



WE EXIST FOR THE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE OF ALL STUDENTS

SUMMER ACADEMIES SUSPENDED FOR SUMMER, 2011

Summer Academies, hosted by Springfield Public Schools for seven years, have been suspended until the budgetary shortfalls of the last few years can recover.

Limited summer learning opportunities through departments such as Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, SPED, or Cultural Diversity may be available. For information about any limited learning opportunities, please check the MUNIS online registration website in Employee Self-Serve or respond to email messages from curriculum and district program leaders.

It is our hope that when the budget rebounds in the future, Summer Academies might be resumed.

In the meantime, opportunities for professional learning are still available through two online sources: **Atomic Learning** and **PD360** (currently available to school sites that requested PD360 this year).

Along with multiple tutorials for SMART board application, Atomic Learning offers tutorials for student use, project-based learning, grade-level lesson plans, and a host of other topics. Atomic Learning is available to Springfield Public School employees on any computer, including home computers.

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world”. ~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Summer Academies Suspended for Summer 2011	1
Transportation Services Explore Management Strategies	2
Custodian “High Fives” Students	2
Nutrition Services Employee A Role Model	3
Attendance Advisors Build Relationships	3
Counselors Help Build Students Confidence	4
Health Services Nurses Touch Many Lives	5

Educational research leaders such as Dr. Doug Reeves, Dr. Michael Fullan, and Dr. Andrew Hargreaves, continue to stress this point: focus on key strategies that are proven to make a difference in student achievement. This year, our theme for *Focus on Learning* has revolved around a high-yield strategy—**Building Positive Relationships**.

Featured so far this year, were the voices of teachers, principals, and students who shared specific examples of the difference positive relationships can make.

Building positive relationships is not an intentional skill limited to teachers and principals. All members of the SPS team have a stake in creating positive relationships with students, colleagues, parents and other customers of our schools.

In this final 2011 issue of *Focus on Learning*, it is our privilege to showcase a few of the many actions, stories, and examples of how our nurses, counselors, bus drivers, custodians, attendance officers, and lunch servers are integral to the ongoing commitment to make each and every child in SPS feel like a person of worth each and every day!

“Mrs. Ross, thank you for helping me gain my speech skills and understanding my speech. I really like that.” — Madeline —

EXPLORES CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Last summer **Cathy Noe**, Supervisor of Transportation Safety and Training along with Supervisor, Dawn Barrett, Supervisor of Lead Drivers, attended a 2-day Classroom Management workshop along with the 2010-11 STEP UP teachers. The goal of the workshop is to provide SPS teachers with consistent management across the district. Transportation supervisors were exploring the impact of aligning the concepts and strategies of classroom management with bus management. Their hope is that by aligning the two, students would respond well to consistency. Cathy and Dawn included classroom management concepts into their training program. **Tonya Wilson**, bus driver and her bus attendant, **Sue Boyd**, have embraced classroom management as a way to manage their bus. Their main focus has been to develop relationships with their students and to



utilize the power of using procedures. Both ladies have effectively developed relationships with the students. Their goal was for every student on their bus to know they were loved and respected. Tonya developed procedures for the way business is conducted on the bus. The procedures were taught and are reinforced. Not only does it create a positive climate, it also prepares students for an emergency. Tonya made the procedure for getting off the bus match the emergency evacuation plan. To motivate good behavior on the bus, Tonya sets creative and fun goals like “Perfect Passengers” and the “Good Citizen Award”. Students who meet those goals receive the award. The Pleasant View principal supports the management plan by displaying those awards on a bulletin board by the main office.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS: “Thank you for being so helpful, you are all so welcoming”. ~ *Kyndall* ~

“You always kid around with me and I always laugh”. ~ *McKenzie* ~

SCHOOL POLICE: “Gary is awesome, he is always willing to have a conversation”. ~ *Anonymous* ~

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: springfieldpublicschoolsmo.org

CUSTODIAN “HIGH FIVES” STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS



Pershing Middle School has a Head Custodian who is very engaged and loved by all the students and staff. **Larry Loveless** can be found any day by the trash cans just to give each younger student a high five before they head back to class. He has been doing it so long the kids expect to see him. They look forward to it each day.

On one occasion last year, I walked into Pershing and found Larry coming in from outside where a Kindergarten function was taking place. The kids were having a Parent Day picnic lunch. According to Larry, a little girl was having a very rough time and felt alone. Her parents were not able to be at the picnic. Larry decided to use his own lunch period to accompany the little girl to the picnic. He truly enjoys his job, the students and staff at Pershing Middle School.

“The custodian is also my football coach. Coach Fair gives me high-fives when he sees me. All my friends talk to him and have a great time”. ~ *Ben* ~

Staff Development
Leadership Team

[Pam Hankins](#)

Director of
Leadership

Development

523-5571 or SPS

Extension 40401

[Virginia Crawford](#)

Director of
Teacher

Development

523-5572 or SPS

Extension 40402

NUTRITION SERVICES EMPLOYEE

A ROLE MODEL FOR STUDENTS



Marvel Bethurem is a staff member at Central High School and has been an employee of the district since 1995. Marvel was recently selected as the Nutrition Services Employee of the Year. She was recognized as an employee who makes an intentional effort to develop relationships with students. She always gives students positive attention and support and can be found at Central's sporting events cheering on the Bulldogs. Marvel also models an outstanding work ethic, effective collaboration with her peers and an amazing attitude for our students.

ATTENDANCE ADVISORS

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTENDANCE



Marsha Rea works as an Attendance Advisor for Glendale High School and all the feeder schools. Her ultimate goal is to keep kids in school and to keep the door open to their future. Marsha describes her work as being the ultimate encourager. She is an advocate for kids. She provides communication with parents and teachers, makes home visits, listens and does everything possible to remove any barriers to completing school. She is the one person that doesn't give up on kids when maybe everyone else may have. She's the one who tells them that she wants to be at their graduation and when they do graduate... she will be there.

Greg Knight is the Attendance Advisor for Kickapoo High School and its feeder schools. Greg has a strong belief in the positive impact this program has on students. He approaches a student's lack of attendance just as a problem that can be solved. He tries to determine what needs might need to be met. He notes that there are many unique situations. Sometimes it's something small, and sometimes the situation is beyond the capability of our program. The point he wants to make, is that everyone in this program puts every ounce of effort into meeting the students' best interest. He believes this will always have a positive impact.



Chrissy Henderson is the Attendance Advisor for Hillcrest High School and feeder schools. Her mission is to address any problem that prevents her students from attending school. She knows that elementary students are generally more dependent on parents, so she listens to the parents' perspective and then shares the school's expectations. Her work with secondary students is directed more toward the students. She encourages them to be respectful, to make better choices, and to accept responsibility for their choices. Chrissy lets all her students know that not only does she care about them; their teachers care about them too.

Marti Montgomery is the Attendance Advisor for Parkview High School and feeder schools. She wants to make sure your student is at school every day. Her philosophy is to build relationships. You might find her on the porch or at the kitchen table. Anywhere a parent might feel more comfortable sharing what's keeping their student from school. Each situation is unique. She often finds herself offering ideas, resources and motivation. She feels everyone needs compassion and understanding. She's even been known to say, "Come on, get in the car. I'll take you there."



Ed Dorris is the Attendance Advisor for Central High School and its surrounding feeder schools. His goal is to provide a "safety net" so that every student has the opportunity to attend school. He understands that mutual trust and respect are critical. Ed develops that kind of relationship with parents by looking them in the eye, giving them his absolute attention, and listening. He tries to help families over bumps that might interfere with their students' attendance. Ed knows that the school and parents need to work together to provide their student with the best opportunity for lifelong success.

COUNSELORS

HELP BUILD STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE

Debbie Presson, counselor at Kickapoo, helps with monitoring “Freshman Academy”. The goal of Academy is to provide extra support for incoming freshmen. Relationships, relevance, and rigor are the backbone of the program. Students are assigned to both a history and an English class so that instructors can build a relationship, and monitor how individual students are transitioning, both personally and academically. Students also receive instruction in reading and study skills. There is a correlation between the number of credits that a freshman earns in their first year of high school and success in school. Debbie is quick to say that Freshman Academy is a team effort, and she credits the work of Mrs. Thater and Mr. Phillips for the increase in the number of credits earned by the Freshman Academy students.



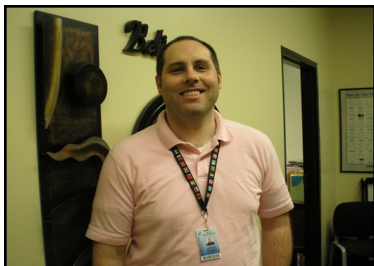
The focus of **Laura Lawson's** “After-School Dance Crew”, was to give 4th and 5th grade girls a sense of inclusion, and to build self-esteem, understand their changing bodies and to incorporate healthy choices in a manner that was appealing to them. Laura loves to dance, so she took that strength and made it work in a way that was beneficial for students at Westport. The program was funded through a grant from Caring Communities.

The program had had a positive impact on the girls. Discipline referrals have decreased, attendance has increased overall, and there have been some improvements in Ed Performance testing. Their confidence levels have also increased as well as their conflict resolution skills. Laura has provided positive female leadership and feels that her life has become richer because of it.



Stacy Johansenn heard about a successful girls' program conducted at a neighboring school and thought, “I can do that”. She was right. Girls' Night Out is all about crafting and has been in place at Pleasant View for the last 5 years. The after school event provides 20-25 middle school girls with an opportunity to build relationships with all grade levels, free from social cliques.

She has been able to maintain the program with volunteer help from other staff members and parents. This year, art teacher, Ms. Gibbs, has facilitated two craft projects; the girls have made candles and also scarves. Projects in the past have included making blankets for the Pregnancy Care Center and heart pillows for recovering heart surgery patients.



“Man Lunch” is a program that **Josh Seaman** leads to help Pipkin middle school students develop their personal leadership. To keep the groups small, there are 3 groups held during lunch on different days. Each group consists of 6 or so boys. Eighteen students are currently attending. The focus of this program is small group discussion, facilitated with an anchor question. The “men” discuss responsibility, and decision making. In essence... what it means to be a man. Josh is pleased with the level of participation and the commitment of these young men.

LIBRARIANS: “The librarian helps me succeed by always helping me”. ~ William ~

“Mrs. Huff helps me. I would like to sing her a thank you song for helping me find books. ~ Anonymous~

“Mrs. Mahaffey make me feel welcome when I am in the library”. ~ Anonymous ~

HEALTH SERVICES NURSES

TOUCH MANY LIVES

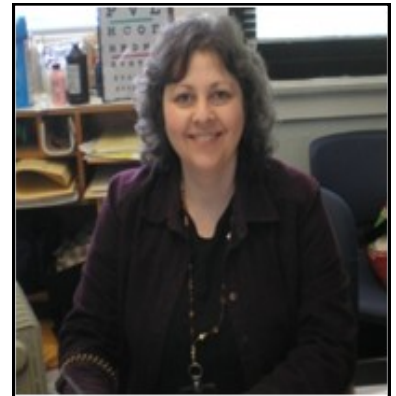


Donna Harmsworth was vital in facilitating the opening of the Shining Stars Early Childhood Center. She took the responsibility of managing the students' medical needs and records. She helped facilitate the smooth transition of students to the new center and continues to address their needs. She currently serves the needs of 530 early childhood special-needs students (280 are served in the new center). Donna also travels throughout Springfield screening students who may qualify for the program. Her responsibilities also include checking for hearing, vision and shot records; then developing health plans. Not only does she touch many students' lives with her dedication by providing high quality health information, she goes beyond her work as a Program Nurse by cross-checking the breakfast and lunch menus for students with allergies or food restrictions.



Lee Ann Neill has been named, School Nurse of the Year, at the Third Annual Southwest Missouri Salute to Nurses which was sponsored by The Springfield News Leader. She was one of seven finalists that were selected from the 291 nurses nominated from our area. She was nominated for her deep commitment to her students and tireless dedication to their well-being. She monitors and manages the medical plans for each of the students at Delaware, and works with parents who often seek her advice. She is also a source of knowledge and care for the Delaware staff members. A fellow employee describes Lee Ann as the Shepherd of their school community.

Tammy Teeling serves as the president of the Missouri Association of Nurses. The purpose of this organization is to advocate for the health of the students across the state of Missouri. This involves many responsibilities outside her building, including working with legislators in Jefferson City. Tammy rolls up her sleeves and does whatever is needed to address her students needs. You might see her trying to locate shoes or a coat, or help parents fill out paperwork for energy assistance. She may even make phone calls with parents to secure help because they don't have access to a usable phone. Students are most appreciative of her compassion. You might hear someone say, "She cheers me up and cares about everyone. Not just school stuff, but your personal life too". Or, "She will talk you through a problem". "Advocate" is a fitting title for Tammy.



ISS TEACHER/FOOTBALL COACH: "He says I am smarter than I think I am". "Coach Wood, even though you don't like seeing me in ISS, I know you like to see everyone on the football field. You inspire me." ~ *Justin* ~

PARAPROFESSIONALS "Ms. Williams because she helps me with my homework and other work." ~ *Jordan* ~

"Thank you Mrs. Williams, you're awesome". ~ *Jarrott* ~

"Mrs. Austin helps me with my work. Thank you for being there for me." ~ *Mikaela* ~

Finally, thank you to all staff members on the Springfield Public School team. Your efforts to build relationships with students are what sets Springfield Public Schools apart. You make a difference every day!

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much" ~ *Helen Keller* ~