Preparing for Testing
It is surprising how quickly the school year is progressing! It is already time for all of us to prepare for the annual state mandated testing, both End of Course exams and Grade-Level assessments. Just last Friday, all of the district counselors participated in multiple training webinars regarding test administration at Central Office. While this year brings many changes to testing, our counselors are working hard to guarantee test security, ease of administration, and detailed training to test examiners. One current hurdle for districts is that the test manuals and all of the training materials are not finalized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. DESE is making regular updates to information, even though the testing window is less than a month away. As these updates are received by the district, the counselors are working to incorporate the changes for their buildings. We are fortunate to have an outstanding counseling staff in the Pleasant Hill School District.

FACILITIES
The District Safety Committee met on Thursday, February 19, 2015. Some of the main topics discussed at the meeting included Janis Yokley, Director of Technology reported the technology department will be sending security tips to staff in the near future in regards to computer usage. Lora Watson, Nursing Supervisor, reported on the status of measles in Missouri and reviewed the steps that would take place if a student was diagnosed with the measles in our district. The committee members then worked their way through a tabletop exercise involving tornados hitting multiple schools in the district.

PRIMARY SCHOOL
Primary School teachers are integrating writing with history and holidays during the month of February. This is an example of kindergarten writing after reading the book Chester's Way, which also emphasizes our monthly character education trait, acceptance. At our professional development sessions this week, staff learned about the hierarchy of word cueing from speech/language pathologist Kathy Lacapa-Boegl and worked together to define “culture of math”, one of our district non-negotiables. We toured the building to discuss examples of math artifacts and
Instruction. A first grade class used measurement in a real-life application to compare heights and posted results throughout the building to add to our math “culture.” Next week we are celebrating Dr. Seuss Week with special color theme days and character costumes.

**Elementary School**

Last week was a short week, but we were not short on learning! Here is a snapshot of our week.

Fourth graders visited the Nelson Atkins Museum last Thursday and Friday. Students toured rooms and learned about different eras and cultures of art. Students were challenged to think about art that “wowed” them or made them “question”. They used adjectives to describe different pieces of art work. Thank you to Mrs. Albin for organizing this trip for our students.

Fourth grade students in Mrs. Voorhees' class were challenged to build a structure that resembled Ancient Greek architecture with only post-it notes. This activity integrated the building-wide theme, art and team building.

Third Graders are finishing their “Build a Town” projects which integrate geometry, art, and social studies standards. The projects will be on display this Thursday, February 26th from 4:30-6:30 in the PHES gym.

Mrs. Reeves hosted Family Fun night in the gym last Thursday evening. Here is a snapshot of what families enjoyed!

The PHES staff and students are gearing up for our “Reading Opens Doors” activity. Classroom doors have been beautifully transformed to resemble the cover of a children’s book. Students will tour the building this week and choose two doors to walk through during Read across America Week.
Finally, as we do each week, students are recognized for displaying good character. This week’s recipient’s of the High Five Character Award are: Ethan Hesterberg, Madison Wilson, Taliya Guenther, Mara Shouse, Jackson Shuler, Jillian Shewmaker-Perrin, Jordyn Barwick, Reagan Beaman, Caleb Martin, Gracie Layton, and Grayce Clark.

**INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL**

“Students of the Week” are: Evan Miller, Averie Snyder, Matthew Davis, Joey Gomez, Marko Brendenhand and Drake Beaman. We congratulate these students for their outstanding character and deeds.

Our fifth grade students attended a fieldtrip to Kauffman Stadium on February 13. It was rated as the Best. Day. Ever! Students participated in curriculum aligned activities, toured the facility, sat in the Royals dugout, toured the visitors’ locker-room and ate lunch. We appreciate all the parent volunteers that attended the fieldtrip; their help was valued greatly!
Sixth Grade World Art class has been learning about art and the culture of China. This year is the Year of the Goat. You may also see this year represented as a sheep or ram. Students had the opportunity to use all authentic Chinese tools to create their art work. Students learned to grind down Sumi ink sticks to create their own ink. They also learned the proper way to hold a Chinese paint brush and were able to create traditional brush strokes. While learning the brush strokes, students created bamboo and cherry blossom trees. For their final project in the unit, students created banners representing their Chinese sign. For most, their sign is the New Year goat. The banners included Chinese writing and brush painting.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**ART I** classes will be starting a unit on color. They will make a color wheel as practice and then work with several color schemes. One of the main things they will concentrate on will be neutralizing colors. To neutralize a color you mix two compliments together creating
mixtures that are a boundless array of “natures” palette. They will then study tree structures. Their culminating project will be to study the art of Grant Wood and create an original landscape of their own using foreground, middle ground and background and neutral colors.

**ART 2** classes are also working on a color unit. After practicing on a color wheel they will create an original design for a CD using all 12 colors on the color wheel along with the 4 neutral colors and any other blended colors they choose. Their second project will be to create a landscape mosaic using torn magazine pictures. They will need to use multiple shades of blues for the sky, greens for the ground and browns for the trees to create a realistic picture. They will learn there are many tints, tones and shades of one color.

**PROJECT ART** students are working on a Surrealism unit. They will be creating a one point perspective picture with contrasting colors as their background. Next, we will take pictures of the students jumping, twisting and turning and make black and white copies on the copy machine. The students will cut out the pictures of themselves and glue them on their perspective pictures creating a “surreal” look as though they are floating in space or being pulled into a vortex. They will learn about art and dreams, emotions in your work and how to use body language in your art to create a message to your audience. Many Surreal artists and projects are planned for this unit. It will be a busy month.

**HIGH SCHOOL**

PHHS students are currently participating in the national Vans Custom Culture shoe design contest. The overall message for PHHS is "It’s My Life." Students are completing their designs on templates from Vans. The top four designers from PHHS will be selected to execute their creation on an actual pair of shoes. Shoe designers from the top five high schools in the nation will travel to New York for the final round of judging. The top school wins $50,000 for their art department.

"Vans Custom Culture was created to inspire and empower high school students to embrace their creativity through art and design, and to bring attention to diminishing arts education budgets. Custom Culture is a national high school customization competition using four pairs of blank Vans shoes to be customized around four themes: Art, Music, Action Sports and Local Flavor (vans.com)."

This is an excellent opportunity for students that have a passion for art and design to have practical real world experience. Check out the teaser video at [http://youtu.be/dlWT9r5TEpk](http://youtu.be/dlWT9r5TEpk).

Beginning this week and continuing for the next two weeks the seniors in US History 1865-Present are preparing to hold a war crimes tribunal. Once they finish their research and prepare their case we will be holding the tribunal that Emperor Hirohito never faced after the Second World War. The prosecution is split into two groups digging into the history of the First and Second Sino-Japanese war as well as the invasion of Manchuria to find evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity on the one side while the other works to connect the Emperor’s knowledge and actions with the activities of Imperial Japan's military. The defense is working to establish that Emperor Hirohito's role in the execution of the war was as that of a figure head who, while knowledgeable of what was being done, was powerless to prevent or alter events or the crimes associated with them.
The PHHS Music Departments are busy preparing for State Large Group Festival and Solo and Ensemble Festival. Both of these events are held on a yearly basis and involve almost all of the students in the music department. The Instrumental department under the direction of Adam Twenter, will prepare a Concert Band and will prepare 32 soloists and 7 ensembles. The Vocal department, under the direction of Karen Dollins, will prepare 4 choirs and 28 soloists and 22 ensembles. The soloists and small ensembles require much independent rehearsal by the students with some guidance from their teachers. Not only is in class preparation required but those “dreaded” early morning rehearsals at 6:30am are also required in order to continue at a high level of performance. Commitment is not only required from the students but the parents as well as they shuffle numerous schedules and provide transportation. It is with great honor that the music department represents PHHS at the State and District level.

The Hillside Singers auditioned and were selected by a panel of out of state music educators to perform at the Missouri Music Educators Conference this past January. This is the 5th time that PHHS has been represented at this conference. Mr. Jim Oliver, PHHS Activities Director and Adam Twenter, PHHS Band Director also performed in the presentation in an instrumental ensemble. The choir was accompanied by Janet O’Neill, our wonderful accompanist. Hillside began preparing for this back in August when the selection was made. Along with prepping for this honor, they continued to put together their show choir show and along with our other two show choirs, Hilltop Harmony and Hillsound, they hosted 2 competitions this year, The Heart of American Competition at Crown Center and the PHHS Battle of the Best. The show choir season began in January and all choirs have been performing successfully with Hillside taking 1st in their division in each competition and Hilltop taking 2nd in their division at the Harrisonville Competition. Terry Young, a long standing community volunteer for the Vocal Music Department continues to teach young people how to work hard while also engaging many fathers and mothers who come along to volunteer for the choirs.

With the help of many parents, volunteers and administrators the music department continues to thrive.

**SPECIAL SERVICES**

In the Office:

Miss Hamilton is working with the building Principals to schedule, prepare and carry out summative meetings with non tenured teachers and teachers up for evaluation. Mrs. Maxey, Mrs. Welliver and Ms. Gassaway continue to work on referrals and re evaluations. We have started to look at staffing and placement for next year.

Parents As Teachers:

Parents as Teachers hosted an Activity Night on February 11, 2015. Activities were designed to introduce and increase fine and gross motor skills for children 6 months to 5 years of age. Activities included scooter race, balance beam, ball bounce, limbo, hop scotch, oochie-scoochie, tunnel crawl, walking the path, walking over steps, football and animal toss, parachute play, bowling, ball pit, colander poke, cup towers and song and dance. Through the various activities, children were working on following directions, taking turns, problem solving, mathematical skills and fine and gross motor skills.
Grace is working on cooperating with others as she also works on her gross motor skills during parachute play.

Dominic is using his balance and gross motor skills to walk up and over stairs without any rails or help from mom and dad.

Brayden used his mathematical skills to help build this pyramid and now is gleefully getting ready to use his gross motor throwing skills to knock down all his hard work.

Rory is listening to the directions before he scooter races down the hall to drop the ball in the named target.
Primary Speech

The speech students are making great gains this quarter. Most students have progressed from saying speech sounds in isolation to good sounds in conversation. The students work in the speech room, classroom, and at home on their sound(s). In addition to serving 34 students on an Individual Education Plan, 5 students are served in a speech RTI group. This allows me to help those students with clear needs who would not otherwise qualify for services.

Kathy Boegel

2nd grade Diederich/Waibel

The students will be able to identify an alliteration.

The students will create their own alliterations.

Pictured are 2nd grade students working on creating their own alliteration. Students learned what an alliteration was and got to try many familiar ones in the whole group setting. Students were then put into pairs to come up with their own alliteration. Once the alliterations were complete, the students got to share their creativity with their classmates. Everyone really enjoyed this activity!!
Objective: Factoring Polynomials.

- Adding and subtracting polynomials
- Multiplying and factoring polynomials
- Multiplying binomials
- Factoring trinomials

The students made a anchor charts as a class to hang on the walls that covered the basics of factoring polynomials. On their own the made "mini" anchor charts on sticky notes to keep with them. Their "mini" anchor charts had the rules listed out for when to use the different kinds of factoring depending on how many terms each polynomial had.
A group of teachers from the Intermediate, Middle and High Schools recently attended the Midwest Education Technology Community Conference. METC, an affiliate of the International Society of Technology Educators, features regional and national experts who introduce participants to the latest trends and best practices in the area of education technology. In addition, attendees have the opportunity to see examples of student-developed work, learn from colleagues, attend hands-on workshops and discover new and innovative ways to approach teaching and learning through technology use in the classroom. Teachers from Pleasant Hill attended many workshops including sessions on coding, programming, Google apps, and digital citizenship. Upon their return, teachers were excited to begin implementing new tools and strategies in their classrooms.
PLEASANT HILL ACTIVITIES… “IT’S A GREAT DAY TO BE A ROOSTER/CHICK!”

Highlights:

1. Boys Basketball: The Roosters had a great week last week defeating conference foes Excelsior Spring and Oak Grove. They play Harrisonville at home Tuesday night (Senior night) and Grain Valley on the road Thursday to wrap up the regular season. District play begins for the Roosters on March 3rd in Warrensburg with a 5:30pm first round game vs. Nevada.

2. Girls Basketball: The Chicks gained wins last week vs Excelsior Springs and Oak Grove. They will play the front side of a varsity double header Tuesday vs. Harrisonville (Senior Night) and at home vs Grain Valley on Thursday night to wrap up their regular season. District play for the Chicks starts on Monday March 2nd in Warrensburg vs. Harrisonville; 7pm game time.

3. Wrestling: The Roosters took 9 wrestlers to the state championships this past weekend. They came home with four medalists. Olen Brattin - State Champion at 152; Kolin Roger - State Runner up at 170; Tommy Williams - Third Place at 220; and Cole Sullivan - 4th Place at 138. It was a solid year for the Roosters in the toughest conference in the state as the MRVC West had 9 finalists this year!

4. Band: The jazz band will perform on the campus of the University of Kansas on March 6th as part of the KU Jazz Festival and again in April at the 18th and Vine Jazz Museum Festival sponsored by MCCKC. Select students are also preparing to participate in MRVC Conference Band on March 7th.

5. Choir: The show choir season is in full swing as they travelled to Nevada last weekend. District and state solo competitions are on the horizon as well as large group performances. The choirs will be traveling to Sedalia March 7th to wrap up their show choir season.

6. Speech & Debate: The state qualifying meet for speech and debate was cancelled this past weekend so results are not available. The team will split this coming weekend with meets in Odessa Friday and Saturday along with a qualifying meet Saturday in Neosho, Mo.

7. The spring athletic season officially begins on March 2nd. It’s here already!!! Let’s hope mother nature cooperates with a mild March!

The spring season is upon us! Let’s keep that Pleasant Hill spirit strong with good representation at our sporting events and activities. We do this for the kids! Professionalism and class at all times will ensure our presentation is first class!