

The Implementation of "Response to Intervention"

For several months, Hawthorn teachers and administrators have been working to implement all aspects of Response to Intervention (RTI). RTI is the process that the State of Illinois has chosen to support the federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

Philosophical Grounding

Several basic tenets underpin Response to Intervention.

They include:

- ♦ all children can learn;
- ♦ to the extent possible, students' needs should be met in the general education setting and within the general education curriculum.

Online Management System

In January, Hawthorn administrators began to use a new online RTI management

system. NetRTI is a user-friendly and efficient tool that allows teams of teachers and administrators to keep track of data, interventions, and team meetings for all students. The Web-based program overcomes many of the hurdles that were standing in the way of effective implementation of RTI.

On the February 4 early release day, all staff members participated in Part I of the

district's RTI training. The training is designed to move forward toward our implementation goals and to allow teams to discuss how RTI is working at each grade level.

RTI is the process that the State of Illinois has chosen to support . . . No Child Left Behind.

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February 2009

Hawthorn Highlights

"Learning for All: Whatever It Takes!"

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The parent-teacher conference is one of the most important communication links between a student's achievement and the parent's understanding of that achievement.

Superintendent-elect Sue Zook explained that if parents were unable to schedule an appointment during the February 12-13 conference times, they should contact

the child's school to schedule a conference whenever they feel a need to do so. "The specified conference time frames should *not* be the only opportunities for communication between parents and teachers," she emphasized. "Both parents and teachers should request conferences when there is a reason or a need to discuss the child."

Those special conferences can be set early in the morning before students arrive, during teacher planning periods, or after school.

One of the Hawthorn schools' goals is keep lines of communication open and work together on behalf of each student's success. Conferences are an important element in meeting that goal.

Board Meetings on Cable

Board of Education meetings are rebroadcast on Vernon Hills Comcast cable channel 4 or AT&T channel 99 at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays following board meetings. Residents who do not receive these channels are welcome to check out DVDs of the meetings from the Educational Services Center.

Illinois Standards Achievement Tests

Beginning the week of March 2, students in third through eighth grades will take the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) in reading and mathematics. Students in fourth and seventh grades will take ISAT tests in science.

In addition, students in grades 3, 5, 6, and 8 will take tests in writing. Those in grades 3 and 5 will do expository writing with one prompt. Students in grades

6 and 8 will address two prompts: narrative and persuasive.

ISAT measures the extent to which students meet the Illinois Learning Standards (1997). Illinois teachers and curriculum experts developed the ISAT tests in cooperation with the Illinois State Board of Education.

Test Preparation

Teachers will be getting students ready for these tests

through review and practice. Another resource, which can be used from home to prepare students for the tests, is Study Island. This program can also provide general review and practice. Information about accessing Study Island from any Internet-connected computer was provided earlier this year. For more information about Study Island, please contact your child's teacher.



To learn about food webs, Hawthorn science students dissect owl pellets.

Community Notes Webpage Offers Local Announcements

District 73 has launched the Community Notes webpage to offer announcements from our community partners. This initiative is one part of Hawthorn's "green" effort to reduce the amount of paper being sent home with students. On the site, you will find notes about programs from many who offer services and activities to Hawthorn families.

Partners who are interested in posting their information should e-mail their requests to <communitynotes@hawthorn73.org>.

Information listed on the webpage does not mean that Hawthorn endorses any of these programs.

You will find the page at: <www.hawthorn73.org/communitynotes>.

Parent Assistance

We ask that parents be aware of the test dates: March 3 through March 9, 2009. You can help to prepare your students for testing by sending them to school well-rested and with a good breakfast on school days.

Reporting to Parents

Individual student reports will not be sent home until late fall/early winter of 2009. These reports will help teachers and parents/guardians understand students' strengths and weaknesses in the areas tested.

The reports also compare each student's achievement to other students in the school, the district, and the state. A Parent/Guardian Guide ("Understanding Your Child's ISAT Scores") will accompany the Individual Student Report.



Update on Hawthorn "Pioneers"

The Hawthorn Pioneer program is in full swing, and nearly all of the equipment has been delivered to all of our schools.

Currently there are 25 Promethean (interactive) whiteboards with projectors in use across the district. These whiteboards have already had an impact on instruction as they provide immediate access to media presentations that enhance the learning process.

Wheel it In!

New carts of laptops are being wheeled into our Pioneer classrooms for "just in time" technology use.

Document cameras, video cameras, scanners, and digital microscopes are some of the other new and innovative technology pieces that are being integrated into the curriculum to enhance student learning.

Staff Development

To take best advantage of our new technological advances, Pioneer teachers have already had two opportunities for staff development, one in October and a second in December. To support our teachers as they progress on their exciting journey, a third workshop is being planned for the early spring.



Happy Valentine's Day!



The Middle School South cheerleading squad took first place at the annual "Spirit Invitational."

Hawthorn Happenings

At **Aspen Elementary**, students in teacher Terri Wignall's fourth grade class learned about food webs as they dissected owl pellets. ♥ The pre-kindergarten three-year-olds learned a great deal in their "bakery and grocery." They listened to stories about bakeries and learned chants involv-



ing ordinal numbers. They baked following simple pictorial recipes and used money and credit cards to make purchases. As a culminating activity, the students visited Dominick's to view their bakery in action. ♥ Second grade students learned how string instruments are built. Experts from Classic Violins of Mundelein demonstrated the materials and tools used in the construction of violins and cellos. They also helped the students discover the relationship between the science of sound and the art of music. ♥ Aspen students completed a five-day bowling unit, learning skills, scoring, and teamwork. On the final day, one fourth grade class scored a record 26 strikes in just 30 minutes. ♥ Kindergartners explored the Polar regions. They packed their suitcases with the things they absolutely needed and first "flew" south to Antarctica. Not only did they learn

about packed ice, icebergs, and harsh weather, but they also learned many interesting facts about the penguins that live there. They then "flew" north to the Arctic Circle to learn about other polar life, especially the polar bear. They compared their "paw" [hand] prints to those of the huge animal and have begun to think about how some of the polar animals are endangered. ♥

The **Middle School South** Student Council organized a "Sweet Holiday Treat" fundraiser to

support their efforts to send a child to burn camp. ♥ Students in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at Middle South hosted the annual "Resale Shop" fundraiser for their Eagle Power Club (EPC). Families and friends donated items which the students then sold. EPC raised \$277 in only two days. The funds will be donated to charity. ♥ To honor the birthday of Martin Luther King and the inauguration of President Barack Obama, the Student Council planned two "Mix-it-Up" days for the lunch periods. Each student received a card with a table number and for each day sat with a new group of people. The theme of this activity was "tolerance." ♥ The Middle South cheerleading squad won first place at the 9th annual "Spirit Invitational" held at Vernon Hills High School in January. ♥ Also in January, chorus students went to Vernon Hills High School for

a choral exchange. ♥ Middle South orchestras attended a performance of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. The American Jazz Classics concert featured George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and Duke Ellington's "Harlem." ♥ Band, orchestra, and chorus students took part in the Illinois Grade School Music Association's solo and ensemble contest which was held at Lake Zurich Middle School South. ♥

Do you know the meaning of the words socialism, proportion, and hypothesis? Students at **Middle School North** do, thanks to a new program, the "Vocabulary Word Quiz." This is an extension of the "Word of the Day" program, in which students are introduced to a new word (one that is related to a subject area) and receive

challenge section using words from past weeks. Students receive extra credit for correct answers, and those who score 100% have a chance to win a prize. Principal Anna Groh believes that the program helps students improve their vocabularies and makes good use of homeroom time. ♥ Middle North is buzzing about our bee winners—the winners of our annual spelling and geography bees! The spelling bee winner is Justin Yim, with Cherie Zhou the runner-up. Justin will compete in regionals in February. Our geography bee winner is Justin Song who has taken the qualifying test for state. Ben Mohrdieck was the runner-up. ♥ In December, a puzzle contest was held among teams from the three grade levels. The winning 8th grade team won an ex-



a chance to win a drawing each time they can use the word correctly in a sentence during a conversation with a staff member. Every Monday, all students take a quiz on the previous week's words. The quizzes are corrected and become part of the grade for the appropriate subject. At the bottom of the quiz is a chal-

tra 15 minutes of lunch for the entire grade. ♥ Student Council held a fund drive to benefit several animal shelters in the area. They sold dog treats, animal pencils, baked goods, and raffle tickets for an iTunes gift card. Students also donated old towels, blankets, and cleaning supplies. ♥

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Hawthorn Highlights is published as a service to residents of District 73. Please direct questions about your schools to Superintendent Dr. Joe Yomtoob. Residents are also welcome to attend meetings of the Board of Education. Hawthorn Highlights is prepared by Scholl Communications Incorporated, Deerfield. Dr. Susan Zook is newsletter coordinator.

Hawthorn School District 73

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Hawthorn extends a special thanks to Dominick's for hosting the culminating field trip for the Aspen prekindergarten students.

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