PRIMARY SCHOOL

November is a very busy month at the Primary School. With the help of our PTO, we hosted a very successful and well-attended Muffins and Mittens with Moms event on Nov. 12. The winter accessories collected include 426 pairs of mittens and 77 winter hats, which will be donated to Lay Clergy, along with our Dollar Jeans money, at our next school-wide assembly on Nov. 21. The Primary School donated the most food items to the local food pantry in a contest sponsored by the Pleasant Hill Bank, earning us a $500 check for the local charity of our choice. Second graders learned about local charities such as the Optimist Club, Meals on Wheels, etc. and voted to donate our check to the Angel Tree campaign. Our 1st-2nd grade concert choir will perform at the high school PAC on Nov. 18, and our 2nd grade performance of “The Big Chill”, a musical about students yearning for snow days, will be Dec. 2. Second graders are preparing to host Grandparents’ Day on Nov. 24 at 2:00. Art projects and instructional activities center around Thanksgiving and Native American culture this time of year, and kindergarteners are preparing for their annual “feast” on Nov. 25. As midterm of our second quarter arrives, we are beginning the second Discovery Education benchmark assessments, starting with 1st graders the week of Nov. 17. Results will help teachers adjust pace of instruction and group students to best meet learning needs. Teachers are working on revising math common assessments to make content more rigorous, and preparing students for performance writing events. We enjoyed an afternoon of learning from our colleagues at district professional development sessions on Nov. 21. Four sessions were led by PS teachers Tina Bailey, Christie Diederich, Monica Pickett, and Kathy Roach, on topics from literacy to technology.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Last week our school was vibrating with excitement. We started our week with the Veteran’s Day breakfast in which we fed and honored close to 200 veterans and their families. Southwest Food Service catered the meal and our Student Leadership greeted and seated our guests. Mrs. Jessica Young’s third grade students culminated their Veterans Day research by interviewing some of the veterans as they left the breakfast.

Professional development was the focus last week for our staff. On Wednesday, we devoted 45 minutes to a table top crisis scenario to ensure that we are ready in the event of an emergency. We all agreed it was a valuable learning experience. On Friday, we participated in district-wide professional development at the High School. Sessions were led by teacher-leaders from throughout the district on topics such as literacy, flipped classrooms and technology integration. The feedback I have received from teachers is very positive. We will spend time this week debriefing from the sessions we attended and sharing our learning.

On Thursday, Mrs. Baedke’s fourth graders participate in a Mystery Skype game with another classroom from somewhere in the United States. They were challenged to use their map skills and critical thinking skills to formulate yes/no questions that helped them determine the location. Friday morning, our PHES students were excited to participate in their third building-wide problem based
learning activity. Students were challenged to be the event planners and business consultants for our Muffins with Moms event that will take place on November 21st. Students worked collaboratively to determine how many guests we should expect, how many muffins we will need, where to buy them and how to organize the space. Students and teachers could be seen measuring, calculating and researching throughout the building.

On Tuesday this week, Mr. McDavitt’s fourth graders will host a problem based learning open house for his parents. This will be a culminating event to a week-long activity in which his students have been planning and calculating the expense of a Thanksgiving meal. Mrs. Pickett’s third graders will invite parents to school as well to participate in a Kool-Aide problem based learning activity on Wednesday in which fractions is the focus! Also on Wednesday, we will honor our paraprofessionals for all they do for our students and on Thursday evening, Mrs. Reeves will welcome families for a fun night in the gym. Friday morning we will welcome 250 moms and their children for our Muffins with Moms event. Finally, our third graders will enjoy their first field trip of the year as they make their way to Science City!

**Intermediate School**

“Students of the Week” are: Elijah Reynolds, Victoria Cain, Izzy McCarty, Kale Bakken, Tucker Brunner and CheyAnn Johnson. We congratulate these students for their outstanding character and deeds. “Students of the Month” for November are: Maddie Blevins, Riley Vaughn, Trey Widhalm, Keagon Madison, Madison Woods, Hannah Joyce, Livie Toler, Emily Hill, Duncan Perkins, Jessica Ross, Tobin Wise, Jacob Johnson and Jacob Baker. We congratulate these students as well!

Our teachers have been busy with conferences; we have recently concluded these but are always available to meet. We were able to meet with 84% of our families. We are thankful to have the opportunity to partner with them--to share with parents and be able to answer questions and receive feedback. The library was a busy location throughout our evening conferences as well. The IS book fair took place during this time; it appears many families enjoy browsing after conferences (and taking a peek at the Royal’s game!). We look forward to continuing to work together with parents and students to ensure success for all children. We thank our parents for their participation and support.
Our fifth grade students performed at the PTO performance on November 4. The theme was Folk music, art, and dance. The elective teachers collaboratively planned the unit. Mrs. Chandler, our music teacher, and Mr. Adamczyk, our PE teacher, combined classes and taught students Folk dances and music. They integrated iPads into classroom instruction. Ms. Greve, our computer teacher, had students create a flyer with all the pertinent information about the performance using Microsoft Publisher. These flyers were provided to the parents as a personal invite. Students also created Folk art—class quilts. The thematic unit was aligned to curriculum and provided an exciting and engaging learning experience for our students.

Students and staff attended the Rachel's Legacy presentation on November 5. This was an extension of Rachel's Challenge that we participated in two years ago. Additionally, twenty-five of our students participated in the training in the afternoon on 11/5. These students have ideas to help support Rachel's Legacy; they will be sharing ideas and continuing to promote kindness and compassion through the Positive School Climate/Friends of Rachel Club. Rachel's Challenge website, www.rachelschallenge.org, states: “Rachel's Challenge is a national non-profit organization dedicated to creating safe, connected school environments where learning and teaching are maximized. Based on the life and writing of Rachel Scott, the first victim of the Columbine tragedy in 1999, Rachel's Challenge provides a continual improvement process designed to awaken the learner in every child. We motivate and equip students to start and sustain a chain reaction of kindness and compassion that transforms schools and communities.”

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

We will be hosting our fourth annual career fair next week on November 25. Career training is a huge part of the guidance curriculum for middle school students in preparation for high school coursework and college & career readiness. This fair is a fabulous tool which involves members of our community in educating middle school students about career and job opportunities available to them. The career fair is set up so that each community member will be in his/her own classroom and will give four 20 minute presentations to approximately 30 students in each time slot. In the past, presenters have used slide shows, handouts, props, displayed tools or just simply dialogued with students. This year we have the following careers by community members/businesses for our students to visit:

*Physical Therapist, Dana Raynard, DPT, ATC from Serc*
*Chiropractor, Dr. Corey Piva*
*PHSD Technology Team*
*Farmers Insurance, Phil Kohler*
*American Family Insurance, Athena Brattin & Scott Hocker*
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 24 at 5pm in our middle school gym with home basketball. Further, the middle school musical has been announced and students are busy preparing musical auditions for *Seussical, Jr.* You can follow the musical work, news, practice information at this link [http://phinthemiddle.blogspot.com/](http://phinthemiddle.blogspot.com/).

**HIGH SCHOOL**

The PHHS annual Blood Drive will be held on Thursday, November 20th from 7:30-2:00 in the gym. Every unit of blood we collect has the ability to make a difference in the lives of two patients in need. High school blood drives provide almost 12% of the blood collected by the Community Blood Center throughout the year. Someone needs a blood transfusion every 4 minutes. As a result the Community Blood Center needs to collect almost 600 units of blood for hospitals in Kansas and Missouri to meet the daily demand. Currently we have 75 students and teachers signed up to donate whole blood and 15 students signed up to donate automated red cells, although, we anticipate higher participation. Student Council has spent several week preparing for this event by meeting with our Community Blood Drive representative and planning promotions for this event. Students have created announcements along with hanging promotional information through the school in order to interest participants into volunteering to help save a life.

The Annual Show will take place on Friday, November 21th. The Annual Show is an annual event produced by the high school vocal music department along with the yearbook staff. This program showcases the talented students enrolled at the high school. Students and parents alike look forward to coming to the auditorium to watch students from the high school sing, dance, and act their way across the stage. The crowd gets to watch the shows of Hillside, Hilltop, and Hillsound before they begin their competition season. Additionally, the audience votes on the
Annual Show King and Queen, which are crowned at intermission. The show is a big hit every year, and all proceeds go to benefit the Yearbook Staff and the Pleasant Hill High School Choirs.

**SPECIAL SERVICES**

In the office: We continue to work on the ongoing evaluations (17). We have 8 completed. This does not include speech/language only students. We have developed a Google Form to start collecting data from the Co Teaching classes. First Quarter (baseline) information is being collected at this time from all K-12 ELA and Math Co Teaching classes. We are working on Professional Development for Co Teachers as well as Para Professionals.

Elementary

3rd grade co-teaching has been busy with Problem Based Learning! Students are learning to solve real life problems using math, reading and writing. Building bird houses while staying on budget, drawing blueprints, and creating art using multiplication are just a few of the ways students are having fun learning!
Middle School

Who is your furthest-back person? The 7th grade students in Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Myler’s English Language Arts class read Alex Haley's memoir “My Furthest-Back Person”, where he is recounting his search for his furthest-back person. Growing up, Haley's grandmother had told him of “the African” who came to the United States after being kidnapped and was sold into slavery. As an adult, Haley wanted to find out the accuracy of his grandmother’s story. As a class, we used this memoir to think about our furthest-back person and other ancestry information and items.

Each student was given two assignments to pair with Haley’s memoir. First, they were asked to create a family tree that included at least 3 generations. Birth, marriage and death dates along with siblings was required on the family tree. The second assignment included 8 writing/projects and the students were asked to complete any 3 of their choice. They could research their coat of arms, gather a family heirloom, recipe or portrait or describe a family holiday tradition along with several other choices.

The picture depicts two seventh grader students working on this project in the computer lab during class. They were given time to conduct research or find family information. They could also use Google Chrome to type the needed information required for each project. If they chose to write about a family heirloom, they needed to include a description of the object, who it came from, who it has been passed to, and why it is important to the family.

Some students and their families have really gotten into the genealogy portion of this assignment. Others have talked to grandparents and found pictures of great-grandparents. As these students grow into young men and women, we hope family becomes a very important part of life. This project stretches the students to look at who they are and where they came from, along with talking about their ancestors that they might not otherwise talk about. Not only have the students dug into their family history, the teachers are also finding new information about their family history. We are all learning and growing in 7th grade ELA.
High School

Mr. Hutzell and Mr. Stahl work as a team to teach both general education students and special education students. The extra teacher in the classroom helps both categories of students and provides a diverse teaching styles and personalities. This method has proven effective in the general education classroom and students are excelling and really seem to enjoy having two teachers in the classroom.

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

What a time for Pleasant Hill Activities!

Highlights:

1. Fall sports awards wrapped up last week with our award ceremonies. The Booster Club did a marvelous job getting things going with cupcakes and drinks for everyone. It was standing room only for the football/cheer awards. The turnout was awesome as only one player was not able to attend. Coach Kyle Roach prepared and delivered a moving speech and set the tone for an excellent evening of celebration.

2. The awards ceremonies concluded Wednesday evening with volleyball, cross country and boys soccer. Again, the turnout was outstanding in support of our programs!
3. The winter sports season kicks off Tuesday with our basketball purple & gold night; 6pm in “The Coop”! Thursday the wrestlers kick things off with a purple & gold night of their own...same time, same place! Come out and see what the Roosters and Chicks have in store for the coming season!

The winter 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!