DISTRICT
Math Teachers Continue the PBL Journey

On Thursday, October 15, math teachers of grades 5 through 12 met to learn more about Project Based Learning (PBL). This professional development day was the third in a series of four covering the topic. As a result of their previous learning math teachers implemented a PBL in their classroom. They shared with their colleagues their challenges, successes, and outcomes of the PBL that was taught. The teachers all did an outstanding job of facilitating this model of teaching and spent a tremendous amount of time in the planning and reflection of the implementation. Following the sharing of experiences, the teachers then participated in a simulation of a PBL prior to their work to develop another PBL for their students. The day was a productive one with high quality classroom activities resulting from the professional development time. One teacher shared she was very proud of her students, as the PBL was not easy, and her "students got a chance to see how real math works and really delve into the practice standards for mathematics." Through continued time dedicated to the development of PBLs the expectation will be one of higher rigor and relevance in the math classroom for all students.

Primary School
The Primary School is filled with authors, illustrators, and artists! And travelers: students have been on field trips to pumpkin farms and the Kansas City Zoo, and 2nd graders are looking forward to a visit to Kauffman Stadium next month. Students are busy sharing and writing about their experiences. Parents have been invited to curriculum presentations and to help with fall parties on Oct. 29. We are celebrating Fire Prevention Week with visits from the PH Fire Dept. and their new Dalmatian on Oct. 22. We are looking forward to lots of fun theme days and activities during Red Ribbon Week, with thanks to PTO for helping to purchase supplies. Teachers are completing student assessments and preparing for conferences with parents the week of Oct. 26.

**Elementary School**

As First Quarter comes to close, students are proud to display all they have accomplished. Their research and project based learning artifacts can be seen throughout the building. The halls and walls of the Elementary School are alive with vibrant student work displays. Teachers are busy collecting Unit Assessment data in reading, writing and math as they prepare for Parent Teacher Conferences next week. Part of that preparation includes meeting to calibrate expectations for scoring common assessments and students' writing. This Friday teachers will participate in professional development focused on Problem/Project Based Learning and the Unit of Instruction artifacts required for the Network for Educator Effectiveness.

Last week we received our long awaited copies of the Principal Magazine Supplement. The Elementary School article is entitled, *The New Era of Family Engagement*. Our emphasis on family engagement continues as we recently held our first PIE Night for parents where we shared information about flipped classrooms, art infusion and Project Based Learning. This week, Mrs. Albin will host our first Family Art Night of the school year.

This week, students will continue to participate in our First 100 Page Reading Challenge of the year, Jump Rope for Heart, Pumpkin Decorating Contest and Red Ribbon Week!
Data not only is driving instruction, it is driving goals. Based on pre-tests and clear learning targets and objectives, the following types of goals are being set: team, class and individual student goals. We are challenging all our students with high expectations; through this students are tracking their own learning and progress which can be very powerful and motivating. Teachers are providing continual feedback to our students to help them in the process. Each team also has set an attendance goal. Research indicates goal setting is a highly effective strategy. There are many visuals of this throughout our building.

PHIS Students of the Week are: Taliya Guenther, Raegan Watterson, Logan Mann, Jordan Fisher, Weston Hemmerling and Kelly Anderson. These students were picked by their teachers for exhibiting outstanding character and deeds. We are very proud of them and their accomplishments!

The book fair is coming to PHIS October 26-29! Students will have the opportunity to attend the book fair during school hours. It will also be open the evenings of the 26th and 28th from 4:00-7:45pm. Mrs. Arenson held a drawing with the assistance of students to distribute certificates for a free book. Thank you to the book fairies for their assistance and congratulations to all the students that will receive one! Happy Reading!

During the Morning Motivator students generated their ideas regarding what they think Responsibility “Looks Like” and “Sounds Like”. Responsibility is our second quarter character trait. This trait will be taught and reinforced during guidance lessons and in
classes throughout the quarter (as well as the remainder of the school year). Students had great ideas as is seen in one of the posters that was generated from this activity.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Greetings from the Middle School Music Room! Select Choir, Women's Choir, and Chamber Choir have all been focused on preparing music for our upcoming Fall concert on Monday, October 19th at 7:20pm in the High School Performing Arts Center. The concert will feature a wide variety of songs and a combined Intermediate school choir/Middle school choir performance! The past couple of weeks, students have been working on polishing each concert song and meeting performance objectives (standing and transitioning properly, singing with expression and emotion, adding articulations/dynamics/diction/memorization/part tolerance).

In order to prepare for our performance, all PHMS choir students participated in an after school rehearsal to put our combined choir songs together. In addition to this, we had a first hour guest clinician appearance from Mrs. Karen Dollins and Mr. Dalton Burge (senior) at the High School, who critiqued Select Choir and gave suggestions for improvement. Students have also spent time recording and listening to themselves sing in order to discuss problem areas and work toward a better performance. One of our songs (Mozart's Dona Nobis Pacem) features a small group of performers who have been doing individual practice and have been coming in during advisory time to rehearse their parts and be prepared. I am excited to see what they accomplish on stage on Monday the 19th!

*Please take a look at our Fall Program:* [https://goo.gl/9k7VsU](https://goo.gl/9k7VsU).

The end of the first quarter has arrived, and this week our 7th & 8th grade students and teachers are finishing up practicing and preparing for the hosting of student-led parent/teacher conferences for next Tuesday evening (October 27) from 4:00pm-8:00pm. For the past several weeks, students have been putting together portfolios of academic work to showcase and define their strengths and weaknesses for each course that they are taking this semester.

We continue to offer this type of parent/student/teacher conference format at the middle school level ([8th year of implementation](https://goo.gl/9k7VsU)) because this style allows each student to play an important role in acknowledging his/her education responsibilities.
Each student has been given instruction, along with daily encouragement and time to prepare his/her portfolio under the guidance of his/her teachers. Students have been responsible for organizing their portfolios with two pieces of choice work from every class, doing a self-assessment, along with a teacher assessed behavior sheet, and creating an action plan for academic growth and success. This “project” culminates next week as students “present & discuss” their portfolios with their parents and teachers and review first quarter grades. Eighth graders and parents/teachers will meet in the gym while seventh graders and their parents/teachers will meet in the cafeteria. Individual tables will be set up in each location. Students will present their portfolios to their parents and a teacher will be at the table to answer specific questions and help guide the student through this process. Each conference will take approximately 10 minutes. No appointment needed.

For parents who prefer a more “traditional” style of parent-teacher conferences, Monday, October 26th from 4:00pm-8:00pm has been designated for individualized conferences. This middle school format is a traditional parent teacher style of an individual teacher meeting in his/her classroom individually with one parent at a time. However, we would still like to encourage parents to bring his/her student too! Appointments are suggested for this evening, and teachers have been sending out individual links for parents to easily register for a 15 minute appointment time.

**Costume Day Fundraiser.** Middle School students can pay $1 and wear their favorite costume to school on October 29th. The contest will have the following categories and prizes will be given:
- Most creative
- Funniest
- Best pair/group
- Best homemade

We are a bunch of kids at Middle School and we still love to dress up and eat treats. This is a great day for your student to bring treats to share with their advisory class.
**Scholastic Book Fair is coming soon!**
Pleasant Hill Middle School will be hosting the Scholastic Book Fair the week of Parent Teacher conferences October 26-29th. Students will be able to shop the fair before and after school, and with their ELA classes that week. The fair will also have an online component that allows students access to more mature YA titles and other Scholastic titles that were not included on the physical book fair shelves. PHMS Book Fair 2015

**October 27th** students are invited to wear their pajamas to school and stay after to Read S'more. Students can bring s'more inspired treats to share with the group. Drinks will be supplied. We will read, shop, play games, eat and repeat, until 5:30. Parents may pick up their students and then meet with them and a teacher for student-led conferences.

**High School**

This Week at Pleasant Hill High School

Mrs. Case's Geometry classes are currently working on a problem based learning activity that was created during the Math Dept Professional Development in September. In this activity students are pretending to be NASA engineers that are solving three problems related to mars exploration. The students have been busy drawing models and discovering how a real engineer attacks a problem. In this exploration the students have used Pythagorean Theorem and conversion factors to solve problems that deal with programming a mars rover, building a communication tower at a lunar outpost, and planning a route for an astronaut exploration on the moon. This process has been a difficult one for students but they have grown in both their problem solving skills and their ability to use the Pythagorean Theorem.
**TECHNOLOGY**

The annual conference hosted by MOREnet, the internet provider for our district, was held at St. Louis Union Station October 5-8, 2015. Teachers and members of the technology department attended the conference which focused on both instructional and information technology. Sessions on classroom applications, Google Apps for Education, STEM, network security and many more topics were held and attended by our staff members. Brian McDavitt led a workshop on Six-Traits for film production which was accepted by conference organizers. Caleb Clawson and Brook Ludlam attended sessions on new classroom applications and will be presenting a fast-paced “grudge-match” type workshop at our upcoming district mini-conference. Janis Yokley will also be presenting a workshop on new Google apps and extensions that are useful for classroom instruction. All attendees are looking forward to implementing all of the new strategies and tools gained from the MOREnet conference.

**Special Services**

**Primary**

Our Little Rooster Learning Center - the pilot program where we combine typical peers with our Young Children with Developmental Delays - is off to a great start! Our morning program has 3 children on IEP’s and one typical peer. Our afternoon program has 3 children on IEP’s and 4 typical peers. We have been busy this quarter recognizing and writing the letters L, O, G, H, T, and P. Each day we work on increasing our vocabulary by naming pictures of things that begin with our letter of the week. On Mondays, our afternoon students watch a youtube video about how to write the letter. Then they practice writing that letter on white boards. Tuesdays and Wednesdays we practice writing the letter on paper or using other media (iPads, painting polka-dots with pom poms, using pasta, etc.). We wrap up our week by having a yummy snack that either starts with our letter of the week or goes with our theme. Last week we learned about letter P. On Thursday, we ended our week with a picnic outside, where we enjoyed the beautiful weather, and some popcorn and popsicles!

Our morning students are painting polka-dots on the letter P with pom poms.

Afternoon students pasting pasta on the letter P
**Elementary**  
Ashley Lewis 3rd Grade Co-Teacher  
Tiffany Sullivan  
Lesson Plan: Landmarks (ELA)  
Objective: I CAN conduct research and make a model to represent a landmark of our classroom community.  
Why: By researching monuments, students learn about the research process, what a monument is, why they are built, and what they represent.

**Intermediate**

5th Grade Problem Based Learning Activity  
Mrs. Armstrong 5th grade Co-Teaching Math  
Objective: I can divide 3 or 4 digit dividends by 1 or 2 digit divisors.  
Why: to help better understand division.

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: How many bed sheets would the students need to escape the roof of our building? 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 plan on how to escape the roof. They could use any size sheet and had to come up with the dimensions by either measuring a sheet provided or research the dimensions of a selected sheet. The students also had to measure the building height or ask other resources about the building’s height. After the students got all the information they needed, the students worked together to come up with how many sheets they needed to use to escape the roof using division. Each group had to present their findings in an oral presentation. This activity was engaging for all students and all students participated in the lesson.
Middle
7/8th grade Math

Ms. Justus, Self Contained Classroom

Objective: Use ratio reasoning to compute unit rates with fractions in context while collaborating their thinking, strategies, and solutions.

Project set up:
Ms. Justus is in REALLY big trouble! Since she has been so busy at Pleasant Hill Middle School, she almost forgot that her mom's birthday is right around the corner! Since she is your favorite teacher, she needs YOUR HELP!!!!!!! Her party is next weekend and she needs you to help decide what recipes to use. There will be 30 people at her party, so we will have to use our excellent skills with fractions to make sure we get the recipes right! For her party, we need to find a recipe for one main dish, three side dishes and of course... A CAKE!

This project was a great tool for students to practice their math skills while incorporating the use of technology. Each student presented their final projects and students voted on the best recipes.

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High
Pleasant Hill High School: Mrs. Juliette’s Math Class
Learning Objectives
DLM Essential Element- EE.OG-CO.1 Know the attributes of perpendicular lines, parallel lines, line segments, and angles.
Throughout first quarter, our class has been studying lines and angles. We started off the unit by learning the vocabulary. Students completed an anticipation guide at the beginning of instruction and at the end of instruction. Anchor charts, partner-work, and group projects were all used to help increase student understanding of the many concepts. Students were given the task of finding real life examples of each angle and line around PHHS. Students created a Pic Collage for each example. They displayed and labeled them all onto a poster for the class to see. Each student had a great time learning all about the different angles and lines in our math class!

Pleasant Hill Activities… “It’s a GREAT Day to be a Rooster/Chick!”
Highlights:

1. Chicks Volleyball: The Chicks wrapped the MRVC West Conference Championship this week...yet again! They begin their district tournament selected as the #1 seed. They will play at 4:30pm on Thursday in the semi-finals and hopefully at 7pm in the finals.
2. **Softball:** The Chicks made it to yet another district final this year. They fell to the Harrisonville Wildcats in the Championship game. The team had a very strong year looking forward to a bright future.

3. **Cross Country:** The Roosters and Chicks ran in the Warrensburg Invitational this past week. The Roosters took 1st place, yet again and the Chicks secured a 4th place finish with three ladies medaling in the meet. They travel to Richmond this Wednesday for the MRVC Conference meet scheduled to begin at 3:30pm.

4. **Boys Soccer:** The Roosters got a big win last week vs. the Van Horn Falcons on senior night. They achieved the #2 seed in their district tournament. PHHS will be hosting the tournament at Eklund this week (Thursday/Saturday). The Roosters will play Monday (at LaMonte), Tuesday (at Excelsior Springs), and Thursday (Districts at 7:30pm - Eklund Field).

5. **Pride of the Hill:** The band competed at UCM this past weekend. The color guard brought home a 1st place trophy in their indoor competition! The POTH travels to Blue Springs South this Saturday to compete in their last competition of the season.

6. **Choir:** PHHS choral members got seven students into the All-State Choir. They will represent Pleasant Hill at the Missouri Music Educator's Association convention at the end of January.

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.soniclockeroom.com](http://www.soniclockeroom.com) Last weeks show had Asst. The latest show that are archived are Mr. Berry and the theater kids talking about the musical Footloose and Mr. Twenter and the Pride of the Hill drum majors talking about their season.

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**Facilities**

District custodial and maintenance members Mike Weinel, Alan Borchert, and Kelly Hart have been busy installing and painting a new stage floor surface at the Performing Arts Center at the High School. Part of the installation process required these individuals to work after hours and on the weekend to get the project completed in time for upcoming performances.