

The Review



A cribbage board made and donated by an NCLC friend.



1420 E. College Drive
Marshall, MN 56258
www.swsc.org

Winter 2016

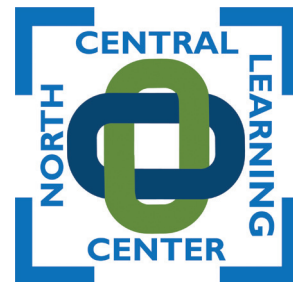
PROJECT BASED LEARNING AT BLC AND NCLC

By Lori Dierks, Assistant Director of Alternative Programs
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Belview Learning Center (BLC) is a Setting IV Behavioral Program and North Central Learning Center (NCLC) is a Setting IV Behavioral/Therapeutic Program offered through SWWC. The BLC program is designed to meet the needs of special education students who are having behavior issues within their resident district. The NCLC program is designed to meet the needs of special education students who are having behavior and/or mental health issues. Both programs offer services for elementary, middle, or high school students. In addition to academics, students receive social emotional learning classroom instruction.

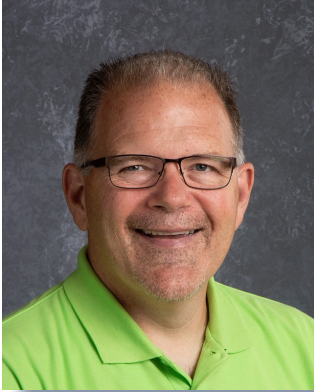
Each year SWWC's Alternative Programs set goals and focus on those goals throughout the year. This year, we are focusing on Project Based Learning (PBL). We received instruction on PBL from Tom Hoff (SWWC's Career and Technical Education Coordinator) at our Fall In-service. We have also been learning from our colleagues at the Red Rock Ridge Learning Center, who implemented some PBL projects during the 2014-15 school year.

Our focus this year at NCLC, with the assistance from our Behavior Analyst, has been *Choice Time Activities*. We want our students to learn new activities that are healthy and social. Staff encourage students to be creative in their choices ... and the other rule is "No Technology." All of the students at NCLC have learned how to play Cribbage and often challenge others to a friendly game. Students have also created crossword puzzles from vocabulary words and have challenged staff to complete them. Other activities have included: Legos, extreme dot-to-dots, and going to the YMCA twice a week. These activities teach students healthy competition, exercise, citizenship, identifying on-task behavior, and how sensory activities are beneficial to daily life. Another PBL activity the students and staff at NCLC are working on is *Wonder*, a children's



(Continued on page 7)

Update from the Executive Director



2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director, cliff.carmody@swsc.org

The 2016 Minnesota legislative session begins March 8th! This session is expected to be a short session, with a “get in and get out” framework. This has been the expectation starting with the 2015 session, so I wouldn’t hold your breath!

With a budget forecast showing a healthy surplus and an election in the fall, this session is likely to be as contentious and difficult as sessions in the past. MREA reported recently the DFL Caucus is focusing on greater Minnesota this session, specifically broadband access and “ag-to-school” tax credits. Many of us assume the Governor will continue his push for expanded pre-school program requirements. In addition, it has also been intimated that this is NOT the year for K-12, as K-12 was taken care of last session. At any rate, when St. Paul is in session we all pay attention!

In addition, the re-authorization of federal education policy will be interesting to watch over the next year or so. With greater flexibility for states, figuring out how the new federal law impacts local and state educational policies remains to be seen. I expect that Minnesota will use the NCLB waiver as the cornerstone for these changes and MDE will work out the balance between state and federal policies in the coming months!

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EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Cliff Carmody, Executive Director

Deecy Jesse, Executive Assistant

Doug Deragisch, Senior Director of Risk Management

Lisa Gregoire, Senior Director of Teaching & Learning

Darin Jensen, Senior Director of Administrative Services

Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services

Annette Miller, Director of Finance

Dr. Mary Palmer, Senior Director of Special Education

Tammy Stahl, Director of Human Resources

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Updates from Teaching & Learning

THE WORLD OF ROBOTS

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
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Watch for brochures in mid-February for the 22nd Annual Science & Nature Conference. For more than twenty years, keynote Jack Burrus has been actively involved in changing attitudes about science and technology at all levels of education by giving people a glimpse of the power of technology and its potential to shape the future. His expertise in robotics and technology, combined with years of experience, gives him insight on what will need to prepare our youth today for their roles as the leaders of tomorrow.

The conference will be held on May 11th at Southwest Minnesota State University. We will have a number of new and exciting topics this year, mixed with some old favorites such as the science of firefighting, crime scene, maple syruping, bees and honey, makerspace, rockets and much more.

We now have online registration available - try it out!
Early Registration Deadline: March 22
Final Registration Deadline: March 24

WRITING STORIES IS A THREE-RING CIRCUS

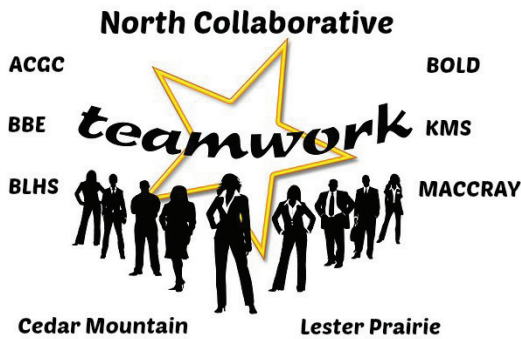
By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
andrea.anderson@swsc.org

The Conference for Young Writers was held on January 6, 2016. It is not every day we get the opportunity to impact almost 650 students with writing techniques. Students had the chance to learn new ways of writing, create and share stories and interact with presenters. They participated in three of the 19 different hands-on writing sessions such as Freaky Fractured Fairy Tale Fun, Hint & Tricks to Making Your Writing Come Alive, Poetry Surprise, Write Like a Cowboy, Hooking Your Audience, Combining Reporter Stories to Photographer Videos, Using your Five Senses, Creating Human, Aliens and Monsters, Fairy Tale New, Writing Tips, Interactive Writing and more. During the keynote, Ryan Jacobson engaged students by using volunteers from the audience to create a funny story using three basic steps creating a character with a goal dealing with a problem. It was a fun way for students to use their imagination and learn new ways to create characters and stories.



Pictures on the front and back pages of this issue are from the Conference for Young Writers. See more at www.swsc.org/studentactivities.

Updates from Teaching & Learning



NORTH COLLAB CONTENT MTGS TAKE “COLLABORATION” TO A NEW LEVEL

By Teresa Hunt, School Improvement Specialist
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Imagine 17 educators from 8 different schools from multiple grade levels coming together to unpack and sort the math standards for grades 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. This is the case for the 8 schools in the North Collaborative which consists of ACGC, BBE, BOLD, BLHS, Cedar Mountain, KMS, Lester Prairie, and MACCRAY. The large group participated in a 17 member unpacking and sorting process. The group was led by site team lead facilitators Josh Wallestad, Kelley Heimerman, and Tanner Lilienthal from ACGC Schools.

After the sorting process was completed, a collaborative discussion of bundling benchmarks to create a learning unit ensued. The group then created a learning progression scale for the Ratio unit and developed activities, tasks and a formative assessment which address the learning targets of the benchmarks bundled for that unit. A learning progression scale helps teachers organize their teaching, it allows a student to self-assess their mastery level of that standard/benchmark and it guides instruction both individually and for the large group as a whole.

This year, the North Collaborative (NC) content meetings are being hosted amongst the 8 schools in 20 different subject/grade level areas. Principals, NC personnel, and Teresa Hunt (SWWC's School Improvement Specialist for the NC) work together to bring the collaborative approach to the table of content area meetings. The amount of collaborative artifacts being created is staggering, so much so that a website dedicated to the NC is being developed by Lucy Lloyd, BBE and Teresa Hunt. This will give the NC a digital warehouse for all of these resources so they are readily accessible. These meetings have become a network haven for NC personnel.

At right, participants from the 8 schools of the North Collaborative meet in ACGC to discuss middle level math standards. Here the group is pictured sorting and bundling 6th grade math standards at their October meeting. In December, the group met to sort the 7th grade standards.



Updates from Teaching & Learning

NORTH COLLABORATIVE (continued)

Unit: Ratios

6th Grade Standards

1. Bridge to Ratios (Fractions, Decimals, and Percents as Ratios)
2. Comparing Ratios
3. Part-to-Part verses Part-to-Whole
4. Solving Proportions with Cross Products
5. Unit Rates

Standards Covered in the Unit:

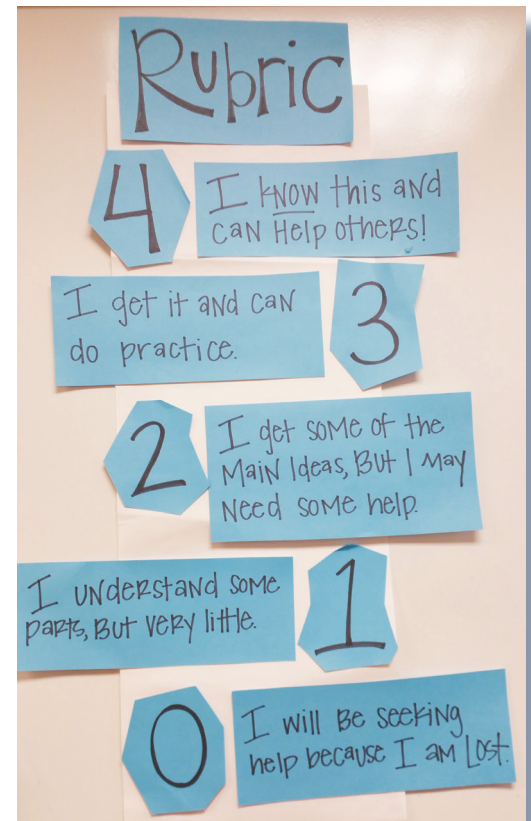
6.1.1.3	Understand that percent represents parts out of 100 and ratios to 100.
6.1.2.1	Identify and use ratios to compare quantities; understand that comparing quantities using ratios is not the same as comparing quantities using subtraction.
6.1.2.2	Apply the relationship between ratios, equivalent fractions and percents to solve problems in various contexts, including those involving mixtures and concentrations.
6.1.2.3	Determine the rate for ratios of quantities with different units
6.1.2.4	Use reasoning about multiplication and division to solve ratio and rate problems.
6.3.3.1	Solve problems in various contexts involving conversion of weights, capacities, geometric measurements and times within measurement systems using appropriate units.

Above shows the end product of the sorting and bundling math standards exercise featuring the Ratios unit artifact that was created by 17 different educators from the NC. Comments from the large group during the sorting process were: "This looks like spatial sense." "Do you think this benchmark is Algebra?" "We could start the year with number sense and go back and review later." "Do probability and statistics go together?"



6th Grade Learning Progression Scale for the Ratios Unit

Standards/Content: Bridge to Ratios (Fractions, Decimals, and Percents as Ratios)	
4.0: Students will be able to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Create your own comparison that can be set up as a ratio and write it in all three forms.
3.0: Students will be able to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Express ratios in all three forms: fraction, colon, and the word "to". <input type="checkbox"/> Set up and solve real-world problems using ratios.
2.0: Students will recognize or recall academic vocabulary including:	<input type="checkbox"/> Ratios
Students will be able to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Convert between Fractions, Decimals, and Percents. <input type="checkbox"/> Understand the connection between ratios and division. <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce fractions to simplest form.
1.0: With help from the teacher, student has partial success with unit content.	
0.0: Even with help, student has no success with unit content.	



Updates from Special Education



PRESCHOOL INCLUSION 101

By Hollie Pater, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator
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This Fall several districts attended the Preschool Inclusion 101 workshop. The workshop targeted district teams made up of preschool teachers, early childhood special education teachers, and related service providers. Throughout the workshop district teams had time to collaborate to help improve or implement their inclusive preschool programs. Districts developed an action plan to help work through current barriers and to provide high quality preschool opportunities for all children.

The Pipestone Area Schools preschool team presented on their journey to inclusion and how they provide service to their students. The team consisted of Dawn Samuelson (preschool teacher), Dianne Prins (preschool teacher), Anna Hesse (SWWC ECSE Teacher), Jessica Robinson (SWWC SLP) and Kathy Rupp (SWWC OT). After that presentation, Trinidad Garcia shared her thoughts on inclusion through the eyes of her twin preschool children -- one who has a disability and one who is a general education student. Her message was powerful and supported how inclusion can benefit both disabled and non-disabled students.

DOUBLE ROBOTICS - TRY IT OUT!

A Double telepresence robot gives you a physical presence at work or school when you can't be there in person. Watch this video to learn more and visit www.swsc.org/cpdouble for rental details.



Updates from Special Education

PROJECT BASED LEARNING (continued from page 1)

novel written by R.J. Palacio. *Wonder* is a story about a student with disabilities that must face the difficult world around him. Students are working with guiding principles for life. They are learning how to apply difficult situations to life and encourage others to do the same. Students are creating Vision Boards, discovering life lessons through discussion, and journaling their thoughts and feelings.

At the BLC, PBL is taking place in several ways. In the science classroom, students have created ecosystems for frogs, toads and salamanders. Students found a cocoon and watched it hatch into a butterfly. Students are currently working on individual science projects and presenting to other students. Some of the projects include filtering water, creating electricity using a bicycle, and creating an antenna in order to obtain television stations.

Our BLC high school students have started a business called **Bel-Youth**. They researched and created a proposal to purchase a Heat Press (pictured top right). They are able to create personalized gifts including t-shirts (one example pictured bottom right), mugs and other items. Bel-Youth has customers within the town of Belview and are looking to expand their business. One of the special items students made this year was in honor of our favorite Veteran, Rich Sullivan (pictured below).



BLC also participates in STEM Education. The STEM Education Coalition informs federal and state policymakers of the critical role that Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education plays in U.S. competitiveness. STEM focuses on these areas because these fields deal with real world learning and how students learn most effectively.



For more information on SWWC's Alternative Learning Programs, visit www.swsc.org/alternativeprograms.

Updates from Special Education



Special education teachers and staff provide valuable instruction and support to students with disabilities while maintaining complicated and accurate due process documents. They do a tremendous job with their teaching practices and demanding paperwork.

PRACTICES & PAPERWORK

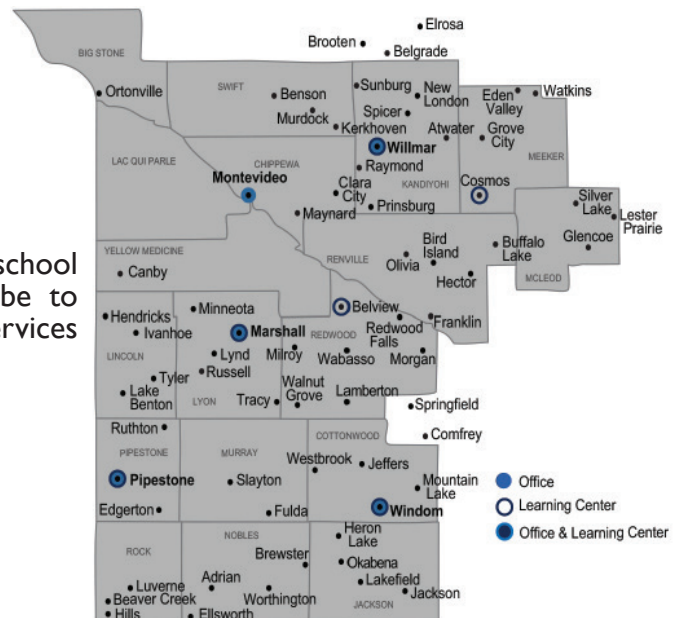
By Diane McCarron, Director of Special Education
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All school districts receive a comprehensive monitoring visit from Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Division of Compliance and Assistance once every six years and participate in self-monitoring two years earlier. The MDE is responsible for ensuring each district demonstrates general compliance and continuous improvement in the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). There are many activities required to complete the monitoring process including on-line surveys, phone interviews, site visits, and extensive reviews of due process files for special education students. Special education staff have been working diligently to complete all the activities required for our MDE Due Process Monitoring.

The districts in the SWWC Service Cooperative provide special education services for over 5,500 students. Each of those students has a due process file with many required documents. This fall, as part of the MDE monitoring process, a representative sample of the special education student files were reviewed for up to 169 specific items. The totals for the review indicated there were less than two percent items of concern and twenty percent of the files had absolutely no concerns! These outstanding results are representative of the hard work and dedication of the special education staff throughout SWWC.

Even though the file review is finished, there is no rest for the special education staff. Any areas of concern will be fixed to 100% accuracy during the next few months and the SWWC SpEd Leaders will be providing training and support to all the special education staff in the school districts.

This map shows the school districts that subscribe to special education services through SWWC.



Updates from School Districts

CEDAR MOUNTAIN NHS HOSTS COMMUNITY SANTA DAY

By Bob Tews, Superintendent

Cedar Mountain National Honor Society members Amber Tietz and Natalie Hoffbeck (pictured at right) organized Santa Day in children in Morgan. They received donations from local businesses and organizations. They worked with Cedar Mountain NHS members and high school seniors Megan Hacker, Nereida Villegas, Aaron Walter, Keesha Barnes, Jason Carlson, and Lauren Boyle to give presents to 70 children.



GLENCOE-SILVER LAKE'S MADRIGAL SINGERS ARE ACTIVE

By Chris Sonju, Superintendent

A new musical group has been added to GSL High School's choirs this year: "Madrigal Singers." This dedicated group is directed by Kay Wilson, High School Vocal Director, and is made up of students selected through audition in grades 9 through 12. They meet to rehearse at 7:00 a.m. on Mondays and have been busy with rehearsals for school and community performances.

On December 6th, GSL's Madrigal Singers attended one of the 47th annual Madrigal Dinners at Bemidji State University, where they expanded their knowledge about madrigal singing. Madrigals are polyphonic vocal pieces written for small groups. Several parts are combined so that each part is interesting rhythmically and melodically. Madrigal singing was brought to England from Italy in the 16th century and was at first an informal type of private entertainment at the castles and country homes of the lords and ladies, who frequently performed the music themselves after dinner in the Great Hall.

The Madrigal Singers' inaugural performance was at the fall band and choir concert on October 27th. The group was invited to open at the two Community Strings concerts in Glencoe on December 13th. They welcomed high school concert attendees with an outdoors performance before the holiday concert on December 21st, and then performed on stage that evening. The group also entertained Glencoe's Rotary organization on December 22nd.



Glencoe-Silver Lake's Madrigal Singers attended Bemidji State University's 47th Annual Madrigal Dinner on December 6th. Above: Some of the BSU madrigal group visited with GSL students during the event



The GSL Madrigal Singers entertained Glencoe's Rotary organization on December 22nd. Madrigal singing was brought to England from Italy in the 16th century and was at first an informal type of private entertainment at the castles and country homes of the lords and ladies.

Updates from School Districts



SENIOR JOB DAY AT NL-S

By Jenny Marxhausen, Counselor

New London-Spicer High School in coordination with the SCOPE (School to Career Opportunities Partnership Endeavor) Committee hosted a Senior Job Day.

All NL-S seniors spent the morning of November 24, 2015 at a local church and attended four job related sessions. Speakers from area businesses presented information on finding a job, skills to keep a job, financial sense and interviewing tips. Topics ranged from filling out job applications to customer service to work ethic. Students also learned about the role of social media in finding jobs and how it can interfere with being successful at a job. In addition, each senior participated in a mock interview. Business people from the NL-S area also fulfilled the role of interviewer.

The day was created as a way to introduce students to soft job skills. Many of our students have jobs, but local business people have commented on the hardship of keeping their high school employees for various reasons. We had also noticed lack of professionalism when students were filling out applications for college and scholarships. Senior Job Day was our way to address these concerns. An added bonus was the connection created between the school and local businesses. The day was deemed a success by both students and business professionals alike. We are already looking forward to the 2nd Annual Senior Job Day.



Artist Conference

On October 18th, many KMS 4th, 5th and 6th graders attended the Conference for Young Artists in Marshall, Minnesota.

Organizer: Annalee Guillemand



Updates from School Districts

TRACY AREA HIGH SCHOOL JOINS U OF M EFFORT TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE

By Kathy Vondracek, High School Principal

Tracy Area High School has been selected to participate in a partnership with the University of Minnesota to help kids reach their highest potential. Ramp-Up to Readiness is a college preparedness program designed to help Minnesota middle and high school students succeed at the next level—whether they choose a four-year college or university, or a technical or community college.

In March, Tracy Area High School participated in an official program Launch on the university's Saint Paul Campus, where TAHS joined teachers, principals and counselors from 25 schools around the state who are joining 100 schools already implementing Ramp-Up to Readiness.

TAHS is excited to offer this program to grades 7-12, as the program guides the students in creating a personal post-secondary plan. A critical element of the plan is a readiness rubric which includes the following: grades/GPA, academic belief, self-management, effort and persistence, and state assessment. This rubric helps the student self reflect on each and every area listed three times a year. Coordinators Sonja Gasca and Kristy Campbell have been organizing materials and events so each teacher can complete one activity a week with their small group of students.

According to a growing body of research, by 2018 more than 70 percent of jobs in Minnesota will require some form of education past high school. We're excited to be part of this aligned effort and help Minnesota enter a new era—one in which all of our students are expected and supported to go beyond a high school diploma and obtain a postsecondary degree or certificate.

For more details about the program, visit www.rampuptoreadiness.org.



Updates from School Districts

MARSHALL'S COMFORT DOG

By Jeff Hansen, Middle School Assistant Principal

Rookie is just a little over 8 months old. She is a hypo allergenic and non shedding miniature Golden Doodle. Her mother was a cross between an English Golden Retriever and a Standard Poodle, while Rookie's dad was a Toy Poodle. Golden Retrievers have always been known for their family/kid friendly temperament, and the English Golden Retriever is reported to be one of the best family dogs. When she is fully grown she should be around 25 pounds. She has been very socialized in her upbringing, this summer she attended basketball tournaments, soccer games, baseball games, and being out in public. In her off time, she loves to go for walks, retrieve toys, snuggle on the couch, and just like our students, have fun. She loves to come to school and we have students that one of the first things they ask is where she is if I see that student. She is not a novelty gimmick, she has a role that she is responsible for and that is helping our students.



When I started in 2012, Jen Hey mentioned the idea of a comfort dog at the Marshall Middle School after she researched the benefits of comfort dogs in school settings. In 2014, our counselors, led by Ms. Hey continued to pursue the idea further. We had discussions between counselors, our nurse and administration about moving forward. Ms. Hey took the lead on the process and Ms. Hey wrote a grant through the Family Collaborative Initiative that helped us fund getting Rookie here with us. In August of 2015 the Marshall Board of Education approved *Policy 808 Comfort Dogs in the School*. At the beginning of the year letters were sent to families of students at Marshall Middle School informing them of the new staff member; in addition to that, information was provided to staff about utilizing Rookie. Rookie is a full time staff member and I act as the host home for her. She rides to and from work with me every day.

There is a wide variety of activities that a comfort dog may do. First, students are not required to interact with Rookie. Her role is one that she is utilized to work with students to support student mental health, academic or behavioral interventions and social skill development.

Work or tasks that our comfort dog will be performing may include:

- o Assisting students with socializing
- o Having students read to Rookie
- o Mental stimulation
- o Developing sense of nurturing
- o Acceptance
- o Emotional support
- o If a student has an individual session with one of our counselors Rookie has calming time with that student, de-escalation of emotions by petting or holding her, students are willing to open up and talk to the dog and counselor. Rookie is a good listener and doesn't seem to

Updates from School Districts

COMFORT DOG (continued)

say much. If Rookie is involved in Individual Special Education sessions, there is a calming time, an opportunity to learn about responsibility by walking and caring for a do, playing or petting causes relaxation. During classroom sessions, Rookie listens to students reading out loud, she joins students that are doing group work and becomes a “member” of the group.

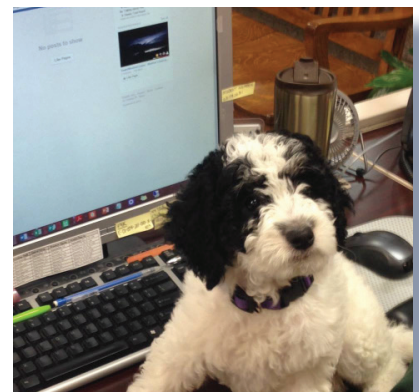
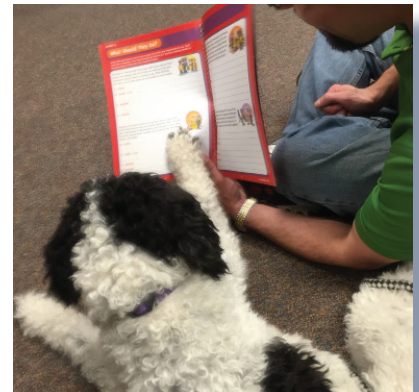
Some of the area supports we were able to receive include a grant through the Family Collaborative Initiative, we have received support from the Marshall Animal Clinic in the high quality care that Rookie receives as well as consulting with us having a puppy in a school setting, we have had assistance from Dog Training by Jess, Dog Training by Jeff Debaere, Rosewood Kennels provided a discounted price for the purchase of Rookie when they heard what her role was going to be, Rosewood Kennels also was instrumental in selecting a puppy with the appropriate personality for a school setting, (they did a great deal of monitoring their puppies for personality traits that would be a great fit and she has a wonderful personality), the Marshall Public Schools Board of Education was also supportive of this venture, our staff at Marshall Middle School have been wonderful as well.

Staff has embraced the idea of having Rookie as a resource to support student learning. In the past week for example Rookie has had 5 individual student sessions, 20 special education student sessions, 5 classroom visits, as well as 1 visit to our Early Childhood classroom. The more people she is around, the more accreditation she gets toward her AKC status and her emotional support dog status.

Rookie has shown a positive impact in working with some of our students. She is nonjudgmental, listening, and willing to help students with their emotions and just be a solid support system for kids. Simply petting a dog can decrease levels of stress hormones, regulate breathing, and lower blood pressure.

Rookie has had preliminary training and will continue training. Rookie has been very well received by our students, staff and community. We want to provide a caring supportive environment in our school through any of our staff, Rookie included. I encourage people to check out her Facebook page for periodic updates on what she is up to!

<https://www.facebook.com/RookieHansenMMS/?fref=ts>



Junior High Knowledge Bowl Winners

The regional Junior High Knowledge Bowl competition was held on January 7th at SMSU in Marshall. The top three teams are pictured below.

To view winners of the sub-regional events, go to:

www.swsc.org/KB



Professional Development Updates

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

2016 Behavior Conference: Meeting the Challenge

February 22 in Brookings, SD
February 23 in Redwood Falls

Standards Based Grading, Track I - Day 2

March 2 in Maynard



Annual Law Seminar for School Administrators

April 7 in Marshall

Title I, II and III Overview with MDE

April 13 in Redwood Falls

Annual School Business Staff Conference

April 13 in Marshall

Administrative Professionals Day Workshop

April 27 in Marshall

Administrator Forum

Legislative Update with MDE, MREA, MSBA & MASA
June 8 in Marshall

Summer Leadership Conference

June 28-30 in Alexandria

Special Education Law Conference with Melinda Jacobs

November 8-9 in Minneapolis

Professional Development Catalog WINTER 2016



January through April

Dates and times are subject to change. Visit www.swsc.org/workshops
(or scan QR code below) for the most up-to-date offerings.

We support and enhance the work of our members
by providing programs and services that meet their needs.

SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE

SWWC

Education & Administrative Resources



Click image to read our
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or visit
www.swsc.org/workshops

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three times a year.*

If you have suggestions, comments
or items for submission,
contact Shelly Maes at
shelly.maes@swsc.org.



Student Enrichment At-A-Glance



www.swsc.org/KB



March 22nd at SMSU
www.swsc.org/culinary

February 9th in
Redwood Falls
www.swsc.org/bee



SPELLING BEE



Children's Author
&
Illustrator Program

March 29th - April 1st
and
April 11th-15th
www.swsc.org/caip

May 11th at SMSU
www.swsc.org/sn



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