

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dwayne Umbarger at 1:40 p.m. on March 5, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senators Corbin, Hensley, Lee (excused)

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes
Dale Dennis, Deputy Commissioner of Education
Judy Steinlicht, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Destry Brown, Principal, USD 413 Chanute
Dr. Cal Cormack, Superintendent, USD 458, Basehor-Linwood

Others attending: See Attached List

Briefing on Charter Schools

Destry Brown, Principal, addressed the Committee on the Chanute Elementary Charter School, USD 413. The Chanute school is one of a few elementary charter schools. Their purpose was to provide an educational alternative to the traditional; to meet a need in the community to allow students to progress at their own rate; to keep special education kids in the mainstream all the time and to create a student centered school based on current research and learning.

Their reading program is set up in a 90 minute block for the entire school so that each child can go to his or her level reading class. The kids are actively involved for the entire 90 minutes in reading activities, such as actually reading or talking about comprehension. They switch reading activities every 15-20 minutes. The kids are neither bored nor frustrated and Mr. Brown feels that because of this the discipline problems have significantly decreased. Students that are reading significantly below grade level are given an opportunity for a very structured extra 20 minutes of individual tutoring every day. The goal is to have every child reading at grade level by the time they reach third grade. In the math program, they have a 60 minute split block every day so they can have more teachers and smaller class sizes. The kids are offered tutoring in small groups and individually, if needed. All students attend each enrichment class, such as Spanish, technology, creative writing, creative art and science for 30 minutes each week. They have character education in which they focus on a different character trait each month, such as respect, responsibility, cooperation, gratitude. These traits are re-enforced throughout the day, each week at the student council meetings and at the end of the month when they have character rallies.

Progress reports or report cards show outcomes for each content area and reflect the individual student's mastery for each outcome. This way the students know exactly what they need to know to move up to the next level. Students are included in parent-teacher conferences. The student identifies strengths and weaknesses and establishes goals for improvements.

Results in each area are very positive; 81% are reading at or above grade level; 90% are achieving at a highly proficient level; 95% of the parents are satisfied with the student-led conferences; 100% of the parents participated in parent-teacher conferences; 300 people attended the fall family reading night and as many are signed up for the spring family math night; no parents have asked to transfer a student to another school; the waiting list is growing; and the teachers are actively involved in the planning and monitoring of the charter school.

The Committee was impressed with the success of the charter school. Mr. Brown has shared with other schools in his district and was encouraged by the Committee to continue to do so. Mr. Brown believes

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION at on March 5, 2002 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

that anything they are doing could be done in any other school. (Attachment 1)

Dr. Cal Cormack, Superintendent, Basehor-Linwood USD 458 addressed the Committee on his virtual charter school which has been open since 1998. Their mission is to reach out to and serve students who are not being otherwise served by public education. Over 95% of the students currently enrolled were not attending a public school before enrolling in his school. Dr. Cormack stated that they could be considered a "drop-out recovery" program because they are successfully reconnecting students and families with public education. The intent of the charter school was to provide more choices for students and parents. The initial enrollment was 63 in the first year and now in the fourth year, enrollment is 350.

The Basehor-Linwood school is a virtual school in that they are on the internet and accessed by way of internet. They are using curriculum that meets state standards and being on the internet makes all resources accessible to parents, students and teachers. When students enroll, they agree to participate in the Kansas State Assessments, ITBS, and all local assessments. Many of the students were formerly home-schooled and did not participate in assessment tests. The school considers it a major accomplishment to get these students to participate so that their progress can be measured against what other students are doing in the state and nationally. Students and parents receive a computer with initial orientation and training at the time of enrollment and they receive textbooks from the district. They are required to pay a small leasing fee for the computer and pay textbook rental fees, the same as in the rest of the district. Progress of the students over the four years the school has been in existence is equal to or superior to other students in the school district. (Attachment 2)

A motion was made by Senator Oleen to approve minutes for February 14, 18 and 19, 2002. Seconded by Senator Emler. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 2:30 p.m.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE - 3/5/02

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>
Elaine Frisbie	Division of the Budget
Rod Bieker	KSDE
Bruce Wyatt	Board of Education
Val DeFenu	St. Bd of Ed.
Mark Desetti	KNEA
Val Lomack	USD 458
Wesley Ble	USD 230
Bart Doermy	USD 230
Denise Apt	U.S.A - USD 500
Jacques Dakes	SOE
Mark Tallman	KASTS
Destry Brown	USD #413
Steve Parsons	USD 413
Whitney Klaassen	Page (Chanute, KS)
Rachel Moore	Page (Chanute, KS)
Daniel McCoy	Page (Chanute, KS)
PHILIP HURLEY	PAT HURLEY & Co.
Joshua Lewis	Senator Teichman
Beal Stauffer	Topeka, USD 501
Craig Grant	HNEA
Don Knowles	USA.

Chanute Elementary Charter School

Purposes of Chanute Elementary Charter School:

- To provide an educational alternative to the traditional elementary school.
- To meet a need within the community to allow students to progress at their own rate and level. For example, parents of above average students believed that their children should be allowed to go to the next level if they already knew the curricular outcomes. Parents of below average students wanted their children to be provided instruction at their level rather than become frustrated in material that was too difficult.
- To create a student-centered school based on current research about learning.

Programs:

□ Reading

- Students attend reading classes on their reading level
- 90-minute block schoolwide each day
- Uses cooperative learning
- Keeps students actively involved
- Instructional techniques based upon current research about reading instruction
- Additional 20 minutes of individual tutoring for students reading below level in first three grades.

□ Math

- Students attend math classes at their level
- 60-minute split block each day
- Uses manipulatives to allow students to construct meaning
- Teaches problem-solving daily
- Instructional techniques based upon current research about math instruction
- Small class sizes and two teachers at each level
- Students having difficulty meeting outcomes receive additional tutoring in small groups and individually

Senate Education
3-5-02
Attachment 1

□ **Enrichment Classes**

- Spanish, Technology, Creative Writing, Creative Construction, and Science Enrichment
- **All students** attend each enrichment class for 30 minutes on a weekly basis.
- Students and parents have input into the enrichment classes being offered through site council discussions and surveys.

□ **Character Education**

- Focuses on a different character trait each month. Examples of traits include: Respect, Responsibility, Cooperative, Gratitude.
- Character Rallies at the end of each month.
- Morning message every day along with a pledge for each trait.
- Reinforcement and instruction is embedded throughout the entire curriculum as teachable moments and role playing activities.
- Reinforced during weekly class council meetings.
- Students are taught songs during music class about the trait of the month and they perform the song during the monthly character rallies.

□ **Outcome-based Curriculum**

- Students are assessed according to mastery of individual outcomes.
- Progress reports (grade cards) show all outcomes for each content area and reflect the individual student's mastery for each outcome.
- Uses the district curriculum, which is aligned to both State and National standards.

□ **Student Input and Accountability**

- Students lead the parent-teacher conferences.
- They identify strengths and weaknesses and establish goals for improvement.
- Students have opportunities to participate in the development of some of the schoolwide activities.
- The students generate much of the information about the school that goes home.

Results:

- When school began 68% of the students were reading at or above grade level. As of last week, 81% were reading at or above grade level.
- Math progress reports show that 90% of the students are achieving at a highly proficient level for the outcomes being taught at their level.

- Parents were surveyed about the student-led conferences in the fall. 95% reported that they were very satisfied with the experience and want to continue using this format during conferences.
- We had 100% participation in parent conferences in the fall.
- Over 300 people attended our fall family reading night and a similar number has registered to attend the spring family math night this week.
- No parents have asked to transfer their child out of the building except for a couple who have moved out of the school district.
- Our waiting list is growing weekly.
- The teachers at the building are all actively involved in the planning and monitoring of the charter school. They are excited about their teaching and have developed into leaders within the district grade level teams.

MATH SKILL PROGRESS REPORT

Page 1

Year
2001-2002

Assessment Mark

Proficient **P**

Making adequate progress **S**

Having Difficulty **U**

Skills listed are fifth grade level curriculum skills.

Student

Homeroom Teacher

Math

Teacher

PROBLEM SOLVING		Quarter				COMPUTATION		Quarter			
Your child:		1	2	3	4	Your child:		1	2	3	4
Solves problems by drawing a picture.						Expresses and demonstrates the commutative (order) property.					
Solves problems by looking for a pattern.						Expresses and demonstrates the associative (grouping) property.					
Solves problems by working backward.						Demonstrates addition of large numbers.					
Solves problems by making a table.						Demonstrates subtraction of large numbers.					
Uses the TIPS problem-solving model to solve word problems.						Uses the technique of compensation to find sums and differences.					
NUMBER SENSE		Quarter				Uses mental math to find products involving multiples of 10 and 100.					
Your child:		1	2	3	4						
Solves algebraic expressions with one variable.						Finds factors and multiples of whole numbers.					
Reads and writes numbers to the billions.						Correctly multiplies large numbers.					
Recognizes the following symbols: = (equal to), < (less than), > (greater than).						Expresses and demonstrates the commutative and associative properties.					
Rounds numbers to the nearest multiple of hundreds, thousands, and millions.						Uses mental math techniques of the distributive property to break numbers apart to find products.					
Uses a variety of estimation techniques.						Divides when there are zeroes in the quotient.					
Uses critical thinking to find number patterns.						Finds 1-digit quotients for 1-digit divisors.					
Uses critical thinking to discover function rules.						Divides whole numbers with 2 and 3-digit numbers.					
Rounds decimals to the nearest tenth and to the nearest whole number.						Interprets remainders when solving word problems involving division.					
Expresses and writes decimals using tenths, hundredths, and thousandths.						Adds decimals correctly.					
Interprets and demonstrates equivalent fractions by multiplying and dividing.						Subtracts decimals correctly.					
Compares and orders whole numbers and decimals and explain the relative magnitude among them.						Multiplies two decimals correctly.					
Compares and orders fractions greater than zero and explain the relative magnitude among them.						Divides a decimal by a whole number.					
Reads temperatures in degrees Fahrenheit using decimals.						Divides whole numbers with zeroes in quotient and money notation in the dividend.					
DATA, GRAPHS, AND PROBABILITY		Quarter				Demonstrates addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators with reducing.					
Your child:		1	2	3	4						
Reads, interprets, and creates bar graphs, double bar graphs, pictographs, and line graphs.						Explains and performs addition and subtraction of fractions and mixed numbers without regrouping and express answers in simplest form.					
Uses critical thinking to make inferences from data shown on graphs.											
Finds the mean, median, mode, and range of data.											
Recognizes and uses critical thinking skills to determine probability.											

MATH SKILL PROGRESS REPORT		Page	Year		Assessment Mark	
2			2001-2002		Proficient	P
Skills listed are fifth grade level curriculum skills.				Math	Making adequate progress	S
Student	Homeroom Teacher	Math		Teacher	Having Difficulty	U
GEOMETRY		Quarter		TEACHER COMMENTS		
Your child:		1	2	3	4	Your child:
Identifies common types of quadrilaterals.						
Identifies solid figures including cylinder, sphere, rectangular prism, and pyramid.						
Finds perimeter.						
Solves problems involving the use of data in a drawing.						
Uses a formula to find the area of a rectangle and a right triangle.						
Identifies, draws, and analyzes scalene, isosceles, and equilateral triangles.						
Identifies polygons used in tessellation.						
Identifies the parts of a circle.						
Finds the circumference of a circle.						
Uses critical thinking to make comparisons between the perimeters and areas of two rectangles.						
Recognizes points, lines, line segments, rays, and angles (right, acute, obtuse).						
Uses a protractor to measure angles.						
Verifies by measuring that the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180 degrees.						
Uses a formula to find the volume of a rectangular prism.						
Recognizes and performs up to two transformations on one basic shape.						
Graphs number pairs on the coordinate plane.						
MEASUREMENT		Quarter				
Your child:		1	2	3	4	
Estimates lengths in feet, yards, and miles.						
Decides whether an actual measurement is needed or whether an estimate is sufficient.						
Expresses measurements in millimeters, centimeters, meters, or kilometers using decimals when appropriate.						
Changes customary units of capacity from smaller to larger and vice versa.						
Measures length and customary units to change units of length to smaller or larger units.						
Measures length using fractional parts of an inch.						

READING WINGS PROGRESS REPORT

Year _____

Student _____

Homeroom Teacher _____

Reading Teacher _____

READING LEVEL

Each student is given the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) every eight weeks to determine progress. This test measures the students' ability to comprehend text. After completing the test, students are given a score. They are then placed in reading groups based upon their score and their daily classroom performance.

Eight Week Assessments					
	Aug.	Oct.	Dec.	Mar.	May
SRI Score					
Reading Level					

Assessment Period			
1	2	3	4

Assessment Marks	
P	Proficient
S	Making adequate progress
U	Having Difficulty

Assessment Period			
1	2	3	4

COMPREHENSION SKILLS				
Your child:				
Identifies the main characters of a story.				
Identifies the setting of a story.				
Identifies the main idea of a story.				
Identifies the problem and the solution in a story.				
Makes predictions based upon prior knowledge and the events in a story.				

RELATED READING SKILLS				
Your child:				
Comprehends what he/she has read.				
Can sequence a story.				
Draws conclusions by interpreting events in a story.				
Compares and contrasts information in a story.				
Recognizes cause and effect relationships.				
Distinguishes between fact and opinion.				
Distinguishes between fiction and non-fiction material.				
Identifies the author's purpose for writing the story.				

ORAL READING SKILLS				
Your child:				
Reads smoothly, using expression and punctuation clues.				
Correctly pronounces sight words and uses them in meaningful sentences.				
Applies word attack strategies.				

COOPERATIVE LEARNING SKILLS				
Your child:				
Actively listens.				
Helps and encourages others.				
Participates in a positive manner.				
Actively reads with another student during partner reading.				

RESPONSIBILITIES:				
Your child:				
Comes to reading prepared with materials.				
Takes care of books, supplies, and materials.				
Completes tasks on time.				
Completes and returns homework.				

Teacher Comments:

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT LANGUAGE ARTS

Year _____

Skills listed are fifth grade level curriculum skills.

Student

Teacher

Assessment Marks					Assessment Period			
P	Proficient - Meets Standard	1		2	3	4		
S	Making adequate progress							
U	Having difficulty							
	Has not been introduced.							
		Assessment Period						
		1	2	3	4			
WRITING								
Your child:								
Organizes a written piece with a beginning, middle, and end about one main idea.								
Generates personal expression and appropriate voice.								
Uses transitions to allow ideas to flow fluently from paragraph to paragraph.								
Uses specific nouns, powerful verbs, vivid adjectives, adverbs, and descriptive phrases in writing.								
Practices a writing process that includes planning, drafting, editing, and publishing to produce a written document.								
GRAMMAR								
Your child:								
Creates sentences using common, proper, singular, plural, singular possessive and plural possessive nouns.								
Changes nouns to appropriate pronouns.								
Creates sentences using common and proper adjectives.								
Creates sentences using adverbs.								
Determines the parts of sentences, subjects, predicate, adjectives, adverbs, direct/indirect objects, and prepositions.								
Identifies and writes declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative sentences using appropriate end punctuation.								
Identifies and uses antonyms, synonyms, homonyms, and homographs.								
Recognizes and uses figurative language like simile and metaphor.								
Evaluates sentence structure: simple, compound, complete, fragments, run-ons, subject/verb agreement, and negatives.								
SPELLING								
Your child:								
Level:								
Uses correct spelling of commonly used words.								
STUDY SKILLS								
Your child:								
Uses various parts of a book such as table of contents, appendix, and glossary to locate information.								
Uses a dictionary to determine meaning of words.								
HABITS AND ATTITUDES								
Your child:								
Follows directions.								
Is organized.								
Works well independently.								
Makes good use of time.								
Takes pride in neat work.								
Completes assignments on time.								
Respects rules and authority.								
Talks at appropriate times.								
Accepts personal responsibility.								
Shows pleasant, cooperative attitude.								
Cares for own and other's property.								
Interacts well with others.								
Shares thoughts and ideas with the class.								
Practices self-control.								
CUMULATIVE ATTENDANCE								
Days Absent								
Times Tardy								

Assessment Marks		STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT																		
P	Proficient - Meets Standard	SCIENCE																		
S	Making adequate progress	Year _____																		
U	Having difficulty	Skills listed are fifth grade level curriculum skills.																		
	Has not been introduced.	Student					Teacher													
		Assessment Period				1	2	3	4	Assessment Period				1	2	3	4			
Characteristics of Life		Five Senses																		
Your child:		Your child:																		
Explains ways that nonliving things affect living things.						Describes the process of hearing.														
Habitats		Earth Science																		
Compares and contrasts different habitats including oceans, grasslands, and deserts.						Compares and contrasts materials through which sound passes.														
Predicts the possible consequences of an interruption or accident occurring in a food chain.						Space														
Classification, Observations, and Predictions		Locates the most prominent areas for earthquakes and volcanoes to occur and explains why they occur more frequently in these areas.																		
Records and interprets data during an experiment.						Human Health and Nutrition														
Identifies the seven steps of the scientific method.						Explains how the blood flows to and from the heart.														
Recognizes and uses the following terms: variables, hypothesis, observation, results, conclusions, evaluation, and procedure.						Labels the parts of the human respiratory system.														
Environment		Analyzes how the respiratory and circulatory systems work together in the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the human body.																		
Analyzes the effects of pollution on an environment.						Constructs a healthy living plan for a fifth grader.														
Plants		Teacher Comments:																		
Recognizes the differences between a plant and an animal cell.																				
Examines the interrelationships of the plant and animal kingdoms including illustrating and discussing the carbon dioxide and oxygen cycles.																				
Animals																				
Examines the role humans play in the balance of nature.																				
States of Matter/Energy/Forces																				
Creates different types of circuits to demonstrate the conduction of electricity.																				
Defines conservation of matter.																				
Simple Machines																				
Recognizes the components of a compound machine.																				
Designs a compound machine including at least two simple machines.																				
Seasons/Weather																				
Explain the term "air pressure."																				
Compares and contrasts organized data on air pressure and daily weather for a specified period																				

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT SOCIAL STUDIES

Year _____

Skills listed are fifth grade level curriculum skills.

Student

Teacher

Assessment Marks					Assessment Period				
P	Proficient - Meets Standard				1	2	3	4	
S	Making adequate progress								
U	Having difficulty								
	Has not been introduced.								
		Assessment Period							
		1	2	3	4				
CIVICS/GOVERNMENT									
Your child:									
Describes when and why the Declaration of Independence was written.									
Explains why the three branch system of government was created in the United States.									
Explains the principles and ideals of the American democratic system.									
Identifies one of our founding fathers and explains their contributions to the development of our nation.									
ECONOMICS									
Your child:									
Explains the relationship of supply and demand in the US market economy.									
Describes the government's role in the economy.									
GEOGRAPHY									
Your child:									
Explains and uses map essentials (i.e. Scale, directional indicators, symbols, legend, latitude, and longitude).									
Describes why and how early people migrated from Asia to North America									
Explains how geography influenced where people settled.									
Identifies and locates Bering Strait, Chesapeake Bay, Hudson Bay, Ohio River, and St. Lawrence River.									
GEOGRAPHY (Continued)									
Your child:									
Identifies the location of Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.									
Identifies and locates Canada, England, France, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.									
Uses conflict resolution techniques to solve conflicts in a variety of settings.									
HISTORY									
Your child:									
Explains the reasons the early explorers came to the Americas.									
Describes the reasons the American colonies broke away from British rule.									
Explains the impact of the Civil War on the statehood of Kansas.									
Teacher Comments:									

James F. Queenan III, D.O.
402 Westview Ave.
Chanute, KS 66720
March 4, 2002

RE: Alcott Charter Elementary School
Unified School District # 413
Chanute, KS


To: Members of the State Board of Education

I am writing this letter to support Destry Brown's continuing endeavor as Principal of Alcott School. Shortly after I finished my residency in orthopedic surgery in New York, my son, James, started kindergarten at Alcott. As James has been diagnosed with autism, my wife, Melody, and I were concerned whether James could be "mainstreamed" in public school. James has done very well, in large part to his teachers' and Mr. Brown's efforts. James is now in second grade at Alcott, which has functioned as a charter school since this school year began. Though he will always be autistic, James is excelling past where we expected he would be at this point. He likes to go to school and learn. With Alcott's charter system, James is evaluated every nine weeks and placed in the appropriate level for each subject. It is important to James that his card stay green, a disciplinary tool used by the teachers. If you told me two years ago, such measures would be effective, I would have been incredulous. Recently, Mrs. Bideau, a teacher at Alcott, and James put together a presentation of dinosaurs that James gave to all of the classes. I am attaching a column from Alcott's newsletter about the presentation. One student said, "James must be very brave", for getting up in front so many students.

Destry Brown, I believe, is the best principal in Chanute. I am told that Alcott used to have the worst reputation of Chanute's elementary schools. Now, it has the best. Destry has been the leading proponent of obtaining and instituting the goals of the charter system. He knows his students and cares deeply of their education and well being. He usually is the one to greet the students in the morning when he opens their car doors, or meets them walking to school. When I think of my principals at schools where I grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts, Destry outshines them all.

Unfortunately, neither my wife nor I could be in Topeka to speak on behalf of Mr. Brown or the charter school. I hope that this letter helps keep the charter school at Alcott.

Sincerely,


James F. Queenan, III

Alcott Gazette

February 2002

Published By: Mrs. Bideau's SFA Class

Editor: David Martin

Photographer: Lauren Galemore

Special thanks to Mrs. Erickson

Alcott's New Web Page Guess What?!

Three students from the Web Design class at the High School will be coming to Alcott to build our web page. The students will be interviewing the teachers so they can decide what will be put on the web page.

"It's in the very early stages right now", Mrs. Erickson tells me. The goal is for every class to have their own page. She also would like for the 4th and 5th graders to help build the page.

Right now you can visit the district's web page at www.usd413.k12.ks.us. Here you will find a link to Alcott's old page that will soon be updated with pictures and articles about Alcott. Keep logging on to see all the new changes!

By: Amanda Turner



Mrs. Ruggles

I interviewed Mrs. Ruggles. I asked her what is it like having a son in the military and she said, "It is scary because she does not want him to go to war". Her jobs before she was our secretary were being a lunch lady, and a sales clerk.

When I asked her what her favorite thing about Alcott is she said, "The kids and the staff." She thinks it's exciting being a secretary. The last thing I asked her, "Is being a secretary hard?" She said, "It can be."

Mrs. Ruggles is our friend and kind of like a second mom.

By: Danielle Riley



Life Education Center

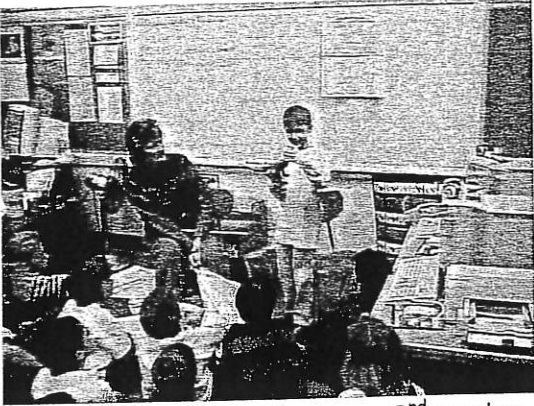
We interviewed Janice Bone, a certified leader of the Life Education Center, about everything she knows about the LEC Trailer. Each of the LEC mobile classrooms are 36 feet long, with all the latest in teaching aids.

Did you know that the LEC started in Sydney, Australia in 1979? In that country it also drives into the outback and the classes are bussed to it. Janice Bone said that more kids have stopped doing drugs in Australia, because of the LEC Trailer.

There are 12 trailers in the USA, some in China, Great Britain, and three at Greenbush. It has been coming to Chanute for 13 years. There are 35 school districts that the LEC travels to, including three in Missouri.

We asked some kids what their favorite part was. Keaton Brown said he liked TAM the best, which is a mannequin that has body parts showing. Jack Martin liked the carpet puzzle that has body organs that stick on the body. Ravyn Whitworth liked the rapping from Harold the giraffe (it is a puppet.) Justin Lawrence said he liked BLASTING off in space on a TV screen.

By Loren Jones and David Martin



Our very own James Queenan, 2nd grader at Alcott Elementary, is a dinosaur expert. He presented many interesting facts about dinosaurs in science enrichment class. In fact, he taught all five grades here at Alcott, about dinosaurs.

First, he told us about the different periods in history, and when the dinosaurs lived on earth. He taught us about meat-eating dinosaurs - carnivores, plant-eating - herbivores, and those that ate both plants and animals - omnivores.

James brought 12 of his dinosaurs to school. When kids pulled one out the bag, he could tell us the name, what they ate, when they lived, how they protected themselves, and other interesting facts. He did not use any notes - he was **AMAZING**.

When we asked him how long he has been interested in dinosaurs, he said, "Ever since I was a little kid."

Great job, James!!

By Allie Mikulka and Mrs. Bideau

Honesty

At Alcott we have Character Rallies every month. We ask people to speak on our word of the month. The word of the month is a word that the whole school talks about every day. The word for January was "honesty."

This month we asked Mrs. Cheryl Day to speak. I interviewed her for our

newspaper. I asked Mrs. Day, "What is honesty to you?" She stated, "telling the truth every day to yourself and others". I asked her, "Can you tell if someone is being honest?" She said, "Often, by body language". I also asked her if she was interested in honesty. She said, "Very interested, because I like the way it feels at the end of the day." I asked her if she was honest all the time in her life now, and she said yes.

Her job now is Elementary Coordinator for the CCLC after school program. Mrs. Day has 2 daughters, 2 grand children and she loves her life. She used to teach first grade at Hutton.

By Joel Williams



Football Frenzy

I am reporting on the NCAA top three football teams. The Miami Hurricanes ended up 11 - 0 and were ranked #1. In the bowl games, Miami beat Nebraska 37 - 14. Miami's total yards against Nebraska were 472 yards. They had 12 penalties that cost them 85 yards. Their quarterback, Dorsey, had 3019 yards, 10 interceptions, and completed 207 passes out of 354 in the whole season. They had 2361 yards running this season. Portis was their main running back. He had 1304 yards and 11 touchdowns.

The Oregon Ducks were 10 - 1 and were ranked #2. The Colorado Buffaloes were 10 - 2 and ranked #3. Oregon played Colorado in a bowl game. Oregon dominated the game field, in running and passing. J. Harrington had six interceptions, 27 touchdowns, and 2,764 yards and completed 214 passes out of 364 in all of this season. Oregon fell on top to go on to win 38 - 16. It was a hard loss for Colorado.

By Kevin Martin



Kansas Day

Kansas day is January 29. Here are a few facts about our state. Did you know Kansas is called the Jayhawk state? The Jayhawk is a make believe bird. If you were born in Kansas you are called a Jayhawker. We also have a college team called the Jayhawks.

Did you know that Kansas has pyramids? The wind and the water form these rocks. They are called Kansas pyramids. You can find them between Oakley and Scott City. Did you know Kansas was the thirty fourth state? It was founded on January 29, 1861. Kansas is 140 years old. Kansas' population is 264,546,951.

A lot of famous people have come from Kansas. One of the most famous is Amelia Earhart. She was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. She disappeared on July 2, 1937 on a trip around the world. She or her plane was never found. She was born in Atchison K.S.

Blaine McNeal



The student we are featuring for this month's book review is Alyssa Pierce. Alyssa is ten years old and in Mrs. Lawrence's reading class. She said her favorite author is Beverly Cleary and her favorite series books are Jenny B. Jones. She likes to read nonfiction books. She read Brittney and Lynne Spears. Alyssa told me the only reason she chose the book was because it had Brittney Spears on the cover, but afterwards she was glad she had picked it. Her favorite part in the book was when Brittney and Lynne, her mom, stopped fighting. She thinks this book would be good for everyone to read because it talks about gossiping and how it's wrong.

Tessa Galemore and
Courtney Ritch

1-B

Presentation to Senate Education Committee

March 5, 2002, 1:30 p.m.
123 South, Capital Bldg.

Overview:

Thank you for this opportunity to present the Basehor-Linwood Virtual Charter School. Basehor-Linwood USD 458 has a current enrollment of 2000 students and is located in southern Leavenworth County. In addition to our virtual school, we have three K-6 elementary schools, one 7-8 middle school, and a 9-12 high school.

- The Basehor-Linwood Virtual Charter School (VCS) is one of the first 15 Charter Schools authorized by the state.
- We opened the school in the fall of 1998. Our charter was renewed last year, and we are now in our fourth year of operation.
- The mission of the VCS is to reach out to and serve students who are not being otherwise served by public education. Over 95% of the students currently enrolled in the VCS were not attending a public school before enrolling with us. In one sense, we could be considered a "drop-out recovery" program because we are successfully reconnecting students and families with public education in Kansas.
- The intent of federal and state legislation authorizing charter schools was to provide a wider array of choices to parents and students and to encourage innovative approaches. We believe we are meeting that expectation with our Virtual Charter School. We are using current and emerging technologies, including the internet, to make the educational resources of our school district available to students and their parents including:
 1. The district's curriculum that is aligned with the state standards,
 2. The district's program of assessments including the state assessments, ITBS and local, on-line tests, and
 3. Instructional support.
- We also provide books, computers and other supplies as needed and opportunities for interaction and networking with other students and parents.
- The VCS has grown from an initial enrollment of 63 in Year I to our current enrollment of 350 in Year IV. Our highest enrollment was 363 in 00/01.

How does it work?

Curriculum

- We have aligned district curriculum to state standards.
- We have put the curriculum on-line and made it accessible to parents, students and teachers.

Assessments

- When students enroll, they agree to participate in the Kansas State assessments and in the ITBS.
- Students also agree to participate in local assessments. All local assessments, except final exams at the 9-12 level, are now on-line. Results are immediate and a test history is archived.

Instructional Support

- Certified teachers assume responsibility for providing instructional support to every student enrolled in the program.
- Elementary teachers are assigned on a grade-level basis and secondary teachers are assigned according to content area.

Textbooks, Technical Support

- Students and parents receive a computer with initial orientation and training at the time of enrollment. In addition, students and/or parents can and do call at any time for technical assistance. The VCS is staffed to provide both instructional support and technical assistance. Students pay a small (leasing fee) for the computer.
- Students also receive textbooks from the district and pay the same textbook rental fee paid by all Basehor-Linwood students.

In Conclusion:

- We have worked closely with the State Department of Education in the development of the VCS. We know that in Kansas, schools are obligated to a process of constant improvement and that accreditation is based on demonstration of that improvement. We accept that obligation and welcome it. We believe every student enrolled in the VCS should have the best possible educational experience we can provide and are committed to constantly improving the program and services provided.
- To that end, we are now working with the North Central Accreditation Association to design and implement the process for accreditation as a separate school.
- We have an active and involved Parent, Student and Teacher Advisory Committee that meet at least quarterly. Parents and/or students are encouraged to “sign on” and to ask questions or offer input by way of the chat rooms.

For more information contact:

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