



# Baldwin's Bulletin

December 2016



## Superintendent's Corner

This time of year is one of giving thanks and spending time with friends and family for many of us. In October and early November, I had the opportunity to meet with student focus groups in each school. With each group of students, I posed two overarching questions: 1) What do you like best about going to school here? 2) If you were principal, what would you change?

As you can imagine, the answers ranged from the wild (all students should get free ice cream at lunch) to the reasoned (each elementary school should have a student government that helps guide the direction of the school) to the creative (some chairs should have bicycle pedals built into them to get out energy) to the thought-provoking (it is really hard to get all homework done due to my parents' custody arrangement).

There was only one common response to all five schools. Without exception, each student focus group stated unequivocally that the best thing about going to school here is the staff. When pressed for detail, students used words like *helpful, kind, supportive, nice, funny, smart, gentle, and respectful*. They said "our teachers treat us like equals" and "they help us until we get it."

It brought me great pride to share that feedback with our staff members. Like our students, I am sure our families appreciate the lengths our staff members go to day in and day out to provide the very best learning and growing experience possible. This all-encompassing community support for our schools makes it such a privilege to serve as the superintendent here.

Together we will continue to focus on educating the whole child so that each and every student who spends time in the Warren Township Schools is prepared to participate in the global community.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season filled with warm family memories.

Matthew A. Mingle, Ed.D.

## Principal's Corner

Happy December! I can't believe that 2016 is drawing to a close already, the year is flying by. This year, many of you have heard me talk about the Whole Child, and our commitment to ensuring that we address each of the five tenets in our educational program. In previous newsletters I've talked about the first two tenets; making sure our children are healthy and safe. When children are healthy and safe, they *can* learn. The

next three tenets address the areas of being engaged, supported and challenged. These pieces ensure that our children *will* learn.

The tenet of engagement states, “Each student is actively *engaged* in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.” When I walk the hallways and visit classrooms each day, I see that our students are engaged in a variety of learning opportunities. They learn about accountable talk, and are responsible to themselves and their peers for carrying productive conversations. Students collaborate with classmates and pick and choose from a variety of strategies to determine what will best help them in their learning. In science, students work together and research the answers to big questions in order to figure out phenomena. At Central, we are truly in an age where teachers are facilitators and opposed to lecturers, and students are doing the heavy lifting to influence what they learn and solve problems. Through lunch bunches, buddy classrooms, our schoolwide Chain of Kindness and countless other daily opportunities, our students are connected to the larger school community. Programs like CAP, assemblies, PTO events, and partnerships with local hospitals and community organizations engage students with the world around them. I am truly impressed by the innovative and engaging opportunities that our staff and parent volunteers bring to our school.

Finally, because healthy and safe are our foundational tenets, one note in that vein. Throughout the winter season, we will have outdoor recess as long as it is above freezing outside. Please make sure that students are dressed appropriately and have hats, gloves, and warm coats.

Enjoy a healthy, safe, and *engaging* holiday season with your loved ones.

## Grade 2

Fall is a busy time in 2nd grade. We anxiously waited for our very hungry caterpillars to emerge into beautiful Painted Lady butterflies. The students wrote daily observations about their butterfly, made metamorphosis wheels and completed scientific notebooks. The children watched their butterflies take off and fly away from the courtyard.

The students are working on their personal narratives. They are writing about a small moment in their life with lots of details (seed story). First, they write in their journals, then they learn how to edit their writing, individual conferences are held with the teacher, and then final copy stories and pictures will be completed. Topics included a friend story, proud moment, or a special place. Once our publishing is complete, students will share their stories with a buddy.

**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR!  
2017**