

The Administrator

From the Superintendent's Desk

By Michael J. Sieh

Home is a Classroom Too! CONTINUED!

Last month, I started a series on expanding learning beyond the school to include the home. My goal is to give parents some learning techniques so that they can assist the school in improving their children's academic abilities. These techniques are all proven and presented by Dr. Robert Marzano in his book titled *Classroom Instruction that Works*.

As a review, last month I discussed identifying similarities and differences, and summarizing and note taking. These two techniques produce the highest gains in a student's ability. Please refer to last month's edition to recall more.

This edition will focus on reinforcing effort and providing recognition, homework and practice, and nonlinguistic representations.

Reinforcing effort and providing recognition has drawn two generalizations: 1) not all students realize the importance of believing in effort and 2) students can learn to change their beliefs to an emphasis on effort. As I was reviewing this section, I started thinking about the Little Engine That Could. Just like the Little Engine, if a student is told often enough that they can, they start believing in themselves. However, if someone of

significance in their life tells them that they can NOT, this only has to happen a couple of times to have a real negative impact.

I also think of that coach who can take ordinary players and turn them into key role players through constant reinforcement. Same is true with academic. Keep in mind that abstract symbolic recognition is more effective than tangible rewards.

Mr. Stogdill provided an article for this newsletter on homework. I encourage you to read this article for homework rationale. I just want to say that homework and practice are ways of extending the school day and providing students with opportunities to refine and extend their knowledge.

Finally, imagery mode of representation is referred to as a nonlinguistic representation. On the

playground, nonlinguistic representation means drawing the play in the sand rather than just explaining a football chair route. All learning can be graphically designed with a little creativity.

I remember teaching students the concept of increasing something by 20%. Everyone thought that the answer could be derived by multiplying the original number by 20%. Students could not understand that you had to add the multiplication answer back to the original. One day, I decided to draw a box representing the original and asked them to increase my box by 20%. All students understood that if they were to increase my box by 20% they would have to add to my box. Hence, the answer had to be 20% more than the original number rather than just 20% of the original number.

Sign-up For School Cancellations!

(Sieh) As we approach winter, I want to remind everyone to visit our webpage and sign up for school closing alerts. Just click on the "Signup For Alerts" on the front page of our website (top center). You can receive alerts by cell phone texts, email, or both.

Besides weather alerts, we use this system also to inform parents of last minute scheduling and schedule changes. Our goal is to inform you as soon as possible.

Volume VII, Issue 5

November 27, 2009

Reporters

Mr. Sieh..... Superintendent
Mr. Stogdill H.S. Principal
Mrs. McKeon..... Elementary Principal
Mrs. Marshall..... Guidance
Mrs. Chilcoat.. National Honor Society
Mrs. Leaver..... Secretary
Mrs. Dahlkoetter1st Grade

Events Calendar

December 14

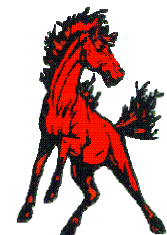
- School Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)

December 23

- 1:20 p.m. dismissal (Start of Christmas Vacation)

January 4

- School reconvenes



www.scs-ne.org
(402)439-2233

Visit www.scs-ne.org to sign up for cell phone text school closing announcements or listen to the RADIO.

Questions??? Please Call!
Central Office – 439-2233
High School Office – 439-2250
Elementary Office – 439-2639

The Principal's Perspective

By Chris Stogdill

Why Do We Have Schools?

Nothing is more important to this country than the transformation of children into educated, productive citizens. It is the study of the history of education, that helps us understand the needs for the future. It provides an understanding of change and how the "past causes the present, and so the future." The founding fathers of this country based their education decisions in part on ideas that were used to form the country. Many philosophies emerged over time, but the underlying current was to provide an educational experience that allowed students the equal opportunity to learn.

Early in American history, the Puritan settlements had a strong impact on education that, in some part, continues today. Christian obligation dictated society to educate children in order to maintain fundamental Puritan beliefs in society. The concept that all children were to be educated had a lasting effect on the development of American education. From this early education philosophy evolved the idea of common core values. The goal of a community was to have core values and an organized system in which to pass these values on to the young members of the same community. Although no provision was made for education in the Constitution, the institution was in the minds of the founding fathers as they worked to form a new country. Who was to be educated? What did citizens need to be productive? How was it best to teach these students who were citizens of tomorrow? Benjamin Franklin promoted education for anyone who desired knowledge and a belief in self education for practical utility. Further, Thomas Jefferson believed in educational opportunity for all citizens and that no society is safe without an educated population. His educational philosophy centered on

the concept of literacy. He further believed that it was critical to the development of a new country to provide a free education while looking for "new blood" for the development of a new society and its ideals. These theories on equality shaped the institution of education that serves us today but would have been largely altered had the founding fathers allowed a system of education to evolve based on wealth and privilege.

The education policies that have evolved over time in America are based in part on philosophies that our country was founded upon, and with each generation those philosophies have sustained the institution. However, new innovations and social issues have made it necessary to rethink and adjust those philosophies without losing the fundamental ideals. For example, technology has changed the face of education. Students have the ability to research material on the web and get results instantaneously. The evolution of the information age has allowed material to be real life experiences with commentary and interpretations available the moment it takes place. The hope continues that students become productive citizens in life. Education is the vehicle that moves this process along. We educate everyone and allow them to have the opportunity to explore their interests and decide where they fit in society. Problem solving skills are vital for all students. The comprehension of material allows the student to apply it to solve a problem. A community needs a variety of people to help it function. Education is not a cookie-cutter institution. We do what is best for the majority but alter goals to help the challenged and to meet the needs of everyone. I am proud of the education that our staff at Stanton provides for the children of our district.

Messages from Mrs. McKeon

By Mary McKeon

Elementary Leadership

Where can you find great student leadership? Right here at Stanton Elementary. Our Stanton Elementary Student Council is up and running strong for the 2009-2010 school year. Members include Broderick Sieh, Ben Hansen, Allie Spence, Tenna Beel, Bailey Patterson, Veronica Peck, Samuel Bates, and Parker Zach.

What is student council? Student council is a school based organization designed to help promote school spirit and leadership among students. Students participating will maintain a high standard of personal conduct and demonstrate leadership qualities by serving as good examples of behavior through their words and actions. All of our student council members are expected to participate in approved activities, which will serve to enhance the quality of both the physical and behavioral environment of Stanton Elementary.

The benefits of our students being involved in student council include the opportunity to improve reading and writing skills, to gain experience in public speaking, and learn how to make a positive impact on school and community. Also, student council serves as a chance to meet new friends and

work with a wide variety of people.

At Stanton Elementary, members are chosen based upon a written application, an oral interview and the demonstration of responsible behaviors at school. Student Council is an opportunity that is given to third and fourth graders.

This year the student council will be involved in many activities. Some include

1. Sponsoring Wacky Wednesdays
2. Participating in school assemblies (PRIDE assemblies, Veterans' Day Program, and Kick-Off assemblies for school projects)
3. Sponsoring the Wayne State College play
4. Purchasing materials/equipment for the elementary (reading materials, jump rope cart, playground balls)
5. Facilitating service projects (community food drive and Pennies for Patients)
6. Peer tutoring
7. Holding fund raisers (annual bake sale and selling Mustang megaphones)

Being on student council is something that will help our students become responsible and active members of the community.

Giving Back Is a Success!

(Dahlkoetter) The first graders have just completed a service project to give back to the troops. Each student was asked to fill a bag to send in care packages to our military troops. The first graders of Mrs. Dahlkoetter's and Mrs. Clark's classrooms have brought an

incredible amount of items and have packaged over 12 boxes to send.

A special thank you to an anonymous donation for the postage on the boxes and a donation made by the Stanton VFW. It was greatly appreciated!

Merry Christmas from the Mustangs!

Homework

(Stogdill) Homework is under tremendous scrutiny across the educational community. What is the purpose of homework? How much should be given? Should we grade the assignments? How much should the homework count toward a student's grade? What if students do not do any? Should homework be associated with disciplinary action? These are the questions educators are asking themselves. "In the nation's classrooms, teachers say they work hard to conform to school board policies and parent demands that do not always match what they think is the best thing for children. Yet teachers themselves don't uniformly agree on something as basic as the purpose of homework (reviewing vs. learning new concept), much less design or amount or even whether it should be graded. And the result can be inconsistency in assignments and confusion for students." (Strauss, Washington Post, 2006)

All agree that homework can be a valuable tool in learning. Homework can help solidify a student's understanding of key concepts. It can help them master the skills being taught in the class. It can boost their confidence and propel them to excel. Or, it can send the student into an irreversible tailspin that crashes with failing grades, low morale and interest, and just plain "shutting down."

Currently, as I look at failing grades, I see the major contributing factor is the lack of effort with schoolwork. Often times, it is simply not turning work in. This work turned in is of low quality. Nothing frustrates our teachers more than to have students not complete the assignments and then have no work to assess the students' progress.

We are taking a serious look at this dilemma. As parents, what can you do to help?

Have some serious discussions with your child about

his/her grades and why they are what they are. If you do not understand why, please call your teacher. They will be happy to explain their grading system.

Insist they spend time working on their homework. I understand teenagers are busy these days, but schoolwork seems to have been shifted way down on the priority list.

Ask to see the grades they received on the assignments they have turned in.

Have consequences at home for poor grades due to not completing assignments.

Talk to your child's teacher. Our teachers are very willing to discuss all aspects of your child's grades. We have several means to talk: each teacher has a phone and e-mail, call the office for appointments, and access your students' grades on line, or have personal contact with the staff member.

Have the conversation with your child that explains how in every job (and school is their primary job right now) there are tasks we do not like to do, but we have to do them anyway. Sometimes it may be hard for them to see the value or importance of some assignments. They still need to do their best.

If your child has a history of not completing homework, set up a reward system for them. Start out with short, easy to attain goals. As they become successful in reaching these short-term goals, start lengthening them to more long-range goals. Everyone likes to achieve goals. Set the beginning goals in reach and then see the positive results.

The bottom line is this: We need your help in helping us lower the number of students not performing up to their ability. We understand that everything we do must be done as a team for everyone to be successful. You are very important member of our team and we appreciate your help and look forward to visiting with you.

National Honor Inducts New Members

(Chilcoat) The National Honor Society held its annual induction ceremony on Thursday, November 5, at 7:30 pm. The following students were inducted as members at the candlelight ceremony: Taylor Kleinschmit, Bailey Poeschl, Josh Herscheid, Dasi Sieh, Steven Petersen, Shannon Pestel, Samantha Oestreich, Beth Kethcart, and Colton Sperl. The students and guests were welcomed by the society adviser, Chris Chilcoat, and Mr. Stogdill, high school principal. Following their induction, led by honor society president Alex Wolf, there was an address given by Stanton's superintendent, Mike Sieh. They then received their membership pins, cards, and certificates.

They now join the current members of the society, Alex Wolf, Nancy Seeman, Samantha Unger, Anita Brown, Melissa Leaver, Grant Nordby, and Kevin Thor.

The National Honor Society is a service organization in which members are chosen by a Faculty Council. The organization recently went bowling to raise funds to support Spina Bifida. We will be wrapping gifts for the Tree of Caring in December, peer tutoring, and helping in the 5th and 6th grade rooms during their study time at the end of each school day.

Following the formal ceremony, cake and punch were served.



Have Your Lunch Balance Emailed To You!

(Leaver) The Stanton Community School currently has 177 families signed up for the email lunch statements. If you have an email address available, please call the high school office at 439-2250 to register your email. You then will receive a weekly statement of your lunch account via email. This weekly statement will help you stay current on your lunch balance.

Important Dates from the Counselor

ACT Test Date	Registration Deadline
February 6	January 5
April 10	March 5

By Kendra Marshall

Quiz Bowl Teams Compete

Congratulations to the following 5th and 6th graders for participating in the Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl in November: 5th grade: Trevor Doffin, Isabelle Stewart, Henry Bohac, and Gannon Tighe. 6th grade: Makayla Hansen, Christian Stallbaum, Mitchael Sieh, and Sam Stodola. The following junior high school students were selected to compete in the Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl: 7th grade: Justin Bowers, Rachel Brandl, Michael Hansen, Ross Locke, and Ashley Waggoner. 8th grade: Dacia Beyke, Cody Carlson, Caden Doggett, Caleb Goeken, Rachel Shafer, and Sierra Zach.

Seniors should apply to at least two colleges by the end of December, as many deadlines are coming near. It is very important to meet the application deadline because, in many cases, the admission application doubles as the freshmen scholarship application.

Continue to encourage your senior to apply for scholarships. Seniors should check with the guidance office weekly for newly available scholarships, in addition to using internet searches. You will also find a list of scholarships on the school website under Guidance. Another valuable resource is the Financial Aid Office at their colleges of interest.

As soon as possible after January 1st and when tax forms are complete, senior students and parents need to complete their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). This can be done online (www.fafsa.ed.gov/) or a paper form can be obtained from the guidance office. If you are unable to attend the Financial Aid Night on December 2nd, contact the guidance office for the information that was presented. If you have any questions about financial aid or the FAFSA, contact the guidance office, the Financial

Aid Office of your college of interest, or Education Quest at 888-357-6300. There is also a helpful FAFSA Tutorial at www.educationquest.org.

Junior and Senior students are encouraged to go on college visits. Juniors are allowed one campus visit, and seniors are allowed two. The guidance office will set up these visits, but students are responsible for bringing a note from home and making up work before the day of absence. An absence for a college visit will not count toward the ten day absence limit. A list of group visit days can be found on the school website, under Guidance, titled Junior/Senior Guidance Information.

Anyone interested in gaining information on college planning, admissions, or financial aid, watch the "Financial Aid Video" at www.educationquest.org. This video contains helpful college planning information, including

timelines for students in the junior and senior year in high school, and a brief discussion of financial aid. One section contains extensive financial aid information and tips on completing the FAFSA form.

Juniors should take the ACT in the spring but could take it as early as February. Registration packets are available in the guidance office or online at www.actstudent.org. The cost to take the ACT is \$32.00. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunches can take the ACT twice free of charge. A request for fee waiver for the ACT test can be picked up at the Guidance Office.

The end of the first semester is January 13th. 7th - 12th grade students needing to change their schedule can do so at the end of the first semester. Talk with your child about any changes he/she may be considering.

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