

DEVIL DOG ADMINISTRATION NEWS

April 15, 2005

SOUTH CONWAY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Special Education Director: Dean Newell

The objective of the special education program is to meet the diverse educational needs of all students who have been identified with a disability and are in need of special services. The program provides services in the least restrictive environment possible. Services are provided in accordance with the student's individualized education program (IEP).

The special education department serves approximately 13 - 14% of the district's student population. In order to provide free, appropriate public education for these students, the district offers a continuum of services to meet their unique needs. This variety of services includes placement in one of the following:

1. Indirect or consultative services
2. A regular classroom with modifications
3. An integrated classroom with a teacher that has regular and special education certifications
4. An inclusion/co-teaching classroom with two teachers - one regular and one special education teacher
5. Itinerant instructional program which has traveling instructors
6. A resource room which pulls students out of the regular classroom for specialized instruction
7. Special classes for certain populations of students with curriculum and services designed to meet their unique needs.

The district also offers an array of related services to allow students to benefit from their educational programs. Related services include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Speech/Language Therapy
2. Occupational Therapy
3. Physical Therapy
4. Counseling
5. Specialized Transportation

These programs are mandated by federal law and federal funding is provided to help defray the cost to the district. If you have questions regarding the services provided by the South Conway County School District's Special Education Programs, please call Dean Newell, Director of Special Education, at 501-354-9454.

Upcoming Events

April 15

No School

April 16

Wrigley's Green Up Day at MHS

April 26

End of Course Algebra

April 28

End of Course Geometry

We're on the Web!
www.sccsd.org

The 7 Correlates of Effective Schools: Jerry Owens

No Child Left Behind, legislation enacted by President Bush in 2002 says all children will be proficient in math and literacy by 2014, has forced many schools to look at the way they do business. In the old days, teachers taught what they wanted to teach and so long as order was kept in class things were okay in that school. In today's society, that is simply not enough. No longer are the majority of our children going to factories or farms, but they are being sought out for jobs that require technology skills, critical thinking skills, and proficiency in math and literacy. The South Conway County School District embraces these changes, and we look to be a school of continuous improvement. Based on the documented successes of effective schools, we look for the Correlates of Effective Schools to provide the frameworks for identifying, categorizing, and solving the problems that we face. The following paragraphs will briefly describe the Seven Correlates of Effective Schools.

Strong Instructional Leadership: In an effective school, the principal must be a strong instructional leader. No school can be effective if it does not have strong leadership in which the principal is always communicating the mission of the school to students, teachers, and parents.

Clear and Focused Mission: In the effective school, there is a clear articulated mission in which everybody in the school knows what is expected and everybody accepts responsibility for getting there.

Safe and Orderly Environment: In an effective school, you will find a business-like bell-to-bell teaching atmosphere in which students and teachers feel safe from the threat of physical harm. The climate is also learner centered, not teaching centered.

Climate of High Expectations: In an effective school, the staff believes that all students can achieve mastery and the instruction reflects so. Teachers will teach, assess, re-teach a different way, and do whatever it takes to make sure every child succeeds.

Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress: In the effective school, student assessment drives the instruction. The assessment results must be used to improve the individual student behaviors and performances, as well as to improve the curriculum as a whole.

Positive Home-School Relations: When parents have an understanding of the goals and mission of the school and are given opportunities to help arrive at this mission, the goal of all students mastering the material becomes a realistic goal.

Opportunity to Learn and Time on Task: Bell-to-bell instruction is again the key, with class time being precious. Teachers know that five minutes wasted at the first of class and five minutes wasted at the end of class add up to hours and days by the end of the year. Assemblies and time out of class is kept to a minimum and time on task is paramount.

The question now is can we educate more of our children at a mastery level while at the same time raising standards. I believe we can if we continue to change the system in place. Our schools must become schools of learning, not schools of teaching, and we must all deeply believe that we should leave no child behind.

End-of-Course Exams Coming in April: Annette Henderson

Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) mandates criterion-referenced benchmark assessment for grades three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and end of course for Algebra, Geometry and Literacy. Parents are provided with testing date(s) notification and test results.

Arkansas Department of Education explains that, "End-of-Course Exams are criterion-referenced tests taken at the completion of a course of study to determine whether a student demonstrates attainment of the knowledge and skills necessary for mastery of that subject." End-of-Course Exams will be given in Algebra I on April 26th and in Geometry on April 28th.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. Attending school every day is crucial part of securing a better education. Studies have shown that staying in school directly affects a person's earning potential. The longer you stay in school, the more money you'll make in your life time.

In addition to staying in school, students are encouraged to put forth effort. In other words, come to school and try your best every day. With the passing of Act 35 by the Second Extraordinary Session, 2003, students performing below the proficient level will receive remediation in the area(s) in which they did not perform. Such remediation could result in the loss of an elective class in order to build skills to the proficient level. Those students scoring below proficient and their parents will be included in the development of an Academic Improvement Plan. According to the legislation, students are subject to retention if they do not participate in the Academic Improvement Plan for the year.

Ultimately, students taking End-of-Course exams may not receive credit for the course unless they perform at the proficient level.

All students have hopes and dreams of graduating and moving on to a bright future. It takes effort from the student, parent, school, and community to provide the academic foundation necessary make those hopes and dreams come true.

Morrilton High School Green Up Day—April 16: Brian Bunch

A great opportunity came to Morrilton High School. Two Spanish Clubs at MHS received a grant for \$8,000 to "green-up" the school campus. The Wrigley's green-up event is about refurbishing the campus of Morrilton High School. Trees, bushes, and plants are going to be planted around the campus, along with other changes to help the campus look better.

The Spanish Clubs would like to ask for your help, as well as the students' help. We encourage everyone to participate in the event. Other schools will also be having a green-up day. All of the schools are competing for a grand prize. The Wrigley's event occurs on Saturday, April 16. There will be food, drinks, and contests. A D.J. will also be provided by Wrigley. Prizes will also be awarded to the contest winners. The contests include planting trees and bushes, mulching, and building retainer walls.

In order to participate in the Wrigley—sponsored clean up events, a waiver must be signed. If the person is under the age of 18, a parent/guardian must sign the waiver. The waiver is signed for photo release and for protection rights in case of an injury. If the waiver is signed and returned in by Friday, April 8, you will be guaranteed a t-shirt. You may also sign up at the event, but there

may not be enough t-shirts to go around. Everyone in the community is very welcomed to participate. We would love to have you come to Morrilton High School and help beautify the campus. You may sign at any of the locations: Wal-Mart, Chamber of Commerce, C-4, Court House (County Clerk), and the Depot. The more people we have, the better our chance Morrilton has to be awarded a free concert by the American Idol finalist Diana DeGarma. The school with the largest number of volunteers and who demonstrates the biggest transformation of the site is the winner of the grand prize.

Many businesses and organizations, as well as individuals, have already donated time and/or materials. Would you like to do so also? If so, contact the Morrilton Area Chamber of Commerce at 354-2393 and ask to be placed on the list.

Thanks for your time and please feel free to get out into the nice weather and volunteer your time to make a difference in the community. Remember, everyone (young, old, in school, out of school, in the community, out of the community, same school, different school) is welcomed to join and help.

Building Update: Doug Adams

The South Conway County School District is in the final stages of planning for the North Side Campus. It is anticipated that the building plans will be submitted for bids around April 24, 2005. As of this date, the projected cost is \$2,922,000 or \$107 per square foot. When the community graciously passed a millage increase twenty-three months ago, school building costs were approximately \$61 per square foot. The fine arts building cost \$1,186,174 or \$83 per square foot. The new high school was bid at \$4,387,000, or \$86 per square foot. As you can see, the costs have grown significantly over the past twenty-three months. We will continue to work hard to see that we get the best possible buildings for our students. Thank you for your generous support.

Financial Update: Doug Adams

The Legislature has passed several laws that have a significant financial impact on our schools. I do not argue against the merits of the new laws. In fact, I support many of the changes. However, I am troubled that these new laws are not funded. Additionally, there is NOT an increase in funding this year. The combination of these new laws, existing laws, bills that are pending, and inflation may increase district costs by as much as \$814,233. Unfortunately, we will have to make cuts and there are consequences associated with those cuts. We will do our best to continue a high level of services for our students. Thank you for your continued support during these difficult times.