**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Third quarter has started off with big learning opportunities and fun staff activities. From preschool to 2nd grade, students are writing, reading, and mastering different levels of addition and subtraction. Students especially enjoy working with informative text. Preschoolers are using inventive spelling to add labels to their illustrations. Kindergarteners are using text and media sources to research fascinating facts about animals. First graders are making inferences, drawing conclusions, and writing opinions. Second graders are using text features, study skills, and various resources to summarize, expand vocabulary, and write persuasive articles. We are continuing our building-wide focus on kindness with recognition and displays for both students and staff. We started a team-building event with fun online activities and friendly competition that has staff members smiling and promoting positive attitudes for all. We’re getting ready for one of the biggest days of the year: the 100th day of school, on Jan. 29.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

This week we welcome our new secretary, Bobbi Wojtowicz, to PHES. She will spend the week with Lori Baker who leaves us on Friday, January 30th. The staff will host a farewell luncheon for Lori on Thursday to express our appreciation for her many years of service to our school.

The PHES clubs are thriving second semester! The following is a snapshot of extracurricular activities our students have to enjoy. **Character Club** starts today after school and has 28 fourth graders enrolled. The focus of the Character Club will be to help others in the school and throughout the community, promote kindness and build character throughout the school. Mrs. Zimmerschied, our counselor is the sponsor of this group.

**The PHES Film Club** currently has 60 students enrolled and meets Fridays after school. These students are working on directing, designing and editing an original film. Students learned the various types of film; documentary, stop motion, and feature films. Students then choose a film type and began creating using The Six Traits of Film Production to perfect their craft. Mr. McDavitt and Mrs. Pickett plan on holding a red carpet reveal in May so that parents and guests can come view finished products.

**Our Tech Team** has 11 members and has been busy working to help update and maintain the iPad sets within our building. We use a work ticket system to help classroom teachers keep the devices in working order. This may include updating apps or software, deleting emails or photos, or adding apps at teacher requests. During first semester the group was comprised of fourth graders and second semester we will work with third graders. Mrs. Brundage and Mrs. Halfmann sponsor this group.

**The Jump Rope Club**, led by Mrs. Reeves is gearing up for their performance on February 9th where they will show off their jumping rope routines. Jump Rope Club meets two mornings each week.
Our Student Leadership Club will host Donuts with Dads this Friday morning. We have 225 reservations so far! They are also sponsoring our “Souper Bowl Food Drive” this week. All food collected will be donated to the food pantry. This club is led by Kathy Brundage and Kelli Voorhees.

On Friday, the PHES staff will officially launch our Ancient Greece theme for 2nd semester. Classrooms will participate in an activity that immerses them in the Greek Alphabet. Students will collaborate to create a Greek class name because Greece is the Word at PHES.

Intermediate School

“Students of the Week” are: Nathan Hitch, Tobin Wise, Darian Patet, Nina Lapee, Logan Leiker and Ayden Sheets. We congratulate these students for their outstanding character and deeds.

Sixth grade teacher, Becky Russell, was selected for the Spotlight Gala Award for Educator of the Year by the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce. The following words were written about Mrs. Russell.

I would like to nominate Becky Russell for Educator of the Year. Becky works tirelessly to find new and creative ways to teach Math every day, from turning "Let's Go Royals!" chants into "Let's Go Math"! to using Grease Lightening choreography to explain x and y axis. She also goes to great lengths to ensure that her students know that they are important and cared for. She has been known to share Amish friendship bread starters with students that enjoy baking to help build connections.

Becky also helps out her building community by being a team leader, curriculum facilitator and mentor. On a district level, Becky is a member of PDC and helps to ensure that our students are getting the best instruction possible and is always looking for ways that we can improve for the betterment of our future. For all of these reasons and many more I think Becky Russell is a prime example of what a great teacher looks like here in the Pleasant Hill School District.

I would be hard pressed to find anyone that has more pride for this town and community than Becky does. She makes it a point to support many local businesses and is filled with joy when they remember her by name. She is always willing to help others, whether it is rides home because their car is in the shop or passing on the name of a great business she frequents. Becky is a person that represents this town with such pride that you can always see it on her smiling face.

Becky Russell is a shining example of what excellence in education, leadership, and community look like in a person.
**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Our upcoming district-wide spelling bee will be held this Tuesday, January 27 at 5:00 pm in the Performing Arts Center at the high school. This year our seventh and grade students eligible to compete in our local district competition are the following: 7th grade: Logan Bailey, Haley Comegys, Angeleena Hook, Dayton Little, Morgan Wehner, Morgan Wilhite 8th Grade: Alex Butler, John Dagley, Roman Carr, Danielle Lichte, CJ Sigala

Every year at this time, our Student Council sponsors several fundraisers which directly benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Staff, parents, and students will have several different ways to support this cause. We will once again be offering parents, students, and staff the opportunity to purchase a lollipop Valentine for one dollar. Students will be able to pick from four different card designs and parents and staff will have two choices. The lollipop Valentines will be delivered on Friday, February 13 during advisory. This program has always been a big success; students love both giving and receiving the Valentines. Sales for students will begin on Friday 1/30 and run until Wednesday, 2/11. Student Council members will be taking students’ orders before school in the foyer. Parents can send in their order form for orders until Tuesday 2/10.

Our final fundraiser will be collecting change for “Pennies for Patients” in the hopes of making a change and finding a cure. We are sending home an information letter and will have a collection box available to those interested on Friday 1/23 with our students. Students will collect spare change and turn their boxes in to their advisory teachers when full or by Friday February 13. The student who has collected the most money will receive a prize (yet to be determined) and the advisory who collects the most money will receive a ice cream sundae party.

Our next dance is right around the corner and Student Council is working hard to prepare for this festive school activity too! The Winter Dance will be Friday, February 6 from 6pm - 8pm in the middle school gym. Cost is $5 at the door (correct change is appreciated) and school dress code will be enforced. Some students choose to dress up a bit more than normal for this dance, but it is not a formal dance and anything students would wear to school is considered acceptable attire for the dance. Student Council will be accepting food and drink donations for the dance. If you would like to help by donating boxed drinks and/or treats please email Janice Martin, student council advisor, at jmartin@pleasanthillschools.com or call her at 540-2149 x4121 by Tuesday, February 3 with what you would like to donate or for additional information. As always, we welcome parents and guardians to stick around and join in the fun as chaperons.

**HIGH SCHOOL**

This week at Pleasant Hill High School, preparations are being made for two professional development opportunities for teachers. On Wednesday, teachers will participate in our monthly Plan Time PD event. The topic for this month is Google Forms. Google Forms will allow us to plan events, design surveys, quiz students, or collect any other information quickly and easily. Mrs. Janis Yokley will specifically lead teachers in developing a survey and sharing it with students. Furthermore, she will highlight Flubaroo, an app that will allow teachers to grade and analyze online assessments.

On Friday, January 30, teachers will work in their content departments to modify common assessments for the second semester. Furthermore, career and technical education teachers will begin preparing for the Technical Skills Attainment (TSA). This is an exam that measures the skill proficiency of students that are concentrators and completers of an approved Career and Technical Education program.

**SPECIAL SERVICES**

The Office

We are working on trying to get a jump start on next year’s possible staff shifts and changes. We would like to get a headstart on interviews so we can secure the best possible replacements for our shifting and retiring staff. We are also looking into paraprofessional needs and placement for next year. We always start this at the beginning of February because it is a long and difficult job to get it right. We continue to test, staff, and meet for annual IEPs as well.

Primary
Students in the English Language Learner class are currently taking the ACCESS Assessment for the 2014-2015 school year. This assessment covers the developmental domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and is administered in segments. Missouri is part of a consortium working with other states to improve ELL programs and become more unified across the board. In doing so, the ACCESS is administered annually to monitor progress of these students and guide the educators in their preparations for the upcoming year.

As a whole, since the inception of the ACCESS testing Pleasant Hill ELL students have shown marked progress each year.

Elementary
Students in Mr. McDavitt’s and Mrs. Armstrong’s class constructed Lego houses. The purpose of the construction was for students to create fractional parts of a whole and then to order the fractions from least to greatest. They grouped the Legos into colors and based their fractions on the amount of color brick used/total of the color brick.

- I can categorize Legos based on a given criteria.
- I can form a fraction that represents a part of a whole.
- I can order fractions with different denominators from least to greatest using 1/2 as a benchmark fraction.

Intermediate
Ms. Love’s Math Class
Objective: Students will apply strategies to assist in performing the Order of Operations in order to evaluate (means to solve even though there is no equal sign) a numerical expression (numbers and symbols).
Sixth grade students initially circle the parenthesis to remind them they must solve this expression first. They also practice bringing down each number and symbol prior to solving, setting up the next step. The next step includes a set of brackets. At times, students might have braces in their expression. Students repeat this process for each line of the expression till they reached a final answer. Not following the Order of Operations or leaving out any symbols or numbers will result in a wrong answer.

Hephaestus is the Greek god of the forge, craft, and fire. Athena is intelligent and a peacemaker. Greek mythology is an interesting topic that lends itself well to research and creative projects. These 7th graders used the Internet to research eight Greek gods and six Greek goddesses. They were to find information such as the gods' or goddesses' symbols, strengths and weaknesses, famous family members, and what he or she is famous for. While researching, credibility and accuracy of the sources were also evaluated for each site used. Finally, the students use this information to create a digital or poster board poster of one god or goddess which will be presented to the rest of the class. The students experienced researching, organizing information, along with creative expression while being exposed to some fun and interesting mythology.

CCS Writing 8 - Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each sources, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
Mr. Hutzell and Mrs. Geist

The students in Biology have spent the last couple weeks working on cell structure. We have learned how to identify different parts of a cell. This was leading up to a hands on lab activity where the students got to use the microscopes to see the parts they have been learning about. The students were able to identify many parts in both an onion cell and in a cheek cell. The best part of the project was when they would look into the microscope and see that the cheek cell was actually still moving under the slide. It was awesome to be there for that AHA moment for the students.

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

What a time for Pleasant Hill Activities!

Highlights:

Winter activities are in full swing! Check out your favorite activity soon!

1. This week the Chicks and the Rooster basketball teams are playing in the Grain Valley Sonic Shootout. The brackets can be found on the new activities website! [www.pleasanthillactivities.org](http://www.pleasanthillactivities.org)
2. The Rooster Wrestling team has their senior night Tuesday night in their duel vs. Harrisonville. Matches begin at 6pm. They travel to Marshfield on February 7th. @RoosterWrestle (Twitter)
3. The Scholar Bowl team competes at Lexington High School this Wednesday. They will host an event on Wednesday February 4th. Volunteers will be needed to help with the event. Contact Mr. Moore for information.
4. The Hillside singers will be performing at the Missouri Music Educators Conference at 9am on Thursday of this week! It is an honor to be chosen to perform at this convention. They will perform at the Tan-Tar-A Resort. Kudos to all involved in helping to run a successful Battle of the Best show choir competition this past weekend. It was awesome to see all the cooperation and hard work among parents, directors, teachers and staff to make the event run as smooth as ever!
5. Mr. Berry has the Speech & Debate program heading to Platte County High School this weekend as they continue to roll with a successful season. Follow the team @roosterdebate on twitter!

Some exciting news!! The activities department launched a new webpage. Check it out at [www.pleasanthillactivities.org](http://www.pleasanthillactivities.org) Currently a work in progress as we discover what works best in communicating with our patrons, parents and community on the webpage. In the future look for contributing articles from members of our new Ambassador Club, coaches and managers. Fans even have an opportunity to contribute photos to the site. Be patient! It’s not perfect...yet, but we’ll get there! We hope you find it useful and enjoyable.

Have a safe winter!

Technology Department

The Middle School ELA teachers and students are working hard and enjoying the Chromebook laptops that have been placed in the classrooms. In preparation for the deployment of the Chromebooks, the tech department worked very hard to have all of the equipment ready while teachers were restructuring their lessons to integrate technology skills into their ELA lessons. The feedback from students indicates they feel the Chromebooks are a much more efficient and engaging way to do their work in the classroom. Teachers report that students participate much more and are very excited to do their lessons on the Chromebooks.