

The Review



SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE

SWWC

Education & Administrative Resources



1420 E. College Drive
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www.swsc.org

Fall 2016

A SUN PROGRAM IN WINDOM

By Colleen Schatz, Assistant Director of Alternative Programs
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On August 26, we opened our doors to a new classroom at the Red Rock Learning Center in Windom - a **SUN (Students with Unique Needs)** program!

Prior to this new program, our Setting IV program served K-12 students with emotional and behavior challenges - whose abilities were in the average range. For these students, emotional and/or behavioral challenges prevented them from accessing the general education curriculum in their home school settings.

Our new SUN program is for students with emotional and behavior challenges - whose abilities are below the average range. These challenges are preventing the students from being successful in their home schools. The SUN program serves students with a variety of unique needs, including those identified with autism spectrum disorder or developmental cognitive disabilities.

Our initial efforts are focused on elementary level students. The classroom opened in August to four students, one special education teacher and three paraprofessionals. The students received related services per their individualized education plans.

Academic work is difficult for this group of students. The classroom is set up on visual schedules using timers to help the students manage time. Students rotate through a variety of centers during the school day. These centers include academic activities, work box activities, art, play, independent living skills and many other areas. Students work for a period of time and immediately move to a sensory break. This pattern is continued for the duration of the day.

We work closely with a SWWC behavior specialist to assist the students in managing behavior - which allows for teaching independent living skills and academics. Our goal is for students to return to the home school and community settings with increased skills and success.



Update from the Executive Director



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The Review is published three times a year. If you have suggestions, comments or items for submission, contact Shelly Maes at shelly.maes@swsc.org.

SERVICE

By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director
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SERVICE - SWWC believes service is being committed to the success of our members, coworkers and others. We care about them, listen to them, and work to anticipate their needs and solve their problems. Satisfying those we serve is a priority for everyone in the agency.

Our core values of service, respect and integrity are the foundation of the work we do at SWWC. The cornerstone of this foundation is service! It is through our commitment to service that we are able to provide the kinds of programs and services that meet the needs of our members. Through a caring attitude, active listening, and working to anticipate needs, SWWC is solving problems and creating value for schools, cities, counties, and other governmental agencies in our region.

In our offices, we talk a lot about how we create value for our members and for each other. Often, you will hear us say “we create value by improving the end-user experience” or “we are here to make good things happen for other people”. Both of these statements embody how we enhance the work of our members, meet their needs, and move us toward our vision of being a “premiere service agency”. To SWWC, service is an action verb; requiring effort and movement to ensure we are being resourceful and resilient, approachable, exceeding expectations and working with a sense of urgency.

Service at SWWC is in our name and in our brand. I ask that you continue to hold us accountable for our service mindset; it is one of our values and requires that we commit to a service mindset.

On a different note, I want to sincerely thank the members of the SWWC School Crisis Response Team. Made up of staff from SWWC and member school districts, this team provides immediate assistance to schools in times of crisis or traumatic events. In collaboration with local crisis teams and crisis plans, the regional team provides support to local schools during very difficult times. Specifically trained using standards set by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, this program was started by SWWC and continues to be supported by SWWC as a service to our schools in response to a school crisis. Please do not hesitate to contact leads Brian Skogen (brian.skogen@canbylancers.org, 507-828-7955) or Jason Kratochvil (jason.kratochvil@swsc.org, 605-520-5939) should you need assistance.

More information about the School Crisis Response Team can be found at www.swsc.org/CISM.



Congratulations!

MURRAY COUNTY CENTRAL'S BRENDA WHITEHEAD NAMED EDUCATOR OF EXCELLENCE

By Joe Meyer, Superintendent

The Minnesota Rural Education Association (MREA) recently announced the 2016 Educators of Excellence for Greater Minnesota.

The 2016 honorees are:

- North: Jackie Chwialkowski, third-grade teacher at Stephen-Argyle Central Schools,
- North Central: Dobis, third-grade teacher at Pierz Public Schools,
- South Central: Jamie Madson, teacher and STEM Curriculum Integration Coordinator at Rockford Area Schools,
- **South: Brenda Whitehead, a high school math teacher at Murray County Central Schools.**

"The honorees represent an inspiring group of educators who have positively impacted students and student achievement, shown leadership in their school and community and helped bring about new and innovative practices in education," said Fred Nolan, MREA executive director.

MREA will recognize the 2016 honorees at its annual awards banquet November 14 at Cragun's Resort. The awards banquet will be held in conjunction with MREA's Annual Conference, Making Teaching Matter.

"It is our desire to shine a spotlight on the great work educators are doing across the state," Nolan said. "So this awards program intentionally selects honorees from regions across Minnesota."

MREA advocates for greater Minnesota schools. MREA's membership represents more than 210 school districts in Minnesota.



RED ROCK RIDGE LEARNING CENTER RECEIVES GRANT

SWWC's Red Rock Ridge Learning Center in Windom received a \$3,000 grant from Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC).

The vision surrounding the grant is to work in partnership to ensure that our young adults have access to the services they need to become self-sufficient and successful. PIC staff will work individually with students in achieving that goal. Students will also be participating in a variety of activities centered on life skills, career and personal goals.



Updates from Teaching & Learning



NORTH COLLABORATIVE EDCAMP

By Teresa Hunt, School Improvement Specialist/PBIS Coordinator
teresa.hunt@swsc.org

ACGC was the setting of the North Collaborative Common In-service Day held on October 3, 2016. This year's professional development day was conducted by way of an Edcamp.

Close to 345 educators participated in the first-ever North Collaborative Edcamp. An edcamp is an "unconference" where the learning is educator-driven and educator-led. The schedule of the learning is developed THAT day. Educators come to an Edcamp with an open mind on what they hope to learn and some also offer to lead sessions they have expertise in.

The sessions on October 3 were comprised of technology, standards work and coaching options. One session, "Effective Communication with Student Athletes and Parents" was held and this session was standing/sitting room only. Participants were free to vote with their feet ... meaning if two sessions of interest were offered at one time they could leave and attend both. An Edcamp is intended to be a very different way to conduct staff development since the staff are in charge of their learning, not the building principal.

As Matt Bullard, Superintendent/Principal of BBE said, "Educators will get out of an Edcamp what they put into it". BBE was the first to showcase what an Edcamp looks like when their staff hosted their own Edcamp last January.

SWWC would like to thank:

- ALL of the schools in the North Collaborative for attending
- BBE and their technology team for providing a guide to help us conduct the Edcamp
- The administrative staff of ACGC, specifically Superintendent/Principal Sherri Broderius, Middle School Principal Robin Wall, Elementary Principal Kodi Goracke, and Business Manager Dan Tait, for the excellent hosting and organizing skills.



They even made t-shirts!



Updates from Student Activities

AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR PROGRAM

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
andrea.anderson@swsc.org

Encourage the love of reading and inspire students to write and illustrate. SWWC has invited **Julia Cook** and **Gordon Fredrickson** to travel around and visit your schools. They will walk through their journey of how they create ideas for books and illustrations; explain what it takes to be an author or an illustrator and show the end result; and get kids excited about writing. Register your school to give K-6 elementary students an opportunity to use their imaginations to start creating their own book.



This program is available for a half day, full day or multiple day residencies. Days fill up fast, so get your registration in by November 3. For the full brochure and the registration form, go to www.swsc.org/caip.



*Children's Author
&
Illustrator Program*

CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
andrea.anderson@swsc.org

Students have an opportunity to use their imaginations to generate creative fiction and nonfiction stories and poems. A teacher can make this a classroom project or encourage students to enter on their own. There are many young talented storytellers and writers in our region - let's seek them out and get them involved!

The contest is open to students in grades 3-12. Contest rules and guidelines must be followed for a chance to be one of the top three place winners. The top place winners will be invited to an Awards Ceremony in April. The submission deadline is **January 20, 2017**. Students will have plenty of time over holiday breaks to use their imagination and get creative.

Go to www.swsc.org/studentactivities for more details.



Updates from Student Activities



YOUNG WRITERS CONFERENCE

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
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The 25th Annual Conference for Young Writers for students in grades 3-8 will be held on January 4, 2017, at Southwest Minnesota State University.

The keynote is Geoff Herbach, an author from Minneapolis. The conference will encourage students to write about fiction, fantasy, truth, piracy, poetry, building characters and much more. There is more to writing than just a piece of paper and a pen - so come and learn ways to write about monsters and villains, how to hook an audience and how to write like a reporter.

You can find the conference brochure at www.swsc.org/yw.

Early registration deadline: November 15

Final registration deadline: November 22



SPELLING BEE

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
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Mark your calendars for the 2017 Regional Spelling Bee!

February 7, 2017 (snow date Feb. 8)

Redwood Falls Community Center

An exciting way to compete as an elementary or middle school student is in a spelling bee. Spelling bees help promote literacy, build confidence and give students a goal to work towards. In addition, bees improve spelling, aid children in learning concepts, and help kids improve comprehension and develop study skills.

Register your school today to give students in grades 5-8 a challenge on spelling words. Scripps enrollment was due October 14 and registration through SWWC is due November 1. You must enroll with both.

Four winners from the Regional Spelling Bee will advance to the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee in Fergus Falls on February 21, 2017. The winner of that bee will participate in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC in May.

For more information, please see www.swsc.org/studentactivities.



Mark Your Calendars!

March 30, 2017

www.swsc.org/culinary

Updates from Student Activities

CAREER EXPO SUCCESS

By Mary Mortier, Career Assessment Coordinator
mary.mortier@swsc.org

Thanks to all the volunteers and school districts for contributing to the success of our 2016 Career Expos in Marshall and Worthington. SWWC especially wants to thank our partners for making these events possible:

- Minnesota West Carl Perkins Consortium
- Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council
- Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- Southwest Minnesota State University
- SWWC Service Cooperative
- Job Service
- Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce
- Marshall Area Chambers of Commerce
- Marshall, Montevideo, and Worthington Workforce Centers
- Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Regional businesses and service agencies



During the two expo events we served 1,840 students from 30 schools. We were excited to hear many positive comments from teachers, students and exhibitors. We had 118 total exhibitors, which is again an all-time high!

Check out our Career Expo web page for pictures and exhibitor lists (which can be filtered by site, career field, scholarship availability, etc.).

www.swsc.org/careerexpo



SCIENCE & NATURE CONFERENCE

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
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The Science & Nature Conference is set for May 10, 2017, at Southwest Minnesota State University. This conference is for students in grades K-8. The keynote is Steve Belliveau, Getting Excited about Science, from Wisconsin.

Our conference goal is to stimulate the interest of science during interactive sessions on science related topics such as rocket building, geocaching, being a vet, crime scene, technology and much more. More information will be available mid-February. Watch our website at www.swsc.org/sn.



Updates from School Districts



CHARACTER EDUCATION ~ WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

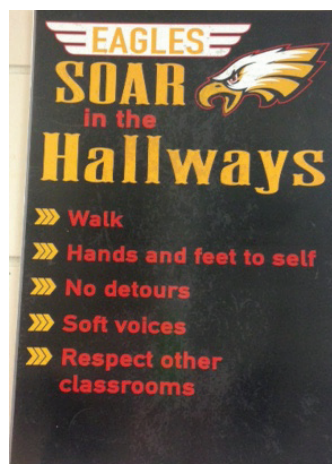
By Maureen Odegard, Elementary Principal

At Appleton~Milan Elementary School, we are tackling that question. In society today, we hear a lot about 'Character' and 'Character Education', but what is it really all about? Does Character have a different meaning in a different setting?

At Appleton~Milan Elementary School, we began our SOAR initiative (following the protocol of PBIS) last school year and we are continuing the initiative this school year. In our building we focus on being **Safe**, staying **On** task, having a positive **Attitude**, and showing **Respect** (**SOAR**). All of these components tie directly into educating our students on positive Character.

On a daily basis, our entire staff embeds positive character traits and values into our curriculum. Whether students are in the lunchroom eating breakfast, in the classroom learning Math, or lining up for the bus at the end of the school day, we expect our students to treat everyone with kindness and to respect self, others, and our school. Additionally, we take timely opportunities to point out examples of positive character during everyday teaching and learning. This is a great way to show students that positive character isn't removed from their everyday experiences and there are numerous ways to **SOAR** at our school.

As the school year progresses, we will continue to focus on ways in which our students can learn and then demonstrate positive character traits in our building. At home and out in the community, we encourage other adults to help our children show how they can be positive role models to others. Good character can be displayed anywhere in the community and our ultimate goal is to reinforce positive behavior in our students and create citizens who will make a positive impact in our own communities and in our world. Eagles **SOAR!!**



Updates from School Districts

BENSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

By Jacquelyn Hickey, SWWC School Psychologist

In an effort to provide innovative learning opportunities to all students, Benson Public Schools is exceptionally proud to roll-out the Restorative Justice Class. Students in the class utilize the principles and theoretical foundations of Restorative Justice to support their peers who have violated school rules. Students in the class engage their peers in meaningful conversations about the incident, and focus on three main questions: “What happened? Who was harmed? What are you going to do in order to repair the harm that was caused?”

The program is designed to teach students about empathy, perspective taking, problem solving, conflict resolution, and leadership, while also reducing the use of punitive and exclusionary consequences. Students and staff are excited to embrace a different way of thinking about discipline that aims to build skills, repair student-staff relationships and improve overall school climate.

RJ Coordinators:

Jacquelyn Hickey, School Psychologist

Lisa Kurtzbein, Special Education Teacher

Shannon Schmidt, Regular Education Teacher



Updates from School Districts



1:1 LAPTOP INITIATIVE AT TAPS

By Dr. Chad Anderson, Superintendent

A new academic program implemented this year at Tracy Area Public Schools (TAPS) is a 1:1 laptop computer initiative in grades 7-12, combined with the upper elementary expanding their access to laptops in science and social studies. This initiative provides equal access to information through technology by all students. This technology has significant educational benefits for students and can enhance the learning opportunities where information is available anytime and anywhere. Schools in the 20th Century used pencil, paper and chalkboards as the main curriculum delivery method. Schools in the 21st Century will need to bolster their educational framework by adding technology to their teaching practices to keep pace with the changes in technology.



The focus of the TAPS 1:1 program is to provide our students with the same opportunities that are available to other students around the world, while seamlessly integrating technology into their learning. This will not only give our children the same opportunities that other students have, but prepare them for a future where advanced technology is necessary at the post-secondary level and the workforce. One of the main ways we will prepare our students for the changing future is to provide every child with access to their own laptop.

Each student in grades 7-12 was issued a school laptop and backpack to carry the laptop. Students in grades 5 and 6 also have access to laptops in their science and social studies classrooms. Students will use this computer the entire year and will be reissued the same laptop each fall when they return to school. Our students at TAPS will use their laptops to access text books and other reliable information sources, submit assignments, take tests and quizzes, create presentations, communicate with their teachers, work collaboratively with other students at home and at school, complete and store notes, and take their learning to the next level.



Updates from School Districts

MCC ELEMENTARY IMPLEMENTS FLEXIBLE SEATING

By Todd Burlingame, Elementary Principal

Several Murray County Central (MCC) teachers spent many hours this summer preparing their classrooms for their new flexible seating arrangements. Student desks have been replaced with booths, tables, chairs, couches, rugs, pillows, balls, tires, five gallon pails, and crates of many vibrant colors that offer students many alternative seating options. Students use clipboards for writing - and tubs and totes to store their supplies. This full implementation could not have been possible without the generous donations of community and family members and Pinterest, of course.



Several teachers in our building have implemented partial flexible seating arrangements in their classrooms as well. Students, staff and parents all have had very positive reactions to this new way of thinking. Parents and community members are invited to tour these innovative classrooms that give students a choice in what kind of learning space works best for them. You may find students bouncing on a stability ball, lying on a colorful rug, sitting at a low table on their knees or standing at a high top table. We believe it will help them to work collaboratively, communicate better, and engage in more critical thinking.

Although new to MCC, flexible seating has been used in several classrooms around the country. Research suggests that the immediate physical benefits of flexible seating include burning more calories, using up excess energy, improving metabolism, increased motivation and engagement, creating a better oxygen flow to the brain, and improving core strength and overall posture.

Brain research confirms that physical activity – moving, stretching and walking – can actually enhance the learning process. Sedentary classroom styles can lead to restless behavior and make for long days in our classrooms, not only for students, but for teachers. The brain learns best and retains most when it is actively involved in physical activity. Flexibility in seating arrangements can also be very beneficial for children with ADHD. By engaging our students in a greater variety of postures, including walking, lying down, moving, leaning against a wall or desk, perching, or even squatting, we can alleviate anxiety issues and improve behavior and increase focus.



As we are always implementing new ideas to accommodate our students' different learning styles, we hope that all of their skills will be enhanced by attending MCC Elementary. If you have any concerns, comments or just want to check us out, contact me at 836-6450 Ext 5102 or todd_burlingame@mcc.mntm.org.



Updates from School Districts



JCC ROBOTICS TEAM GROW

By Glory Meyer, Junior at JCC & Spirit Manager for the JCC Robotics Club
The JCC Robotics Team is competing for the sixth year as a Jackson County Central High School team. They are going strong this year while building their robot for the BEST Robotics competition and they are in it to win it! They have 24 students this year ranging from 6th-12th grade.

JCC Robotics has been a part of BEST (Boosting Engineering Science and Technology) Robotics for five years. Each year they are presented with a unique task for the robot to complete. They have to design, build, market, and exhibit the robot in a six-week window.

“Robotics is a great opportunity for students to explore science and creativity,” said Adviser Lyn Meyer.

This year they are competing with 26 other teams from across the Midwest in Brookings, SD, on October 29. If they perform well at the Brookings competition, they move on to the regional competition in Fargo, ND.

This year’s task is based on a agriculture theme. Their robot must accomplish the mission of harvesting corn, lettuce and tomatoes. They also have to corral pigs and turn on an irrigation system. The team has to work together to build and test the robot, exhibit the engineering process, and design the marketing presentation. They also have to work together to document the whole process in an engineering notebook.

“It’s great working as a team,” Student CEO Anna Rose said. “I feel like I’m learning skills I’ll use forever.”

Lyn Meyer is the Robotics Advisor.



Updates from School Districts

GSL STUDENTS GROWING WITH STEM

By Scott K. Picha, Teacher

Glencoe-Silver Lake (GSL) Public Schools is excited to implement the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch program to its K-5 students. Every K-5 student in the GSL district will have a nationally known and respected STEM program implemented right in their general classroom setting. PLTW is a hands-on, interdisciplinary, collaborative STEM program. Students will receive instruction in four modules during the 2016-17 school year. Two modules will focus on engineering, one module on computer science, and one module on biomedical science.

At the conclusion of each Launch module, the students will have designed a solution to a real-world problem. Our Kindergartners built multi-function painting tools, first graders had to design and build a communication device to project sound or light over a distance, and second graders designed and built an insulator to keep a popsicle from melting. GSL third graders designed and built a model glider to carry supplies to a natural disaster site, fourth graders designed and built a model of a restraint system to keep an egg safe in a collision, and our fifth graders designed and constructed a robot to move hazardous waste into a specific collection zone.

Two PLTW Lead Teachers were hired to provide student instruction, staff training, and to oversee program implementation. With the PLTW Launch program implemented, GSL is now proud to offer all our students PLTW STEM courses in grades K-12.



Mark Your Calendars!

**Registration Deadline:
November 30**

**More information at:
www.swsc.org/photography**



December 8, 2016

www.swsc.org/photography

SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE
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Updates from School Districts



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

By Erin Dumke, Teacher for Students of DCD

Isabella is a first grade student at Prairie Elementary in Worthington. She has been working on activating a switch with her left cheek. She has a switch mounted to her chair and she uses it for a number of activities throughout her day.

She starts her morning out by greeting her classmates with a message recorded on her BigMac. She does other activities such as sharpening pencils, playing music, and her favorite, making popcorn. We have an air popper in the room that the switch can be hooked up to. When she hits the switch it will turn the air popper on for 30 seconds. When she hears that it has turned off she hits the switch again to get it started.

She has enjoyed making the popcorn so Kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms now have the opportunity to order it from her. She will deliver the popcorn with a message on her BigMac saying "I brought popcorn!". This activity is so motivating for Isabella. She "lights up" when she brings the popcorn into classrooms. When the students see her in the classrooms and hallways they continue to acknowledge her because they think it is pretty cool she brings them popcorn.



3RD ANNUAL BLACKJACK READING BOWL

By Amy Heideman, Principal

The 3rd Annual Blackjack Reading Bowl was held at RB Clay Field in Dawson on Monday, September 12! It was a terrific night! Stevens Elementary staff, Title I staff, and the Dawson-Boyd Athletic Department teamed up to present this event with varsity athletes in Cross Country, Football, Swimming, Tennis, and Volleyball. Every team was announced and ran out on the field with their student-athlete coaches. Students read and played games with their teams through 4 quarters. Simultaneously, parents/guardians had an opportunity to hear about Student Support Services offered at Stevens Elementary. This year the adults also heard from Karin Falness, Dawson-Boyd's School Psychologist, on positive behavior and parenting through tough behaviors. We had nearly 120 in attendance PreK-6 and each was accompanied by a parent/guardian. It was a wonderful event to bring together families for a great night of learning and having fun!



SWWC Alternative Learning Program Student-Run Businesses

LOOKING FOR UNIQUE GIFTS?

Two of the alternative learning programs at SWWC have student-run businesses. The students take great pride in their work!

If you are looking for a unique gift ... or are in need of items for a group event, contact them!

Glassy Treasures Red Rock Ridge Learning Center

Glassy Treasures creates exquisite bottles and glassware. They have many on display at the Red Rock Ridge Learning Center in Windom that can be purchased and they take custom orders. The students can do etching or vinyl designs on the glassware. Contact them at 507-831-6935.



Bel-Youth Press Belview Learning Center

Students at Bel-Youth Press create items with their screen press. They can create t-shirts for your next event or gathering ... as well as special items such as mugs. Contact them at 507-938-4111.



NEED
GOOGLE?
CONTACT
KARA!

SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE



Education & Administrative Resources

A Certified Google Trainer Right In Your Backyard!

Kara Damm, a Technology Integration Specialist at SWWC, recently became a Certified Google Education Trainer. She is the first SWWC employee and one of only a handful across Minnesota (and of 1,800 in more than 52 countries) to become certified. Google Certification for Educators provides training and skills to better integrate Google tools in the classroom. Certified Google Trainers have demonstrated subject-matter expertise by passing six separate 90-minute exams and delivering extensive Google for Education training sessions.

To discuss or schedule Google Apps for Education training for your staff, please contact Kara at kara.damm@swsc.org.

Kara can also be contracted as a Technology Integrationist at your school. For more information or pricing, please contact Josh Sumption, Director of Technology, at josh.sumption@swsc.org.



Kara Damm, M.A.
Technology Integration Specialist
Certified Google Education Trainer

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