

IMLEA is dedicated to promoting, improving, and supporting middle level education.



MIDDLING AROUND

The Newsletter of the Indiana Middle Level Education Association



Dearest Educators and CHANGE AGENTS...

An Alternative Approach to Standardized Testing

Dearest Educators and Change Agents,

I hope this note finds you doing well. As we enter the season of standardized testing, we wanted to send a message of encouragement.

As we, at our school, started practice testing this week, I could physically see the anxiety levels and behaviors of our staff and students escalate. As we reflected on this observation, we came to some conclusions that we wanted to share with you. Hopefully this will encourage you to keep doing your very best in our noble profession.

We have decided that we will encourage our students to do their best on any form of accountability; however, from this point forward, we are going to shift our focus as a school from being good test takers to preparing our students to be lifelong learners and well-rounded citizens. We have decided that we will not be holding the annual ISTEP pep rally nor will we take weeks to finish these assessments.

It was obvious to me that there is already enough implied pressure on both our staff and students; therefore, we are going to take the first round of ISTEP, ILEARN, or whatever test that is implement-

ed in our future, in two days. We decided to do this so that we can get back to doing what we feel we are best at: teaching our students. Our focus will remain on the main thing, our students.

We do not want a student's identity to be found in the passing or not passing of a test. We are going to focus on teaching essential standards that will prepare them to do well, no matter what situation they are in. We are going to provide them with character development, provide experiences that will make them well-rounded citizens, and most importantly, love our students.

As I pray over our students, especially my own children, I do not ever ask for them to be the best test takers in the state of Indiana. I specifically ask for each of them to feel loved by their teachers each and every day. I can promise you that 30 years from now, your students will not remember their test scores, but they will remember your name, what you taught them, and how you made them feel. So, in closing, I would encourage you to increasingly show them even more attention, engagement, and most importantly love during this testing season!

Bobby Thompson is principal of Triton Central MS in Fairland. You can contact Bobby at bthompson@nwshelbyschools.org.



The Middle Matters

Indiana Middle Level Education Association
2018 Fall Conference
September 16-17, 2018
Indianapolis Marriott North
Indianapolis, IN

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MIDDLING AROUND

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IMLEA HAPPENINGS

Shirley's Desk



Why Belong to IMLEA?

ing the four domains of "academic excellence, developmentally responsive, social equity, and organizational structures and processes." This is a school improvement program that principals and staff agree allows for student engagement, inclusion of all students in all programs, greater community involvement, college and career preparation, schedule flexibility, critical thinking, all resulting in higher attendance, fewer behavior issues, and truer accountability. See the STW page on www.imlea.org for more information. This is a free program to Indiana middle schools. The next free one-day workshop is April 10 at the IASP Conference Center - register on www.imlea.org.

IMLEA is also the affiliate office for the Association for Middle Level Educators.

All IMLEA memberships include "Member Only" Access to our website. All institutional member principals will receive a PDF of the bi-annual 12-page newsletter, which can be forwarded to all staff members. The print copies can be available in your office, staff lunchroom, or area of your choice. All educators who have an article published will receive a mailed print copy.

Institutional Membership

- All certified staff belong with full benefits
- A tiered membership based on student enrollment:
- Up to 125-\$100; 126-350 - \$200; and above 350 - \$300
- If all middle-configured schools in a district join - \$250 per school

Single Membership for \$50 allows benefits for only that member - newsletter will be sent as hard copy.

Join online link www.imlea.org or Fax P.O. or invoice to 317.454.0749.

IMLEA is the only Indiana professional education association "dedicated to promoting, improving, and supporting, middle level education in Indiana!" Joining IMLEA as a school allows all staff members to receive our online "Monday Minute" every week which affords a quick update on the latest news, views, PD, meetings and conference opportunities for middle level educators. Our website, www.imlea.org, is an all-inclusive platform with state and national news, events, professional development, book reviews and articles focused on middle school issues and concerns. Educators from Indiana middle schools share online and in the newsletters their experiences with new programs, technology applications and resources.

Members also receive discounted registration to our annual 2-day state conference Sept. 16-17, "The Middle Matters;" discounts and/or support from our education company partners for their products and/or services: Achieve3000, Let's Go Learn, Horace Mann Companies, Cathy Tooley - "Tools for Success," Five-Star Technology Solutions, PATINSPRO-JECT; "Paws and Think" Therapy Dogs, PD.

IMLEA is one of 17 states designated by the National Forum for Accelerated Middle Grades Reform allowing it to oversee the "Schools to Watch" program where middle schools can apply to become a "School to Watch" by meet-

Shirley Wright is the Executive Director for the Indiana Middle Level Education Association. Contact Shirley at the IMLEA Office by phone at 317.894.2937, or email at imlea@iasp.org

Join us at the 2018 IMLEA State Conference: The Middle Matters

IMLEA is pleased to announce our 2018 state conference dates!

The Middle Matters 2018 will take place on **Sunday, September 16, and Monday, September 17**, at the Indianapolis Marriott North hotel.



Our keynote speaker, Ben Glenn, has over two decades of speaking experience, using his own background as a struggling student with ADHD who has overcome failure and fear to connect with a wide array of audiences.

Also known as "The Chalk Guy," Ben will create an art speedscape as he speaks; you can see some examples on his website, <http://www.simplybenglenn.com/>. We encourage you to bring any unneeded Legos, as he works with a program to donate them to children in need. He does this in recognition of the creative outlet they provided him.

The keynote will be on Sunday afternoon at 5:00 pm, with the opportunity to register, visit our exhibitors, and mingle with other attendees beginning at 4:00 pm. On Monday, we will have registration, over 35 concurrent sessions, a plated sit-down lunch, and exhibitors.

We take your feedback very seriously; in answer to that, we have negotiated with the hotel to include a breakfast buffet of coffee and pastries on Monday morning, AND we have held the cost to last year's registration fees. In addition, the hotel rate is again \$129 until August 27.

The most important ingredient to a successful conference is you! Please consider submitting a proposal to present by April 20 and visit our special conference website at <https://www.imleastateconference2018.com/> for continuing updates and links for registration, proposals, and hotel reservations. You can also reach the conference website through the IMLEA website.



The Middle Matters

Indiana Middle Level Education Association
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September 16-17, 2018
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Indianapolis, IN



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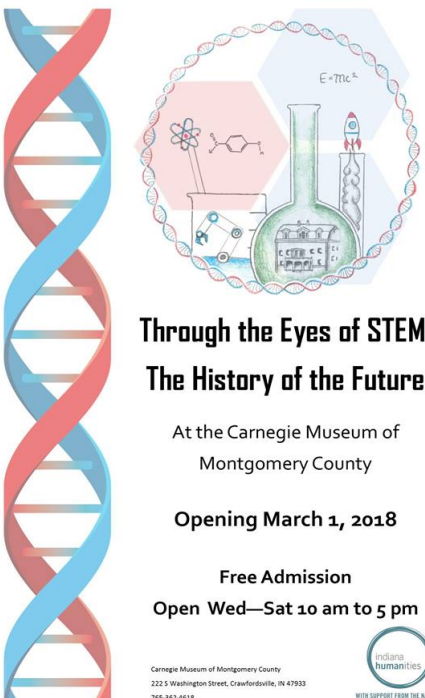


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ACROSS THE STATE

Through the Eyes of Time: STEM, History and the Humanities



**Through the Eyes of STEM:
The History of the Future**

At the Carnegie Museum of
Montgomery County

Opening March 1, 2018

Free Admission
Open Wed—Sat 10 am to 5 pm

Carnegie Museum of Montgomery County
222 S. Washington Street, Crawfordsville, IN 47933
765-362-4618

INDIANA HUMANITIES
WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES



Left: Student-designed poster advertising exhibit at the Carnegie Museum celebrating the Quantum Leap Grant received by Crawfordsville MS and the Carnegie Museum.

Above: Students holding their copies of *Ender's Game* at the culminating party at the museum.

In the autumn of 2017, Crawfordsville MS and the Carnegie Museum of Crawfordsville received a Quantum Leap Grant sponsored by Indiana Humanities. The grant's final product was a nine-part Carnegie Museum exhibit that opened March 2018 and will remain in the museum until December 2018.

Three local groups completed the project. The Carnegie Museum staff designed three pieces of the exhibit. The first piece entitled, "Synthetic Biology," challenges patrons to learn about gene splicing and genetic engineering's attempts to control the mosquito population in our county, thereby limiting exposure to mosquito borne diseases. The second entry, entitled "Do You Care Where It Comes From?" allows patrons to learn about and voice their opinion about food created from sources other than what is considered natural (e.g., meat grown in a labo-

ratory). The Carnegie staff's third piece utilizes the Carnegie's 3-D printing machine, showing how new technology can create new bones, skin, and medicine.

Crawfordsville MS 6th and 7th grade students created three pieces of the exhibit. The first highlights the various local physicians who were/are on the cutting edge of medicinal procedures, such as Martha Hutchings Griffith, first woman doctor in Montgomery County, who not only pioneered procedures to better assist women and children, but was socially and politically active. The second spotlights Andrew Moyer, an Indiana native and Wabash College graduate and microbiologist, was responsible for the development of techniques for the mass production of penicillin that saved potentially millions of lives during World War II. The third piece is a display on the evolution of local hospitals prior to and after desegregation, care pro-

vided, and equipment used to treat patients.

Three pieces of the exhibit were provided by the community. The League of Women Voters hosted two panel discussions with local inventors and health practitioners. The third piece was an All Community Read of the book *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card. All those who read the book were invited to attend an evening of celebration at the Carnegie Museum.

If you're ever in Montgomery County, please stop by the Carnegie Museum to take a peek at this exhibit and so many others! The Carnegie can be found at 222 South Washington Street, Crawfordsville, Indiana. Please call 765.362.4618 to arrange a tour for a group. The museum also has a Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/CarnegieMoCo>.

*Shannon Hudson, Science Dept Chair
Crawfordsville MS, Crawfordsville*

Reading & Writing: The Meat and Potatoes of English Curriculum

Five years ago I was in my 8th year of teaching 7th grade English, and I was loving every minute of it. I loved my students, breaking down difficult concepts, offering feedback to develop their inner writing voice, and the joy that unfolds when a class becomes a family.

What I didn't love, however, was the overwhelming pressure I felt to cram it—the curriculum—in before the state assessment. Luckily for me, the teachers in our district create the curriculum. Brownsburg Community School Corporation has worked hard over the past several years to “cut the fluff” of unnecessary programs and instead invest its time and energy into truly making teachers the experts in their fields. They did it by creating authentic professional learning communities (PLC) where teachers create and revise their common curriculum and assessments.

I was the leader of my PLC, but it felt as if we had so many plates spinning with curriculum items—it was impossible to keep up. We taught novels, and hit all literature standards every time. Then there were nonfiction standards, but to be honest, that was something we just never talked about. Where was the time?

Our district ensures that all PK-12 teachers who teach writing are trained with a common writing approach, Smekens' 6+1 Traits of Writing. There is phenomenal power in having a shared vocabulary and approach to writing instruction, and our students' writing continuously demonstrates the undisputable impact this has had on their learning. But, when you're teaching writing you then feel you need to include grammar because how can you teach writing without grammar? And soon you realize that students cannot strengthen their writing unless they bolster their vocabulary, so you add in vocabulary instruction. If you're an English teacher, at the end of the day you simply feel like I felt: there was not enough room left on any of my spinning plates. I often wondered how anyone could balance it all? How could any student learn it all?

There had to be a way to simplify.

The following year, I accepted the position as the English administrator within our district. Brownsburg is unique in that it has six curriculum administrators at the secondary (6-12) level who are essentially curriculum, instruction, and assessment evaluators and coaches. My primary role was to guide the 45 English teachers at four buildings through curriculum and assessment alignment.

The state already indicates which are the critical standards. As educators, it is our job to: a. realize which standards are critical and then b. unapologetically teach only those standards.

I opened our first professional development with a simple analogy: the English curriculum is like a Thanksgiving dinner. Reading (literature and nonfiction) was the meat (turkey and ham). Writing was the potatoes. Reading and writing: meat and potatoes. Grammar? The gravy. Vocabulary? Spices. Speaking and listening skills? Dessert. I reasoned that though grammar is an important element of writing, no one wants to eat a meal of just gravy. Likewise, vocabulary in the context of reading (which is the only critical vocabulary standard in Indiana) is crucial, but devoting entire lessons to vocabulary was like feeding our students tablespoons of cayenne pepper and asking them to feel satisfied. It just doesn't work.

After committing to the new “Meat and Potatoes” mantra, our department embarked on a two-year journey to revise our curriculum. We decided the smartest thing to do was what many other teachers, English departments, and schools do every day: teach reading—fiction and nonfiction—in conjunction with writing. The three go together. Reading and writing together leads to discussion, analysis, and deeper understanding of concepts. The connection is crucial.

And now: our students and teachers are happier. We replaced multiple plates in our curriculum with just one. Stress levels drastically decreased for all because we were no longer assigning vocabulary or grammar worksheets. More reading and writing was occurring in the

Carrie
Rosebrock



classroom—with the modeling and guidance from the teachers—so that also cut down on time spent on English outside of the classroom. Some might argue this sounds like a bad approach...students spending less time on English? How could results improve if you spent less time on fewer skills?

We found that students knew (because their teachers knew with confidence) that what they were learning was important. In fact, they were working on only the most important skills. Each and every day.

We are now in our fourth year with our narrowed curriculum, and our students are more engaged than ever. Our schools have earned the number 1 ranking of students passing our state English exam for the past two years. While other school districts across our state have seen marginal to drastic decreases in scores, ours continue to climb. Student responses to literature and nonfiction are analytical and thought-provoking. Their argumentative essays are complete, balanced, and evidence-based. Their narratives are honest, raw, and awe-inspiring.

How are we different? Our students read and write every day. It's all about the meat and potatoes. We don't apologize for this, either. As the English administrator, it's my job to guard this recipe for success. Teach the wrong standards—students will feel starved or stifled. Teach too many standards—students will feel stuffed and overwhelmed. Teach reading—with writing—and students will feel a satisfaction that leads them to hunger for more.

Carrie Rosebrock is the Secondary English Administrator for Brownsburg Community School Corporation. She has presented on several occasions at the IN Assn of School Principals conference and will present this summer at the Natl Assn of Secondary School Principals conference.

Carnival for a Cure

The 6th Grade Project Based Learning team at the Innovation Academy at Riverside Intermediate has paired with Marshall County Relay for Life to create a community partnership, as well as a wonderful learning experience, for all those involved.

After last year's successful collaboration, this year's PBL team at Riverside Intermediate was asked to take on more of a role in this summer's Relay for Life culminating event on June 16, 2018. That is exactly what they have done. To kick off our year and community partnership, these 6th grade learners voted from several options and have created the theme of this year's event: Carnival for a Cure!

Throughout the school year thus far, students have created and run fundraisers in hopes of beating last year's class fundraising total. They have also planned the creation of carnival-like games to be used at the June 16th Relay for Life final event.

Along with the creation of ideas, students have had the opportunity to apply for "job openings" that will be the leadership positions established throughout the rest of the year. With this, our learners created resumes complete with letters of recommendation, cover letters, and references. Later in the school year, students will be given the opportunity to interview with community partners invited in from throughout Marshall County with the idea of earning one of these leadership positions.

Facilitators, learners, and other staff members have really come together to help raise funds for this amazing cause. This year's 6th grade class looks to outraise the \$10,000 that was raised by last year's PBL class.

*Zane Cooper
Grade 6 PBL Facilitator
Riverside Intermediate School
Plymouth*

There Is a Story Behind Every Behavior: How We Became a Trauma-Informed District

Our journey started less than a year ago.

Jim Sporleder, administrator of Lincoln Alternative High School and subject of the movie *Paper Tigers*, led a summer workshop for interested Hamilton Southeastern Schools staff. He explained the direct correlation between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and behavioral issues students display in school and the long-term health problems that can result in adulthood.

Jim shared his stories of students who had experienced so much trauma they were in constant survival mode ("fight, flight, or freeze") as well as simple, usable strategies every educator can use to help regulate students and keep them in the classroom ready to learn. During breaks, teachers discussed stories of their own. Looking at behaviors through the lens of brain research gave them hope and ideas on how to help.

A trauma-informed school shifts the focus from "what is wrong with you" to trying to understand what a student needs to be successful. Listening to Jim's journey from traditional discipline to trauma-informed best-practices was the beginning of a cultural shift in our district.

We sent a team to the national Trauma-Informed School Conference to gain further insight and learned that being a Trauma-Informed School is not a canned program, but rather a shift in culture which is research-based for ALL kids, not just those with high ACE scores. A trauma-informed school focuses on building trust and positive relationships, which begins with questions instead of reactions.

Our journey to become a trauma-informed school will take time; however, the thirst for understanding seems to snowball because the trauma-informed approach makes sense. It makes sense to use the most current research about how our students learn and grow. It makes sense to help students regulate and discuss the issues behind the behavior. It makes sense to create a culture of honor and respect.

For more information:

Trauma Informed School Conference 2018
www.beyondconsequences.com

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Confucius, American Teachers, and Chinese Cultural Literacy

Jim Iddins

Language Arts/Social Studies
Highland MS, Pathfinder Academy



According to the US Census Bureau, in December 2017 alone China exported approximately \$45 billion worth of goods to the United States, and imported close to \$14 billion in goods from the United States.¹ And this is only a one-month snapshot of our economic relationship with our Chinese friends.

If we zoom out a little more, our increasing interdependence becomes glaringly obvious. Economic analyst Kimberly Amadeo tells us that to-date, China now owns about 20% of US debt (\$1.2 trillion).² While these numbers are indicative of the practical economic interdependence of our two cultures, what these numbers miss is our increasing intellectual interdependence as well.

As American culture becomes increasingly intertwined with Chinese culture, it becomes all the more imperative for US middle and high school teachers to educate themselves and their students on the history and culture of our closest trading partner. To not do so is to put blinders on ourselves and our students, and to shut the door to learning opportunities we desperately need if we are to prepare our students to not only survive, but also thrive in this era of global academic and economic competition and collaboration.

I was first forced to come to terms with my ignorance regarding China and Chinese culture during my graduate studies at Valparaiso University. I had never been exposed to Eastern thought, and that lack of exposure put me at a disadvantage during those intercultural exchanges. There I experienced classes with Chinese students where I was at a complete loss for a lens into their culture. Due to their respectful, largely deferential perspective on classroom etiquette, however, I now realize that I often misunderstood their silent reluctance to voice individual opinions in the classes there. Those same “reserved” students came out of their shells and led teams during a marketing internship in which I was lucky to take part. They were enigmas to me.

Only after embarking on a study of the Analects of Confucius did I start to gain a lens into Chinese culture. Beginning to study the

Analects has been like stumbling upon a deep well of academic and intellectual insight. Currently, I am so overwhelmed by the sheer depth and reach of the content that I am sure this is a work I will look to for guidance for the rest of my teaching career, and even my life, for both professional and personal improvement.

While there is no way for me to do the collection of teachings any justice, in the spirit of improving cultural literacy with regard to our closest trade partners, I want to distill a few brief lessons I have taken away from my study so far:

- The focus of the Analects, and the Chinese Confucian tradition as a whole, deals with how to develop what Confucius calls “consummate conduct.”
- Confucius never gives a definition of consummate conduct. He does however, give countless examples of what consummate conduct looks like in various contexts. Ultimately, one comes to see that what Confucius teaches his students is largely not content memorization, but the application of a form of intelligent, situational ethics.
- The situational ethics that Confucius shares through his teaching revolve around five principles which I think all teachers who feel called to their profession can get behind: Xin-integrity, Zhi-knowledge/study, Li-respect for rites and rituals of the collective, Yi-justice, Ren-benevolence/humaneness.
- Achieving consummate conduct, or as we might say, becoming an exemplary person, for Confucius, had to do with not only doing the right things, but also doing them in the right way. His students were required to think critically about each new situation in order to determine the right way to do the right thing, given all of the variables specific to that situation. When all these aspects are aligned, one can be said to be operating according to “the Way.” Life begins to happen fluidly for us, and so we can also speak of experiencing “flow.”

For American teachers, Confucius speaks to us

from the distant past, reminding us that individual differences

matter. He reminds us that there definitely is a right and a wrong way, even in doing the right thing. To a student that always jumps the gun, we may coach restraint. To a student that is too reserved in a situation, we may coach assertiveness. If a new variable enters the situation, we may coach each to follow their natural tendencies. Specifics matter, and there are no shortcuts.

Above all, Confucius warns that an exemplary person does not sacrifice his or her integrity no matter what – even if it means that we lose our job, that we go without for a time, that we are misunderstood, etc. There is absolutely nothing more detrimental to self-worth and a meaningful existence than sacrificing our integrity for petty comforts along our journey.

These conclusions are shored up by recent research on what employers now expect. In a revealing study completed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, 93% of employers surveyed said that “a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than a candidate’s undergraduate major.”³ Another key finding was that 95% of employers surveyed want the candidates they hire to be able to demonstrate a history of ethical judgment and integrity, have intercultural skills, and be open to new learning.

Not only can Confucius act as a cultural bridge for American teachers, opening up new opportunities for themselves and their students, but Confucian ethics can reinvigorate our lessons and lives by forcing us to think critically rather than accept ready-made, by-the-book answers.

¹ <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1712cm.html>

² <https://www.thebalance.com/u-s-debt-to-china-how-much-does-it-own-3306355>

³ <https://www.aacu.org/press/press-releases/employers-more-interested-critical-thinking-and-problem-solving-college-major>



*Dr. Daryl Werner, Principal
Jac-Cen-Del Jr/Sr HS, Osgood*

Our Journey with Schools to Watch

At Jac-Cen-Del Jr. Sr. High School we encourage every student to “Explore Your Possibilities, Develop Your Talent, and Achieve Your Success.” Starting in 2015 we decided to utilize the Schools to Watch framework to help us put this mantra into practice for our students. The framework, which focuses on Academic Excellence, Social Equity, Developmental Responsiveness, and Organizational Structures, aligned perfectly with the vision of our School Improvement Committee as we looked for an opportunity to drive continual school improvement.

Our journey began in the fall of 2015 as we administered the first self-assessment in an effort to get a true pulse of the staff and began our work in the areas that we collectively viewed as areas of need. It became clear that we needed to focus on providing teachers time to work collaboratively to improve student learning, developing partnerships with community organizations, and creating more opportunities for student enrichment. Students in grade 7 and 8 often struggled with the transition as they went from elementary students to high school students. The Schools to Watch self-study helped us better define our challenges and work toward solutions.

With this information in hand our staff set out to improve our school. We visited other schools in the Schools to Watch network and researched solutions to these newly discovered challenges. Over the last three years we modified our schedule to allow for regular teacher collaboration. Being a small school with only 3-4 teachers in each core area, we created cross-curricular collaboration groups with a group consisting of Language, Social Studies, and PE and another with teachers in

the STEAM areas. These groups meet every other week to discuss best practices, improving assessments, student data, and, most recently, prioritizing academic vocabulary. Assessments in all classes are now using assessment language aligned with state testing which pushes students to think more deeply about the subject matter, moving beyond basic recall.

Further we explored a variety of options to create more enrichment opportunities for our students. Being a small school with limited resources and staff, we often struggle to provide a wide range of opportunities. To meet this goal we reached out to form partnerships with employers, colleges, and neighboring schools.



Over the course of three years we established summer camps in Health Care, Computer Science, and Advanced Manufacturing for students in grades 7 and 8, open to students living in Ripley County, taught by a combination of high school and college instructors and including site visits to businesses in the county. Building on these partnerships, we also created career pathways for our students to take college classes at little or no cost and participate in internships in the same areas during their Junior and Senior years. Additionally, we built on an existing relationship with the regional career center to better inform students and families about the educational and vocational opportunities offered to our students, only 10 minutes away from JCD. Students tour the Career Center in 8th and 9th grades and are

able to begin taking courses in their chosen career path starting in 10th grade.

We also searched for a way to give students a chance to develop a more intrinsic love of learning by giving them an opportunity to learn about subjects they are passionate about. After much discussion among the staff and conducting school visits to several other schools, we developed the idea of a weekly class we titled “Explore.” During Explore, students choose from one of 25 different high interest electives each 9 weeks. Among the topics taught are Beekeeping, Yoga, Dance, Chess, Cooking, Sports Statistics, Designing Your Dream Home, Personal Fitness, Survival Skills, Adulting, Stress Relief, Travel Planning, Cake Decorating, Scrapbooking, Writing Horror Stories, Geology, and many more. We’ve partnered with the local Purdue Extension office to offer Robotics, Food Science, and Hunter Safety. Two teachers also received grants from generationOn to teach a Philanthropy class; as part of this effort students collected over 2000 items for a local food bank and are working on a project to raise money to purchase items for Wheeler Mission in Indianapolis.

As we continue our journey toward continual school improvement, the Schools To Watch framework continues to guide our School Improvement Team. We’ve given the Self-Assessment Rubric each of the last three years and use it as a measure of overall school growth, both in terms of where we’ve shown improvement and in helping to determine areas of future focus. Additionally, being a part of the Schools To Watch network connects our school to a community of schools that, although diverse in size and demographics, share a common vision for creating a great school environment. It helps us to see beyond test scores and school letter grades to help us become a well-rounded school, which meets the needs of our students by continually focusing on Academic Excellence, Developmentally Responsive, Social Equity, and Organizational Structures and Processes.

Congratulations to the following "Schools to Watch" designations for 2017-2018:

Newly Designated Schools

Center for Inquiry IPS 84, Indianapolis
Kathleen Miller, Principal
Jac-Cen-Del Middle/High School, Osgood
Dr. Daryl Werner, Principal
Sunman-Dearborn MS, St. Leon
Matt Maple, Principal

Re-Designated I Schools

Lebanon MS — *Doyle Dunshee, Principal*
Northridge MS, Middlebury
Rachel Valance, Principal

Re-Designated II Schools

Hebron MS, Hebron — *Jeff Brooks, Principal*
Riverside Intermediate School, Plymouth
Jeni Hirschy, Principal

All seven of these schools will be formally recognized at the National Forum Summer Conference, June 26–29, 2018, in Washington, DC. They will each present a session at the conference and visit with one of our Indiana Congressmen. Indiana now has 15 designated Schools to Watch!

IMLEA and Special Olympics Announce Partnership

The Indiana Middle Level Education Association (IMLEA) and Special Olympics Indiana have announced a partnership which will set the stage for ongoing activities between both organizations intended to foster mutually beneficial learning experiences for years to come. The partnership will be called "Champions Together—In the Middle."

The partnership was inspired by the partnership between Special Olympics Indiana and the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) launched in 2013-14 known as "Champions Together." Lee Lonzo, Director of Champions Together, noted "this new partnership will seek to extend the message of respect, inclusion and anti-bullying into middle and intermediate schools throughout Indiana."

Through the partnership, the IMLEA will encourage its member schools and their students and faculties to participate in existing Special Olympics events, create their own events and otherwise lend support to Special Olympics Indiana. The activities pursued by IMLEA mem-

bers will vary in each school tailored to best utilize the students' time and local resources, but all will include the four criteria for being recognized as a Unified Champion School.

A school will be designated as a Unified Champion School if during the school year they 1) form an inclusive student leadership team to plan the program, 2) implement activities that engage the entire school in supporting respect and inclusion for individuals served by Special Olympics, 3) participate in Unified Sports® combining students both with and without disabilities as teammates, and 4) philanthropic support of Special Olympics Indiana and the Champions Together In the Middle partnership. Fifteen schools have signed up for this year to pilot the program. If your school would like to sign up for next year, email imlea@iasp.org to request more information.



Becoming a "School to Watch" and Transforming Our Vision of Education

Matt Maple, Principal – Sunman Dearborn MS

Recently Sunman-Dearborn Middle School received their first Schools to Watch site visit. Our staff, community partners, parents, administrators and students were interviewed throughout the day. The "Schools to Watch" committee conducted a thorough examination of our school's academics, community involvement/partnership, and, most importantly, how S-DMS students feel about their school.

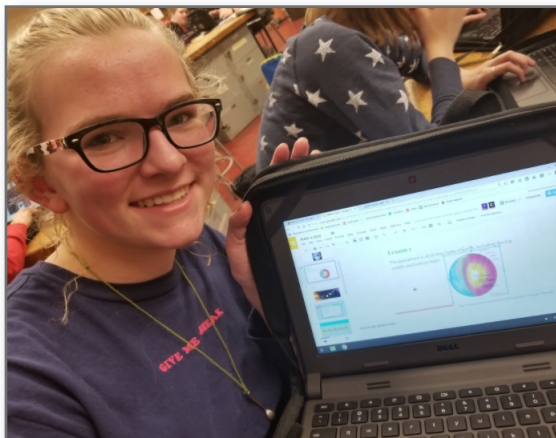
Throughout the "Schools to Watch" process,

our school made some drastic changes; we are implementing a teaming schedule for 6th grade students, implementation of the Trojan Careers Program and a Community Service Day. Our staff has transformed their vision of education, and now understand the importance of a positive culture and importance of educating the "whole" student. The "Schools to Watch" structure of the four domains of academic excellence—developmental responsive-

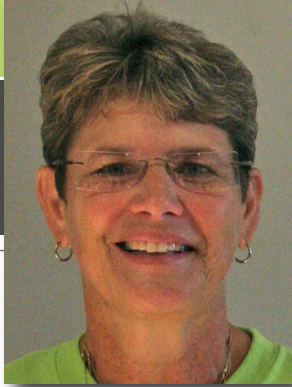
ness, social equity, and organizational structure—is an extremely valuable format when looking at the constructs of a middle school.

Personally, I have found the contacts I have made in working through the Schools to Watch application process to be as valuable as any professional development. Many Indiana middle schools are doing such great things, and I appreciate "Schools to Watch" being a platform to highlight those schools.

This student is showing her Google Slide presentation from Mr. Dawley's class. They could use anything – books, other people, technology – to help their classmates prepare for the upcoming assessment.



Mr. Black's Spanish class getting a workout by learning about the different dancing techniques of Latin American culture.



generationOn provides programs, tools and resources to engage kids and teens in service and volunteering.

generationOn Indiana

is a Lilly Endowment, Inc., grant-funded program facilitated by the IASP and the IMLEA to support and assist educators in Indiana with the FREE resources and lessons on the

generationOn and Learning to Give websites and provide FREE professional development. Connect to us by registering on www.generationOn.org. **Contact Joan Belschwender, Director of genOn IN at generationON@iasp.org for more information and check out our page on the IMLEA website.**

generationOn Schools

Educate, Equip and Empower students with 21st Century knowledge and skills through real-world problem-solving and service opportunities. FREE service and service-learning resources, individual and school registration, and online service-learning trackers www.generationOn.org/page/for-classrooms-and-schools.

generationOn Service Clubs

Provide kids and teens with the tools and resources to implement service projects and share their successes. Club members take the lead with the adult advisor supporting the club by providing information and supervision. <http://www.generationon.org/page/clubs>

Learning to Give (LTG)

FREE Philanthropy Education Lessons and Resources Teach Giving and Civic Engagement through Academics. Over 1,700 K-12 teacher-created lesson plans searchable by grade level, subject area, issue area, and time of year connected to standards to inspire and equip students who use their hearts and minds to impact their world. Toolkits with project ideas, background information, community resources and much more. Visit www.learningtogive.org and create an account.

generationOn Indiana knows the importance of starting students early on the path of philanthropy and service-learning. The 21st century skills that they will acquire through the service-learning process are key to creating effective and dynamic leaders with a heart for others. The lessons and resources on generationOn and Learning to Give, along with our support, will help students and schools with in this journey.

Our genOn IN Team has free professional development for your staff. Trainings can be anywhere from 30–90 minutes. We present at PLC time, staff meetings, team meetings, before or after school – whatever best meets the needs of your staff. Presentations can be customized to a generalized overview or a specifically targeted training – PBL, STEM, Special Education, Indiana Academic Standards connections, Indiana Graduation Pathways (service-learning pathway), anti-bullying curriculum, or even content area specific. Contact Beth Smith – Educational Consultant, generationOn Indiana, at bethsmithgenonin@iasp.org to schedule your free professional development with one of our genOn IN Team.

Check out our Spotlight to Service-Learning articles here. These monthly-themed articles, written by our genOn IN Educational Consultant Beth Smith, feature Indiana schools' service-learning experiences. More genOn IN information and these articles are archived on our genOn IN page on the IMLEA and the IASP websites.



generationOn
A POINTS OF LIGHT ENTERPRISE

New on the Learning to Give website:

- *Current Events* – Tools and tips related to current events. Involve your students' voice and action to make a difference. Advocacy is a form of social action and philanthropy.
- *Lead Your School* – Cultivate Your Students; Grow Your Community; Why Philanthropy Education. Use LTG's standards-aligned lessons, teach both "head and heart" through philanthropy education to motivate and empower learning and positive student action.
- *Get Started* – 8 Ways to Get Started including whiteboard videos to show your students.
- *TeachOne* – Four initiatives throughout the year, including Earth Day in April. Lessons with adaptable project ideas for your grade/subject.

generationOn Website:

- *Projects and Causes* – 13 Issue Areas with Project Ideas, Plans, Guides, Fact Sheets, Reading lists to assist kids and teens with their service and service-learning experiences.
- *Resources for Educators* to help implement service-learning in your school. Advance your teaching practice and enhance your students' learning through IPARDE, the six stages of service-learning.

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation, Fortville, has been recently designated the first generationOn Indiana School District. All of the schools in their district, including Mt. Vernon MS, have worked to educate their students about the importance of philanthropy and giving time, talent, and treasure to others, and have created a service-learning community.

There are currently over 325 registered generationOn schools in Indiana. Check out the genOn Schools Directory to see if your school is registered. Write Joan at generationOn@iasp.org about registering your school and starting your school's service-learning journey!



Let the Reading Begin!

With the help of generationOn Indiana, Castle North Middle School in Newburgh raised \$20,000 to fund Dolly Parton Imagination Library

In March 2017, the Castle North MS generationOn Club members chose a project designed to promote literacy. The goal set by the CNMS generationOn Club members was to raise \$20,000 to begin sending free books to children born after January 1, 2017, and residing in Warrick County.

Learning to Give awarded the club a \$1,000 grant that set the project in motion. The club members used the funds to write, illustrate, and publish the picture book, *Not Just a Story*. The book was given as a “thank you” to donors who gave at least \$25 – the cost of books for one year for one child. Learning to Give provided resources beyond the funding. Students were introduced to philanthropy with the lesson “What is Philanthropy? A Call to Action” (<https://www.learningtogive.org/units/call-action-intro-philanthropy/what-philanthropy-call-action>). The club members also used facts gathered from the Literacy project ideas on the Learning to Give website.

Active fundraising began immediately with the club members selling “Cards for a Cause.” The members solicited the help of our local elementary schools to spread the word. Chandler, Newburgh, Sharon, and Tennyson Elementary Schools allowed our club members to set up information/sales tables at spring events to collect donations and share details about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Information tables were also set up at local community events like the Warrick County Literacy Walk. By the end of the 2016-17 school year, club members had raised \$5,000 toward their goal.

Summer break didn’t stop the momentum that started in the spring. Word continued to spread. Grants applications were completed. Plans for fall fundraising were made.

Varying levels of donations and grant awards came from more than 60 businesses, organizations, and individuals. By December 2017, the club had met and nearly doubled the initial \$20,000 goal. The dream to bring Imagination Library to Warrick County is now reality.

Our founding partners have encouraged us to aim even higher and expand registration requirements. We’d love to send free books to ALL children residing in Warrick County under the age of five. The new goal of \$100,000 will allow that to happen. That sounds like a big number, but in six



Castle North MS students collaborated with students in a technical writing class at the University of Southern Indiana

short months our club laid the groundwork for their vision and the goal of \$20,000, so the sky seems to be the limit.

The future of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Warrick County is bright. The Warrick County School Corporation has accepted the work of the CNMS generationOn Club and is managing all funds collected after January 1, 2018. Several schools in Warrick County have designated future funds to the initiative.

The CNMS generationOn Club will continue the tradition of writing, illustrating, and publishing a picture book to promote literacy for preschoolers in Warrick County. This year, the book will be sold and all proceeds will go to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Warrick County. We have the privilege of collaborating with students in a technical writing class at the University of Southern Indiana to write the best book possible.

This project has provided our students with the opportunity to build academic and life skills too numerous to mention. Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library IS coming to Warrick County. The CNMS generationOn Club members’ efforts have laid a foundation for a legacy that will carry on for years to come. Learn more about the Dolly Parton Imagination Library: <https://imaginationlibrary.com/>

Darlene Short
Ginger Schaperjohn
CNMS generationOn Club Co-Sponsors





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