**District**

On Friday, November 13, Pleasant Hill R-III staff members gathered at the high school to participate in district-wide professional development. The format consisted of 50 minute sessions led by local educators where each staff member could attend 3 different sessions to learn about various topics. The sessions aligned to district initiatives and gave attendees the opportunity to learn more about these effective educational strategies and techniques. The event was a huge success thanks in part to the planning of the District Professional Development Committee officers and members and the high-quality presentations provided during each session.

Mrs. Smothers shows how parachutes can incorporate STEAM into curriculum.

Kathy Lacapa-Boegl shares techniques regarding cueing strategies.

**Primary School**

Students and staff are all about curriculum integration this time of year! We are reading about Pocahontas and Native American tribes, responding to literature in our writing and art, learning about Native American symbols, and preparing for class feasts. Our second benchmark testing period begins this month, using the Discovery Education online tests in reading and math. The first and second grade “concert choir” performs this coming week, and we are hosting Muffins and Mittens with Moms as our annual service/community event. Teachers are meeting regularly to develop, implement, and evaluate their Units of Instruction as part of our teacher evaluation system. I am conferencing with all teachers this month about their progress on the selected indicators: academic language, cognitive engagement, and student/teacher relationships.
Elementary School

Last week, our Student Leadership organization honored over 100 Veterans and their families at our Veteran's Day breakfast. The menu was developed by our students and included eggs, bacon, biscuits and gravy, fruit and coffee. Mrs. Young’s class created artwork and the whole school signed a “Thank You” banner to display. Third and fourth grade student leaders acted as greeters and escorted our distinguished guests to the dome where breakfast was served. Mrs. Young’s class interviewed some of the Veterans after they were finished eating. The interviews were conducted as part of their research project on the history and meaning of Veterans Day. As our visitors were leaving, they remarked that our students were polite and well-spoken. We received many accolades about the breakfast and positive interactions with our students. Congratulations to our Student Leadership sponsors, Ms. Halfmann and Mrs. Brundage for all their hard work; this event was truly a success.

This week we are conducting our first school-wide problem based learning activity which is tied to our first semester theme, “Cultivating Creativity through the GREAT OUTDOORS”. Our PBL is entitled, “Cultivating Creative Campers.” Today, we will launch the PBL with an assembly at the end of the day where students will view pictures of our staff on various camping trips and then they will receive this prompt: Though we are many campsites, we must come together as one campground to plan an outdoor adventure for our school. Your mission is to plan a two day camping trip for us and determine the cost. To facilitate this process, the last 45 minutes of each day this week will be devoted to the school-wide PBL experience. Classrooms will be renamed as campsites and each student will be placed in a cooperative learning group where their jobs include one of the following: camp counselor, quarter master, historian, park ranger, navigator, or camp director. Students will visit satellite stations, work cooperatively, research, make calculations, utilize technology, and have FUN! Our culminating activity will take place on Friday when we will let groups share the camping adventures they have created and then participate in camping activities for the remainder of the day.

Intermediate School

Congratulations to the PHIS Students of the Week: Elijah Reynolds, David Vaughn, Easton Roe, Lydia Mannino, Jay Cooper and Elizabeth Sudduth! They have done a great job exhibiting character traits and doing good deeds!

Congratulations to the PHIS Students of the Month for November: Quincy Payne, Anna Morrison, Alicia Quinn, Jacob Hanes, Chase Underwood, Jozlyne Rivera, Kristen Vestal, Cheyann Johnson, Livie Toler, Trey Widhelm, Jordan Fisher, Matthew Davis and Keagan Roeder. These students were nominated by their peers for exhibiting the character trait: responsibility. We are so proud of them!
Sixth graders have been engaged in Project Based Learning (PBL) in math classes. Project Based Learning is a student-centered strategy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of solving an open-ended problem or challenge. Students learn both thinking strategies and math skills. Students were challenged to plan their own Fall Party. Students learned how to multiply and divide fractions through recipes. Teachers conducted mini-lessons and formative assessments to ensure students were obtaining the content knowledge. Project Based Learning promotes: high levels of student engagement, real life relevancy, collaboration between students, instruction which is differentiated to meet individual needs and students using their oral and written communication skills.

What our kids say about PBL:

- “I like planning the Fall party while learning about fractions.”
- “I can use the skills in real-life.”
- “In math class I like being able to choose to use lattice or window strategies.”
- “The fraction foldables helped me understand fractions.”
- “Converting fractions into decimals helped me plan for the party.”

Fall parties took place October 29. We appreciate the support of families to help create a variety of treats!

**Middle School**

**PE news...** The physical education department recently wrapped up a basketball unit, which looked at several techniques incorporated in a variety of activities. These activities focused on the fundamental techniques of shooting, dribbling, and passing at the individual level and through team play. The students were given shooting technique instruction and evaluated while performing basketball golf, which focused on form and accuracy. The instruction on the dribbling technique focused on spatial awareness and maintaining ball control in an activity called tails. The passing technique consisted of the basic bounce, chest, and overhead passes to stationary and moving targets using a weave activity. The primary goal of these activities leads to the development of basketball game play and giving student the opportunity to enjoy this recreational and competitive
Over the next few weeks the physical education classes will be focusing on a nutrition unit covering multiple topics. Some of these topics will highlight effects of soda pop and energy drinks, vegan and gluten free lifestyles, sugar vs sweeteners, obesity, healthy eating choices, organic food vs GMO’s, antibiotics and hormones injected into foods and their effects. Students will be researching these different topics and creating their projects on Google slides and presenting it to the class. If anyone has information they would like to contribute about these concepts, please contact Lisa Dowdy or Harrison Campbell.

Middle school winter sports practices are well underway for wrestling and basketball. We kick off our first home middle school winter sports activity on Monday evening, November 23 at 5pm in our middle school gym with home basketball.

This upcoming season the Chicks return 12 players who played last year as 7th graders. Individuals who played on the A Team last year that went 7-7 include Kylie Campbell, Braylee Davis, Jacey Faust, Paige Hicks and Jordan Hoerl. Returners who played on last years B Team that was 5-5 include Haley Comegys, Hanah Hocker, Sydney Lamborn, Tanner Reffitt, Brylee Wells, and Rachel Wilhoit. With all the experience coming back, the Chicks have higher expectations and hope to continue to show improvement as the team finished last season with a record of 5-2 after Christmas.

The Chicks first game is on Monday, November 23 at Harrisonville at 5pm. The A Team will then resume play after Thanksgiving break playing in the Grain Valley Tournament November 30, December 2nd and 4th. All tournament games are at Grain Valley North Middle School and start at 7pm. The first home game is an A/B doubleheader on December 7th versus Odessa.

The Pleasant Hill Middle School Rooster basketball began November 2. We had a lot of boys tryout with a lot of talent. The 7th and 8th grade teams have been selected, and we are just a few practices away from our first game. Our first contest of the year is at home against the Harrisonville Wildcats on November 23. Coach Hutzell will coach the 8th graders this season. We have a talented core group of 8th grades (many played last year as 7th graders) along with a few new players to fill the roster. Coach Kober who is now student teaching at the high school will again coach the 7th grade team. The 7th graders had tough competition at tryouts and are progressing nicely into the program. The coaches are excited to work with the boys and look forward to them also learning a few life lessons along the way while growing as athletes.

**HIGH SCHOOL**

The past few weeks at Pleasant Hill High School for the FFA and Agriculture classes.

Nathan Ryan, Pleasant Hill FFA President and son of Tim and Melanie Ryan, Pleasant Hill took first place at the Area 7 FFA Fall Speaking Contest held at Pleasant Hill High School. Additionally, Nathan took top honors at the District Level FFA Fall Speaking contest at the University of Central Missouri with his speech sponsored by the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation. Nathan is one of six to be competing at the state level during the Annual Meeting of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation District in Tan-Tar-A December 1, 2015.

The purpose of this contest is to promote a stronger interest and clearer understanding of the many aspects of natural resource conservation, to provide opportunities for our youth to gain knowledge, appreciation, and understanding of Missouri’s natural resources and help to promote their many values and virtues.
The National FFA Convention was held in Louisville, Kentucky on October 29-31. Pleasant Hill High School was represented by 11 current students at the convention. A contingent of 610,240 FFA members from across the nation were present for this three day event.

Eight members of the Pleasant Hill FFA earned their American FFA Degree at the awards ceremony. The American Degree is the highest degree an FFA member can achieve in the FFA. Each of these individuals graduated from PHHS and have continued their involvement in the FFA. Pleasant Hill High School is proud to have the highest number of students receive the American Degree at one convention in history. Pictured is: (L to R) Kaylee Smith, daughter of Michael and Janice Smith; Mr. Mike Keilholz, Advisor; Alexandria Schwartz, daughter of Scott and Nicole Albin and Anthony and Sherry Schwartz; Brittany Couch, daughter of Chaylon and Debbie Couch; Patricia Stillwell, daughter of William and Jeanette Stillwell; Perri Brown, daughter of Kristi and Gary Hinton and JD Brown; Kendra Pryor, daughter of Rick and Stephanie Pryor; Hunter Anderson, son of Greg and Sandi Anderson; Gracyn Walter, daughter of Steve and Ruth Walter; and Ms. A.J. Wingard, Advisor.

Students enrolled in Agriculture's Equine Science class have the option of taking this course dual credit (3 hours of college credit) through Missouri State University for half price tuition. As part of the learning lab to meet dual credit requirements; Zandri Bredenhand, Cordell Jellison, Kylie Keith and Dillon Bray are determining the age of horses by the amount and wear of the teeth. Students also have the chance to test in March 2016 to meet the State MOASK (Missouri Agricultural Skills Knowledge) requirements for vocational education in equine science.

Ag Education in Pleasant Hill is part of Career Technical Education (DESE) and in Agricultural Structures class, students receive hands-on learning experiences to prepare them to meet the high-demand career jobs in the Kansas City area. These experiences include Problem-based learning (PBL) activities in the areas of electricity, plumbing, concrete, surveying, electrical motors, power tools and carpentry. Garrett Bakken, Conner Coffel, Coleman Corson and Spencer Eubank figured the pitch of a roof, measured, marked and cut out a rafter to fit the span of a small portable shed.
Technology

On Friday, November 13th, during the district Professional Development mini-conference, Teachers Teaching Teachers, the HS teachers attended a workshop on the use of Chromebooks for teaching and learning. The High School Building Improvement Team is exploring the use of Chromebooks in a 1:1 environment for technology integration that helps students be prepared for college and the workplace. The team made the decision to focus on teacher training as a first priority. During the workshop, a Chromebook was distributed to each teacher for their use during the 2015-2016 school year. Teachers will have time, training, and support during the year to practice implementing 21st century learning skills in their classroom. The Building Improvement Team, along with Dr. Canaan and Dr. Yokley, plans to visit other schools who have implemented 1:1 with Chromebooks. During the visits the team hopes to gain insight on the opportunities and challenges involved in a 1:1 learning environment to be prepared for implementation at the High School.

Special Services

Primary School
Ms. Kay and Ms. Underwood

W.2.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

During ELA in the 2nd grade co-teaching classroom of Ms. Kay and Ms. Underwood, students learned to write “how-to” pieces. Students wrote “How to Make a Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich” and then followed their own directions to make their own sandwich. This helped students to see the importance of each and every juicy detail needed in their writing, as some sandwiches did not turn out the way they had hoped.

Nathan Wood Speech and Language:

The picture shown is a screenshot of a speech-therapy video clip taken earlier this month. The Speech and Language Department at the Primary School is very excited about the progress students are making with video homework. At least once a week, short clips of the therapy sessions are created in which the students are practicing various skills (i.e., articulation, auditory memory, receptive and expressive vocabulary development, etc.), and then sent home to parents, who have consented to view them, for practice. This is helping to increase carryover of IEP targets outside of the therapy room to other settings such as home. Students gain feedback into their own performance and find watching the videos very motivating. In addition, parents are able to see demonstrations of various techniques to try at home.
Elementary School
Carey Armstrong and Brian McDavitt
Students in Mr. McDavitt's class read an informational passage about a Coral Reef. Students had to use text clues to give meaning to the words predator, bleached and ejects. They also practiced finding the main idea of the passage with three supporting details. The culminating activity was a coral reef painting. The class used tempera paint and sponges to create a unique reef ecosystem as their piece of artwork.

Intermediate School
Kayla Heishman
This lesson was taught in a co-teaching 6th grade math class. The unit of study was rates and ratios, meeting CCSS.Math.Content.6.RP.A.1. The objective of the lesson was “I can understand what ratios and rates are and use my academic language to share my knowledge with my classmates.” The why of the lesson was “So I can increase my use of academic language in and out of the classroom” This lesson was taught as a whole group, using Chapter 4 Lesson 4.1 in Go Math. This lesson lasted two class periods. The focused instruction was writing down the vocabulary of the lesson on the whiteboard while the students copied the terms into his/her math notebook. The terms were ratio, equivalent ratios, equivalent fractions, rate, unit rate, and ordered pair. After each vocabulary word and definition were written down, the students were to verbally repeat each term and definition together as a class. Following writing the vocabulary into their notebooks, each group of students were given two sets of index cards. The students were to write the vocabulary term on one side of the first set of index cards. On the second set of index cards the students were directed to write each definition on one side. This was done in groups of 3-4, and the 6 vocabulary terms and definitions were taught. My co-teacher and I hid the vocabulary terms on the whiteboard and had the students play a matching activity with the terms and definitions. Following the index card activity was the guided instruction. Guided instruction that was provided during the lesson was the students completed Lesson 4.1 pg. 147-148 in their groups of 3-4. At this time my co-teacher and I walked around the room discussing the lesson with the students and asking them deeper thinking questions. Collaboratively, the students and I used the academic language of the lesson to complete the pages from the chapter. Next, the students were given time to independently work on 4.1 pgs.73-74. My co-teacher and I walked around the room at this time and provided assistance to the students, encouraging them to use the academic language that was discussed during the focused and guided instruction. We also checked every student's work throughout the period to make sure that they were not
completing the worksheets incorrectly. The strategic teacher questions were what are rates and ratios, and how can I use them in everyday life? Two ways to formatively assess the students are giving them a pretest before the lesson begins and to have the students complete exit slips at the end of the lesson.

**Middle School**  
**Jessica Parsons and MaryJo Fender**

For 7th grade Co-teaching Math, we have been working on scale drawings. The first Part of this Unit we did a PBL where the students got to design their own room. They had to come up with a design, budget and timeline for their project as well as create a real life scale of their drawing with all the dimensions proportional to their scale drawing. They then had to create a presentation that included all their information and present it to the class. We have also done a couple of lessons to reinforce this topic. Now the students are doing their review and getting ready to take their test over this unit.

For 8th grade Co-teaching Math, we have been working with Rational and Irrational numbers. The students had to understand the difference between rational and irrational numbers, identify them and justify their answer. The students have also been working with squares, cubes and their opposites (radicals). They worked without a calculator which really helped solidify the numbers and how to find the correct and answer for them. The students just completed the test on this unit. Several students showed major growth from their pretest to their post test.

**High School**  
**Adam Hutzell and Mr. Schoenherr**

Mr. Hutzell and Mr. Schoenherr are working together in a chromebook classroom this semester. As part of the districts push toward technology in the classroom we are able to enhance or lessons and data collections quickly and efficiently with the use of the chromebooks. It started off with some hurdles but has grown into an awesome classroom tool. Students that originally struggled with putting their thoughts on paper are now writing well developed thoughts. As the students get more and more comfortable with them we have plans to incorporate them into bigger projects going forward into the year. The students seem to be getting excited about utilizing this technology in their learning.

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

Highlights:

1. Basketball Purple & Gold Night: P&G for basketball will be held on Tuesday November 17th at 6:30pm. There will be a parent activities meeting at 5:30pm followed by coaches parent meetings at 6pm.
2. Wrestling Purple & Gold Night: P&G for wrestling will take place Thursday November 19th at the Coop! There will be a parent activities meeting at 5pm followed by a coaches parent meeting before the matches start. Come out and see the 2015-16 wrestling team!
3. Cross Country: The Roosters took 5th Place last week in Jefferson City at the State meet! They missed the trophies by just one place... The Roosters are excited by their performance as they are a young team with big plans in the future. Lauren Larkins and Emma Moore represented the Chicks at the meet.

4. Theater: Footloose was a hit this past weekend! It was awesome to see all the talent Pleasant Hill HS holds in the form of the theatrical arts. I hope you were able to take in one of the shows!

5. Chicks Basketball: The Chicks will host a jamboree on Wednesday November 18th in the Coop; 5:30pm tip. Other schools attending will be Lee’s Summit North, Fr. Osage an Kearney.

6. Rooster Basketball: The Roosters will travel to Kearney on Thursday November 19th; 5:30pm to take part in their basketball jamboree.

7. Check out the Sonic Locker Room Show on Wednesday afternoons at 4:20pm on 1030 KCWJ The Light. You can also hear the shows archived on [www.soniclockerrroom.com](http://www.soniclockerrroom.com) Last weeks show had Asst. The latest show that is archived is Mr. Moore talking about all things Scholar Bowl. This week's show will feature Mrs. Dollins and the choral department talking about the Annual Show and Little BOB.

Help us inform you by checking in on our website… [www.pleasanthillactivities.org](http://www.pleasanthillactivities.org). Advertising opportunities are available which will assist our activities department. Thank you for your support and Have a great week! (Twitter…@phhsactivities)

**FACILITIES**
The access road connecting Lexington and the Intermediate School parking lot recently received patchwork by Pleasant Hill District Grounds and Maintenance men Paul Smith and Randy Greufe.