



# PERRY ★ LECOMPTON

## UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 343

JUNE ISSUE

2016-2017

NEWSLETTER #3

### *A Note from the Superintendent... J.B. Elliott*



Let me start by congratulating the 2016-2017 Graduating Class of Perry Lecompton High School. These students worked hard to get to this place in their lives and I am proud of them, their families, and the district staff that supported them through their journey and wish them continued success in their futures! I hope they can all say they are proud to be a KAW and will come back and visit!

As you look around our District, there are many great and awesome things happening all the time that can make us feel proud to be a KAW! We have such talent displayed in our high school and middle school students who are singers, musicians, writers, artists, athletes, and scholars in many different subjects. In addition, we have such inquisitive, eager young learners in our elementary schools that just soak up knowledge at such a rapid rate. It is exciting to see these younger students flourish and grow and before we know it, they will be in upper level grades and be those singers, musicians, writers, artists, athletes and scholars forging their own paths, just as the students before them!

The enthusiasm and the innovativeness of the teachers and paras in our classrooms is catching! They bring excitement and energy district wide that is contagious. From Kindergarten students sitting in a reading circle engaged in a story, to students sitting at science tables in the high school engaged in dissecting a science specimen, to students at all grade levels giving back to their communities through community service events. You can't help but feel proud knowing these achieving students are getting a quality education from people that truly care about their successes now, and care about their future as well.

One of the things that makes our district a great district is the remarkable and awesome students we have, and having the privilege of being able to watch their growth and success every year as a KAW! The caring and dedication of our great district team of cooks, custodians, bus drivers, maintenance workers, building office staff, district office staff, bus barn staff, coaches, teachers, and paras is one of the many reasons why our district is such an outstanding place to be! I would also like to recognize that without the support our district receives from the parents, community members, and businesses we would not be as successful as we are. All of these groups of people combine to make our District such a unique and inspiring place to educate students and prepare them for their future. So, as you can see, as a district, we have many great things going on that make us feel proud to be a KAW!

With this school year coming to an end, and a new one coming upon us quicker than we think, I want to keep you updated on the school-funding situation for the 17-18 school year. As of the second week of June, the new school funding formula has been created with Senate Bill 19. It has passed the House and the Senate. It currently sits on the Governor's desk for consideration. He can sign it into law, veto it, or let it become law without any action.

The new formula looks similar to the previous funding formula used prior to 2015 in terms of the amount of base state aid. Historically, base state aid per student was as high as \$4,400 in 2008. Due to budget cuts in previous years, we are currently at \$3,852. The new formula would set the base state aid amount at \$4,006 in 2017-18 and gradually increase to \$4,317 by the 2020-2021 school year. USD #343 would not see an increase in total funding from this formula due to the overall decrease in student enrollment district wide. In fact, the proposed increase to base state aid per student, along with the decrease to enrollment would result in approximately \$31,000 less budget dollars in the 2017-18 school year for our school district. Here are other key components of the new funding formula:

- Student count (enrollment) will be based the prior year or second prior year's enrollment, whichever is higher.
- Funding for at-risk students will be based upon free lunch count, just as the previous formula. However, the weighting for at risk enrollment increases from .456 to .484.
- All day Kindergarten will be fully funded.
- An increase to state aid for 4-year old at risk programs. (2 million statewide increase.)
- Overall funding for Special Education will be increase. (12 million statewide increase.)
- Bilingual education will be computed using the higher of .395 of the contact hours or .185 of the bilingual headcount enrollment for students who qualify for services.

As you may recall, the Supreme Court issued an order to the Kansas Legislature to produce an adequate and equitable school finance formula by June 30, 2017. Although a finance formula has now been produced, I would point out there is still a chance the Supreme Court may rule that it is still not up to par. The main reason would be the base state aid per pupil amount. Remember, schools were funded at \$4,400 per student basis in 2008. This formula does not reach that funding mark next year or by 2021. Only time will tell! It could be an interesting summer!



## News from Perry & Lecompton Elementary Schools

Connie Thornton, Principal



It is amazing to think we are in the last few weeks of the school year. Each year seems to go by faster than the previous year. Most days my analogy is that the school year is like running a marathon at a sprint pace! When the pace begins to consume me I have found that it is important to get reconnected. I do this by walking through classrooms and observing the learning and development that is occurring. It is during these observations that I notice the 'growth' of the students and teachers and can appreciate the efforts put forth. As this year comes to a close please know that the elementary school staff is thankful for your continued support. We appreciate your willingness to be a part of your child's educational experience.

### ***PLES News and Highlights***

**Music:** We've had a great year in Music! The fourth quarter focused on shows for three grade levels. Kindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup> grade performed at their recognition event on 5/12 and 5/23 respectively. Keep up to date by checking our blog at [www.welovemakingmusic.blogspot.com](http://www.welovemakingmusic.blogspot.com).

**PLPK:** Preschoolers and parents took their annual trek to the Topeka Zoo and Gage Park on 5/4. Their end-of-year 'pot luck' was on the last day of school May 24<sup>th</sup> – morning session: breakfast 8:30 and afternoon session: lunch 12:30. Preschool students continue to develop their social and pre-academic skills. Mrs. Hoeffner would like to remind parents and grandparents how important it is to read daily with your child!

**Kindergarten:** During March students and their families were busy making a school to home project: leprechaun traps. This was an opportunity for them to work at home as a family on a project. They brought the project to school to share and set up a display to try and catch those crafty leprechauns! Their spring field trip was to the Discovery Center in Topeka. Kindergarten students continued to build their literacy and math skills. They also have the opportunity to have hands on economic field trips to Gambino's and Thriftway. These experiences helped them understand how businesses operate. Kindergarten recognition and the music program were on 5/12 at 2:00 pm at Perry Elementary School.

**First Grade:** Their spring field trip was to the Flint Hills Discovery Center in Manhattan. In math they will continue to develop their skills in the areas of geometry and measurement. 1<sup>st</sup> graders continued to utilize the learning garden during their study of plant growth. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, they took a short trip up to Lecompton Elementary to learn about their attendance center for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

**Second Grade:** On April 28th, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade attended Ag Day sponsored by Jefferson West's FFA. They also took a trip to the Prairie Park Nature Center to learn more about rocks, which is their science topic for 4th quarter.

**Third Grade:** Third Graders were excited to attend the annual Kansas Kids Fitness Day at Seaman High School on April 26th. Students worked very hard to become fluent in basic multiplication facts in order to celebrate with a huge ice cream party in May.

**Fourth Grade:** The 4<sup>th</sup> grade spring field trip was to the Capital building in Topeka. Students explored economics by developing and marketing a product, with the final activity being the 4th Grade Store that was on May 12th. Students completed their studies of the regions of the United States by creating a travel brochure of a state in the West. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade recognition and music program was on May 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm in the PLHS auditorium.

**PE:** In February, the K-4 grades participated in Jump Rope for Heart and raised almost \$6000. Thank you for your donations to this event. In April, our 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders completed a bowling unit and then put their skills to use at Royal Crest Lanes in Lawrence. They really appreciate getting the experience of life time sports. PLES students had fun participating in the annual end of the year 'Field Day' that was on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

**PTO:** We so appreciate the financial support PTO gives our elementary children. This support allows us the opportunity to attend events throughout the school year. We believe field trips and special events are wonderful learning opportunities for our children. The PLES Carnival was a huge success! Children and parents had a wonderful time and PTO gained monetary support for next year's programs!

Thank you for your continued support of our elementary schools – your assistance is invaluable! Wishing you a terrific summer!

*Connie Thornton*

# News from Perry-Lecompton Middle School

*Mike Maloun, Principal*



What a full year of accomplishments we have had here at PLMS. Our kids have excelled in the classroom as well as in athletics and activities. Research has shown that students who are involved in activities in their school, such as music and athletics, are more likely to do better in school. Over 70% of our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are involved in activities! As your students continue to progress through school, I hope you as parents continue to encourage them to be active. The number one reason kids continue with any activity is not the sponsor or the coach, but the continued support of their parents.

Speaking of activities, we have much to celebrate from this 2<sup>nd</sup> semester. Our boy's basketball team had a successful season. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade finished 8-6, which was a 3<sup>rd</sup> place league finish. Our 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys finished with an impressive 10-4 record and a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish.



PLMS's Scholars bowl teams were strong again this season with our 7<sup>th</sup> grade team finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league and our 8<sup>th</sup> grade team winning the 2017 League Scholars Bowl Championship. Joe Ward won the Jefferson County Spelling Bee for the 2<sup>nd</sup> straight year, and had a strong 2<sup>nd</sup> place showing at the regional spelling bee hosted by the Topeka Capital Journal.

PLMS has given back to our community as well this year. Our students participated in the Pennies for Patients drive to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma society. PLMS raised \$770.64!

Our music department continues to represent PLMS with strong performances. Joe Ward represented PLMS at the John Philip Sousa Honor Band for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year. Our Choir participated at the Emporia State Music Festival where both our Men's and Women's ensemble received "1" or superior ratings for their outstanding performances.

A big thank you to all the parents that helped us celebrate Pi Day on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Parents provided pie for all of our kids and staff members at lunch. I can't think of a better way to celebrate Pi Day!

Also a big thank you to all the parents, students, and community members who have made my transition to PLMS principal easy and rewarding. I love being a part of this community and hope to continue to make PLMS a school we can all be proud of.







## News from Perry-Lecompton High School

*John Luhrs, Principal*

It is difficult to believe that the 2016–2017 school year is drawing to a close and the new school year is just around the corner! Working through Career Cruising and under the guidance of seminar advisors, students have developed Individual Plans of Study (IPS) and have pre-enrolled in courses that will help prepare them for their future. With the IPS, students are encouraged to focus their preparation for future careers based on their interests and skill sets. By the time you're reading this newsletter we are in hopes that students will have seen their schedules and made any necessary changes. Please help your student review their choices to ensure that they meet graduation requirements with the courses they have selected. If you or your student has any questions at all, please call us at the PLHS office for assistance.

### IPad Information:

When PLHS students return to school next fall they will get to use the newest generation of iPad available! As we close this school year, students will need to check in their iPads during the final day of school. This includes the device itself, Otterbox, charger and charging cable, all must be in working condition. Students will be charged for either missing or any items that are broken. If you need to replace a charger or cable, they can be purchased in area stores and in some instances, from PLHS too. Should your student choose to provide their own iPad for the 2017-2018 school year, some new guidelines will be put into place regarding those iPads. Look for more information regarding these changes around enrollment time in the fall.



### Solar Eclipse Field Trip

Early preparations are being made for the Great American Solar Eclipse of Aug. 21, 2017 — and the sun's position on April 19, 20 and 21, but especially April 20, offered a perfect dress rehearsal for that historic event. School personnel have been working with a neighboring school district to reserve space for our students to observe the solar eclipse on August 21, 2017. The planned field trip will occur during a normal school day where students in grades 2 – 12 will travel about an hour and a half to Troy, Kansas.

According to several information sites, when preparing for the eclipse, an important aspect to consider is the sun's location in the sky for your location. Across the western

third of the United States, the eclipse will reach its peak during the late morning hours. Over the nation's midsection, the maximum eclipse will come at midday, and for the eastern third of the country, the time of greatest coverage of the sun by the moon will happen in early to mid-afternoon. Troy, Kansas located in Doniphan County is considered to be a nearly ideal location for viewing. Families are encouraged to join us for this historic event!



# NEWS FROM JOSH WOODWARD, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

## ***Preparing Perry-Lecompton Students for Success***

Preparing students for the work force in an ever-changing world can be a challenge. The Kansas Department of Education recently shared research from the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, which predicts that 71% of the Kansas workforce will need some sort of post-secondary training or certification by the year 2020. Rather it be a four-year university degree, a two-year Associates degree, technical school training and certification or completion of military basic training and technical school, by the year 2020, nearly ¾ of the jobs available will require some sort of certification or degree. As a result of this research, the Kansas Department of Education and USD 343, as well as other public schools across this great state are collaborating to meet this future job market demand.

The Kansas State Board of Education adopted five measureable outcomes that will assist schools in preparing our students. These outcomes were the result of personal conversations between Kansas Department of Education Commission Dr. Randy Watson and statewide stakeholders such as educators, parents, students and community business leaders. After multiple roundtable discussion, the Kansas State Board of Education adopted the following outcomes to assist public and participating private schools with preparing our students for the future demands of the Kansas workforce. Click on the blue link for a video of Dr. Watson explaining each outcome.

- [Kindergarten Readiness](#) - Kansas districts will evaluate and seek more efficient ways to determine kindergarten readiness, and will determine how to best help parents prepare their child for that important first year of education.
- [Social/Emotional Growth](#) - In an effort to prepare our students to be successful adults, each Kansas school district will determine how to monitor and help our students develop social/emotional skills such as emotional regulation and impulse control, appropriate social etiquette and most importantly, self-confidence.
- [Individual Plans of Study \(IPS\)](#) - This is an individualize plan of study that every student will create in middle school. The intent is to expose students to careers, which match their interests. The IPS will show students possible high school and post-secondary education requirements, projected expense, which colleges, technical schools, or military branch offers degrees or certification in the student's field of interest, as well as other relevant information.
- [High School Graduation Rates](#) - Kansas hopes to lead the world in high school graduation rates. Currently, the Kansas average is 85%. Portugal currently graduates the highest percentage of high school students with an average in the low to mid 90's. In recent years, the PLHS graduation rate has averaged around 94%, so USD 343 students are in line with the best in the world. We plan to do better!
- [Post-Secondary Completion and Attendance](#) - To meet this outcome, students must complete one year of college, or complete one year of technical school, or possibly join the military and successfully complete basic military training and military technical school. The need for some sort of post-secondary college diploma or technical school certification is the result of our current job market. During the recent economic recovery, 99% of the jobs added to the labor market required some college or technical training.

Perry-Lecompton Schools understand that an important part of our success lies with collaborating with students and parents. Perhaps Perry-Lecompton parents remember the perceptual surveys that were sent out in late April/early May. These surveys are part of our effort to determine areas of improvement for our school district based on parent and student perceptions. Your thoughts and opinions are important and will certainly influence our focus areas of improvement. A district leadership team, along with a district site council team will work together to establish our goal areas for the 2017-2018 school year and beyond. The Kansans CAN

initiative is a vision that calls for Kansas to lead the world in the success of each student. Although an ambitious goal, through collaboration with the Kansas Department of Education, area school districts and most importantly, our students and parents, it is our belief that Perry-Lecompton Schools will be successful in meeting these state outcomes. To learn more about the future of education in Kansas, please click on the following link.... [Kansans Can!](#)



Questions, comments or concerns: Please contact Josh Woodward at [jwoodward@usd343.org](mailto:jwoodward@usd343.org), call 785-597-5138 or stop by the USD 343 district office. I'll supply the coffee!

## NEWS FROM *RHETT SCRIMSHER* DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Department is proud to have provided safe travel for the students of USD 343 this school year. This included not only the regular morning and afternoon routes, but also over 494 activity and athletic trips! Through the course of their duties, commendably, our bus and van drivers have covered literally tens of thousands of miles without an accident!

While these drivers are key to the Transportation Department's success, we could not operate without our skilled mechanics and dependable substitute drivers. The District's mechanics keep the fleet of vehicles running smoothly so our students can be transported safely. The substitute drivers are always ready to step in when needed and that is greatly appreciated! The District is proud of the invaluable service that all of these folks provide!



This year, one of our veteran bus drivers, Susan Hack (Route 4), has decided it's time to retire and pass her bus keys off to someone else! Susan has dedicated herself to the District and our students for 31 years. For the first five years of her career with USD 343, she was a van driver and substitute bus driver, and for the last 26 years, she has had her own bus route. We are sad to see her go and will miss her, but we know how much fun she will have spending more time with her grandchildren! We wish her the best and hope that she makes lots of lasting memories in her retirement! Have fun Susan!

## NEWS FROM *MIKE PARAMORE* DIRECTOR OF ACTIVITIES

As the 2016-17 school year comes to a rapid close, spring sports are still in full swing and our teams are gearing up for possible post-season runs in their respective sports. PLHS Softball has jumped out to a 12-2 record and looks poised to make a run at a Regional championship. The baseball team has started off with a 7-4 record and has scratched out some tough wins along the way. Both teams have three doubleheaders remaining before starting Regional play the week of May 15.

The Track team has good numbers out this year and has several athletes putting up performances that put them among the top in 3A competition. They ran Regional track at Silver Lake on May 19 with the hopes of having several qualify for the State meet the following week in Wichita.

The golf team keeps a busy schedule and has already competed in several tournaments and competed at the Regional tournament on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Overall, the PLHS sports teams have had a very successful year. In the fall, PLHS Tennis had four State qualifiers, while the football team made the playoffs. Volleyball had a solid season and earned a Sub-State Runner Up. The Cross Country team was Big 7 Runner Up for both boys and girls and the girls went on to be Regional Champions and finished 6th place at State. Lexia Jamison finished her career with a 5th place finish at State!



During the winter, boys and girls basketball teams had improved records and won first round games at Sub-State before falling to the eventual Sub-State champ in the semifinals. Wrestling saw improved numbers out this season and qualified three wrestlers to the State tournament in February.

The continued improvement of PLHS athletic teams over the past year has raised standards and expectations for future teams. With a solid foundation in place, the PLHS KAWS look for continued improvement in 2017-2018.



# NEWS FROM *CRAIG UNDERHILL* DIRECTOR OF NUTRITION SERVICES

Sometimes it seems like we just returned from holiday break, and suddenly the end of the school year has arrived! You know what is said about staying busy: it makes the time go fast. Looking back over the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, that would explain it, we definitely have been keeping busy in the Kitchen. Of course, the Kitchen doesn't keep on track without the hard work and heart that the Kitchen Crew provides. **It is my pleasure to announce that *Marge Tobin* has been selected as the OPAA! Regional Employee of the Year!** Perry-Lecompton is part of a region that extends from Chapman and Beloit to Piper and Basehor-Linwood, and from Santa Fe Trail and West Franklin on north into Nebraska. Marge has been recognized for her exceptional qualities, and is now a candidate for the prestigious OPAA! National Employee of the Year Award. Please congratulate Marge on her success!

We were privileged to become involved with two major events at PLHS, providing the pizza, salad bar, and desserts for the A-Team Banquet on April 5th, and pinwheel wraps, fruit and veggie trays and desserts for the Art Fair on May 2nd. It is exciting to have opportunities like these to show our ability to serve the school and community after school hours.

We celebrated National School Breakfast Week again this year by inviting parents and caregivers of Perry Elementary and Lecompton Elementary students to breakfast on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Shrove Tuesday brought a new Pancake Race Champion, as Tyler Buttram survived a final four that included Blaise Ball, Kyle Newman, and Ms. Ward, earning a round of free pancakes for the Freshman class.



April 13<sup>th</sup> brought the Spring Feast, as all 4 schools enjoyed baked ham, mashed potatoes & gravy, fruit, veggies, and the ever-popular lemon crinkle cookie! And speaking of cookies, we had a double dose of Apple Pie Cookies. First the PLHS Culinary Class baked off samples of the new recipe, making the OPAA! Facebook page in the process, and then on March 14 the Kitchen prepared a batch to celebrate National Pi Day.

Children learn better when they are nourished, so please remember that if your student is eligible for free or reduced lunch, they are also eligible for free or reduced breakfast. If you have any questions about your child's lunch status through the federal Child Nutrition Program, please contact Deb Brehm at the District Office at 785-597-5138. It is important that we are able to provide nutritious and balanced meals to our students. If you have any questions about Perry Lecompton's Kaw Kitchen, please call Craig Underhill, Director of Nutrition Services, at 785-597-5872.

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## ***Perry USD 343 Mission***

Preparing students to become successful citizens.

Updated and Adopted by the USD 343 Board of Education on December 12, 2016

## ***Perry USD 343 District Beliefs***



- ✦ Our focus is on being a **UNIFIED** school district.
- ✦ Our schools must be centers of **OPPORTUNITY**.
- ✦ Mastery of **READING** and **MATH** is fundamental to a quality education to obtain quality 21st century skills.
- ✦ **PRIDE IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY** is an important element in a quality school experience.
- ✦ The success of our schools is accomplished because all stakeholders accept **RESPONSIBILITY**.
- ✦ For students to learn effectively, they must have a school environment that demands **RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY AND SAFETY OF THE INDIVIDUAL**.
- ✦ The **EFFECTIVE USE and APPROPRIATE APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY** is essential for the success of our schools.
- ✦ **GOOD CITIZENSHIP** and **RESPECT FOR COUNTRY** by staff and students are important cornerstones of our educational system.
- ✦ The partnership between **SCHOOL and FAMILY** is a key to a child's success.

Note: *District Beliefs* are listed in random order.

Updated and Adopted by the USD 343 Board of Education on December 12, 2016

101 one hundred + one  
**bits of summer fun**

make a fort check out + make "Flat Stanley" play frisbee  
go to the pool nuzzles write a letter go down a slide  
play dress-up TAKE A CLASS go fishing learn about a famous  
put on a play write a book scavenger hunt artist + recreate  
work in a soup kitchen obstacle course become a pen pal paint rocks  
have your kiddo learn a recipe + make a meal have a sleepover puppet shows  
make a "book nook" make popsicles water balloons  
play memory BBQ go to a farmer's market dance  
date with dad PJ+ movie playdate mini golf  
free concert decorate an old box as a playhouse  
teach your child to set the table child makes a whole meal  
visit the pet store visit a farm sing a song  
bring popsicles to a neighbor play in a bounce house  
take cookies to a firestation stay up late  
go to the park nature hike homemade slip + slide  
make canvas handprints melt crayons star gaze  
visit a farm dance in the rain can fruit LEARN A JOKE  
hopscootch make greeting cards for the whole year  
read a book learn a new song  
dig in the dirt nature hike  
make a nature rubbing create your own grocery store  
go to storytime fly a kite decorate an old box as a playhouse  
wash the car picnic bubbles in the bathtub=less mess!  
play dodgeball pillow fight date with mom  
family movie night water playdate plant something  
eat watermelon paint your own pottery play i spy  
learn phrases in a new language take books to a children's hospital  
make a friendship bracelet board games  
host a cooking party listen to classical music while painting  
play soccer eat breakfast for dinner feed ducks  
play jax have a pillow sack race banana split party  
visit a museum backyard camping lemonade stand

cake cupcakes  
paint with pudding

the 500  
make a time capsule  
learn about another culture  
go to the library

water balloons

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