



The Historic Carrollton Covered Bridge

The Bridge

Volume 6, Issue 3

November, 2014



Important Dates

- Nov. 4** Election Day:
No School
- Nov. 10** Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m.
- Nov. 11** Veterans Day Holiday:
No School
- Nov. 17** Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m.
- Nov. 24-26** Out of Calendar Days:
No School
- Nov. 27** Thanksgiving Day
Holiday: No School
- Nov. 28** Out of Calendar Day:
No School
- Dec. 8** Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m.
- Dec. 22** Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m.
- Dec. 23** End of Second 9-Wks
Grading Period:
Report Cards Jan. 12
- Dec. 24-31** Out of Calendar and
Christmas Holiday
- Jan. 1-2** New Year Holiday and
Out of Calendar Day

Hi Folks,

Our school year is moving along at a rather fast pace. We have one 9-weeks in the books and the second one is well under way.

As much as I don't want to admit it, winter weather is making head-way towards West Virginia. I really do enjoy the snow, but with the school calendar changes from the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and having lost 23 days last year, another hard winter will have us going to school well into June.

On the State front, educationally we have been notified by the WVDE that we will soon receive our School Designations and Accountability Results based upon Westest results from Spring of 2014. According to the Department, accountability calculations will be finalized, and the opportunity for schools and districts to review school designations will be available sometime in November. Those results will be withheld from the public by the State for a period of time and then will become public through *ZoomWV*, the new source for education information in our state.

Locally, our new WV State Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Michael Martirano, has announced his "Vision" for West Virginia schools and his plans to visit all county systems. While we have not yet received word related to his coming to Barbour County, we are working to ensure that our local and school strategic plans are consistent with the "Vision" of Dr. Martirano.

November tends to be a short month with Election Day and Veterans Day, and then the Thanksgiving break to start the Holiday Season. Please allow me and my family to express to everyone our heartfelt best wishes for this Thanksgiving. We hope that all of you will enjoy family and friends in giving thanks for all your blessings – little ones as well as big ones.

As always my door is open, please stop by when in town.

Respectfully and, again, Happy Thanksgivings!



New State Superintendent's Vision Plan Is Based Upon "One Voice, One Focus: All Students Achieving"

As I start my tenure as the State Superintendent of Schools of the State for West Virginia, I am full of energy, enthusiasm, hope and optimism. According to Michael Fullan, author of the book entitled, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, "Energetic, enthusiastic, hopeful leaders cause greater moral purpose in themselves, bury themselves in change, naturally build relationships and knowledge and seek coherence to consolidate a greater moral purpose." I can think of no greater moral purpose than the task of educating our youth and it is an honor and a privilege to defend the rights of every child in West Virginia. I firmly believe that this is a very exciting time for the students in West Virginia. The state is implementing the Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives and a new evaluation system for principals and teachers. We are transitioning to a new A-F grading system for our schools, to a new generation of assessments developed by Smarter Balance and we as a state are having conversations about the skills needed for the highly competitive global economy that are designed to prepare more young people for college and careers. All of these transformational efforts are designed to ensure that our students graduate from high school ready for college and for the complex 21st century world of work.



During the last several months, I have engaged in conversations with members of our State Board of Education, our Governor, our elected officials, community and business leaders, educational leaders, teachers, parents, and students and it has been made clear to me that outstanding public education in the state of West Virginia must be a top priority for every citizen. They have communicated directly to me that they want an educational leader who is committed to and who will take student achievement to a much higher level by increasing opportunities, increasing rigor and with a "one voice" focus to provide a fierce level of urgency "of now" for the educational priorities for all of our young people.

With full fidelity and commitment, I plan on giving it my all and doing whatever I can to meet and exceed the stated expectations from the State Board of Education and our stakeholders. This is my promise. However, I know that I cannot do it alone and I will need the support of every citizen in West Virginia. We must believe that all young people can and will learn and that every young person in West Virginia must be provided with a world-class education. It must be a rigorous educational experience that focuses on each student graduating from high school being fully prepared for college and careers. We must embrace a singular focus where we expect every young person to graduate from high school. Dropping out of high school is not an option and we must increase our graduation rate and decrease our dropout rate. There is no other more important metric that validates our progress than our graduation rate. When more young people achieve and graduate, our entire state becomes stronger.

I am looking forward to working with everyone in our great state to improve the educational quality for each young person in West Virginia. We must be bold, innovative and think of possibilities that will continue to improve the quality of life for our young people. We must do everything that we can do to eliminate academic failure. Please join me in this challenge and assist in whatever way that you can as we implement our bold and robust agenda for educational transformation, continuous improvement and change as we examine our processes, our products and look to our people for ways to improve the educational delivery model for our young people. I firmly believe that our best days are yet to come as we advance and implement our "One Voice, One Focus: All Students Achieving" vision plan.

Michael J. Martirano, Ed. D.

State Superintendent of Schools

Barbour County Schools Awarded \$300,000 Innovation Zone Grant for Philippi Middle School

During its October 8th meeting, the West Virginia Department of Education announced that Barbour County Schools was one of four recipients statewide selected for a 2014-15 Innovation Zone / Dropout Prevention grant. Barbour County will receive the maximum funding available of \$300,000 over the next three years for the implementation of a new dropout prevention and school improvement initiative at Philippi Middle School. Joined by stakeholders that include educators, community organizations, businesses, parents and citizens, the partnership has embraced this grant proposal, which will dedicate 100% of the Innovation Zone Grant funding to creating, managing and equipping West Virginia's first "middle school within a school."



PMS will become the first middle school in West Virginia to adopt the New Tech Network philosophy when its eighth grade begins the new approach to learning at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year. Philip Barbour High School, one of only two high schools enrolled in NTN in the state, recently entered its third year of the program in August of 2014. Benefits of the program are anticipated to include increased graduation and attendance rates, and improved academic achievement levels, all of which will lead to graduates who will become lifelong learners and productive citizens of the 21st century.

The competitive grant award brings to \$900,000 that the county has received since 2011 for local implementation of the New Tech Network program model, which is based upon three primary elements: a culture that empowers, teaching that engages and technology that enables. First, the culture component,

focusing on trust, respect and responsibility, establishes a critical foundation in setting a positive tone for the entire educational experience. Next, project-based learning—the teaching that engages—involves students in defining problems, group planning, research and investigation, guided activities, developing solutions, and presenting those solutions. Finally, the 1:1 ratio of fully-equipped computers provided to participating students is a central program component that propels a level of learning and experience mandated in today's technology-driven economy. Current research, data and best practices all support this exciting new pathway to success, as students assume more personalized and active roles in their own preparations for high school, college and career accomplishments.

Entitled, "The Middle School Quest for High School Success," the program is designed to build a bridge from middle school to the high school by preparing students for the challenges, demands and opportunities of high school, while tapping their natural interests in technology, problem-solving, self-direction and group activities. Initially designed for the eighth grade core classes, the program may expand to other levels as future resources permit. The administration and educators will begin planning, training and acquisition of the equipment and supplies for the program during January. The staff will be guided in the program philosophy and instructional model throughout the spring and summer by certified NTN trainers and consultants, as well as by their experienced colleagues from the high school complex.

Superintendent, Dr. Joe Super, commented on the announcement of the grant award, saying: "I want to express my most sincere thanks to our community partners and to the staff and LSIC members at Philippi Middle School for stepping up to the plate in supporting us through the application process. It is because of "that" support we move forward in doing the right thing through our efforts to instill in students not only the desire but also the need to accept their accountability for their education. Our being awarded this grant is truly another major step in that direction."

KMS Students Compete in Army's 2014 CyberMission STEM Contest

Mrs. Angie McDaniel's science classes in grades 6-8 at Kasson are competing in the Army Educational Outreach Program's 13th annual *eCYBERMISSION* program. The free online learning competition is designed to cultivate student interest in science, technology, engineering and math by encouraging them to develop solutions to real-world challenges in their local communities. Students can win on state, regional, and national levels, with national winning teams receiving up to \$9,000 in U.S. EE Savings Bonds, as valued at maturity. In the last four years, Mrs. McDaniel has had eight teams to place either first or second in the state. This year's team, shown left to right, includes: Ruston Seaman, Jordan McGee & Kiara Harris.



Digital Storytelling Project at Kasson

"emPowered Stories" is an exciting new program established through the Clay Center and the Benedum Foundation that focuses on storytelling through the use of technology. The project is also intended to encourage students to take college preparatory science and elective technology courses in high school, to ultimately pursue careers in science or technology.

Students are challenged to develop 10-minute multimedia video exhibitions using collected oral histories, interviews, video segments and photography, tied together by voiceover narratives. The completed videos will be displayed in a special exhibit at the Clay Center.

Through "emPowered Stories," students at Kasson School (one of five chosen in the state) will produce digital stories exploring energy issues in their communities. These stories will address community issues and questions posed by the natural gas and energy industries in a creative way that facilitates 21st century learning and

strengthens skills in the STEAM disciplines of science, technology, engineering, art and math. KEMS advisors for the program are Susan Anglin, Angie McDaniel and Jan Coffman.



Extension Service Project Helps Volga-Century Students Learn About Propulsion

Barbara Wolfe with the WVU Extension Office recently visited Volga-Century Elementary School and showed students how to make stomp rockets as a science project. Prior to the activity, students collected plastic two-liter bottles and brought them in. They engineered their rockets with Mrs. Wolfe before launching them in the school cafeteria. Slade Chitester is shown launching his stomp rocket while third and fourth grade classmates await their turns.



WV Social Studies Fair Set for April 24

The West Virginia State Social Studies Fair is set to be held at the Charleston Civic Center on April 24, 2015. The annual event host students from around the Mountain State who demonstrate their knowledge and creativity in the true spirit of 21st century learning. For the first time in 2014-15, *all* high school students are moving to the National History Day portion of the State Social Studies Fair, while middle school students will have the option of the History Day event or the traditional categories.

Barbour County school level winners from grades 3-12 will advance to the RESA contest, which will be held at the Fairmont Middletown Mall no later than March 30, 2015. The specific date will be announced soon. Social studies teachers are encouraged to conduct classroom and school fairs to afford their students opportunities to ask essential questions, recognize patterns of behavior, think critically, create solutions, predict outcomes and draw conclusions to help them learn to solve problems, thereby preparing them to be participatory citizens of the 21st Century global society. For more information about the Social Studies Fair, please contact Elaine Benson at the BOE or visit: www.wvssfair.com.

— Odds 'N' Ends —

➤ **November 21 Early Release:** A 3-hour early release will occur on November 21, the Friday preceding Thanksgiving Break to compensate for employee time spent during the October Parent-Teacher Conferences. This plan will necessitate service personnel to acquire three hours of in-lieu time so they may take the early release or they may work a full day schedule. A similar plan has been established for the spring conferences and early release process as well. It is reflected in the updated county calendar on the BCS website.

➤ **ABE Program Offers Computer Training:** The Barbour County Adult Education Department is now offering a free computer class for interested citizens from the area. It will provide instruction in such areas as: computer basics, file management, exploring the web, Email basics, word processing, spreadsheets and presentations. The self-paced program will allow enrollees to learn at their own paces. Completers will receive a certificate at the end of each course. The class is open each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at the CTC Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, call the center at 457-4807.



➤ **Next Equivalency Exam Dates Announced:** The second session of the TASC high school equivalency testing will be held at 4 p.m. at the Career and Technical Center on December 10-11. Formerly known as the GED program, the new state credential is available at no charge to citizens who register and pass a pre-test. ABE classes are available to help candidates prepare for the test. Call Shelly Gainer at 457-4807 to register or for more information.

Changes in County Dental Plan Pending for 2015



If approved by the Barbour County Board of Education, the system will be changing dental plan coverage to a

company named "Principal" as of Jan. 1, 2015. This change will help the County financially while providing the same coverage as Delta Dental. No matter what company the county chooses, it must be remembered that the coverage rates are subject to fluctuations based upon the volume of submitted claims and the dollar values of those claims as per the group plan.

The following assurances have been provided by the underwriter:

1) As noted above, the benefit coverage plan is the same as Delta Dental, while providing a financially better situation for the County.

2) As with Delta, whatever you have accrued towards your deductible will be honored if it is within the deductible year.

In order to assist with a smooth transition to "Principal," employees need to be aware of their personal provider's (dentist's) policy regarding the filing of claims. With that in mind, employees are urged to do the following:

1) Please contact your current dental provider to see if they are in the "Principal" family of participating dentists and exactly what their policy states for filing claims.

2) If they are not in the "Principal" family, again please check their policy for filing claims and see if they will file the necessary reimbursement forms for you. As now with Delta, if they are not a participating member, you may have to file the paperwork.

The county administration is informing employees now to afford all ample time to work with their current dental providers and to share any questions or concerns that they may have.

