

Insights from the Board

Hello Citizens of Vincennes,
My election to the Vincennes Community School Board was a thrill. I had planned for a long time to seek a seat on the board. I care deeply about this community. I came from a very poor family. We had a small non-modern house, with no bathroom or running water. We had to pump our drinking water from an outside pitcher pump, and when mom did laundry we had to pump a few buckets for washing and a few for rinsing. We had a coal stove for heat, but usually couldn't afford coal, so we burned a lot of wood. I don't mean to sound like I'm complaining, because I'm not. I don't think any other type of environment could have prepared me for life as well as the "Ranch". I learned to hunt, trap, fish, grow a garden, and raise chickens and of course how to prepare all of them for dinner. When you don't have a lot, you learn to make do with what you've got, so when life does smile on you, and gives you a break, you know how to appreciate it. I want all of the citizens of Vincennes to know how much I appreciate being allowed to serve on this board. I have enjoyed helping when I could and I feel we have set a course for success in the future. The new middle school will be an

asset for all of the community. Paying off the high school bonds and putting our maintenance plan for the elementary schools on track will benefit the entire city. There are so many programs that our school Administrators, Principals, Teachers and staff have implemented I'm afraid to mention for fear of leaving one out or making one seem more important than another. I do know that since I have been on this board I've seen many strides to help your children succeed. I would ask that if you have children in one of our schools, or are just a concerned citizen, that you participate in some way to help us succeed. I'm not talking about any mega donation or anything, just attend a ball game, or go to a school program if you can find the time. Volunteer in a classroom, sponsor a field trip or help mentor a student in need. Your support will not only help the schools, but the students will learn from you and appreciate it. I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to serve on your school board and I hope this will show how much we need you to participate and support our community.

Ron Boger

Vincennes Community School Board Members

Mr. Ron Boger
President

Mrs. Melissa Turner
Vice President

Mr. Bryan Thais
Secretary

Mr. Aaron Bauer
Member

Mr. Philip Grounds
Member

Construction Update



Expected Completion Date

June 2010

Underground piping and underground conduit installation inside the building is underway. Concrete block masonry walls around the gymnasium have begun. Outside the building the underground site utility work is progressing rapidly. Underground water lines, sanitary sewer lines, storm sewer lines, electrical

conduits have been in full gear over the last few months and a great deal of progress has been made. In the coming months metal decking, roofing, metal stud wall framing, masonry brick veneer and many other items will be installed on the new Vincennes Clark Middle School.

Success... For Life! Opportunities, Achievements,

School Wide Geography Bee
Champion: Valerie Abendroth



Vincennes Community School Corporation
1712 South Hart Street Road
Vincennes, IN 47591



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Southern Indiana Junior High School Academic Conference Bowl hosted by CMS

Clark Winners include:



Michelle Graham
(Grade 7) – Art 2D



6th Grade Quiz Bowl
Champions: Isaac Fields,
Colin Crabtree, Sharon
Helfenbein, Alex Libecap



Jessica Ash
(Grade 8) – Art 2D



6th Grade Spelling
Champion:
Maggie Sutton



Elementary Teachers Using mClass

This year our elementary schools began using an exciting new assessment system to help determine what our children have learned and what they need more help on.

Our teachers in the primary grades, grades K-2, have begun to use a software system called mClass. This software is a computerized system that was developed by the Wireless Generation Company. This system trains teachers to use palm pilots to assess each individual student in the areas of reading and math. The software uses the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) program to assess each student. The DIBELS assessments measure the 5 national reading skills that children must understand to be successful in reading. They are... phonological awareness, alphabetic principle, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. Each of these skills are tested in each grade level, K-2, with the difficulty increasing each year. "I feel that DIBELS has given me a better understanding of what skills students need for them to be successful. Those in turn are the skills we work on either in a small group or individually," stated Kay Zeigler, first grade, Tecumseh-Harrison.

skills as counting, number identification, missing numbers, quantity discrimination, number facts, computation, and concepts. This system assesses only those skills that should be mastered in each grade level. Benchmark testing and progress monitoring is done in Math as well.

Each school has several trainers that assist the teachers when help is needed. Learning to use new technology and working with students in a different way is always a new adventure for our teachers. Our corporation is very blessed to have a very dedicated group of teachers that strive to provide the best education possible. "According to our Summative / Performance Assessment Results, DIBELS interventions taught during our Literacy Groups have demonstrated a tremendous boost in our writing performance. Small group and individualized instruction is essential to achieve mastery level for developmentally ready students. The DIBELS palm is so easy and convenient. I can take my palm with me to meetings or home and reflect on each student's results, and with just a simple tap I have examples of interventions that are research based to enable my students to achieve their benchmarks," said Heather Hislip, Kindergarten, Tecumseh-Harrison.

Benchmark assessments are given at the beginning of the year, in the middle of the year and at the end of the year. These assessments will determine what the child has mastered and what skills the child still needs to learn. In between benchmark testing, the teacher will check those children that need remediation. This checking is called "Progress Monitoring." Progress monitoring is usually done every other week. During this time period the teacher will use interventions to instruct the child and to provide extra practice and assistance in helping the child master each skill. This system has worked really well in all classrooms because it provides the teacher with very current academic information on each child and the teacher knows what each child needs further work on in a timely manner. "DIBELS has helped me do a better job diagnosing individual phonics needs and addressing them," explained Gail Street, Kindergarten, Tecumseh-Harrison. The mClass system also features a math assessment that provides the same assessing and remediation. The math portion assesses such

This system has a good parent connection program. Parents are informed after each benchmark testing so they are aware of the progress their child is making and what skills they have mastered and what skills need extra practice. Research has shown that early intervention with our students provides a solid introduction to these skills and good remediation to those that need further help in mastering the skills. The corporation believes that these assessments will provide the necessary information that teachers need to plan daily instruction to reach each individual child. Using this system in all five elementary schools is a plus as many students move from school to school. Because this program is web-based, teachers can access this information wherever there is a computer or even on their palm as stated earlier. We feel this is a positive movement in our schools and will help provide our students with better individualized instruction.

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Letter from the Superintendent

Vincennes Community School Corporation will be a part of the Stimulus Funds distribution. The actual name for the Stimulus Fund is the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The ARRA funds are one time dollars that must be spent in a two year period. These dollars that will come to Vincennes Community School Corporation need to be spent on projects that are self-sustaining or that add no long term operating expenses.

The funds our school corporation will receive from the ARRA will come in two categories; Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which are both federal programs that support Vincennes schools. In Title I we will receive \$809,619.06 and the IDEA will receive \$727,658.00 from the ARRA. Therefore, Vincennes will receive \$1,537,277.06 in total Stimulus Funds that must be expended in a two year time cycle.

With this kind of dollars from the Federal Government, the level of accountability greatly increases. An application, budget, and letter of assurances must be submitted and approved before our school corporation actually receives these funds. The assurance document basically spells out the guidelines on how a school corporation can use the funds, document and

report expenditures, timelines for reporting, audit expenditures, and be accountable for the proper use of the funds.

Special Education Director Saundra Lange and Title I Coordinator Tom Nonte have started the process of getting all of the documentation ready to submit to the Department of Education in order to obtain these funds.

As soon as the corporation's application, budget, and letter of assurances are completed they will be submitted. The Department of Education then must approve the application and 50% of our total funds will be released immediately. The other 50% will be released in the fall.

With the Stimulus Funds, we will be able to purchase some items that will help our students immediately that would have had to be planned within our budget process over a period of time. It really is exciting that these Stimulus Funds are going to education and will ultimately help our students in the education process. There is no greater resource than our children and the children of the future.

Douglas D. Rose

Douglas D. Rose
Superintendent of Schools

"...Vincennes will receive \$1,537,277.06 in total Stimulus Funds that must be expended in a two year time



Through the Halls

A look at academic life at every level

Elementary

The Simple 6: A Writing Rubric for Kids

Written by: Eric Goggins, Washington Elementary Principal

In February of this school year, elementary and middle school language arts teachers from the Vincennes Community School Corporation participated in professional development training on a new writing program called The Simple 6. This program, created by Kay Davidson, a former elementary teacher, is geared toward the improvement of student success in every day writing, as well as writing to a prompt. Prompt writing is given every year to students in grades 3, 4, and 5 during annual ISTEP+ testing.

The Simple 6 was developed around the six qualities of outstanding writing, which are stick to the topic, logical order, interesting words, different sentence patterns, descriptive sentences, and audience. The main goal of the program is to develop an understanding and knowledge of the six qualities so that they are able to include them in their writing and be able to self-check and monitor their own writing for the qualities, as well as checking and monitoring their peers writing. This is done through the use of a common writing rubric that is used by all teachers in all grades. The rubric is very simple and allows for the use of common vocabulary and expectation for students starting in kindergarten and going all the way through eighth grade.

Kay Davidson, the creator of The Simple 6 says this about her writing program: The purpose of The Simple 6 is that "Students can recite the components of The Simple 6, and they understand what each part means. They can score writing samples, they have an understanding of time management, and they approach standardized writing assessments with enthusiasm and confidence. The key to success is mere simplicity-putting the expectations into terms that students and teachers can understand."

Our students are excited about this program and are saying wonderful things about it. Tate Schuckman, a third grade student at Washington Elementary School says, "The Simple Six has made writing easier for me to stick to the topic; it also makes it easier to understand what I am expected to write about." His classmate, Justin Goodwin also says, "The Simple Six really helps me write with more descriptive sentences." These types of comments are very encouraging and are the purpose of this very simple writing program. We are confident that the every day writing, as well as the ISTEP+ writing assessment, is sure to improve. In fact, we are already seeing great success with this new program.



Vincennes Community School Corporation Administrative Team

Mr. Douglas D. Rose
Superintendent of Schools
882-4844

Mr. Thomas Nonte
Executive Director for Instructional Services
882-3668

Mr. Chad Blacklock
Executive Director for Financial Services
882-6971

Mrs. Saundra Lange
Director of Special Education Services
882-0102

Assistive Technology in Public Education

Jonathan is a 5th grader with a physical disability that makes it difficult for him to write by hand. He does much better using a portable word processor that the school provides for him as part of his special education program. Jonathan uses the device to take notes in class and to complete all of his written work. He even takes it home with him to complete his homework assignments. The portable word processor has helped Jonathan

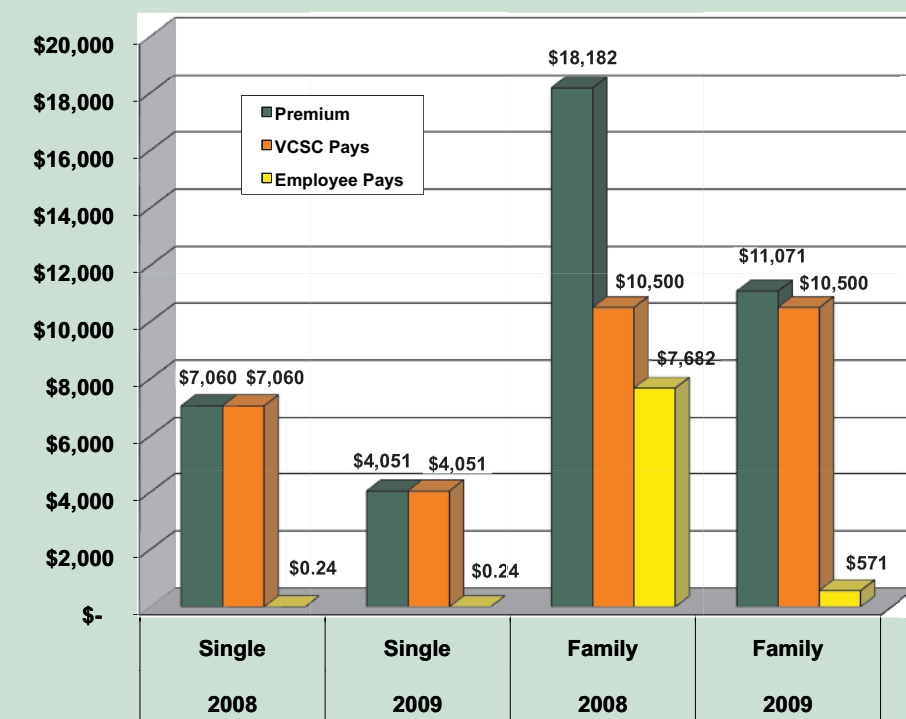
keep up with his school work and maintain a B+ average.

The portable word processor is an Assistive Technology device that Jonathan's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determined was necessary for him to fulfill his educational goals. Without it he would not be able to keep up with the rest of his class and would be dependent on others to help him complete his school work.



Community Report Card

Health Insurance Savings



The Vincennes Community School Corporation employees with family insurance plans saved \$7,111.20 per year. This is added income to their paycheck, which was significant.

Since many of the school employees switched coverage from single to family in 2009, the corporation had a zero percent increase in health insurance cost.

Middle School

Reality Store: Choosing Careers

During the month of April, the eighth grade students participated in several career exploration activities. All students participated in the Reality Store - an activity in which the students select a career based upon the results of a career interest inventory which was facilitated by Mrs. Jill Bailey, Guidance Counselor.

During the Reality Store, the students have an income which is based upon the career which they chose. During the course of the event, they make choices of how to spend their monthly income and see what it is like to be an adult and budget their income.

During the same time period as the Reality Store - twelve speakers provided presentations to all of the 8th grade students regarding different careers. Mrs. Bailey arranged for two speakers to present within each career interest code. The speakers included:

- Artistic** Lisa Ice Jones - On A Wing - Picture Framing
- Tom Bartholomew - Bartholomew Photography - Photography
- Social** Karen Robinson, MSW - The Willows - Counseling
- Jon Hillenbrand - Vincennes Police Dept - Police Officer
- Enterprising** Chris Sievers - Goodwin Funeral Home - Funeral Director
- Aaron Bauer - Bauer Jewelers & Gemologists - Jeweler
- Investigative** Melody Candler-Catt - Vincennes Veterinary Clinic - Veterinarian
- Paul Vonderwell - Vincennes University - Computers

Conventional

- Wendy Mangin - Medical Records - Good Samaritan Hospital
- Wally Nowakowski - McDonalds - Franchise Owner

Each speaker covered information about their present position, and how they chose their job. They additionally discussed pros and cons of their present position and the future job forecast. Additionally each speaker was able to describe how they used their previous educational experiences and skills within their current position such as math, writing skills, and chemistry. Furthermore interpersonal skills and communication skills were discussed.

Each presenter emphasized the need for all 8th graders to remain in school and to select a career which they would enjoy and do well. Additionally, job interviewing skills were discussed which included the importance of the first impression, dressing for an interview, eye contact, listening skills as well as reliability and responsibility.

Following the presentation each student selected a specific presentation which they enjoyed and wrote a personal thank you note to that presenter.

A huge thank you to each presenter and to the community for these opportunities which our students have been given.



High School

Foreign Language Has Busy Spring

LHS Foreign Language students were very busy this spring! First year students created a travelogue of a country where their language is spoken, while second year students took on the persona of an important French/German/Spanish-speaker. Third year students learned more about a cultural topic that interested them, and 4th year students made an imaginary trip to a major city and its surrounding region. Power Point and posters were presented in front of the students' classes. There were many outstanding projects this year!

A variety of activities took place to highlight the various countries and cultures where Spanish, French, and German are spoken. The focus of Foreign Language Week was on learning away from the textbook: students learned folk dances and tongue-twisters, did traditional crafts, listened to pop music, and prepared & tasted food from the many nations involved. Some chose to be a member of their class' Jeopardy trivia team. A competition was held between all language classes - the winning team earned a pizza party for their class. Others taught students in another language class how to shop for school supplies during our class exchange. The foreign language club labeled various rooms and objects around the school in the 3 languages. The highlight of the week was the department dinner and talent show. All the foreign language students were invited to attend the dinner, an international pitch-in. They decorated their tables to add to the festive atmosphere and all enjoyed the wide variety of dishes from the many countries. After the dinner, 12 acts were presented in Ader Auditorium. The skits, songs, dances, and videos, all involving the language and/or culture of the students' languages, were nothing but



excellent. We are always so impressed with the talent our students demonstrate!

The week following spring break Vincennes welcomed 15 students and 2 teachers from our sister city, Wasserburg, Germany. Seven of the students stayed with LHS students, while the remaining students went to homes at Rivet or South Knox. While here, Matthias Haus, an accomplished organist and one of the teachers accompanying the students, participated in a concert of German music at St. James Episcopal Church. Lisa Miller, a voice instructor at Vincennes University & parent to four current VCSC students, organized several other local and IU music students, as well as our own DeEtta Welte, to complete the outstanding program. The kindnesses shown them and the friendships made during their two week stay here are most surely the highlights of their trip. There were many tears shed in the LHS parking lot before the students left for their flight. Many thanks to the families who opened up their homes to these students and demonstrated the true meaning of "Hoosier Hospitality". Our students will have the opportunity to see their new Wasserburg friends during the summer of 2010, when Mrs. Donna Kramer, LHS German teacher is planning a return visit.

Finally, speaking of student exchanges, Mrs. Karen Query and 7 of her French students will be visiting our sister city Vincennes, France for 2 weeks this June. Nineteen French students will be coming to "our" Vincennes in late October for 2 weeks. If you are interested in hosting a student, please contact Mrs. Query at LHS.



VEF News

• Membership Has Its Privileges

The Vincennes Education Foundation board of directors has recently enacted a new requirement for all teachers submitting applications for VEF funds to be a current member of the Vincennes Education Foundation. In an effort to stimulate membership amongst the VCSC teaching staff, the VEF board is confident the new requirement will essentially lead to the growth and strength of the organization and ultimately provide additional future capital for distribution.

Board member Phil Corona explained, "The VEF was created with the sole purpose in mind to help our teachers with the additional financial responsibility often required to provide our children with the kind of education we all want them to experience. In order to do just that, the VEF must have the total support of our teachers through their commitment of membership. Without it, the VEF has no impact whatsoever."

VEF membership requires a \$25 annual contribution to the organization. The contribution may be paid in advance or payroll deducted at \$1 per pay period.

For additional details regarding membership, application for funds, and/or how you can get involved with the Vincennes Education Foundation, please direct your inquiries to VEF secretary, Mary Beth Gavney, at 882-2027.