

Hello again and greetings from USD 467!

Congratulations to the WCHS Indian Football team for another big win last Friday! This coming Saturday is Regional Cross Country and Sub-State Volleyball for the WCHS Indians with both contests being held at Meade. Good Luck Indians!! Also a reminder that there will be no school again next Friday.

Last week I shared goal two of the Board of Education vision, values, mission, and goals. This week I will cover goal three.

Goal 3: Effective two-way communication within the district and with families/community.

Desired outcomes: Builds trusting, collaborative relationships, positive intent assumed with open, honest, and continual communication.

District internal communications; designate preference for printed or digital and be consistent; identify relationships and regular communication routes. All district internal communications needs to be two-way—Board to administration and staff—administration to staff and board—staff to administration and board.

District External Communications: Designate preference for printed or digital and be consistent. For example, school website can be used as primary digital source of calendar and lunch menus, and paper notes only sent home in special cases; identify relationships and regular communication routes. Examples: Board to public, administration to public and families, teachers and staff to families, families and public to teachers and staff, administration and board, family to office and teachers. Important questions: What is important to communicate? How often? Who will do it? For example: Board commits to publishing relevant updates on the school website Board page at least monthly. This will include at least a DRAFT of monthly meeting minutes within 2 days of the meeting on school website (www.leoti.org) for the public. Other updates examples: recognizing staff and students, goal progress reports, etc.

Effective communication between home and school: Good communication is the responsibility of both parents and teachers. Parents can be active in this process by keeping teachers informed as well as seeking information about their child's progress in the classroom.

Parents can assist in the communication process by: Informing the teacher about their child's difficulties and strategies that have been found to be effective; Becoming an active participant in the student's education; offering the teacher support in whatever way works best for him/her; always making an appointment when you want to discuss something regarding the student; working in partnership with the teacher; adopting a collaborative problem-solving style approach.

It is always appropriate to ask questions about the student's progress at school including questions about their academic progress, homework, general behavior, and social-emotional well-being. However, it is important to carefully choose a time to ask these questions. Often the best approach is to ask the teacher when the most appropriate time would be or to set up a formal meeting. When informing the teacher/s about the student's learning disability or difficulties, it is useful to give them information about the student in a brief format, which may include a verbal discussion followed up

with an email or a summary page outlining key pieces of information. Sometimes just handing over the student's assessment report can be impractical as a teacher has limited time to sit and read through a lengthy document.

As briefly as possible, you should let the student's teacher know: any of the student's formal assessment results that may affect their learning; interventions, therapy or tutoring that has been done in the past or that is currently happening; any important family or life events that may affect the student's learning in the classroom; Important medical information; the student's strengths and areas of interest. These can sometimes be used to engage the student in activities; the student's specific areas of difficulty and activities in which he/she may need support; strategies that you think work for your child or that a previous teacher, tutor or therapist has indicated works well in the classroom; any upcoming appointments that will occur during school time.

This information will be particularly important if the student is changing schools, starting a new school year with a different teacher, or when there has been a recent assessment or change in the student's situation that the teacher should be informed about. Having this information on hand can also be useful if a relief teacher takes the class.

Who to talk to? If you feel the student is experiencing difficulties in the classroom or is not getting the support they need, it is always best to go directly to the student's teacher first with the aim of working together to come up with a solution that will work for you, the teacher, and most importantly, the student. It may also be beneficial to ask the teacher who supports them within the school and suggest arranging a meeting with those additional staff. These people may include the School Psychologist, the Principal, and other teachers.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have specific questions or want more information about what's happening in the buildings or district, don't hesitate to contact Lori Maxwell, WCES Principal, at 375-2314, Delbert Schmidt, WCJSHS Principal, at 375-2213, or me at 375-4677. Thanks!

Keith Higgins