

# Principal & Director Reports

March 2009

## AC. Houghton Elementary

We look forward to the board visiting our school for the month of March. You're going to see a very special demonstration of our Bal-a-vis-X activities presented by staff. In the past year, several of our staff had attended workshops at the ESD. This year, in the fall, almost our entire staff participated in a training at ACH presented by the founder of Bal-a-vis-X, Bill Huber. His feedback for our group was that this was one of the most committed and dedicated schools to this type of learning that he had seen. The activity, with balls and beanbags and balance boards has a profound effect on the way students learn, because it is a process that can retrain the brain and the way it processes information to be more efficient in learning. We all have heard about right brain /left brain activity centers. Some of the way these sides process information don't function too well for a fair amount of our student population. By doing intensive cross brain activities, new and better pathways can be created that allows better understanding of learning of reading and math.

There will be three parts to our report. The first part will be a much more detailed statement than what is above as to what Bal-a-vis-X does and is secondly, will share some data for students who would be hard for us to reach by any normal educational process, even intensive special education direct instruction. We have had some amazing educational turnarounds, especially during this year. Finally, we will have some demonstration of the exercises and if you're lucky, we will ask you to participate. You will very quickly learn that there are definitely two sides of the brain and when you're asked to retrieve or react from the opposite side and return, the results can be pretty interesting and pretty funny. That's why it's kind of fun at times.

## Heppner Elementary School

It is once again a privilege to report the recent happenings of Heppner Elementary School. March has arrived and as of today our enrollment at HES consists of 188 students and our current attendance percentage for the 2008/2009 school year is 95.7%. As always we will continue to promote the importance of regular attendance to the students and parents of Heppner Elementary School.

February was full of many exciting events which took place at HES, with the highlight being the "Smart Hearts Health Fair". This event was once again a huge success and I would like to say **Thank You** to all who were involved with this spectacular educational event. I have received many positive remarks from some of the families who attended and it appeared that everyone who attended really enjoyed spending family time together during this evening.

Get out your dancing shoes for the "Celebrate Oregon" Western Dance event! On March 7<sup>th</sup> the HES PTC is hosting a western dance for families and friends of HES from 6-9pm at the HES Gym. If you would like more information about this exciting event please contact Brandi Sweeney at 676-9128. The end of the third quarter is just around the corner, with March 19<sup>th</sup> being the last day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> nine weeks. Spring Break for students will begin on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> and school resumes on Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup>.

I would like to end this months report by again thanking each of you for your support of Heppner Elementary School, and your commitment to all students of the Morrow County School District.

## Heppner High School

- We took all of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to the Career Showcase in Pendleton on Feb 10<sup>th</sup>. It was a great time where students learned about future opportunities to consider while picking a career pathway in high school.
- Our second quarter PBS activity day was held at the beginning of the month with over 60% of our students meeting criteria to attend. This has been a good thing for our kids and staff focusing on the positive things happening in our building.
- Basketball is wrapping up with both boys and girls teams in the state basketball tournament. They are in the sub-tourney right now with the girls traveling to Santiam and the boys hosting Lakeview.
- We are extremely excited about the 10 kids we had place at the wrestling district tournament this year. We have two district champions in Wacy Coil and Chance Day. In three short years, our program has taken off with number of students involved and they are all having success. Our team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> at the district meet out of 10 teams and just missed second place by 3 team points. There is a lot of enthusiasm with the program and it is rubbing off on community folks. The employees of the bank of Eastern Oregon have committed \$7500 to the program to purchase a new mat, and we are in the process of combining some storage areas in the high school to give them their own permanent space to wrestle. Chance and Wacy will be competing at the state tournament this year- the first two since the start of our program!
- Brett Harrison placed second in the district prepared speaking contest in FFA. He will be representing our school and district at the state competition. Our FFA program continues to impress around the region with their involvement in activities and success.
- Our school celebrated National FFA Week this month with activities that included apple bobbing, seed spitting, and dummy roping. Our entire student body had fun with this and Mrs. Dickenson continues to create an environment at our school that continues to promote FFA.
- Mr. Flaherty has been taking a Knowledge Master team of our brightest kids to regional competitions in the bi-county area. I am proud to report that in the two contests so far, our team has placed in the top three both times competing against other schools.
- Overall, things at our school are going smoothly and it has been a real enjoyable year. Our kids are engaged, as they just finished up the writing assessment and second window of testing in math and reading. I am looking forward to compiling results and will report next month on our progress😊.

## Irrigon Elementary School

**Positive Behavior Supports-** (PBS) is a program we have been doing and improving with the help of our ESD. A team of us went to a staff training on February 18th in Pendleton to help improve the positive things our school can do to teach positive characteristics, and do other positive incentives to motivate students in our school. It was very good.

**Outdoor School-** IES is planning to have Outdoor School with Windy River Elementary School. It will be the last week of April. Already, we have talked several times to plan what the teachers/ staff will be doing. It will save both schools money, and have more staff to monitor students during the week. We are excited to be working together.

**State Writing Test-** February was the month of the State Writing test for IES students. Every teacher, before the testing started, was instructed to review the 4 & 5 paragraph writhing rubrics. Students were able to practice in our IES Writing Contest about the 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Oregon. I hope to see the results come back with our kids showing that they are able to write well. IES will also be participating in the WRE Writing Fest on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **ESL**

**ESL Program Readies to be Audited by ODE-** We have been notified by ODE that on March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31 the ODE Title III personal will be doing a review-audit of our ESL program. I have been reviewing with all our ESL

school site coordinators the things to get ready for this audit. We are doing our best as we have always done to get all that we must in perfect working ESL order. I expect good results.

**Heppner ESL Parent Meeting-** On February 3<sup>rd</sup> I visited Heppner Elementary School with a nice lunch to meet and share our programs with the Heppner ESL parents. Visiting also with us was our superintendent, and our two Heppner principals. We had an informative time explaining our ESL program and answering questions from parents and students.

**Oregon Department of Education ESL Directors' Meeting-** On February 13<sup>th</sup> I attended the ODE ESL Directors meeting Salem. It dealt with getting ready for our upcoming audit-review, Special Education/ ESL students, Exiting ESL student, demographic trends of students, and the ELPA test adjustments. This meeting happens only twice a year. Important information like the above keeps us in the present with everything happening with English Language Learners, Migrant Education, and how it relates to our school district.

### **Irrigon High School**

Congratulations to the IHS Wrestling Team! They placed third at the district tournament this past weekend. We had three individual wrestlers qualify for the state tournament. This is Rosario Rios' (112) third year at state while Giles Ellett (171) will be making his second appearance, and it will be Wade Aylett's (189) first time.

Our 'Name the Knight' contest has finally come to an end with over forty entries. We had a representative from each grade level help narrow the field down to five before the entire student body voted. The winning entry 'Sir Nogirri' (Irrigon spelled backwards) was submitted by senior Betsy Newport. She received an I-Pod shuffle at our last home basketball game.

The Knights Pride Booster Club is hosting their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Auction dinner on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Prime rib or parmesan encrusted chicken is on the menu for the night. Tickets are on sale for \$20 and the doors open at 5:00. Since the school has taken over concessions from the booster club this year, this is their main fund raiser. The booster club has been instrumental this year in purchasing our gym floor cover and scorer's table. They are also increasing the amount of money available for scholarships to \$4000 this year.

We have now finished our second round of testing and are in the process of identifying those students who will need to start attending on Fridays as part of our intervention program. There have been two newsletter articles in the last three months sent out to all parents regarding the 236 committee and the Friday intervention program. The Irrigon Irrigator has also published these articles. On a more upbeat note, we recently had an ice cream sundae celebration for all students who met/exceeded the state benchmark or who showed at least 5 points RIT growth. There were over a hundred sundaes passed out!

On February 8<sup>th</sup> our eighth grade students travelled to the Pendleton convention center for the annual career showcase. This was a great opportunity for students to explore different career options. We were also able to arrange a tour of the BMCC campus which included lunch in the cafeteria. We received a lot positive comments on how well our students behaved.

Last week four of our staff members attended a workshop in Pendleton that focused on bringing PBS (Positive Behavior Supports) into our school. PBS is a philosophy that works to make small, systematic adjustments and changes that have a big impact on student behavior and overall school climate. The core of the PBS philosophy is a shift from reacting to problem behavior to preventing it. The team came back from the workshop with a number of ideas and a rough action plan to put in place for the upcoming school year. With a little more work, the plan will help us simplify what we do, communicate our expectations clearly and more frequently to students and staff, and begin collecting data about behavior and climate to inform decision-making down the road.

## **Riverside High School**

### **CONFERENCES**

Riverside Jr/Sr High School held 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter progress parent/teacher conferences, Tuesday, February 24, 2009. The building was full all evening with approximately 150 sets of parents/students attending.

### **8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CAREER SHOWCASE**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of February, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Riverside Jr./Sr. High School attended the Umatilla-Morrow ESD Career Showcase at the Pendleton Convention Center. This event is the zenith of a Career Education Unit that 8<sup>th</sup> Graders throughout Umatilla and Morrow Counties took part in over the last few weeks. I, once again, had the pleasure of taking one of the best dressed, best behaved groups of young people in Morrow County to this event. This is just another example of the students and staff at Riverside Jr./Sr. High School making Boardman and Morrow County proud. I have been involved with this project for several years now and I have to say that I feel it is one of the most meaningful experiences that I have been a part of and I think that it has positively impacted all the 8<sup>th</sup> graders that have participated. I'm proud of the students at Riverside and I thank my fellow staff members and administration for supporting them. These students are a credit to the community. Written by Mr. Thomas Grimes

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

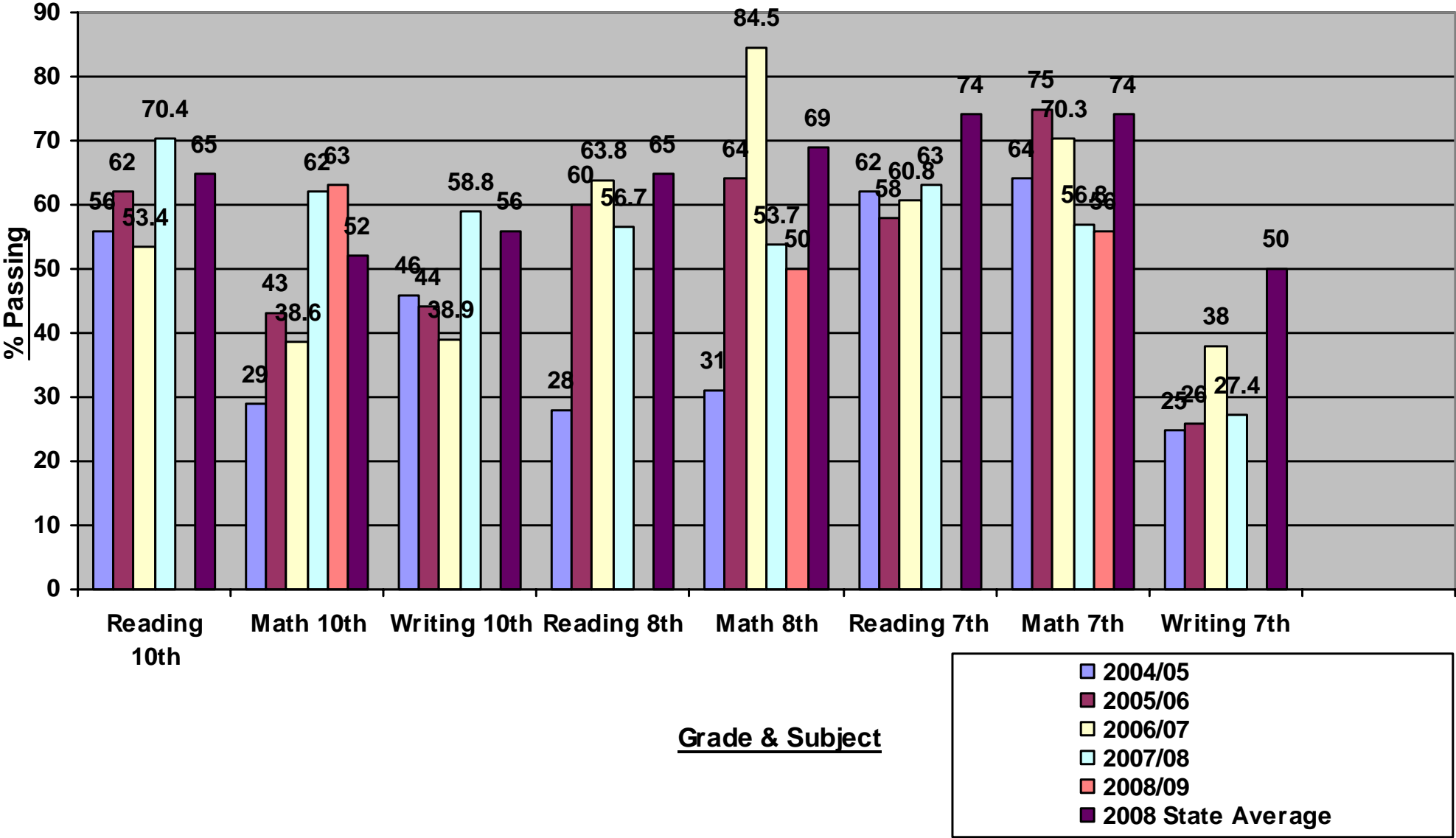
Once a week, our class goes out into the community to learn job/life skills. My students are low ability and participate in my life skills/transition program which will hopefully teach them skills to be successful in life after high school. My assistants and I take the students to different businesses around town where they are responsible for specific tasks at each business. They do a variety of skills such as: following instructions, customer service, putting together food baskets, stocking shelves, organizing, filling pop machines, making copies, filing, etc. Hopefully these experiences will help create skills that will allow my students to be productive member of society.

Pat King and I also went on an adventure with our students who are seniors. We had two students who graduated last year, attending International Air & Hospitality, in Vancouver, Washington. These two students successfully completed this program and were graduating in February. Some of our seniors expressed interest in attending this graduation and maybe attending International Air & Hospitality after their own graduation. So, we loaded six seniors into the school van and headed to Vancouver. We were able to get a college visitation through International Air & Hospitality and the students were able to ask individual questions about the program. Then we attended the graduation, which was great because the students got to see the final results of attending the school. It was a great experience for our seniors to see previous students be successful with their continuing education. Written by Ms. Brooke Barton

### **BENCHMARK**

Riverside Jr/Sr High School students that are not at Benchmark are going to receive support several ways; including double classes, after school, Friday school and/or summer school.

# RHS 5 Year Comparison



## **Windy River Elementary** **4<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Party**

Friday, February 20, 2:30-3:15ish

Fourth graders invited parents in for a Science Parent Party this month!

They worked together on the following concepts:

1. Coal is an energy resource that is mined from the earth
2. Coal is a nonrenewable resource
3. Some places have more coal than others.
4. Some places have coal that is easier to mine than others.
5. Coal on the surface is easier to mine than coal that is underground.
6. Returning the earth to a natural form after removing coal is difficult.

To do this, parents and students were given two different types of chocolate chip cookies...one softish, one more crisp. The drill they used to mine the coal was a paper clip. There was a chart to record individual as well as class results. There were many comments as to the difficulty of mining! They also noticed how the earth was changed by the mining process, as well as how difficult it would be to return the earth to the natural form, and if this could actually be accomplished.

This activity was very engaging for both parents and students, and the complete activity will overrun into next week with final calculations and discussions taking place on Monday and/or Tuesday. This activity accompanies our studies of rock cycle, economics, and environmental issues.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

On February 18, WRE held parent /teacher conferences for the third time at the mid- term rather than at the end on the quarter. The parents were very appreciative to know how their children are performing before the quarter grades come out.

### **PBS Workshop**

On February 19<sup>th</sup>, members of WRE's staff attended a Positive Behavior Support Seminar at the Pendleton Convention Center. Those attending included: Mr. Jones, Miss Sanchez, 4<sup>th</sup> – Mrs. Prindle, 5<sup>th</sup> – Mr. Keefer, and 6<sup>th</sup> – Mr. Beagle. Topics addressed were the need for consistent behavior rules, everyone's expectations for positive behavior, why there are rules for hallway travel, cafeteria, playground, classroom respect, and manners.

WRE's participants agreed that this is a topic which we, as a staff, are already accomplishing partially, but we, as a staff, are not in concert with each other. Everyone felt this program, once implemented, would negate numerous behavior problems and free up instructional time for other students to grow and excel.

**Sam Boardman Elementary**

***Students of the Month for February:***

	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Kinder</b>	Savannah Morris Vicenete Zuniga Samantha Rea Omar Castillo	Jack Curtis Jose Ruiz-Nino Ali Zapata Humberto Sanchez	Gerardo Lopez Joshua Kinder Rigo Martinez Hailee Pratt	Angela Barragan Heidi Chavez Yahir Colin-Rodriguez Jose Napoles	<b>Mrs. Matheny</b> 92%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	Lilian Solis Jacob Hibbits Juan Frausto Anthony Flores	Cesilia Garcia Juan Madrigal Maryza Prado Megan Gilbertson	Gunnar Livingston Ezequiel Ramos Nyssa Muniz Stephanie Chavez	Fernando Ortega Karina Mendoza Jose Mendoza Emmanuel Barrera	<b>Mrs. Harjo</b> <b>Mrs. Ogden</b> 95%
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	Jenna McCullough Brandon Juarez Monica Virelas Fatima Diaz	Blas Zapata Oscar Lopez Francisco Chavez Veronica Alvarez	Ashley Price Abraham Cervantes Chris Stanger Tony Rivera	David Araiza Seth Nunamaker Joshua Matthews Allan Gutierrez	<b>Ms. Drake</b> 98%
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	Brandon Cabrera Skylar Wightman Daniel Rodriguez	Fabian Meza Alicia Calvillo Maydi Barrera	Viviana Garay Abigail Bozarth Marielena Lopez	Michael Olshove Sonia Medina Larry Lopez	<b>Mrs. Bankston</b> 96%

**Enrollment:** 309      **Attendance:** Average attendance for February was 93.01%

**OAKS Winter Assessments:** We expect each student to achieve reading and math RIT gains. We are supporting students who did not demonstrate their growth on the OAKS assessments in three ways.

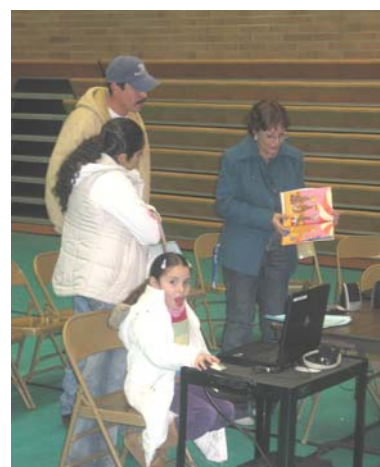
- 1) Friday School: 42 students have been invited to attend eight Friday Schools. Students will receive instruction and practice in test taking, reading and math.
- 2) In-school Extension and Intervention: Third grade teachers have set aside an additional 30 minutes each day for calculation and estimation, our lowest math strand. All students will receive small group instruction at their skill level.
- 3) "Study Island" – All third grade students will receive individualized practice in reading and math using this on-line computer program. This fun, game format has students earn game time by practicing questions similar to those found on OAKS. Students can access this program from home.

**MAPS Winter Assessments:** K-2 has completed their winter assessments in reading and math. Teachers use this information to make instructional decisions and individualize for students not making adequate progress. Teachers will learn more about MAP features and resources during an inservice this Friday presented by NWEA's assessment specialist, Patrick Dugan.

**Family Fun in Education:** Teachers demonstrated for parents several ways to help their child develop key grade level skills through games and activities at home during Family Fun in Education. Special presentations by



OHSU, Migrant and Legal Aid Services of Oregon, and SBE Title specialists added to our program. Featured here are Jenny Chavez (left) presenting a



nutritious snack and Clara Beas-Fitzgerald (right), ELD instructor demonstrating “Rosetta Stone”.

**Site Council** updated progress on our schoolwide plan, discussed ways to increase parent and community involvement and heard explanation on ELPA assessments which are under way.

Please join us in celebrating **Classified Week**, March 2<sup>nd</sup> through March 6<sup>th</sup>.