



# THE SAVAGE EXPRESS

SIGOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dec 2011/Jan 2012

## From the Desk of Superintendent Benita Gonzales

### Parental Involvement: What is My Role?

#### History Regarding Public Education and Parental Involvement

In rural America, the little one room schoolhouse was virtually controlled by its neighborhood—the parents. Textbooks, subjects and teachers were chosen by the parents. Construction, upkeep and repair of the schoolhouse were also the responsibility of the community. As a result, the community felt strong ownership in the education of their children.

Usually the interests and needs of a community were the foundation of the educational focus for a school. Controlling their schools was highly valued so consequentially, parental involvement was visibly evident as parents sent the books to school they expected their children to be taught from and even sent children as young as two years old to school “to get them from under foot” at home (Crowson, 1998).

The rural schoolhouse was quite often the center of its community, providing a location for a wide variety of public activities to take place. Depending on the community’s interests, activities could have included Fourth of July picnics, town meetings, seasonal parties, church activities, pot-luck suppers, corn roasts and even “hoe downs” (Crowson, 1998). It’s evident that the early rural school was much enmeshed with the community.

#### Parents as Partners

As the educational system evolved, so did parental involvement. Parental involvement still exists, however at varying degrees at different levels and school districts. Evidence shows there are needs and a demand for increased parental involvement in the education of

students. Linda McClurg, director of human resources in the Davenport Community School District stated, “although parents, teachers and administrators all seem to agree that parental involvement makes a significant difference in the academic, emotional and social growth of a child, many schools still struggle to get parents involved (personal communication, March 22, 2005).

We as a district, appreciate the fact that you are entrusting us with your most cherished treasures when you send us your children to begin their education at an early age. We find it imperative to develop a positive link with our parents and guardians. We can’t keep the school and family separate from each other when working toward the best possible education for the youth of today. We understand that you are your child’s best advocate as you possess intimate and valuable knowledge about your children that can provide insight for us about your student’s behavior and academic skills.

Vast amounts of research validate the fact that parental involvement positively affects student achievement. Children are inclined to succeed not only in school, but also in lifetime endeavors when their parents demonstrate a genuine interest in their child’s education. Probably the strongest indicator of a student’s academic success in school is the degree to which that student’s family is able to (Wherry, 2003):

- create a home environment that encourages learning,
- express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children’s achievement and future careers,
- become involved in their children’s education at school and in the community

#### What Does Parental Involvement Look Like?

Perhaps most of us view parental involvement very traditionally. Attending open house and parent-teacher conferences, volunteering, participating in booster clubs and PTA, assisting with homework, reading to your child and a variety of other activities not mentioned, are all forms of involvement that educators and parents alike have come to view as essential in the successful academic, social and emotional development of students. All of the above mentioned actions are excellent and should be sustained to promote continued involvement of parents in the educational process of their children.

#### Parental Involvement at the Secondary Level

Who is that stranger sleeping in my son’s bed? He kind of looks the same, except that he’s grown a little taller, there is some fuzz above his lip, his legs are getting hairy and he even has what looks like muscles—only smaller. I’ve noticed his voice sounds lower but every now and then it jumps an octave. His smooth, blemish free baby face has a pink spot on its forehead. He seems to be eating all the time and where does it all go?

I found him the other day flexing in front of the mirror in his underwear. He also had five shirts, three pair of shorts, two baseball caps and three necklaces lying on the bed as outfit choices to go to the girls’ softball game in. A girls’ softball game?! I thought just yesterday girls had cooties.

We used to talk about his day’s events — now I’m lucky to get a grunt in response to my questions. If we do engage in conversation, it’s of high concern and value to him and is usually initiated at his convenience. I haven’t decided

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## SIGOURNEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

*The Sigourney Community School District, in partnership with family, business and community, will provide quality instruction and a progressive curriculum in a secure and challenging environment. All students will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, and character to become productive citizens in a global society.*

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**Please direct questions to:**  
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## From the Desk of PK-12 Principal Kim Harmon

In a recent conversation with a parent the question was raised, "Why are we spending so much time testing kids? Can't we find one test that will measure everything?" It made me start to think about how the world of testing has changed since I was a kid.

As a student I remember taking the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills each year — just like students do today. I remember getting the graphs and charts showing my scores over the years—much like students do today. What is different is that, as far as I know, none of my teachers ever asked what they could learn from my scores. They never used them to decide what they should teach me the next day and they weren't reported to the state for any evaluation of my school.

In that respect, testing has changed a great deal. We do test students frequently but the purpose of the testing has changed. No longer do we test only for the sake of saying we did it. The tests help us not only to determine what students know but also what we must do to help them learn more. Schools themselves are rated and ranked based on the results of those tests.

Unfortunately there isn't one test that will tell us all we need to know about our kids. Not all of them learn in the same way and a

test is like a still picture giving us a snapshot of performance on a single day. We are also required to provide multiple assessments because we know that one test does not measure all that we need it to and students do not demonstrate their knowledge in the same ways.

But what has probably changed the most is that as educators we have to differentiate between "assessments of learning" and "assessments for learning." The first tells us what a student has learned and the second tells us what we must do to help students learn more. Part of our professional development for the staff is to learn more about how to use assessments effectively as well as simply learning to use a variety of assessments to get a more accurate measurement of what students actually know.

So as the year progresses and your child comes home saying he/she has taken yet another test, realize that some of those assessments help us improve our instruction while others help us to measure growth. All are intended to help us help your child learn all that he/she can.

*Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season to all of our families.*

## From the Desk of Administrative Manager Deanna Hutchings

### Red Ribbon Week

Oct. 23-29 was Red Ribbon Week. This is our nation's largest and oldest drug prevention program. During Red Ribbon Week, children from all over the country pledge to live a drug free life. This year at the elementary the Sigourney Police Department came and presented to our students on why drugs are bad, what they should do if they see drugs, and encouraged each child to pledge to be drug free. Each student then signed their name to a red strip of paper to pledge that they will remain drug free. The strips were linked together, and a paper chain was created to display by the office to show our school and community that our students are going to remain drug free.



Alan Glandon speaking to students during Red Ribbon Week.

## Elementary Happenings

November has already been a busy month with our Veteran's Day assembly and American Education Week. Here are some of the things we have coming up:

- Nov. 23 - PBS Reward Day (extra recess) and PBS Assembly (responsibility)
- Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 - Preschool Verification Visit
- Dec. 15 - 5th & 6th grade band concert with 6th grade chorus
- January-2nd round of BRI Testing
- March 19 - 23-ITBS Testing

## Jr./Sr. High Happenings

Football, volleyball, and cross-country seasons have ended and basketball and wrestling have begun. Practices are in full swing, games and matches have begun after school hours and the following things are happening during the day:

- Nov. 23 - NHS Induction of New members
- Dec. 15 - Jr/Sr High Winter Band and Choir concert
- March 19 - 23-ITBS/ITED Testing

## NAEYC Conference Goers Share

*Submitted by Brian Kingrey & Mindy Arvidson*

Preschool teacher, Mindy Arvidson, and Kindergarten teacher, Brian Kingrey, attended the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) annual national conference in Orlando, Florida November 2-5, 2011. The two presented Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Intentionality in Early Childhood Education to an audience of 80 participants.

The four-day conference offered hundreds of sessions related to early childhood practices as well as current research on student learning. Both Ms. Arvidson and Mr. Kingrey attended several sessions that will enhance their practices in the early childhood settings in which they work.

### **Ms. Arvidson attended the following sessions:**

- Making Assessment Work for Everyone: Teachers, Children, and Families
- Science is Play-Play is Science: The Art of Finding Science in Every Part of the Preschool Day
- Oh No, A Ditto: Developmentally Appropriate Alternatives to Worksheets
- How Playing IS School Readiness! The Importance of Early Experiences
- Overcoming Challenges to Creating an Outdoor Classroom at Your School: Small Changes Make Big Impacts!
- Environments that Awaken the Imagination
- The Wonders of Nature and Imagination in Curriculum Design
- Creating Fun, Engaging Circle Times Based on Current Brain Research about How Children Learn Best

### **Mr. Kingrey attended the following sessions:**

- Making Assessment Work for Everyone: Teachers, Children, and Families
- Your Fantastic Elastic Brain: A Look at the Brain and Gender Research
- Growing Brain, the Early Learning Outcome
- The Role of Play in an Overly Academic Kindergarten and Preschool
- How Playing IS School Readiness! The Importance of Early Experiences
- Early Childhood Leaders: Building Connections with K-12 • Education
- Kindergarten Literacy Centers: A Hands-On Approach to Teaching Reading
- Environments that Awaken the Imagination
- The Evolution of Early Learning at the U.S. Department of Education
- Building an Aligned System of Early Learning from PK-3rd Grade

As a governing board member for the Iowa AEYC and Midwest AEYC, Mr. Kingrey attended two night sessions that welcomed members from Iowa and the eight Midwest states. Each was well attended and helped communicate to members how each level of the association works for them.

In addition, both Ms. Arvidson and Mr. Kingrey attended the general opening assembly Wednesday evening. The topic of the opening assembly was "Who Will Save the Kindergarten?" Renowned speaker and early childhood advocate Vivian Gussin Paley welcomed everyone to the conference with her speech on kindergarten. She stressed that kindergarten has become overly academic and that play is still needed in all early childhood settings. The theme of the conference, then, was PLAY, and how it influences children's learning.

The conference hosted participants from all 50 states and citizens from 50 countries. The time spent networking and collaborating with early childhood practitioners from around the world was priceless. Ms. Arvidson and Mr. Kingrey wish to thank the administrative team, the Teacher Quality Committee, and the School Board for making their trip to the national early childhood conference possible.

Please contact either Ms. Arvidson at Bright Beginnings or Mr. Kingrey at the Elementary if you'd like to learn more about her or his conference experiences.



National Association for the  
Education of Young Children

## Counseling Office News

*Submitted by Keri VanDenHeuvel*

The school year is flying by already as we approach the end of the first trimester. The counseling office continues to be a busy place at both Sigourney Elementary School and Sigourney Junior/Senior High School. Here are a few highlights of the past few months.

At the elementary, I am available on Thursdays. I am continuing some large group activities with the 6th grade classrooms. We have discussed different kinds of bullying and are now working on improving self-esteem. I have planned a number of activities that we will be using. I meet with several individual students and am hoping to be able to get into other classrooms as the year progresses. Recently I completed a 6 hour training in Play Therapy. I am hoping that this will help my communication skills with all students.

The junior/senior high school is always buzzing. I have been working with individual students on scheduling. Just a reminder, if a student wants to add or drop a course we require parental permission. Especially with any of the core courses - Math, Science, English and Social Studies. In the next few months I will be asking all seniors to visit with me about several things including graduation requirements, future plans, college applications, and scholarships. The link to look at the scholarship list is <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0ApNoCNv6DNjFdEtEVXIEV01oVEc0U>. The list is ever-changing. All seniors have been sent this document through google docs. On Monday, November 28 we will be having Financial Aid Night at 6:00 p.m. in the junior/senior high school library. I encourage all senior students and their parents to attend if there is a plan to attend college. I have experience in completing the FAFSA and will be willing to assist anyone with questions.

There are a couple scholarship opportunities available for juniors. I recently received one of them in the mail - the Hills Bank and Trust Company Leadership Grants. This scholarship is open to all juniors in the 10 southeast Iowa Counties. To be eligible the student must have a GPA of 2.8 or above and demonstrate leadership, entrepreneurship, or community service related qualities. Applications are available in my office or at [www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/teens/scholarships.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/teens/scholarships.htm). Applications are due February 1, 2012.

The State of Iowa mandates that all students eighth grade through 11th grade this year will have a four-year plan on the I Have A Plan Iowa website. I have all student account identification and passwords. This website is very touchy and is down more than it is working. I am working on getting all of the hand written four year plans put into spreadsheet format so I can email these to the students. We will continue to work on getting these in place on the I Have A Plan Iowa website. The link for this is [www.ihaveaplaniowa.gov](http://www.ihaveaplaniowa.gov). If you have any questions about this, please feel free to contact me.

I started doing group counseling sessions in September. Since I only had one student show up, individual counseling seems to be the way this building wants to go. Please encourage your student to visit with me and to communicate any areas of need. I will do my best to assist and advocate for all students.

## Sigourney Community School District Annual Progress Report 2011-12 Submitted by Shannon Web, Curriculum Director

### District Mission

The Sigourney Community School District, in partnership with family, business, and community, will provide quality instruction and a progressive curriculum in a secure and challenging environment. All students will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, and character to become productive citizens in a global society.

*The greatest mistake is to create an environment in which people are afraid to work because they are afraid to make a mistake.* – B. Alcorn

### District Vision

The Sigourney Community School District will provide high quality instruction that incorporates state of the art technology where students become life long learners and achieve personal and academic success in a safe atmosphere where high expectations exist both in and out of the classroom.

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success. – Henry Ford

### Board of Education

Bill Reese, President	Teresa Dawson
Mark O'Rourke, Vice President	Denise Conrad
Ruth Manchester	Marsha Steinhart
Terry Hollingsworth	

*A leader is interested in finding the best way – not in having his own way.* – John Wooden

### Administration & Faculty

Benita Gonzales, Superintendent  
 Kim Harmon, PK-12 Principal  
 Shannon Webb, Curriculum Director & Administrative Manager  
 Deanna Hutchings, Administrative Manager  
 Lee Crawford, Athletic Director  
 Kirk Magill, Technology Coordinator  
 Keri Vandenheuvel, PK-12 Guidance

*People don't always want to move and shake when you do, because they don't share your values* – Author unknown

### Core Values

- Respect for the work place
- Trustworthiness
- Caring
- Honesty
- Morally Sound
- Loyalty
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Communication

*We cannot choose which students we most influence; only they can choose who will most influence them.* – Todd Whitaker

### Sigourney Elementary Building Level Goals: Reading Comprehension

- 50% of all third grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 84% of all fourth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 84% of all fifth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 81% of all sixth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.

### Sigourney Elementary Building Level Goals: Math Problems & Data Interpretation

- 50% of all third grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.
- 70% of all fourth grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.
- 78% of all fifth grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.
- 85% of all sixth grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.

### Sigourney Elementary Building Level Goals: Science

- 50% of all third grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 80% of all fourth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 79% of all fifth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 84% of all sixth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.

### Sigourney Jr./Sr. High School Building Level Goals: Reading Comprehension

- 70% of all seventh grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 84% of all eighth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 85% of all ninth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 68% of all tenth grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.
- 84% of all eleventh grade students will become proficient in reading comprehension in 2012.

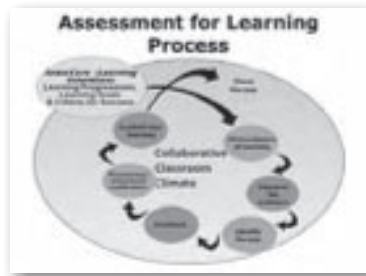
### Sigourney Jr./Sr. High School Building Level Goals: Math

- 75% of all seventh grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.
- 84% of all eighth grade students will become proficient in math problems and data interpretation in 2012.
- 76% of all ninth grade students will become proficient in math concepts: problem solving and data interpretation in 2012.
- 80% of all tenth grade students will become proficient in math concepts: problem solving and data interpretation in 2012.
- 88% of all eleventh grade students will become proficient in math concepts: problem solving and data interpretation in 2012.

### Sigourney Jr./Sr. High School Building Level Goals: Science

- 81% of all seventh grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 86% of all eighth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 90% of all ninth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 90% of all tenth grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.
- 90% of all eleventh grade students will become proficient in science in 2012.





## Core Curriculum: Characteristics of Effective Instruction

### Student Centered Classrooms:

- Educators support all students in making connections to construct new learning in order to make decisions and solve problems.
- The educator facilitates opportunities for students to be metacognitive.
- Educators and students are partners in learning.
- Educators facilitate time for students to learn corroboratively.
- Educators use meaningful and authentic assessment in a real world context.

### Teaching for Understanding:

- Instruction facilitates the construction of deep conceptual and procedural knowledge.
- Instruction facilitates the development of representations and conceptual models.
- Instruction inducts students into the discipline.
- Instruction facilitates the application of new learnings and understandings in new and novel situations (transfer).

### Assessment for Learning:

- Educator utilizes K-12 learning progressions along which students are expected to progress in a domain.
- Student learning goals are clear, focused on the intended learning, and communicated so all students understand the criteria for success.
- Instructional modifications for students are planned from carefully elicited evidence of student learning.
- Descriptive feedback identifies for students the specific knowledge and skills needed to reach learning goal(s).
- Self and peer assessment is planned and structured by educator and students in order to develop life-long learning skills.
- Educator facilitates the development of a collaborative classroom climate.

### Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum:

- Higher order thinking (HOT) is performed by students during instruction.
- Deep understanding and mastery of critical disciplinary concepts and skills are demonstrated.
- Concepts and skills are applied to situations, issues, and problems in the world beyond school.

### Teaching for Learner Differences:

- Instruction is focused on “big ideas” – the essential concepts and skills within the content.
- Instruction is designed and delivered to match students’ needs based on assessment data of students’ prior knowledge, readiness, individual interests and learning preferences.
- Educator provides flexibility within content, instruction, and product to allow for variances in students’ acquisition and demonstration of learning.
- Educator provides clear instruction about how to learn, making the various strategies and skills of the learning process conspicuous to all students.
- Instruction includes opportunities for students to practice and review their learning and receive feedback.
- Educator regularly monitors each student’s progress related to the acquisition of the essential concepts and skills and adjusts instruction to meet students’ learning needs.

### ITBS/ITED Data: Math

Grade	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
3rd	87.5			
4th	64.9	90.5		
5th	75.0	74.4	97.8	
6th	83.7	77.8	80.0	
7th	72.8	69.7	91.5	
8th	83.8	72.2	81.6	
9th	73.4	75.0	81.6	
10th	78.4	65.0	82.5	
11th	88.6	63.8	83.6	

### ITBS/ITED Data: Science

Grade	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
3rd	85.0			
4th	78.4	88.1		
5th	76.9	82.1	93.4	
6th	81.4	80.0	75.0	
7th	78.8	78.8	88.5	
8th	83.8	80.6	92.1	
9th	90.0	82.2	74.2	
10th	88.9	72.5	92.5	
11th	100	86.5	91.9	

### ITBS/ITED Data: Reading Comprehension

Grade	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10	2008-09
3rd	92.5			
4th	81.1	90.5		
5th	82.5	77.5	88.8	
6th	79.1	71.1	75.0	
7th	66.7	81.8	85.7	
8th	81.1	52.8	81.6	
9th	83.3	78.6	87.8	
10th	62.2	67.5	67.5	
11th	82.8	73.0	89.1	

### ACT Data

Grad Year	Total Tested		English		Math		Reading		Science		Composite	
	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State
2007	38	23,016	21.0	21.6	21.0	21.9	21.9	22.6	21.0	22.3	21.3	22.3
2008	18	22,950	19.6	21.9	20.6	22.0	20.4	22.9	21.1	22.3	20.6	22.4
2009	22	22,377	18.7	21.9	19.3	21.9	19.2	22.9	19.6	22.4	19.4	22.4
2010	20	22,943	19.5	21.8	22.3	21.8	21.6	22.6	21.3	22.3	21.3	22.2
2011	15	22,968	20.6	21.7	21.7	21.9	20.6	22.6	20.4	22.4	21.0	22.3



## From the Desk of eSeal Director Kristen Burghorn

*“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, ‘press on’ has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race.”*

– Calvin Coolidge, as quoted from <http://www.motivatingquotes.com/perseverance.htm>

When I stumbled upon this quote a while back, it seemed to summarize my feelings about the Incubator perfectly. As I look at the students who have so passionately dedicated their time to the success of their businesses, they make me proud. Yes, they have talent. Yes, they have genius. Yes, they are educated. But, they are also determined and they are persistent. They pour blood, sweat, and tears into businesses they have created themselves. They are entrepreneurs; they are students; they are creative; they are passionately driven to accomplish great things.

eSEAL is about building the entrepreneurial spirit in students. It is about teaching young people the principles of entrepreneurship and hopefully equipping them with skills later needed to be successful in life. Even if a business does not operate forever, or even open, it does not mean the students did not succeed.

I say all of this to let you know that success is not defined in a student’s ability to launch a “successful” business. Success is defined by their hard work, perseverance, dedication, and what they have learned through the process.

Not every business that gets started will succeed. It is the truth about the economy, and it is the truth as it relates to eSEAL. Even though an eSEAL business may never get off the ground or turn into a multi-million dollar company, it does not mean the students have failed.

Failure, to me, occurs when students do not try. Failure occurs when students give up the first time a challenge becomes difficult or when they run into their first obstacle. After spending a year working through the problems, creating new ideas, and finally coming to the difficult conclusion that the business just was not possible, the business owners have still succeeded. They have not succeeded to the extent that they have opened for business, but they have learned valuable lessons and skills that will stay with them for life.

I feel all of this is important to know, especially as it relates so directly to The Staar. While it will not be opening for business, the girls have still learned valuable lessons. They have learned skills hands-on that they may not have learned without going through this process and having this opportunity. No, their business will not begin, and no, there will be no youth center in Sigourney in the immediate future, but they have not failed!

I look back over the last year and what the girls have accomplished, and I stand amazed. They made it farther than most people thought they could. They have done, and learned, more than I could have imagined. They have worked hard, done their best, and poured themselves into this business. I stand proud of what they have accomplished and hope you do too.

I encourage you to do the same. Press on, persevere, and remain determined. Set your goals high enough to prove challenge-some, but do not let that stop you. Work hard. Find your passion area and pursue it. Do not let naysayers hold you back. In the face of adversity, stand tall.

The Staar, and the other eSEAL businesses, do this on a regular basis. They prove, over and over, that while starting a business, especially as a high school student, is difficult, it is doable. They overcome obstacles, face the challenges in front of them, and are operating some great small businesses.

A new trimester is underway. It marks a new beginning for the students, for classes, and for me as a teacher. It can also mark a new beginning for the businesses. Some businesses are moving beyond the Incubator and others are moving in. Perseverance and determination never end, though. Those skills are demonstrated time and time again by each business owner.

I want to encourage you to learn more about the eSEAL program. Ask questions of the students involved in the programs. Ask questions of me. Become customers of the students’ businesses and consider them an equal competitor.

With the holidays just around the corner, I challenge you to consider ordering cakes, pies, and other homemade goodies from Drayce Webster, owner of Easy as Pie. If you need gifts wrapped or baskets designed, an option may be Bows & Ribbons gift wrapping, owned by senior Katelyn Wheeldon. Finally, please consider contacting Lifetime Treasures owner, Kelsey Dyson, for some personalized, handmade cards to send to your friends and family.

Whatever your needs are, consider contacting the eSEAL students. You might find yourself as impressed with them as I do.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Remember, set your goals high. Aim big and remain determined. You might be surprised at what you can accomplish!

## >> eSEAL Incubator Update

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### **Bows & Ribbons Gift Wrapping**

*Katelyn Wheeldon, Owner*

It has been a while since I have written an article, but it's time for me to get back into the swing of things! The Holidays are fast approaching, which means there are many gifts to wrap and give! This Holiday season, in addition to offering gift wrapping, I will be selling gift baskets. I offer a chocolate lover's gift basket, as well as other options. I can also make gift baskets out of items that you may already want to give. If you have any gifts to wrap, or would like to purchase a gift basket please call me at (641)-224-2521, or email at [katelyn.wheeldon@sigourneyschools.com](mailto:katelyn.wheeldon@sigourneyschools.com).

### **Lifetime Treasures**

*Kelsey Dyson, Owner*

Wow, time for another savage express article already? Oh how my senior year is flying by, and my business is up and coming still. I am excited for my upcoming events including: my Craftfest day for Christmas and making Christmas cards with the people at the hospital. Craftfest is December 7th from 3:30 to 6:30. During this time, I will be working with the kindergarten through fourth grade students making various Christmas crafts for different members of the family. I have very high expectations as to how this day is going to turn out, as I excitedly wait for the day to come! I am excited to see what other projects people will ask me to complete for them. I've been working on expanding from just scrapbooks to cards and crafts in general, so I am anxious to see what the future holds I am eager to see what I will be asked to do the rest of the year. Thanks for supporting me so far!

When placing your next order, reference this article buy 12 cards, get one for free.

### **The Staar**

*Tori Albaugh, Erin Steinhart, & Meredith Wallerich, Owners*

First of all, we would like to thank you for supporting our dream of starting a youth center. While we still feel like a youth center would benefit this community tremendously, we are sorry to inform you that The Staar will not be opening for business.

We have come to the conclusion that we will not have a sufficient amount of time to make this a successful youth center. However, please know that we are extremely appreciative of the help and support that you have given us. In the next few weeks, donors can expect to receive their contributions back from us. If you donated furniture or other items to The Staar, we will also be contacting you to make arrangements.

Again, we really appreciate your help and support. Please understand that this business is not ending because we do not feel it is a worthwhile cause. At this point, we just feel that we are unable to dedicate enough time to this business. Maybe someday down the road we will be able to benefit this community with a youth center. If you have any questions, please call Erin at 641-224-2166 or email [thestaar.etm@gmail.com](mailto:thestaar.etm@gmail.com).

## Busy Times at Bright Beginnings Preschool

*Submitted by Mindy Arvidson*

Classes at Bright Beginnings Preschool, located at 300 West Kelly Street, began the first week in September. This year, there are two sessions that serve four and five year old children. One class meets on Mondays, Wednesdays, and alternating Fridays (by month). The other class meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays and alternating Fridays (by month). It is a full day program that runs from 8:15 am-3:15 pm.

The preschool students participate in the following activities throughout their school day:

- choice time
- small group times
- rest time
- music and movement
- large group activities
- lunch
- story time
- outdoor time

The classroom is divided into different interest areas which include blocks, dramatic play, art, discovery, library, computers, sand and water, toys and games, music and movement, and outdoors. These interest areas offer multiple opportunities for young children to explore, discover, and grow. Throughout the school year, the children work on several different skills in the areas of social-emotional skills, cognitive development, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, and self help skills.

Top Photo: The Monday and Wednesday class at Bright Beginnings Preschool

Bottom Photo: The Tuesday and Thursday class at Bright Beginnings Preschool



## American Medicine Chest Challenge Brings National Attention to the Epidemic of Prescription Drug Abuse in Keokuk County

*Submitted by Lynn Zoulek, KCSTAAR Director*

Keokuk County, Iowa – On November 12, 2011, a historic and lifesaving event – The American Medicine Chest Challenge (AMCC) --- a public health initiative to raise awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse was held in Keota, Hedrick and Sigourney, as part of a nationwide day of disposal of unused, unwanted, and expired medicine that was held in 46 states and resulted in thousands of residents taking the 5-Step American Medicine Chest Challenge and disposing over ten tons of unused, unwanted, and expired medicine.

On that Saturday, the three sites collected over 12 pounds during the American Medicine Chest Challenge, at the Keota City Hall, Hedrick Community Center and Sigourney City Hall.

This initiative challenged Keokuk County residents to take the Five-Step American Medicine Chest Challenge:

- Take inventory of your prescription and over-the-counter medicine.
- Lock your medicine chest.
- Dispose of your unused, unwanted, and expired medicine in your home or at an American Medicine Chest Challenge Disposal site.
- Take your medicine(s) exactly as prescribed.
- Talk to your children about the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently labeled prescription drug abuse an epidemic, reporting that the death toll from overdoses of prescription painkillers has more than tripled in the past decade and more than 40 people die every day from overdoses involving narcotic pain relievers. According to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, 70 percent of people who abuse prescription pain relievers obtained them from friends or relatives, and, there has been a 400% increase in substance abuse treatment admissions for people abusing prescription drugs.

AMCC was created to help families see their medicine cabinets through new eyes -- as an access point for potential misuse and abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicine by young people and to provide an opportunity to properly dispose of unused, unwanted, and expired medicines. All Americans are also urged to take the five step American Medicine Chest Challenge found at [americanmedicinechest.com](http://americanmedicinechest.com)," explained Angelo M. Valente, Chief Executive Officer of AMCC.

If you missed the event, go to [americanmedicinechest.com](http://americanmedicinechest.com) for tips on how to properly dispose of prescription drugs. Many local pharmacies, including Pamida Pharmacy in Sigourney, participate in a take-back program all year around. They cannot, however, accept narcotic prescriptions, such as oxycodone or Vicodin.

AMCC was supported by the PhRMA, American College of Emergency Physicians, the Partnership at DrugFree.org, Generic Pharmaceutical Association, Catalent Pharma Solutions, and the Consumer Healthcare Products Association. The parent organization of AMCC is the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey.

AMCC was locally supported by the Keokuk County Sheriff's Department, Keota Police Department, Sigourney Police Department, KC STAAR Project, and the city offices of Keota, Hedrick and Sigourney.

## December Activities Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>All Dates are Subject to Change.</b>				<b>1</b> 4:15 JH Girls BB vs Tri-County  6:00 JV BB @ Monte  7:00 FFA Meeting	<b>2</b> 4:15 JH Girls BB vs. North Mahaska 4:15 JH WR @ Pekin  6:00 JV WR @ BGM Trn. 6:00 BB vs Lynn-Sully	<b>3</b> 9:00 WR @ Pekin Trn.
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 4:15 JH WR @ Montezuma 4:15 JH Girls BB @ English Valleys 6:00 JVBB vs BGM	<b>6</b> 4:15 JH Girls BB @ Iowa Valley 4:15 JH WR vs Pekin  6:00 BB @ Keota	<b>7</b> AD SICL Meeting	<b>8</b> 6:00 JVBB vs HLV  6:00 WR @ Belle Plaine / Lynn-Sully	<b>9</b> 6:00 BB @ English Valleys	<b>10</b> 9:00 WR @ Mt. Vernon Trn. 9:00 JV WR @ Marion Trn.
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 4:15 JH Girls BB vs Keota  6:00 BB @ HLV	<b>13</b> 4:15 JH WR @ Iowa Valley 4:15 JH Girls BB @ Tri-County  6:00 WR @ Waco/EV 6:00 BB vs la Valley	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 5:30 Grades 5 & 6 Band Concert  7:00 JH-HS Band & Choir Winter Concert	<b>16</b> 4:15 JH WR vs Tri-County, HLV, North Mahaska, Iowa Valley, English Valleys, Moravia, Belle Plaine  6:00 BB @ Tri-County	<b>17</b> 9:00 JH Girls BB @ Keota  9:00 WR @ Iowa City Regina Trn.
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 4:15 JH Girls BB @ Pekin	<b>20</b> 4:15 JH WR @ Oskey  6:00 BB @ Monte	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  <b>2:30 Dismissal Winter Break</b>	<b>23</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25 MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	<b>26</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>27</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>29</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>30</b>  <b>Winter Break</b>	<b>31</b>

### From the Desk of Superintendent Benita Gonzales

...Continued from page 1

if my hearing is taking a turn for the worse or if my son's tongue is just getting thicker. He doesn't make it easy for me to read his lips when all I see is the backside of him as he vanishes into another room.

I'm learning that my role as "mommy" is changing. Well, actually he's teaching me. Not only is my hearing diminishing, I'm becoming quite dim-witted as he has become wise beyond his years. I ask again, who is that stranger sleeping in my son's bed. Adolescence is a confusing time for the teen and parent alike. It's no wonder that a parent may wonder what role they now play in their son or daughter's education as they enter high school. It is during this time of a student's changing attitude about parents presence at the school that parents must find other ways to stay involved.

Research states that even though parent partnerships with the school drop dramatically as the student enters high school, this is an extremely important time in their student's life for

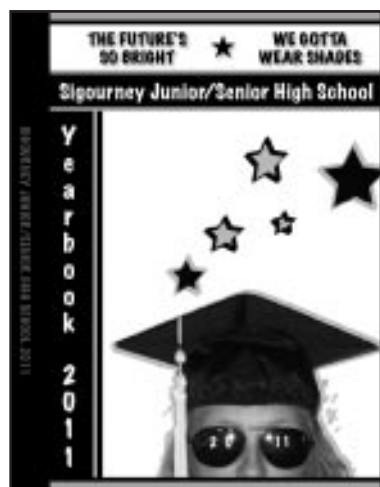
parents continued involvement (Cotton, & Reed, 2001; Wherry, 2003). When parents take an active role during their students secondary years they will find their student's test scores and grades are higher and graduation becomes almost certain (Collins, 1995). In addition, students that have parents involved during their high school years are three times more likely to complete college with a bachelor's degree than their counterparts whose parents were not involved ([www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/famncomm/pa1lk36.htm](http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/famncomm/pa1lk36.htm)).

Because teens are beginning to form their own identity and wanting more independence, the manner of parental involvement that worked in the primary grades is really no longer appropriate or practical (Cotton, & Reed, 2001). The parent's role will be the same—stay involved, but it will look and feel different.

Please visit Iowa's Parent Information Resource Center (IPIC) website <http://www.iowaparents.org> if you are interested in gathering more information about how you can be an integral "player" in your student's education.

## January Activities Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>3</b> <b>CLASSES RESUME</b> 6:00 WR vs Iowa Valley, IC West JV, Moravia, Col. Jct. 6:00 BB @ Belle Plaine	<b>4</b>  7:00 Sigourney Pride Meeting	<b>5</b>  6:00 JV BB vs Belle Plaine	<b>6</b>  6:00 BB @ North Mahaska	<b>7</b>  WR @ Van Buren Trn.
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> <b>NO SCHOOL</b> (Professional Development)	<b>10</b> 6:00 BB vs BGM  6:00 WR @ HLV	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>  4:15 JH Boys BB vs Tri-County	<b>13</b>  6:00 BB @ Lynnville-Sully (Quad with JV)	<b>14</b> 9:00 JV WR @ Independence Trn. WR @ Hudson Trn. 9:00 JV BB @ Belle Plaine Trn. (Boys & Girls)
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  6:00 JV BB vs. Keota	<b>17</b>  6:00 WR @ Albia with Tri-County-Monte	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>  4:15 JH Boys BB @ North Mahaska  6:00 JV BB @ English Valleys	<b>20</b>  6:00 BB vs Keota	<b>21</b>  Little Savage Wrestling Tournament
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 4:15 JH Boys BB vs Iowa Valley 6:00 JV BB @ Iowa Valley 6:00 WR @ Pekin	<b>24</b>  6:00 BB vs English Valleys	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>  6:00 JVBB @ Tri-Co	<b>27</b>  6:00 BB @ Iowa Valley	<b>28</b> 9:00 JH Boys BB vs Keota WR @ SICL Trn (BGM) 5:00 BB vs Pekin (Quad with JV)
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>  4:15 JH Boys BB vs Eddyville-Blakesburg	<b>31</b>  WR vs Pella and Washington				<b>All Dates are Subject to Change.</b>



### Have you picked up your 2010 Junior/Senior High Year Book?

2010/2011 Jr/Sr High Yearbooks may be picked up at The Design House at 220 East Jackson on Highway 92. They are open Monday to Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This issue and past issues are available for order at [www.designhouseplus.com](http://www.designhouseplus.com) or by coming in to The Design House. Questions? Call 622-9013.

### Gold Yearbook Sponsors: We Appreciate You

*Submitted by Rebecca Shaw*

**Brubaker Trucking and Sigourney Body Shop**

## December Lunch Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cereal is a breakfast alternative. Milk choices are offered with breakfast and lunch. 100% juice or fruit is offered with breakfast. Alt Lunch: Deli Sub	<b>Breakfast Served: 8:00 a.m. at BOTH Elementary and Jr-Sr High School</b>	SCSD is an equal opportunity provider and employer. <i>Menu is subject to change without notice.</i>		<b>December 1</b> Long John ----- Chili Soup, (Alt. Soup Chicken Noodle), Crackers, Baby Carrots & Dip, Peaches, Cinnamon Rolls	<b>December 2</b> Scrambled Eggs, Cinnamon Roll ----- Pork Fritter, WG Bun, Brown Rice Pilaf, Green Beans, Applesauce
Salad is offered as an alternative for grades 5-12.  Alternative Lunch: Hamburger on WG Bun	<b>December 5</b> Breakfast Bar, WW Toast ----- Beef Burgers, WG Bun, Seasoned Wedges, Tossed Salad, Baked Apples	<b>December 6</b> Egg & Cheese Quesadilla ----- Corn Dog, Macaroni and Cheese, Baby Carrots and Dip, Fruit Salad	<b>December 7</b> Yogurt, Donut Holes ----- Fajitas with WG Wraps, Tater Rounds, Peaches, Dessert Bar	<b>December 8</b> Fr. Toast, Little Smokies ----- Chicken Patty, WG Bun, Broccoli and Cheese Sauce, Apple 1/2, Vanilla Yogurt	<b>December 9</b> Pancake/Sausage Stix ----- Beef Tips and Gravy Bowl, Whipped Potatoes, Green Beans, Strawberries, WW Roll
Alternative Lunch: Hot Ham on WG Bun	<b>December 12</b> PBJ Sandwich & Potatoes ----- Nuggets, Hash Browns, Mixed Vegetables, 1/2 Orange, BB & PB Sandwich	<b>December 13</b> Breakfast Pizza ----- Turkey and Noodles, Whipped Potatoes, Peas, Mandarin Oranges, WW Roll	<b>December 14</b> Sausage Gravy & Biscuits ----- Elem: Cooks Choice, HS: Cheese Bread Stix and Sauce, Vegetable, Blushing Pears, Dessert	<b>December 15</b> Long John ----- Rotini Goulash, Tossed Salad, Fruited Jell-0, Bread Stix	<b>December 16</b> Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Rib Patty, WG Bun, Corn or Corn Mac, Banana, Pudding
Alternative Lunch: Hot Dog, WG Bun	<b>December 19</b> Cheese omelet, Cinnamon Toast ----- Hamburger, WG Bun, Oven Fries, Fruit, Christmas Cake	<b>December 20</b> Ass't Cereal & Donut Holes ----- Pizza (school made) Corn, Rosy Applesauce, Peanut Butter Cookie	<b>December 21</b> Breakfast Wrap ----- Hot Ham, WG Bun, Cottage Cheese, Baked Beans, Pineapple	<b>December 22</b> Funnel Cake ----- <b>(Winter Picnic)</b> Chili Dogs, Corn Chips, Baby Carrots, Mixed Fruit, Dessert	<b>December 23</b>  <b>NO SCHOOL\ WINTER BREAK</b>
<b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	<b>December 26</b>  <b>WINTER BREAK</b>	<b>December 27</b>  <b>WINTER BREAK</b>	<b>December 28</b>  <b>WINTER BREAK</b>	<b>December 29</b>  <b>WINTER BREAK</b>	Note: WG Indicates a healthy whole grain food.

### What's In Your Kitchen?

*Submitted by Benita Gonzales, Superintendent*

How do we give our kids the academic edge they need to succeed? Is the answer closer than we realize? Could the key to higher levels of academic achievement be in your kitchen? The following is an article provided by Lynn Swinger, RD, LD, Nutrition and Wellness Coordinator for the Ankeny School District. Lynn is a member of the American Dietetic Association and is a Kids Eat Right Campaign Volunteer.

Morning after morning kids arrive to school with backpacks, homework assignments and packed lunches but there may be something they've forgotten. Numerous studies suggest that schoolchildren skip breakfast more than any other meal of the day. That means some kids go as long as 15 hours—or more—without food. That doesn't just leave their stomachs growling, it also impacts their ability to learn.

Kids who fuel up in the morning focus and concentrate better in the classroom and perform better on math, reading and standardized tests. They also have fewer behavior problems and are less likely to be tardy. Conversely, ADA's (American Dietetic

Association) The State of Family Nutrition and Physical Activity Report: Are We Making Progress? finds that even a child who is well nourished but skips breakfast can have problem-solving difficulties that are serious enough to lower their test taking ability.

If you suspect your students are not getting a nutritious breakfast before arriving to school, here are some tips to consider:

- Set the alarm 10 minutes earlier so your student has time for breakfast,
- Stock your kitchen with quick-fix foods like whole-grain cereal, string cheese, berries, yogurt, whole wheat bread, mini bagels and English muffins. These items are easy to grab and go.

Remember: Remind yourself, the extra effort to having students eat a nutritious breakfast is worth the reward. Breakfast is the key to learning.

For questions about nutrition email Lynn at [lynn.swinger@ankenyschools.org](mailto:lynn.swinger@ankenyschools.org)

# January Lunch Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cereal is a breakfast alternative. Milk choices are offered with breakfast and lunch. 100% juice or fruit is offered with breakfast. Alt Lunch: Rib Patty Sandwich	<b>January 2</b>  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>January 3</b> Eggs, Potatoes, WW Toast ----- French Toast, Little Smokies, Hash Browns, Mixed Fruit	<b>January 4</b> Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Salisbury Steak, Whipped Potatoes and Gravy, Peaches, WW Roll	<b>January 5</b> Long John ----- Chicken Noodle Soup (Alt. Tomato Soup) Celery & Carrots with Dip, Toasted Cheese Sandwich, Pears	<b>January 6</b> Yogurt, Donut Holes ----- Deli Sub, Tossed Salad, Pickle Spear, Fresh Orange, Dessert
Salad is offered as an alternative for grades 5-12. Alternative Lunch: Hamburger on WG Bun	<b>January 9</b>  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>January 10</b> Sausage Biscuit ----- Fish Sandwich, WG Bun, Cheese Stix, Corn, Pears, Chocolate Mousse	<b>January 11</b> Egg Combo Bar, WW Toast ----- BBQ Pork, WG Bun, Green Beans, Rosy Applesauce, Rice Krispie Bar	<b>January 12</b> Breakfast Pizza ----- Spaghetti with Meat Sauce, Tossed Salad, Mixed Fruit, French Bread	<b>January 13</b> Fr. Toast, Little Smokies ----- Pigs in Blanket, Macaroni and Cheese, Baked Beans, Strawberries & Bananas
Alternative Lunch: Hot Ham Sandwich	<b>January 16</b> Ass't Cereal or Oatmeal, Donut Holes ----- Burritos, Nachos and Cheese Sauce, Baby Carrots and Dip, Baked Apples	<b>January 17</b> Long John ----- Sweet & Sour Chicken, Brown Rice, Oriental Vegetables, Pineapple, Fortune Cookie, Bread Stix	<b>January 18</b> Muffin Squares and Sausage ----- Hamburger, WG Bun, Seasoned Wedges, Tossed Salad, Fruited Jell-O	<b>January 19</b> Breakfast Stix ----- Tacos, (cheese, lettuce, tomatoes) Refried Beans, Peaches, Cinnamon Rolls	<b>January 20</b> Yogurt, Cinnamon Roll ----- Meatball Sub, Buttered Pasta, Peas, Fresh Fruit
Alternative Lunch: Sub Sandwich	<b>January 23</b> Mini Pancakes, Applesauce ----- Rib Patty, WG Bun, Corn or Corn Mac, Tossed Salad, Applesauce	<b>January 24</b> PB&J Sandwich, Potatoes ----- Popcorn Chicken, Fresh Vegetables and Dip, Apple 1/2, Blueberry Muffin	<b>January 25</b> Scrambled Eggs & Ham, WW Toast ----- Cheese Quesadilla Pizza, Vegetable, Fruit Salad, Peanut Butter Cookie	<b>January 26</b> Cheese Omelet, WW Toast ----- COOKS CHOICE	<b>January 27</b> Breakfast Pizza ----- Steak Nuggets, Whipped Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Banana, WW Roll
Alternative Lunch: Hot Dog, WG Bun	<b>January 30</b> Breakfast Stix ----- Chicken Patty, WG Bun, Broccoli & Cheese Sauce, Br. Rice, Mandarin Oranges	<b>January 31</b> Ass't Cereal, Cinn. Toast ----- Hot Ham, WG Bun, Sweet Potato Puffs, Cottage Cheese, Pineapple	Breakfast Served: 8:00 a.m. at <b>BOTH</b> Elementary and Jr-Sr High School	SCSD is an equal opportunity provider and employer. <i>Menu is subject to change without notice.</i>	Note: WG Indicates a healthy whole grain food.



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