Part of their reasoning is that for the next five weeks they are out of the building on Mondays for Star Base at Forbes Field. PTO has agreed to fund this activity rather than the usual field trip. The end of the year is filled with activities and trips. We do our best to limit class interruptions outside of these scheduled events.

Submitted by Michael Flax