

Board Report May 1, 2017
Jill Mattingly Special Education Director

At the beginning of this month we mailed home surveys to all students receiving special education services. The survey was regarding parent involvement and I hope that the results of this survey will give us guidance on how to better improve parent involvement and to help all parents and guardians feel comfortable in participating in IEP's. They are the most important people in our student's lives and I want all parents to feel informed regarding their child's education and never intimidated by the process we have to go through during IEP meetings.

We are getting ready for our monitoring next year from OPI to see if we are in compliance with all of our special education files. The monitors are already looking at two preselected files from each case manager. I will be meeting with Dale Kimmett from OPI next week to discuss the details of the process for monitoring. We have worked hard this year to ensure that timelines were met, that all of the required paperwork has been submitted, and that all documents have signature.

Mr. Kimmett has also graciously agreed to come to our district to teach a second MANDT training. Most people think of this training as a tool that they are going to learn on how to safely restrain a child that is in crisis. It is much more than that. The Mandt program focuses on treating all people with dignity and respect. A big part of the training that our district employees receive focuses on prevention rather than reaction. Another instrumental part of this training is helping a student to de-escalate after being in crisis mode. Training is the key to helping students and staff get through tough situations in the school setting.

We have been doing interviews to fill the positions we have open for the next school year. It is crucial that we hire staff who are motivated to work very hard to help support our students in the lower grades. What happens in the first couple of years in a student's school career lays the foundation for either success or struggles.

The Special Olympics Team participated in the area games in Great Falls at the end of April. There are less athletes at the area games but our students still had a great time. Bocci ball was cancelled due to the rain.

I am planning an end of the year fun day for all of the students, teachers, and the parents of students in special education. We will be having a fun day at the football field. I even plan on doing some of the cooking. If the weather continues to be nice we may have some giant slip-n-slides, wading pools, and other fun entertainment. Please come and join us to have some food, to have some fun, and meet our great students and parents. We will be having picnics on May 24, 25, and 26 from 11:00 to 1:00.