



POUNCE

STRENGTHENING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY



OCT. '15
EXCELSIOR SPRINGS
SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

It may sound hard to believe, but winter will be here before we know it. Along with shorter days, uncertain forecasts, and the joy of Missouri weather, we will have cold wind, snow, ice, and the anticipation of our first snow day. But on some days the school district would benefit from starting a little later. Maybe the wind will die down, temperatures will rise, or the roads might clear. Many school districts in our area have adopted a Late Start option for dealing with adverse weather conditions. Excelsior Springs School District has adopted that same option beginning

this school year. Last year, a committee of parents, teachers, administrators and staff was assembled to determine if a 2 hour Late Start would be a benefit to the students and parents of our district. The committee surveyed members of the community and weighed the pros and cons of using a Late Start. In the end, there was a clear need to adopt the Late Start option to serve as a good way to ensure safe travel to school, provide meals to students, a warm place to be for the day, and a day of instruction that would fuel the minds of the youth in our com-

munity. Over 600 people responded to the survey. The biggest concerns were getting their student to the bus and taking their student to school. The survey results from the community raised some good questions about what a Late Start would look like. The feedback received was used to adopt an approach that met the needs of as many people as possible. First off, if you as a parent cannot get your child to school 2 hours late, there will be staff on hand to supervise and provide breakfast

..... SEE PAGE THREE

*Mark Your
Calendar*



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

OCTOBER 21, 2015
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 22, 2015
1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

ELEMENTARY PARENTS
Please contact your
teacher for an appointment

**MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH
SCHOOL PARENTS**
You have an open invitation
during these hours



Dr. David Lawrence

SUPERINTENDENT SPOTLIGHT

Our Mission

The mission of the Excelsior Springs School District, in **partnership** with students, parents and community, is to assure a **focused and challenging curriculum** that will monitor progress and provide a **comprehensive system of support** to prepare all students for their **next level of learning**

First quarter of the 2015-16 school year will end October 14 and parent-teacher conferences will be held October 21 from 4:00pm - 7:00pm and October 22 from 1:00pm - 7:00pm. A parent is a child's first and most important teacher. Parents and teachers have something in common: You both want your child to learn and do well. When parents and teachers talk to each other, each person can share important information about your child's talents and needs. Each person can also learn something new about how to help your child. Parent-teacher conferences are a great way to start talking to your child's teachers.

Questions to Consider Asking Your Child's Teacher

- What is my child expected to learn, know, and do at this grade level or in this course?
- How is my child developing the necessary skills and knowledge?
- What does my child do well, and what does he or she struggle with?

Can you give me examples?

- How do you know when my child is making progress and when he or she needs additional help?
- What do you do to support and motivate him or her?
- How do you challenge my child when he or she is doing well at something?
- How do you support my child when he or she needs extra help?
- What does my child get excited about learning?
- What can I do at home to support my child?
- Are there programs or services in the community that could also help my child?
- Does my child get along with classmates and adults?
- Does my child participate in class discussions and group activities?
- Are there times when my child is more or less engaged?

It is important to share information about your child with the teacher as well. Two-way communication will

provide the support and encouragement needed for a successful school experience.

This school year is moving at a rapid pace and has produced several accolades for our students. Our state test scores exceeded state averages on twenty assessments and our graduation rate increased to 95%, which is above last year's state average of 87.3%. We know we are not succeeding at the level we want to yet but are definitely on the right path.

Please come out and show the students your support by attending their activities and performances. You can see a complete schedule of activities on our website www.essd40.com. If you have comments or questions about our school district please give me a phone call at 630-9200, visit our website www.essd40.com and send me an email by using the tab "Ask the Superintendent" at the top of the page. You are always welcome to stop by for a personal visit at 300 W. Broadway.

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Member SDIC



LATE START..... ALLOWS MORE OPTIONS TO GET STUDENTS TO SCHOOL SAFELY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

at normal start times. Just drop your child off at their building and we will gladly receive them. All students will be able to eat breakfast when they arrive early. All classes will begin exactly 2 hours later than their original start time. All bus service will run their normal routes, with pickups starting 2 hours later than normal.

Each building will have a Late Start schedule to make up for the variance in hours for the day. Release times will be the same as they are for any other day; this includes Early-Out Wednesdays. This approach was selected so as to provide the most flexibility to parents who have to leave for work and may not be able to take their student to school later than normal.

In the event of a Late Start, there will be no classes for AM or PM preschool students. On that note, please remember that just because the school is starting late, if

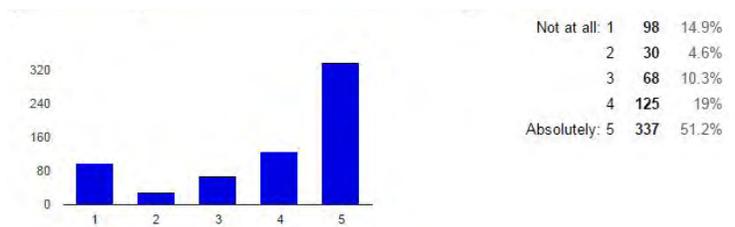
you are unable to get your student to school due to the weather conditions, or feel that it is unsafe for them for any reason, we understand and respect your decision. If the conditions are deemed not to be safe that day, then school will be cancelled for everyone. The Late Start option will only be used if we believe that our buses can run their routes safely.

The purpose of the Late Start is simply to provide additional options for getting students to school safely. The extra time will provide road crews more time to treat roads, the sun to work its magic, and students who drive or walk more time to get here safely.

A 2 hour Late Start option will be communicated via normal media outlets such as television and radio, as well as social media accounts via Facebook, Twitter and School Messenger. If you have any questions about the 2 Hour Late Start, please contact your building principal or our District Office.

SURVEY RESULTS

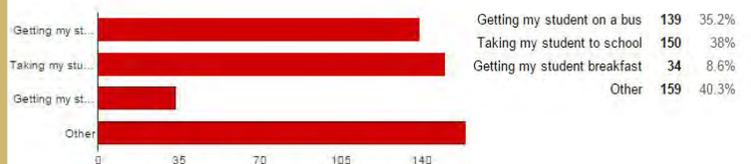
Do you think having a 2 hour late start for bad weather is a good idea?



I would support the addition of a 2 hour late start for some weather conditions.



The biggest difficulty I would have in making a 2 hour late start work is:



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844-XTREAM3

Student Spotlight.....



Who was your favorite elementary school teacher?

"Mrs. Bright is one of my favorite teachers from elementary. She never gives up on students and always makes you feel like one her own kids. She was always supportive and encouraging."

-Abbi Danner (Soph.)



"Mr. Travis is my favorite teacher from elementary school because he always has a positive attitude. He not only taught well, he made teaching and learning fun. I can't think of a better person to recognize than Mr. Travis."

-Makayla Brewer (Soph.)



"My favorite teacher from elementary school was Mrs. Lang. She was always very encouraging and made learning fun! Her influence on me lasted long after elementary school."

-Haiden Shroyer (Soph.)

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

-Albert Einstein



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Michelle Nebel
Chief innovations Officer.....

GETTING TECHY WITH IT...

21st century education is critically dependent upon information technology (IT). From the classroom to the business office, every function of the school district now requires some form of IT to function.

Within the Excelsior Springs School District, the people who comprise the Technology Department face a tall task in supporting the many needs of the schools. Every classroom is equipped with a wired, networked computer, some type of multimedia projection device, a digital media receiver, at least one wireless connected mobile device, and a telephone. Every student, teacher, and administrator has at least one internet-connected mobile device. Administrators and many support staff personnel also carry cell phones and data-enabled tablets. All buildings have at least 3 or more network-connected document management devices such as printers, copiers, scanners, and faxes. That's a lot of technology to keep updated and running smoothly for the employees of the district.

All these technologies are connected within each building by a local area network (LAN) and between buildings by a fiber-optic-based wide area network (WAN). The buildings are connected to the outside world and each other also by telecommunications systems for voice communications and the Internet for web con-

tent and email. Forming the backbone of the LAN's, WAN's and telecommunications systems are over 60 switches, routers, and voice gateways. That's technical speak for "we have a lot of stuff going on".

While a significant amount of instructional resources are now web-based, meaning they are accessed via a website, most of the day-to-day instructional and operational software is run on district servers. Excelsior Springs Schools host 40 servers that provide applications for district staff, students, and parents. In addition to software packages that are installed on each computer and mobile device, many more curricular software systems are managed by the district for instructional purposes.

Installation, support, troubleshooting, management and systems administration of all these IT services for the district is provided by the Technology Department. The seven member IT staff is comprised of the director, two systems administrators, three building technicians, and a help desk technician.

For more information about the Technology department, visit the webpage (<http://www.essd40.com/administrativeDepartment.aspx?aid=12>), blog <http://estigertech.blogspot.com/>, and follow the Twitter feed @ESSD40Tech.

What do you do?

As the Chief Innovations Officer I work to provide the Excelsior Springs School District with a clear vision for transforming student learning and to create actionable steps to achieve this with district programs like the 1:World iPad initiative. I manage the acquisition and deployment of student devices and work with teachers, library media specialists, instructional coaches and administrators to help support this transition into the 21st century. Additionally, I also serve as co-chair of the Professional Development Committee and work with our district representatives to provide meaningful teacher professional development.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Being a witness to the innovative opportunities our teachers provide for students and watching the transformation of our physical learning environments is the best part of my job! Our district is doing remarkable things!

What do you do when you're not at work?

I love spending quality time with my amazing friends and wonderful family. My daughter's constant quest for knowledge amazes me. I am also passionate about connecting and collaborating with other educators nationwide. I love organizing professional learning opportunities for Kansas City area educators including EdcampKC, EdcampLeadership, a weekly Twitter chat, and teaching graduate educational technology courses.

McDonald's
2221 Happy Lane, Excelsior Springs



ROCKIN' TIGER CLUB



Rockin' Tiger Club is the District's School-Age Child Care Program. Our mission is to provide a safe, caring, and comfortable environment where children's individual needs are met.

Our program is located at Westview Elementary, but serves Elkhorn, Lewis, and some Middle School students. Any child from kindergarten to age thirteen, who attends Excelsior Springs School District, is eligible to enroll in Rockin' Tiger Club.

Planned activities are offered weekly that your child will have the opportunity to take part in; cooking, crafts, and science. During these activities, children are guided by staff through the learning cycle; plan, do, and reflect.

In addition, a wide variety of interest areas are offered daily for self-directed activities. The areas are as follows:

- Imagination Areas: Children can create a world using their imagination and a few things from us; puppets, doll houses, cars, trains, kitchen/res-

taurant, etc.

- Creative Area: Children have a variety of art and craft materials available to create one-of-a-kind masterpieces.

- Exploration Area: This area is equipped with materials for children to explore geography, science, and math.

- Construction Area: This area is perfect for children who love to work with their hands. They can construct cities, cars, space ships, and new worlds.

- Study Area: This area promotes curriculum and academic skills; reading, writing, listening center, academic games, and homework assistance.

- Recreation Area: Activities are planned that promote gross motor skills, sportsmanship, and social development with peers on an individual and group basis. These activities take place in the gym or outside.

Areas are rotated monthly and the children who serve on the Youth Advisory Board decide what activities will be offered.

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) was created to give the children a voice in the activities that are offered. When children are given true decision-making opportunities in the program, they are likely to feel a sense of "ownership" of the program. The committees children can serve on are: Area Activity Planning, Community Service Projects, and Monthly Challenges.

Children in 4th - 6th grade can also become a Jr. Staff member. Jr. Staff assist our regular staff with setting up and taking down the areas, helping with planned activities, cleaning up after snack, and mentoring younger students.

Rockin' Tiger Club is open before school from 6:00 AM until school begins and after school until 6:00 PM. There are several days that Rockin' Tiger Club stays open when school is closed.

If you would like more information, please contact Vicky Goetz, Director at 630-9262 or e-mail vgoetz@estigers.k12.mo.us.

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DID YOU KNOW?



Excelsior Springs School District is more than just a public school; it is a prominent business in the community. Of course they are. They serve all school age children, oversee public tax dollars to do so, and serve as one of the largest employers in the area.

But did you know that Excelsior Springs School District is even more than that?

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL SERVE 350,000 MEALS THIS YEAR

Between breakfast and lunch servings, the district averages over 2,000 meals per day! The food service program has to meet strict local, state and federal guidelines when feeding students. OPAA! serves as the district's contracted food service provider and works to ensure that students and staff are fed. Each lunch costs the district \$2.58. Compare that with a lunch cost to high school students of \$2.20 and you can imagine how hard it can be to serve a nutritional meal for that price. The district spends \$1,000,000 per year on food service.

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS SCHOOL DIST. DRIVES OVER 2,000 MILES A DAY

Public transportation isn't very visible in a town the size of Excelsior Springs, but the district's use of transportation to get kids to and from school certainly may surprise you. We've all seen big yellow school buses on the road. As one of the largest transportation hubs in the city, Excelsior Springs School District drives over 2,000 miles a day in order to pick up students and take them home each day. That's the equivalent of traveling around the world 14 times each and every school year!

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS SCHOOL DIST. EMPLOYS 356 EMPLOYEES

These include 234 certified employees including teachers, administrators, counselors, library/media specialists and others. In addition, the district employs 122 classified employees. These positions are secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, maintenance, and others. That makes 356 employees who serve our community and most importantly our children.

ALL IN ALL, THE EXCELSIOR SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT SPENDS \$35,000,000 EACH YEAR!

That money goes predominantly to local salaries, benefits, and purchased services that stay right here in Excelsior Springs. Not only is the school district one of the largest recipients of funds in the area, it is also one of the largest contributors to the local economy.

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Superintendent's Office: 300 W. Broadway, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024 • 816-630-9200



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