

Hello again and greetings from USD 467!

Over the past weekend, we had 2 members of the WCHS wrestling team qualify for the State tournament at Fort Hays State University this weekend. Those who did qualify were Jesse Gardner at 170 pounds and Jesse Hermosillo at heavyweight. They will wrestle on Friday and Saturday at Gross Coliseum on the campus of FHSU at Hays. Good luck!!

Next week will again be a busy one for the district. On Monday the 25th is the make-up time for the Junior-Senior High Parent-Teacher Conferences that were postponed from earlier in the month. Also that evening will be the first round boy's home game for the 2A Sub-State Basketball Tournament that WCHS is hosting this year. Our girl's first round game will be Tuesday on the road-at this time we do not know who the opponents will be. Also on Tuesday is the home Junior High Wrestling matches beginning at 4:00. Then, on Thursday, the JH Wrestlers will be at Cimarron, while the WCHS gym will be the site for the basketball boy's semi-final games. Friday will be the girls' basketball semi-final games, and on Saturday will be the girl's and boy's championship games with the winners playing at the 2A State Tournament the following week at FHSU in Hays.

The end of the 3rd quarter is on March 7th with no school the 8th for a teacher work day. Then Spring Break the week of the 11th through the 15th. Hopefully we'll have warm weather by then!

Over the past few weeks I've shared information with you about KESA, the new school accreditation program. The process requires each district to do a needs assessment to determine what areas the schools need to work on to improve student learning. I have shared over the past few weeks we have selected two goals for this cycle: Relationships-Student; and, Responsive Culture-Leadership.

Reviewing the goals, the goal statement for Relationships-Student is USD 467 will provide a safe learning environment that promotes student engagement and character development. The work targeted steps are: SECD (Social, Emotional, and Character Development); Student Engagement; and, Classroom Engagement. In previous letters I have described what SECD is. Several of the action steps incorporate teacher inservice to become more familiar with and give information how to work with students on character development. A focus on this goal is to evaluate student involvement in the classroom and with extra-curricular activities and to increase participation in both areas. Again, teacher inservice will be needed to develop the ideas and strategies to attain this goal. For the Responsive Culture-Relationships goal, the work targeted is to develop a comprehensive 5-year strategic plan; increase effective communication to stakeholders, using the means and methods to match the stakeholder's needs and/or interests; and, merge the KESA goals with the current Board of Education goals by aligning the wording for a seamless integration and understanding of the desired outcomes.

The District Leadership Team is in the process of organizing the documentation to be entered on the KSDE website which will be part of our annual on-site visit, which will happen at the end of March. The On-Site Visit Team is made up of a chair and two additional members, all of which are education professionals that have spent many years in the classroom and as administrators. They will listen to our presentation, review the data and documentation, offer advice and suggestions and, hopefully, recommend our district to remain accredited to the State Board of Education.

This being the month of February with lots of winter time left, please remember when the mornings are cold to dress your children in layers to keep them warm on the way to school. This is especially true for any walkers and bus riders. And if your child has layers he or she can remove as they warm up, they can also put them back on if the decision is made to go outside for recess to get some fresh air.

This is also the time of the year that kids and adults are catching colds along with the coughing, sneezing and runny noses. If your child has had symptoms of a cold or flu and has had diarrhea, please keep them home for at least 24 hours. School policy is that if a child has been vomiting, they must stay home for at least 24 hours. If that happens at school, a parent will be contacted to take the child home and we do not expect to see them before that time. Please give your child a chance to get to feeling better before they return.

Thank you for taking the time to read this; I hope to share the good things that are happening at USD 467! 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!

Educationally,

Keith Higgins, Superintendent