DISTRICT
Summer Curriculum Writing Work a Success

This summer teachers began the process of selecting essential standards using the new Missouri Learning Standards, as well as realign curriculum maps, pacing guides, and curriculum lesson plans to new standards in the areas of mathematics, ELA, and social studies. Our summer work to begin this process started on June 6th with social studies teachers and ELA teachers from grades 7-12 focusing on the new writing standards on June 7th. Following these two days for specific groups, these groups of teacher, as well as other content teachers selected additional days to work on curriculum. June 8-9, June 13-16, and August 1-4 were all designated as curriculum work days at Central Office. There was a large group of educators in attendance on these days! The social studies and ELA teachers continued their work along with the following groups on those days: mathematics, vocal and instrumental music, art, and counselors and librarians collaborating on 21st Century Citizenship Curriculum. This year, teachers were able to utilize their chromebook for the curriculum writing. This was a great addition to the process!

During these same days, any high school teacher who needed to set up Google classroom in preparation for the first day of school and the Connect Me 1 to 1 initiative was able to work at Central Office. This time was utilized by several teachers who found the designated time beneficial.

Collaborative work takes place at Central Office over the summer.

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our first week of school was a time to celebrate the return of staff and students, and welcome new friends. Teachers spent most of the time on the instruction of procedures and expectations, especially for lunch, recess, restrooms, and hall behavior. By Friday afternoon, students and staff alike were tired and happy. Staff new to the profession and new to our building quickly became part of the PS family and contributed to a smooth start of school and our ongoing efforts to support our positive building climate: Patrice Adams, secretary; Melissa Roach, PAT educator; Kathleen Brundage, 1st grade; Melinda Buchanan, kindergarten; Samantha Baldwin, music; Sharon Hyatt, speech; Ashley Lewis, sped; Kim Fisher and Amber Helgren, paras. We are grateful for the return of Sandy Parrott to our first grade team, after a year’s leave of absence. Preschool classes start on August 22. Discovery Education online assessments, Gates/MacGinitie Reading tests, and Title I screenings will be conducted over the next 3 weeks in order to prepare for small group instruction in the classrooms and our Response to Intervention “barnyards and coops.”
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The staff at PHES is committed to building a school that is engaging, caring, challenging and safe. Before school started the staff worked collaboratively to construct structures using our peers non-verbal assistance. It was fun and we learned how to support one another in different roles.

The staff also shared their ideas for how they would like our school to look, feel and be perceived by the community and students. Then we shared our skills and how we could help bring that vision to reality. Our “Dreams are Under Construction” - and we are ready for a great year!

When the students arrived we were ready and they were eager. They have been learning routines and procedures, but most of all, we have been getting to know each other. Classrooms are full of class building activities. These challenges teach our students to work together, not give up and support one another on the journey. All important skills for the rest of their lives!

We invite you to come visit our school. You can watch in a classroom, volunteer with students and even stay for lunch. I know you will be impressed with what is going on in our classrooms.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

The Intermediate school is off to a great start! Students have been engaging in “get to know you” activities and team builders in their classes. We are striving to build positive relationships with students; this is a top priority. The more we know about our students, the better we can meet their needs and help them achieve. Our first day consisted of a “red carpet” welcome because our students are stars!
Students have also been learning about routines, procedures and expectations. This is another priority for us. Once we have mastered these, it will help us focus on learning. Time has also been spent on learning where classes are and how to open lockers. This is always a biggie! We are making great strides!

Students were able to check out books from our library—most of them on the first day of school. Many students have already been back for new selections! What enthusiastic readers we have! Last year’s 6th graders left messages to our 5th graders on a board in the library. What great advice they have given!

We are looking forward to an amazing year full of learning and fun!

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Above left: Students in Mrs. Williams’ Women’s Choir class begin to find their voices. Above right: Mr. Campbell’s science class are constructing their own white boards for efficient formative assessment.

**Pleasant Hill Middle School**

The middle school is off to a successful start! Students found their classes and practiced lockers on Monday Night (August 15) at Open House. We began Tuesday morning with 331 students and have worked through a week of learning building procedures and reviewing previous learning to move forward in their classes. During the second week, ELA teachers have administered the Gates - Macginitie reading tests to establish a baseline for this year’s students. Other classes have begun moving into their first units of
curriculum. Thursday Night (August 25) will begin the middle school’s version of Purple and Gold Night; introducing the cross country runners, the football players, and the volleyball players.

Above: Students in Mrs. Dowdy’s PE class prepare to run the mile as they watch their classmates already on the track.

**HIGH SCHOOL**

**Introduction to Engineering and Design (PLTW)**

Students participated in an instant challenge to reinforce the design process. Groups of students are given an assortment of supplies to build a solution to the proposed problem. They have a limited time to brainstorm design solutions, agree on a concept, build their project, troubleshoot, redesign, and rebuild their final solution.

Their first project was to create a vehicle that travels along a string carrying a passenger. All groups showed improvement from their first design to their last. Groups also learned the value of testing their design before the deadline to determine flaws and weaknesses in their design.

**Principles of Biomedical Sciences (PLTW)**

Principles of Biomedical Science students began their first day of class immersed in the mysterious death of a fictional character, Anna Garcia. They were asked to hone their scientific inquiry skills through investigation and documenting the death scene. Throughout the year, they will learn valuable biological content in the context of real-world, hands-on activities, projects, and problems as they solve the mystery of Anna’s death. They will also have an opportunity to explore a range of careers in biomedical sciences.
**Introduction to Computer Science (PLTW)**

Students are very excited about the computer science classes Mr. Dustin Mounce is teaching. Over the last few days students began the process of building Android apps for tablets and smartphones. The students are stepping up to the challenge and are very driven to learn as much as possible.

**Common Plan Periods as a Means to Increased Student Achievement**

All core teachers at Pleasant Hill High School have a common planning period this year. These teachers meet a minimum of one day per week to discuss student achievement, analyze data, design assessments, and plan instruction collaboratively.

**Special Services**

Our first week of school was spent building our classroom community, establishing routines and setting expectations in Mrs. Smothers and Mrs. Sullivan’s classes. As part of setting expectations in these rooms, students outlined what they expect from their teachers. The students wrote their ideas on whiteboards. Then they shared these ideas in a round robin format with others at their table. These ideas
were permanently captured on an anchor chart that will serve to remind us of what the kids in the class need from their teachers throughout the school year.

In Co-Teaching English Language Arts IV

Students are learning about goal setting in and outside of the classroom. Students have been working on setting SMART goals for personal, vocational, and academic aspects of their lives. The students were asked to write three goals and as a group brainstorm what they thought the SMART acronym represented. Once the acronym was revealed, students revised their goals to mirror SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely). As a class, each hour decided on academic, personal and vocational goals as a whole. These goals will be tracked and measured each semester throughout the year.

TECHNOLOGY

The Technology Department staff is very excited to have implemented 1:1 Chromebooks at the High School this year. Nearly 700 Chromebooks were distributed to students at Enrollment/Residency night and the first week of school. In addition to the Chromebooks, an upgraded wireless network was installed in the building providing access to the wireless network in every classroom in the building. Student technology assistants were provided training during the first week of school to provide assistance in resetting forgotten passwords for students and teachers. Student technology assistants will also be trained to repair broken screens, replace batteries and provide other small repairs to the Chromebooks. Having on-site repairs available should cut down wait time for students should their Chromebooks be damaged.
Facilities

The Pleasant Hill School District Safety Committee held its first safety meeting of the 2016-17 school year. Members of the committee include representatives from: First Responders, nursing, technology, teachers, community member, building level administration as well as a district level administrator. Items discussed at the meeting included upcoming safety drill schedules, drug dog program, meeting schedule, crisis management packets, radio channel sheets, safety bucket lists, wall maps and chart audits and window number audits. The committee meets on a regular basis and can be called together if a situation should occur.