

# ***Illinois Valley High School***

An Expeditionary Learning School

## **First Trimester Report 2008**

The first trimester at Illinois Valley High School has gone well. The students love the five period day and the teachers like the longer class periods. The common concern by most of the teachers is the loss of time together as a staff and the difficulty of the common prep. Except for that, the teachers are positive about the trimester and are looking forward to teaching new classes next trimester. We are looking forward to seeing some grade data to see if we have been successful in our goal of having fewer failing grades. Attendance is up a little and the discipline referrals are down by about 35%

A major setback that we had at the beginning of the trimester was the premature birth of the son of our Spanish teacher, Ms. Szijarto. Ms. Szijarto went into the hospital at the end of the first day of school. Though we tried to find a Spanish certified substitute, we were unable to do so. We were able to find an excellent sub (who has since been hired at North Valley) who worked with Ms. Szijarto to give the students the best experience possible. Bea DeFoe did come in for a few days at the end of the trimester and was able to give the students some practice with speaking Spanish and she will continue to come one or two days a week through December. Ms. Szijarto will return after the Christmas break. Another sub will be working during December but with the trimester change, three of the classes are now English classes so it will be slightly less problematic. We have another teacher out on maternity leave for the second trimester, but have a long-term sub who is licensed in English taking her place.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Grant**

We are up and running with many opportunities through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning grant for students and parents. Jennifer Marsden and Deborah Murphy-Mannix continue to facilitate the grant. Two teachers work each night to help students with homework and a variety of extra-curricular classes happen each day. These classes are largely taught by community members.

### **Athletics**

Fall Sports have come to a close and winter sports practices have begun. Though our teams did not do well in the 'win column' this year, the students enjoyed themselves and the fans appreciated the opportunity to watch young people play. We had new coaches for volleyball and football this year and feel that there was success in the building of the programs. Our cross country girls' team took 2<sup>nd</sup> in the district and came in 7<sup>th</sup> at the state meet. Casey Robertson came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the District and 9<sup>th</sup> at state and was awarded the Runner of the Year in the Skyline Conference.

### **PBS**

PBS is off to a great year at IVHS. We took the first day of school and spent it in an activity based day teaching students the expectations. Students were put into groups and moved around the campus in that group all day learning expectations for the library, the cafeteria, the office, the computer lab, etc. Students received a stamp on their PRIDE sheet at the end of each training. The staff had discussed the wisdom of using the first day of school in this way, but clearly, it has paid off. The discipline referrals are down significantly. We are really

emphasizing having each teacher and staff person stay on the same “page” with discipline.

Part of our focus with PBS is looking for ways to honor students who consistently show Cougar PRIDE - perseverance, respect, integrity, discipline, and excellence. We do students of the month, Cougar Pride Citations, PRIDE cards, attendance awards, and Cougar Treks. We try to make these awards as public as possible so that these students can be seen as role models at the school and feel recognized for their outstanding efforts.

We have also instituted the Above and Beyond Award for staff members. Colleagues, parents, and students can nominate a staff for this award.

### **ECMC Scholars and Mentoring**

We currently have 26 ECMC scholars in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. These are students who are eligible to receive a \$6000 scholarship when they graduate as part of a grant through the ECMC foundation. Jann Taylor applied for this grant and we were one of seven Oregon high schools who received it. It is a five year grant so if funding remains stable, we should have it through the class of 2012. Each scholar has a mentor who meets with them on a monthly basis to discuss goals and planning for the future. This grant targets at-risk youth who have one or more factors that may interfere with them going on to college. Nine of the ten scholars from the class of 2008 went onto to postsecondary education.

### **HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION**

We inducted 22 new Honor Society students in November. Parents and students were invited to a dinner before the ceremony. We are proud of these students for their academic excellence and for having hearts for service.

### **LIVE C Class**

We are excited to be working with Hidden Valley High School on piloting a video-conferencing class – AP Literature. Loralyn Townes from Hidden Valley taught the first trimester. She is now out on maternity leave and Deb Mitchell is serving as the substitute. Heidi Marks will be teaching it the last trimester. There are some hurdles that we have gone through, but overall, it has been successful. It is not the optimal way to deliver instruction, but it is working. One of the biggest hurdles that we have had is around the issue of the students building relationships with each other and with the teacher. In looking at what we do generally with students in the three high schools, we realized everything we do is competitive – it is always one school against the other. We are committed to being “enemies” and having great pride when one school is better than the other. We did not plan for working with the students to build relationships with each other. IV students have felt like the “teacher likes the HV students more” and “the HV students make fun of us”. As we continue to look at video conferencing as a way to increase opportunities for students, we need to develop a plan to make the classes cohesive.

### **DUCK DERBY**

It was with grateful hearts that we received a check from the Duck Derby for just over \$27,000. This money will be used to complete the press box project (including sound system, upgrade the sound system in the gym, and to work on the softball and football fields. We are currently working with the Booster Club to develop a long range plan for the athletic facilities.