

Special Education/Pupil Services School Board Report
September 12, 2017

Last year the School District of Tomahawk partnered with Lakeland Union High School to develop a Project SEARCH site at the Howard Young Medical Center. This is a vocational training site modeled after the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Attached is the link to learn more about the program <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8juNYG6nP1U&t=67s> The ultimate goal is to increase outcomes for our students in obtaining employment. My goal for this year is to have two students participate next year. Funding comes through DVR and IDEA Flow Through.

In preparation for the new school year and meeting iep needs, additional paraprofessionals have been hired. This was due to:

- During the last two months of the 2016-2017 school year, there were five transfer students with ieps requiring staff support. Due to timing, staff shifted some coverage to get us through the end of the year and allow us to see how much support these students actually needed.
- Over the summer, the district has received an additional eight transfers, four of which occurred after the 28th of Aug.

In order to address districtwide needs alternates were sought.

- With fewer iep minutes required at the high school, one special education paraprofessional was shifted down to the elementary.
- The high school no longer required as much time from the study hall supervisor and she was willing to shift to the elementary to work as a special education paraprofessional for some time.
- The elementary also needed three individuals for lunchroom and recess duty. Since it would be extremely difficult to find three people for two hours in the middle of the day, I included those hours into my paraprofessional staffing.

Paraprofessionals will receive training this year on the following topics:

- assistive technology to increase student utilization of digital texts and voice to text thus increasing self reliance
- data collection to support decisions regarding the amount of support students require
- fading- how to gradually reduce paraprofessional support and increase student independence

The district paraprofessionals are quite familiar with my mantra, "You're most valuable to me/the district when you work your way out of a job."

The district is continuing into its final year of its involvement in the Allies in Autism Project in cooperation with CESA 6. This project includes meeting with an Autism Consultant; studying and utilizing evidence based practices; maintaining data; collaborating at the family, team, and building levels; and disseminating information. In August I joined our team for an extremely productive three day training, which included some much needed planning time.

In August, I joined a team from the elementary at the Trauma Informed Care Training in the Dells. The team was able to weave components into the current PBIS program without adding another initiative.

Our new and transferring special education staff seem to be acclimating well to their new assignments. The mentors have been working closely with them, as well as their entire building team.

The Guidance Department has been bustling with transfers in and out, as well as assisting students with schedules.

Teri Rortvedt, the school nurse, has been busy checking that all supplies made it to the appropriate buildings and that her students had a smooth start.

Overall, it has been an amazing start to the 2017-2018 school year. I am truly looking forward to my second year with the School District of Tomahawk. Thank you for the opportunity.

Sincerely submitted,

Katherine L. Strong
Dir. Sp. Ed./Pupil Services