



Riverdale C.U.S.D. #100 District Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 3 Winter 2012

School Year 2011-2012

From the Superintendent:

I hope this finds all of our Riverdale families having a great start to the New Year. The first month of twenty-twelve has kept many of our students busy

with interscholastic activities. I am proud of the lessons these individuals learn through participation in their chosen activities. They are required to attend practices each night, contests that can last from a couple of hours to multiple days, and still find time to complete assigned homework, study for exams, and some, a part-time job. The lessons in time management, cooperation, perseverance, and how to be both a good winner and loser, are lessons for a lifetime. Again, I am proud of how Riverdale students demonstrate these attributes on and off the court, field, mat, etc. I also want to recognize Mr. Matt Reece, our vocal and instrumental music teacher for how good our pep band sounds this year. Not only are they fun to listen to, but they have been a big part of our basketball team's success.

As much as I enjoy watching our Riverdale teams compete; I dislike shoveling snow. Some of you might now be wondering what those two things have to do with one another. The answer is "not much, really," but I do want to remind everyone that it is winter in Illinois, and keeping our parking lots and sidewalks free of snow and ice can be a challenge. Our custodians and main-

tenance people do a good job of clearing these areas before school, and throughout the day, however, there are times when they are busy cleaning classrooms, and we get additional precipitation. So, if you too are inside the gym cheering one of our teams to another victory, please be careful when you leave. It may be slippery. If you notice an area that needs attention, please find a Principal, our Athletic Director, Scott Hemm, or myself, and we will get it taken care of.

Finally, those of you who have read other articles I have included in past newsletters, would likely be surprised if I closed without a few comments regarding the funding stream from Springfield. As of the end of December, the State was behind in payments to us by almost \$500,000. As you might imagine, it becomes very difficult to keep up with bills, when you budget to receive money we are owed, and it is not received, or it comes months later. During the past five-plus years, we have worked to cut expenses, including reducing staff, renegotiating contracts from garbage disposal to toilet tissue.

We have been forced to spend reserves because of funding cuts, and/or funds that were received after the end of a fiscal year. Because of the continued uncertainties of funding from the State of Illinois, the Board of Education recently sold bonds to ensure that the District has money available to pay those bills that we would otherwise pay with State money owed to us. Currently, the State is a little more than four months behind in getting us our money. As you might imagine, the school district can't get by sitting on bills for four months, but the State does. This is the reason for selling the bonds. Unfortunately, the result is an additional burden placed on us, the property owners of the school district at tax time. We will continue to be vigilant in our efforts to control costs, yet balance that with our primary goal of providing a quality education for our students. Maybe twenty-twelve will be the year our economy shows real signs of recovery. That would make shoveling snow much more enjoyable. Thank you!

Important Dates:

**February 3rd
Parent/Teacher
Conferences**

**Early Dismissal
Elementary - 11:15 am
Middle School - 11:25 am
High School - 11:30 am**

**February 8th
School Improvement Day
1 Hour Early Dismissal**

**February 20th
Presidents' Day
No School**

**February 22
School Improvement Day
1 Hour Early Dismissal**

**March 5
Casimir Pulaski Day
No School**

**March 6
ISAT Testing**

**March 7
School Improvement Day
1 Hour Early Dismissal**

**March 21
Teacher Institute
No School**

**April 2 - 9
Spring Break**

Riverdale Administration

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The District Newsletter is produced quarterly. Submissions are accepted by the Superintendent's office from anyone living within the Riverdale District. Names of contributing writers must accompany submissions along with titles and phone numbers. Content is strictly regulated and should not include sensitive information that may cause conflict if read by other district members. All submissions are subject to editing for content and clarity. Submissions for publication can be forwarded via fax (309-523-3550), disk copy (Microsoft Word), hard copy, or as an e-mail attachment sent to Susan Simosky (ssimosky@riverdaleschools.org).

*Content Editor:
Mr. Ronald Jacobs
Newsletter Editor:
Office of Superintendent*

A Note from Julia Evans Elementary School Principal

The start of the new semester was fast paced and hectic! As we head into February and March we begin to make plans for the upcoming ISAT tests. This year, testing will take place the week of **March 6**. All students in grades 3-8 will be tested in reading and math in addition to science in grades 4 and 7. As you know this test is a result of the NCLB legislation which mandates 100% of all students meeting or exceeding state standards by 2014. Our goal for this year is 85%.

While students cannot "study" for this test, there are some things you can do to assist in testing success. Making sure your student gets adequate rest and eats breakfast are two things which are a great help. In addition, it is important that students are encouraged to take this test seriously and stress the importance of attendance during the testing time. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call. I will

assist you in any way I can.

The District Spelling Bee will be held on January 24 at 7:00 p.m. in the Betty Plumb Auditorium. Fourth and Fifth grade students who qualify will participate in this contest.

We will be hosting a Family Math Night again this year. It will be held on March 15 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. in the elementary gym.

Kindergarten Round-Up will be held on March 22 at 6:00 pm. More information will be available as the event gets closer. Please check your building calendar for other dates coming up in February and March.

With the beautiful weather and sunny days, the overall atmosphere in the building is very positive. We will continue our policy of going outside when the temperature is over 20 degrees F. Please remind your children to be prepared and

wear appropriate outerwear on a daily basis. The Student Messenger system will be used to advise on school closing and late starts. We hope you will find it helpful. If you have any questions or concerns about how you were notified please let us know.

Please continue checking with your child on homework each day and encourage them to continue doing their best.

Visitors and volunteers are always welcome. If you wish to set up a time to visit your child's classroom please call 523-3186. Teachers do ask for advanced notice to keep outside distractions to a minimum. Expectations for classroom volunteers are the same as those of staff members. Remember to call if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child. Office hours are 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. or you can leave a message and someone will get back with you.



Leap into a Heart Healthy Year!

On February 16, 2012 Riverdale Elementary will hold their Annual Jump Rope for Heart event. This will take place at the elementary school from 3:15 - 5:00 p.m. for students in Grades 3-5. Last year Riverdale Elementary students raised \$11,000 for the American Heart Association. It was a HUGE success. Our goal this year is to raise \$12,000.

The American Heart Association is offering some great prizes for those who raise \$5 dollars or more. The more you raise the greater the prize. Some of these prizes include: water bottle, jump rope, t-shirt, soccer ball, slam



shot rocket, cyber fire, squap and Razor Electric Scooter. The AHA is also giving each student who raises \$50 or more a free ticket to a Quad City Mallard game and free passes to

Cocoa Keys Water Park for 1, 2 or 4 days depending on how much they raise. Other incentives offered for this event include: students from the top class will receive an extra 30 minutes of P.E. participating in a game of their choice, teachers from the top class will receive a free prep time, pie throwing contest for those who raise \$50 or more. More details coming soon!

American Heart Association is hav-

ing a T-shirt Design contest again. All designs must be submitted to Mrs. Secker by January 20th. All pictures submitted will be considered and one picture will be chosen as next year's design! Please see Mrs. Secker for the poster and guidelines. We are hoping to have a creative and artistic Riverdale Elementary student win the contest this year. Good luck!

We will be sending home Jump Rope for Heart materials January 17th. This will give each student one month to begin raising money for this event. By participating in this fun and exciting event your child will make a big difference and help save many lives! Thank you for supporting Jump Rope for Heart!

Kindergarten News

Our 100th day of kindergarten is coming up very soon. It is always a fun day, we do **100's** of things on that special day.

February brings valentines from our friends and we will be making them into a scrapbook to save.

We have many special days and activities in kindergarten but, we are also working hard on reading and math

skills. We can figure out a word by making the sounds of the letters we see. We know enough popcorn words so now we can read sentences and make stories. We are writing in our notebooks almost daily. (Notebooks are a place we get to write whatever pops into our brains.) We know shapes by their "fancy" names: parallelogram, trapezoid, hexagon, sphere, cylinder,

etc. The words are more fun to say too!

Important Dates to remember are: Grandparent's Day is March 30, and Kindergarten Round-Up for school year 2012-2013 is March 22.

Zig Ziglar was right when he said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

From First Grade

First graders will start the New Year by traveling around the world. The children will discover similarities and differences between themselves and the children from Mexico, China, Germany, Australia, and Kenya. We will be making passports, learning familiar phrases in other languages, and locating countries, continents, and oceans on a map. Ask you first grader about our travels!

Our hundredth day of school will be at the end of January. We celebrate the day by doing many math, reading, and writing related activities. We count and share our 100 objects; make 100 day necklaces out of Fruit Loops; make 100 day treats; and read 100 Day books and poems. 100 Day is a big day for a big number.

February brings our study of the post office. We learn firsthand how a post

office works by setting one up in our classroom with children working in the different postal positions. We do this by assigning addresses to each student and mailing our valentines. We learn to stamp, cancel, and sort the valentines before delivering them to the proper addresses on Valentine's Day.

First graders are working hard and getting smarter by the day!!

Second Grade Scoop

Happy New Year from second grade! December flew by with gingerbread stories and activities. Students had a lot of fun making their candy houses and our holiday parties were a blast. We would like to thank all the parents that donated time and treats. During January, we will be experimenting with a

science unit on the phases of matter. We are also beginning to learn cursive writing. This is a challenge and an important developmental stage for students. We are sure that you will begin to see lots of "squiggly letters" coming home soon! We are also beginning both subtraction



facts and 2-digit addition with regrouping. Remind students to practice those facts and to check over their work for accuracy!

Hopefully winter will not drag on too slowly and before we know it spring will be in the air!

In Third Grade

This year third grade's charitable project was King's Harvest. Our attempt was to help provide items for the Christmas party that King's Harvest has for homeless children. In an effort to provide warm blankets and personal care products for homeless children, our students brought in monetary and fleece donations, along with gifts of soap, toothbrushes, towels, washcloths, and other personal hygiene supplies. We were able to get enough fleece to make 30 blankets that our students helped tie together. Over 50 warm fleece scarves were also

made by our third graders. One of our students, Lauren Lodico, convinced her dentist, Dr. Mark Bollaert, to donate over 100 toothbrushes to the cause. Our students also decorated over 20 dozen Christmas cookies for the party. It was obvious by the willingness of our students to help that they were really passionate about this project.

We have begun our Social Studies unit on early American communities and how they use their resources. We will study two Native American tribes: the Iroquois who lived in the forests and the Hopi who lived in the

desert. The students will learn how they used the resources around them to provide their homes, clothing, and shelter. Then we will study two early American settlements, Jamestown, Virginia and Salem, Massachusetts. Again, the focus will be on how these settlers used their environment to help provide what they needed.

We are working on our ISAT preparation. These tests are scheduled to begin on March 6th. The third graders will be tested in the areas of reading and mathematics.

Forging ahead in Fourth Grade

We would like to remind you to continue working on the multiplication facts with your child. We are delving into complicated division and the better your child knows the facts, the easier it will be for them to grasp the new concepts.

We want to thank Mrs. Secker and Mr. Roland for taking the time to have a combined dance unit during our physical education and music classes. The kids learned many new moves.

We just found out that Symphony Day is Tuesday, February 21. The

children are asked to dress nicely because we will be representing our school at the Adler Theater performance.

Two days later, Thursday February 23 we will have our Fourth Grade Science Fair. Please continue to work on your experiments at home and remember to have fun with it!

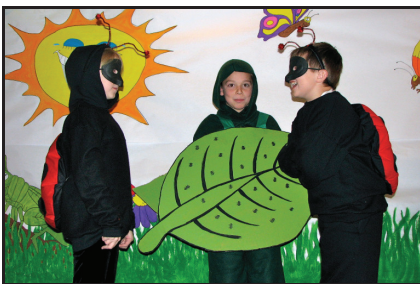
Tuesday March 6 we will begin ISAT testing. It is important that your child gets plenty of rest during the week of the state mandated tests.



The Facts from Fifth Grade

Mrs. Marmion's 5th grade class

We have had a very busy fall. Our highlight was our performance on Family Reading Night of the "Very Grouchy Ladybug" based on the book by Eric Carle. The class had so much fun creating lines, trying on costumes, designing the set and especially performing for two groups that special night.



Reading class took us back in time to Pre-Revolutionary time when the Indians were struggling to coexist with settlers in the book *Indian Captive* a novel written by Lois Lenski. Students learned about the harsh realities of war and conflict among the natives and settlers. Students also began to think and

question the text and the ideas as they read.

In social studies we finished our studies of early explorers and even began to learn about the ways of life of early colonists. We will next study and learn in depth the causes of our nation's first major war, the Revolutionary War.

In science we finished learning about energy and in language arts we wrapped up a study of parts of speech, punctuation, and sentences. This quarter students will use what they have learned during our creative writing unit, in which each student will try his hand and writing their own story.

We look forward to the snow and the fun it can bring, from cuddling up with a good book club book to playing outside with our friends.

Mr. Dinquel's 5th Grade News - Courtesy of Gavin Bussert, Ryland Coers, Carly Ziegler, and Abby Weaver.

We have had a great 1st and 2nd quarter!

In math we have reached lesson 73 and have been learning the place value of decimals.

We are in Theme 4 in reading where we are learning about different forms of creativity and see how creative children may grow up to be creative adults. We also finished reading the novel *Shiloh* and made a dog biscuit treat to take home.

Our language class has just completed studying pronouns and will now begin learning about adjectives. Currently in social studies we are learning about the original 13 Colonies and will soon be adventuring into the Revolutionary War.

In science we are now beginning the study of electricity. Our class spelling bee winners this year are: 1st place - Ryland Coers, 2nd place - Carly Ziegler, and 3rd place - Samantha Ferguson.

At the end of the quarter we were given a week for anyone that had guitars to bring them to school and were given the opportunity to learn new songs and given a beginner's lesson on how to play.

News from the Middle School

Mr. Jim Jennings

Hold on tight! If second semester goes as quickly as first semester did spring break and summer will be here before we know it. As everyone wonders how long we can hold off that first big wintry return, students and staff here at the middle school continue to work hard in and out of the classroom.

Our students spent first semester learning about Rachel Joy Scott and the message she presented to students, teachers and parents across the country (Look for the Best in Others, Dream Big, Choose Positive Influences, Speak with Kindness, and Start Your Own Chain Reaction). As we finished up first semester and headed into a new year, the students revisited the challenges given to them through Rachel's Challenge back on October 5th. Students were asked to reflect on the different challenges and to consider what changes they have made for themselves and for their friends and classmates in creating a chain reaction. Several students, with the help of Mrs. Buffington, created a FOR Club – Friends of Rachel club. Students meet once a month to share thoughts and ideas on how to improve themselves as well as their friends and their school atmosphere. They have brought in several guest speakers. Last month, Gerad Hall, Riverdale Grad and Youth Pastor at Wildwood, talked about the 5 challenges listed above. Gerad shared personal experiences about dealing with bullying when he was a student and then provided them with simple behaviors and actions that students can use when facing difficult situations. This has been a wonderful program for our students and staff and we are very excited about the continuing efforts of our students as

we enter second semester.

The Riverdale Middle School Band and Choirs had another outstanding performance in their annual holiday concert. The 6th grade choir debuted and provided a wonderful start to the evening. The 7th and 8th grade choir followed up with many holiday favorites including a special presentation of "Solitary Snowflake" performed by our very own Snowflakes (Emi Cook, Kenzie Haskins, Maddie Haskins, Morgan Hofmann, Spencer Hughes, Nicole Polzin, and Katie Young). The band followed with several holiday tunes including my favorite, "Christmas Tidings." The band and choir wrapped up the evening with a grand finale, "Festival of Lights", which included all 118 middle school musicians.

The 7th and 8th grade boys put the finishing touches on a successful basketball season by winning their conference tournaments. The 8th graders played a tough Morrison team to start the morning and then came back that same afternoon to cruise to a victory over Rock Falls. The 7th grade boys defeated Erie to start their morning and then came back to win a hard fought game over Rock Falls to finish their season undefeated. Congratulations to both teams on a successful season.

Boy's wrestling began right before break with a three day voluntary mini camp that provided wrestlers a chance to work on some basic moves and instruction. Wrestling along with 7th and 8th grade girls basketball resumed practice January 3rd. The girls kick off their season at home on January 31st.

Please check the schedule of activities and take time to stop by and help cheer on our Rams. The fol-

lowing are dates of home activities:

Girl's Basketball	Wrestling
1/31	2/02
2/07	2/14
2/27	2/28

Get out your dictionary and thesaurus, it's that time of year, Riverdale District Spelling Bee is just around the corner. The spelling bee was scheduled for January 24th in the Betty Plumb Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. Middle school participants for this year's Spelling Bee were: 6th: Riley Dodds, Dallas Cook, Chase Edwards, Reese Winkel, Kayle Payne, Deonna Devinney. 7th: Jacob Miller, Morgan Searl, Emily Mitchell, Jurnie Hinde, Tim Geiger, Casey Nickell, Blake Haas. 8th: Joe Ibarra, Laken Watters, Landon Liebke, Taylor Zimmerer, John Hynes, Nathan Park.

Lastly, ISAT tests are just around the corner. Teachers and students have been working together preparing for this year's tests. Testing will begin March 6th and continue through Friday March 16th. Please mark these dates on your calendar as your support and your child's attendance are key parts in making the tests a success. This year's goal is for 92.5% of our students to meet or exceed on the tests. You can check test results from the past few years by visiting iirc.niu.edu. There you can view not only our scores but the scores of all schools from around the county and state. We are very proud to be one of the top middle schools in Rock Island County and would like to continue that tradition.

7th Grade Language Arts and Communications

Tim Geiger, Blake Haas, Jurnie Hinde, Jacob Miller, Emily Mitchell, Casey Nickell, and Morgan Searl will be representing the 7th grade at the Riverdale District Spelling Bee, January 24th in the Betty Plumb Auditorium. Good luck to all of you.

The 7th grade students have begun a five week study on the intriguing

American saga of the Donner Party. They are analyzing various forms of text written on this topic and expanding their knowledge about this tragic event.

February will bring technology into reading. The students will begin an independent biography reading unit. They will choose a biography of their choice and be responding to their read-

ing using an online program called Edmodo. It is an educational site in which students log onto and continue class discussions by posting thoughts. The conclusion of this unit will have students creating a website that educates others on their person of interest.

Middle School Student Council

RMS Student Council will continue to sell pizza at the middle school girls' home basketball games beginning on Tuesday, January 31. Student council members will also be busy planning for the Valentine's Dance for Friday, February 17 from 3-5.

I would like to take this opportunity and thank the student council members who have been volunteering their time helping the PTA: Emily Frohock, Taylor Stark, Taylor Bensenberg, Hannah Graham, Colin Vaughan, Elizabeth Gorgas, Morgan Hofmann, Kayleen Mercer,

Taylor Bensenberg, Jacob Miller, and Jurnie Hinde. These students have been babysitting children while their parents are attending the PTA meetings once a month.

News from the High School Mr. Jim Boyd

Second semester is well underway. We are already making plans for the 2012-2013 school year. We will be getting ready for registering for the 2012-2013 school year. Students and parents need to make careful choices when registering. Please feel free to contact the school with questions.

On April 24 and 25 all juniors will take the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). This is an extremely important two days of testing. The main purpose of the exam is to evaluate the progress of the high school toward meeting the Illinois Learning Standards. They also measure the achievement of Illinois students with respect to the Illinois Learning Standards. The test also measures the school's average yearly progress (AYP) as outlined in the Federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

There are three components to

the PSAE. The first is the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) reading, math, and science assessments. The second component is the ACT, which measures academics for the prediction on how the student would do during their freshman year in college. The ACT component from this test may be used for admission to any Illinois State college. However, it does not count for any NCAA athlete who will be attending college. They must take the ACT on a national testing date. The last component is Workkeys, which assesses reading for information and applied math skills. Workkeys is used by many businesses across the country for hiring purposes. As you can see, the PSAE is extremely important.

Once again this year we will be offering to those students who meet or exceed in reading, math, and science the opportunity

to waive all finals their senior year. There is discipline criteria also tied to waiving the finals as well. The incentive also includes those who miss meeting in only one area but are within four points of meeting in that area a chance to waive finals. Those students must attend a day of review/study. We will have one day for students to attend a study session. But if they don't meet in one area and are within four points, they must attend the day for the entire time. We have found this day to be very helpful to our students. The review day is March 21, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The Gratitude Tree

The Sophomores in Mr. Apicella's 8th hour advisory period made decorations for a gratitude themed tree. Prior to Thanksgiving break, each student in the advisory was given a glass ball ornament and some ribbon. They were

also given strips of paper where they wrote the words "I am grateful for." The students then completed the sentence as they wanted. Most students wrote that they were grateful for their friends and their parents. The strips

of paper were then inserted into the glass ornament, the ribbons attached to the ornament and then the students placed their ornament on a small tree in the lab area.

News from the Art Room

Hello everyone! I would like to share with you what we are working on in the art classrooms this semester.

At the High School, each class is doing something different. Art 2 students are currently learning about the art style Surrealism, and some of the artists associated with this movement including Salvador Dali, Max Ernst, and Rene Magritte. Art 3 students are cre-

ating abstract sculptures that focus on line, movement, color, and negative space. Working in 3-d will be a wonderful problem solving experience for the students. The Computer Graphics students are just getting started learning Adobe Illustrator. This industry standard program is used in creating drawn artwork for nearly all fields of design. Our first project will be creating a real-

istic looking object with the program.

Over at the Middle School, the eighth graders are reviewing and adding to their Color Theory knowledge. Soon we will be looking at the work of painter Henri Rousseau, and create a landscape painting of our own!

Career Night is Coming!

Riverdale Education Foundation is pleased to announce this years Career Night! This event will be held on Tuesday, March 13th from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Riverdale High School Gym.

Students, families, staff and community members are all invited to attend this event where over 30 vendors will be in attendance, helping the students find answers to the questions about contin-

ued education and job hunting. The military will be represented, as well as the Trades. Please mark your calendars! Plan to attend!

Riverdale Education Foundation Scholarships

Riverdale Education Foundation offers scholarships to Riverdale Seniors. Scholarships can be used for college or trade schools. Applications are available in the Guidance Office. Please ask Pam Smith for details.

Applications must be submitted by March 1st, 2012.

News from the Drama Department

Auditions for the Spring play, "With Their Eyes" and "Bertha the Beautiful Typewriter Girl" will be held on Monday, February 6th. The show opens on March 21st in the Betty Plumb Auditorium.



The annual Fine Arts Banquet - celebrating the best in Choir, Band, Speech, Drama and Art will be held on Thursday, May 3rd at 6:30 p.m. in the Betty Plumb Auditorium.

Yearbook Information

High school yearbooks are currently on sale. Please visit www.jostens.com to order/pay for your 2012 copy of the yearbook. The book is 160 pages and full color.

If you have pictures you would like to see in the yearbook, please submit them to the yearbook staff. Log into www.replayit.com. From this site, you can send the yearbook staff all your best shots from this year and they could be used in the book.

Please see Ms. Simosky at the high school with questions. Ssimosky@riverdaleschools.org.

**RIVERDALE
C.U.S.D. #100**

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Home of the
Rams!

Other News...

Make sure to check out the district website at www.riverdaleschools.org.
The website has been redesigned and is your source for all information about at the school!

Breakfast and Lunch menus are sent home with
elementary students and are also available in school offices or
online at the Riverdale District website
www.riverdaleschools.org