**DISTRICT**

With second semester underway, the staff of the R-III School District have already been involved in professional development. This began on Monday, January 4th when Will Bowen addressed the staff with his “A Complaint Free World” presentation. He began his work in July 2006 by offering people a simple way to monitor their success at eradicating complaining from their lives. His idea exploded around the world and now more than 10 million purple Complaint Free bracelets have been sent to people in over 106 countries. Many teachers in the district are sharing the ideas he presented with their students to help improve the relationships students experience with each other at school.

This week co-teachers across the district are meeting at Central Office to continue their professional journey with co-teaching. They are participating in a day-long session which includes reading and reflecting on current practices, as well as planning for co-teaching in second semester.

**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

PS staff returned to classrooms with enthusiasm on Jan. 5, after Monday’s district professional development. Many of our staff members are taking the 21-day “complaint free world” challenge, presented by Will Bowen on Jan. 4. Our building goals this year include strengthening staff relations through trust and communication, and our “complaint-free” focus is driving meaningful, productive, and very supportive conversations! Teachers have completed and submitted their units of instruction for NEE and 2nd. quarter data results. We are scheduling meetings with parents of students that are performing below expectations and revising RtI and Title I placements as student progress warrants. We continue to monitor student absentee rates and communicate with parents about the importance of prompt and regular attendance. During first semester, 93% of our students had 90% or better attendance. Our big excitement this month is the distribution of 30 more iPads for staff and professional development provided on use, apps, and ideas for creation and collaboration in the classrooms.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The following is a snapshot of some of the great things happening for PHES students.

- The week prior to winter break, we concluded first semester with an “Elementary Extravaganza Event” culminating the first semester theme: “Cultivating Creativity Through the GREAT OUTDOORS”. The 152 families in attendance enjoyed listening to a music performance by our 4th graders and student authors read original works in the Brewing Writer’s Café. Families also had the opportunity to visit interactive stations such as the Reading Terrarium, Holiday Light Bright Circuits, Camping Snowglobe Art, Rock Painting, Seed Mosaic, Minute to Win It, Animate the Outdoors in 3-D Pictures and Adobe Voice-Create Your Own Adventure. Families also enjoyed the student artwork on display throughout the entire building.
• Students and staff members each created Gingerbread Friends to accompany them over Winter Break and were then challenged to keep a journal of their activities. It was great to see our students all over social media appearing with their Gingerbread friends while away from school. The response was outstanding to this Writing Challenge with every classroom having solid numbers of participation. The top classroom Challenge Champion winners were Mr. McDavitt's and Mrs. Martin's. We will honor all participants with a party this week.

• We celebrated 2nd Quarter at an assembly on January 8th. Students were recognized for their achievements in art, music, sportsmanship, character, reading, overall improvement and academic achievement. Former student, Brenden Grego was honored for his art work which will be added to the PHES Student Gallery Wall.

• This week we will launch the second semester theme: “Around the World in 90 Days”. Teachers will dress as tourists and unpack their suitcases to reveal where we will be traveling this semester.

• Students can also look forward to new clubs this semester including: Character Club, Fitness Club and Coding Club.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**
It is good to be back to school after a nice, long holiday break! Students are back into their routines; 6th graders have a new semester elective class. Teachers and students are excited about this new learning experience. We are also excited for all that 3rd quarter will bring!

We would like to congratulate the PHIS Students of the Week: Madelyn Fatino, Tayler Bowers, Taylor Vaughn, Keaton O’Neal, Mia Meuschke and Dylan Burnett! They have done a great job exhibiting character traits and doing good deeds!

We will be focusing on Kindness as our third quarter character trait. A character education lesson was led by 6th grade teacher, Mr. Clawson, during the morning motivator on January 5. As part of this lesson, students discussed what kindness “looks like” and “sounds like”. Posters were created that depict their ideas. Please look for these throughout the building when you visit. Students nominated a
peer from each homeroom for January Students of the Month based on this character trait. What an honor it is for these students to be recognized for being kind to others! Congratulations to the PHIS Students of the Month for January: Shannon Ruckman, Madison Wilson, Emma Dutcher, Jazmyn Baker, Brock Zimmerschied, Nicholas Linthicum, Bella Jensen, Jayda Whitaker, Rayne Rusk, Emmy Duncan, McKayla Christopher, Molli Johnson and Keaton O’Neal.

Students and teachers have begun engaging in on-line tutorials for MAP Interim tests. The tutorials are quick sessions in which students learn about various on-line tools available to them that can help them work through and solve problems. The actual practice tests will occur later this month. It will provide teachers with another data set as to how students are progressing on standards.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**ELA Departmental News...** Before the winter break, 7th graders finished reading *A Christmas Carol*, and 8th graders completed *The Roll of Thunder, Hear Me Cry*. During these units, students concentrated on learning the academic language of literary elements: characters, setting, plot, conflict, and resolution, along with theme and symbolism. Students incorporated technology into these lessons by creating Google presentations, storyboards, and posters, as well as participating in webquests and connecting these novels to current events.

With a new semester underway and schedule changes, students are becoming acquainted with their new teachers, understanding classroom expectations, and setting reading and writing goals. Next week, 7th graders will begin Greek mythology while the 8th graders will begin reading various Scholastic articles and short stories to improve their reading skills such as inferencing and author’s purpose.

**Middle School Building Crisis Team Plans...** Our middle school building crisis team has already been very busy over the first week of January related to search and rescue and security professional development trainings which were held on January 4th at the district level and followed up with on January 6th at our building level meeting. Based on our feedback and conversations from these two sessions, we are planning more staff development and professional development for our entire building
which will occur on both January 20 and 29. Areas of focus for this month include bomb threat procedures and plans as well as active shooter/intruder drill scenarios involving our local law enforcement and first responders.

HIGH SCHOOL
“New” seems to be the theme for Pleasant Hill High School for the start of 2016. PHHS has welcomed eleven new students for the second semester. These students are in the process of transitioning into a new school and making new friends with help from the guidance counselors and our student ambassadors. PHHS is happy to have these students become Roosters and Chicks!

All Juniors will take the ACT exam on April 19, 2016. This past week these students have started the preparation program. Pleasant Hill High School students are taking place in a pilot program to review for the ACT through a software program through a company called CE Webinar. A rotating schedule has been structured so that each student will have time during the school day to complete various modules to prepare for the ACT. Students will also have the freedom to work on this program at home.

A new credit recovery program is in place to allow students to regain those important credits needed for graduation. PHHS has recently purchased an online program through A+ Learning Systems that is used during the school day and after school in credit recovery sessions. This program will allow PHHS to address the individual needs of students and challenge them with lessons in various content areas.

TECHNOLOGY
The work regarding our internet speeds and phone upgrades is nearly complete. The phone system has been switched over from Century Link service to a cloud based phone system with k12itc, a Kansas City based company. All phones are now able to dial local and long distance without any additional cost for long distance service. Also available with the new service is voicemail to email service which is currently in pilot phase in the district. Once the service is prepared for all users, staff will receive training to pick up their voicemails via email.

The district recently received a circuit upgrade through MoreNet which will allow us to increase our internet speeds above the 100mg connection. Once the speed tests are completed by the company that installed the circuit, the service will increase and users will see improved performance when using internet services. The tests are anticipated to be completed this week. This is an important step to move forward when implementing the phases of the district's Connect Me and Project Lead the Way initiatives.
Special Services
Primary School
Early Childhood Special Education
Georgette Harrald

The students in the Little Rooster Learning Center continue to work hard on letter recognition and letter sounds. Many of them can tell you that we practice our letters each day because knowing our letters will help us learn to read! They’ve recently began searching for our letter of the week in books, other places around our room and school. The students will point them out when they are found. They are very excited each Monday when we do a graph and they have to tell us if the letter of the week is in their name or not. We then use this graph to do a bit of math. We count how many students have the letter in their name and how many don’t and then practice our math vocabulary when we compare which has more, less, etc. With practice each week, they are getting better (and more patient) at writing their letters also.

Elementary School
Miss Lewis 3rd Grade Co-Teacher
Mrs. Martin 3rd Grade Co-Teacher

I CAN read an article and summarize the information.
Objective: Students will read an article over Pearl Harbor, take the information they learned and type up a summary of that information to present.

Today, the students honored Pearl Harbor Day by reading an article with lots of facts concerning Pearl Harbor. Many students learned things that they had never known before! As they read the letter they annotated the text to pick out the information they wanted to include in their summary. Once they finished reading, there was a discussion about what information they had learned. Students also shared their own background knowledge or connections they were able to make while reading. After the discussion the students were asked to summarize what they had read into a short paragraph. To summarize, the students typed up their response using google docs. When they finished their summary they then learned how to share it with the teacher using that program. The students work will be displayed on the bulletin board in the 3rd grade hallway.
Intermediate School
5th Grade Problem Based Learning Activity
Mrs. Armstrong 5th grade Co-Teaching Math

Objective: I can add and subtract decimals
Why: to help better understand decimals.

In our 5th grade co-teaching Math classrooms, we had students participating in a problem based learning (PBL) activity. We gave the students the problem: Creating a Thanksgiving dinner with a $150.00 budget. This was a student driven activity with little prompts from the teachers. The teachers went around and ask the students questions. The questions were to help students think deeper into their thinking. The students had to come up with a menu, cost, and seating arrangement for their Thanksgiving. They could choose what they wanted for dinner and choose where they wanted to buy the items. The students also had to come up with supplies to buy for the feast. After the research was completed, each group had to present their findings in an oral presentation. We had groups do posters, powerpoint, and Explain All ap. This activity was engaging for all students and all students participated in the lesson.

Middle School
Special Education Self Contained ELA
Ms. Justus

Students in Ms. Justus’ ELA class have been reading The Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickson. The students were asked to compare their lives to Scrooge’s and make a timeline that involved past, present, and future events in their lives. Scrooge
is visited by each ghost and he is shown memories or things to come. So the students made an outline with key events within their lives to list on their timelines and then had to come up with key events for their future. The timeline had to include at least three events from their Past, Present, and Future. Then the students were asked to use their outlines to make a final draft of their timeline, using color, dates, and important events to complete the timeline. Then each student presented their timelines to class. Ms. Justus' students really enjoyed this activity and were very creative with their future events!

High School
High School Self-Contained Classroom: Kristen Julliette
EE.RL.9-10.2 Recount events related to the theme or central idea, including details.

At the high school, we have been working very hard on our reading comprehension. We started by reading several short stories and recalling important details about the story/characters/setting. Students completed a sequencing strip, which showed important events and illustrations that occurred in the text. Students in the classroom were then able to pick a chapter book of their choice. They were responsible for recording several key details/events that happened as they read. After finishing their book of choice, students are working on a timeline of events that will be displayed in the classroom. The ability to sequence events and key details while reading is a key comprehension strategy that we are continuing to work on in our classroom.

PLEASANT HILL ACTIVITIES… “IT’S A GREAT DAY TO BE A ROOSTER/CHICK!”
Highlights:

1. Rooster Wrestling: The Roosters obtained a big MRVC Conference win last week vs the Oak Grove Panthers. They travelled to Bonner Springs this past weekend where they won the Dick Burns Mat Classic. They took 10 Wrestlers and came away with three 1st place, one 2nd, three 3rd place and one each of 4th, 5th and 7th place! The Roosters have a very busy week
this week, heading to Excelsior Springs Tuesday and Clinton on Thursday. The MRVC Conference tournament is in Higginsville this coming Friday and Saturday. Follow the Rooster wrestlers on twitter at @roosterwrestle

2. Rooster Basketball: The Roosters are turning up the heat with two wins last week! The first win was against the Clinton Cardinals. They defeated the Odessa Bulldogs in MRVC Conference play last Friday night. The Roosters enter this year’s Pleasant Hill tournament excited to move forward as the varsity squad keeps getting better and better. They will play Tuesday night vs. Summit Christian Academy at 8:30pm.

3. Chicks Basketball: The Chicks are working to improve on their season. The ladies are working hard and will enter this week’s Pleasant Hill tournament with a tough task Monday afternoon taking on the Grain Valley Lady Eagles at 4pm at the Coop. Come out and support the Chicks!

4. Speech & Debate: The speech and debate team traveled to their largest tournament so far this season at Fort Osage High School. Nathan Ryan finished 5th in Informative Speaking. The Public Forum Debate team of Nathan Ryan and Colleen Wouters went 3-1. This finish means that currently PHHS has a winning record for the season in all 3 forms of debate. Jacob Longmeyer and Alex Whittington both finished in the top 15 of 99 total entries in Original Oratory. This finish gives both students their first bid to the Tournament of Champions. A second bid would qualify both students to attend the Tournament of Champions in Denver, Colorado. Follow the Speech & Debate team on twitter at @roosterdebate

5. Choir: The Show choirs hit the road this week beginning their season at Rockbridge this coming weekend. They will travel to Joplin the following weekend. Rehearsals have been intense as they hope to keep the tradition alive with successful trips bringing home memories lasting a lifetime!

6. The 91st Annual Boys and 29th Annual Girls Pleasant Hill Basketball Tournaments are going on this week at PHHS! Come out and watch some quality basketball. Adults $5; Students $3.

**FACILITIES**

On January 4th, 2016, members of the First Aid and Search and Rescue teams from Pleasant Hill School buildings participated in training for an emergency event. Captain Lee Rennolds and Adam Mall (firefighter/paramedic) with the Pleasant Hill Fire Protection District lead training in first aid as well as carrying/dragging techniques. Also participating in the training was Lieutenant Mark Largent of the Pleasant Hill Police Department. The training was organized and planned by staff members Christy Reeves and Nicole Albin.

After a review of the techniques presented by the First Responders, staff had an opportunity to put their knowledge to work. The staff divided into a group of victims of the event and the other carried out their designated rolls in a rescue effort. Lights were turned out in the downstairs area of the high school and the teams had to find victims and attend to them accordingly. Individuals needing attention were taken to the triage area and attended to. The groups then switched
rolls and performed the operation a second time. The group returned to the library for a debriefing by the First Responders and discussion of lessons learned ensued. The District is very fortunate to have such a positive relationship with our local First Responders and would like to thank them for their ongoing support and efforts to keep our students and staff safe.