

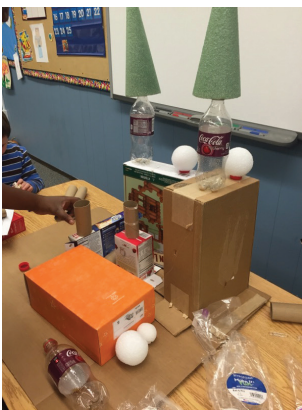
The Review



SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE

SWWC

Education & Administrative Resources



1420 E. College Drive
Marshall, MN 56258

www.swsc.org

Winter 2017

BMLC'S NEW ELEM PROGRAM

By Tish Kalla, Director of Alternative Programs

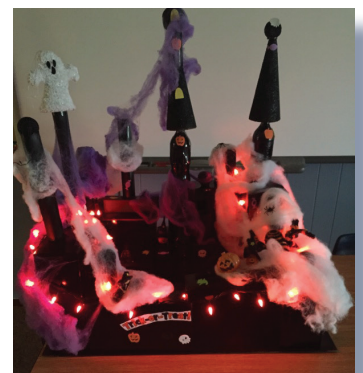
tish.kalla@swsc.org

The Blue Mound Learning Center (BMLC) is a Setting IV Behavior Program located in Pipestone on the Minnesota West Community and Technical College Campus. The program is designed to meet the needs of special education students who are having behavior issues in their resident school districts. In addition to academics, programming includes social-emotional learning classroom instruction and focus groups with licensed professionals based on the individual student's educational needs. Referrals to the program are made by the school district.



Until this school year, BMLC was for middle school and high school students only. An elementary program for grades K-6 opened in the fall of 2016. Currently the program staffs a full-time teacher, two full-time paraprofessionals and a part-time school counselor. Students also have access to related services staff like Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists and Board Certified Behavior Analysts. The student academics are delivered in a variety of methods, including Project-Based Learning.

Students and staff enjoyed the SWWC alternative programs' Worksheet Free Week which was held January 23 - 27. (See pictures on pages 4-5). Staff planned field trips, classroom speakers, and technology usage to support learning in an innovative manner. Some special activities included a tour of McDonalds followed by lunch on a budget, assisting MN West staff with recycling, service learning at the nursing home and a Minecraft building project.



The haunted house pictured on this page was created by students and built entirely of recycled materials.

Update from the Executive Director



IN THIS ISSUE

Learning Center Updates: 1, 3 - 6, 12

Student Activities Updates: 7 - 9

Teaching & Learning Updates: 10

School Districts Updates: 11

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director

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According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), one in five youth ages 13-18 have, or will have, a serious mental illness. This is a sobering statistic that defines the challenge our schools and communities are facing around children's mental health. Additional statistics from NAMI that help to define this issue include:

- 11% of youth have a mood disorder
- 10% of youth have a behavior or conduct disorder
- 8% of youth have an anxiety disorder
- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in youth ages 10-24
- 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14 ... 75% by age 24
- 8-10 years is the average delay between onset of symptoms and intervention.

Youth mental health – a clearly defined need expressed by these statistics and a serious issue SWWC is working on to support schools and communities! Although these are national statistics, our region is not immune from the challenges faced by issues around mental health.

SWWC is providing leadership in our region through a proactive approach to addressing the concerns of children's mental health. In the fall of 2016, SWWC began a new mental health-consulting program designed to address the youth mental needs in our region. Paige Thompson, a licensed school social worker and trainer in Youth Mental Health First Aid, has been working on the development of resources, training, consulting and coaching to assist schools and communities at they work to address the mental health needs of our youth. The support that Paige provides through this project is not just for schools; her training, support and consulting is applicable to law enforcement, county social workers, church youth groups, and any other organizations working with young people.

Our region is fortunate to have the talent and expertise Paige brings to this regional and national challenge. I encourage you to contact Paige if you are struggling with how to address mental health issues in your organization. An outstanding resource, Paige will be a valuable partner with you as you work to develop capacity to respond to the mental health needs of our youth!

You can reach Paige at paige.thompson@swsc.org. Learn more about her services at www.swsc.org/mentalhealth.

The Review is published three times a year. If you have suggestions, comments or items for submission, contact Shelly Maes at shelly.maes@swsc.org.



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Updates from SWWC Learning Centers

IPAD FROM AUTISM SPEAKS!

By Rachel Cox Raverty, School Social Worker
Red Rock Ridge Learning Center
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Autism Speaks was founded in 2005 by Bob and Suzanne Wright, grandparents of a child with autism. The organization strives to enhance lives today and accelerate a spectrum of solutions for tomorrow. This wonderful group is dedicated to: promoting solutions for individuals and families through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of autism spectrum disorder and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions. Autism Speaks has named a multitude of goals in which they hope to achieve within the next decade. This resource also includes an Autism Response Team (ART) dedicated to providing training and resources to individuals, families and caregivers.

In November of 2016, an email was forwarded to me regarding a grant that could be applied for on behalf of students with autism. If selected, the student would receive a brand new iPad Air, purchased by Autism Speaks.

Considering that this is a national organization, I realized that thousands would be applying for the iPad grant and that the likelihood of my application being selected was not great. The deadline was fast approaching and I had just a few days to complete the process in time. However, I optimistically submitted applications on behalf of two elementary students in the Students with Unique Needs (SUN) Program and one elementary student in the Emotional/Behavioral Disorder (E/BD) Program. Teachers Josh Wasmund (SUN) and Anne Bruns (E/BD) and I were elated when I received an email from Autism Speaks on December 20, 2016, stating: "Congratulations! Our review committee has selected you to receive an iPad Air from Autism Speaks! We do apologize for the lateness this year, but please know that your application stood out among thousands and we hope that this vital communication tool will change the person with autism's life!" It was determined that Lain Erickson, SUN Program Student, was selected to receive an iPad Air! The iPad arrived at Red Rock Ridge on January 4 and was given to Lain the next day. Lain's older brother, Derek, happens to be an outstanding paraprofessional at Red Rock Ridge Learning Center as well. He shared with Josh and I that Lain's life is greatly enhanced by the use of his current iPad, but it is worn out and barely functioning. Derek gladly volunteered to assist in setting the iPad up so it is ready for educational and communicative use in the home. We are certain that replacing Lain's timeworn device with the new iPad Air will be beneficial to him. Red Rock Ridge staff (including Lain's proud big brother) are so excited for him! We cannot thank Autism Speaks enough for their generosity. The organization received a video of Lain opening his iPad Air so they could see firsthand what a blessing their gift is.



Lain Erickson, teacher Josh Wasmund and Rachel Cox Raverty



Updates from SWWC Learning Centers

WORKSHEET-FREE WEEK AT SWWC LEARNING CENTERS

By Tish Kalla, Director of Alternative Programs
tish.kalla@swsc.org

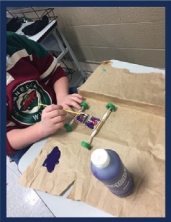
Our alternative learning programs designated January 23-27 as “Worksheet Free Week”! We feel strongly that teachers should consider lessons that provide students interactive experiences and challenging problems. These lessons will more likely engage students, foster discussion, and build a true understanding of the purpose and joy of learning.

Five Reasons Worksheets Do Not Work

1. They don't engage students in learning
2. They don't promote critical thinking
3. They don't promote communication and collaboration
4. They don't provide immediate feedback
5. They aren't accessible to students with a wide range of learning styles and abilities

IT'S WORKSHEET FREE WEEK AT SWWC LEARNING CENTERS JANUARY 23-27





**ELEMENTARY
STUDENTS
MAKING
MOUSE TRAP
CARS**




**MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENTS'
ANIMAL CELL
MODELS**



**HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS'
SOLAR
FURNACE**



**STUDENT
CREATED
GAME IN PE**









IT'S WORKSHEET FREE WEEK & PARAPROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK!





**Students served a 3-course meal to the paras!
They used china, candles, fancy glasses and
silverware to make it a fine dining experience.
Some paras had tears in their eyes!**



**The HS students toured
Wilson Manufacturing, had
a cookie baking lesson,
and did projects exploring
how music effects physical
activity & reading.**



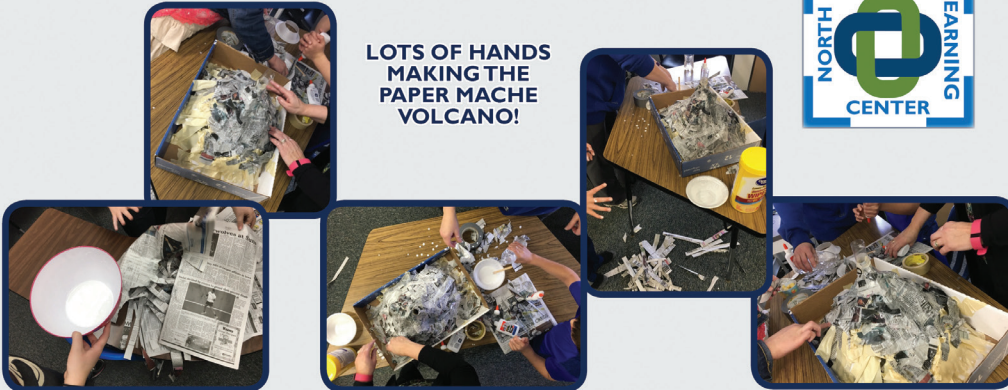
Updates from SWWC Learning Centers



IT'S WORKSHEET FREE WEEK AT SWWC LEARNING CENTERS JANUARY 23-27



LOTS OF HANDS
MAKING THE
PAPER MACHE
VOLCANO!



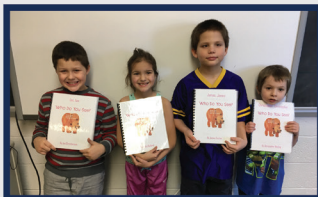
IT'S WORKSHEET FREE WEEK AT SWWC LEARNING CENTERS JANUARY 23-27



GUEST SPEAKERS
AND MANY HANDS-ON PROJECTS!



IT'S WORKSHEET FREE WEEK AT SWWC LEARNING CENTERS JANUARY 23-27



FLEECE PILLOWS, BROWN BEAR BOOKS AND A SOLAR SYSTEM!

Updates from SWWC Learning Centers



PBIS FOR LEARNING CENTERS

By Colleen Schatz, Assistant Director of Alternative Programs
colleen.schatz@swsc.org

The SWWC Alternative Learning Centers were the recipients of a \$40,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Education to begin the process of implementing School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions (SW-PBIS) in all of our schools.

PBIS is a powerful organizing framework that supports school staff in their efforts to move from reactive to proactive behavioral interventions. Key features of PBIS include:

- Setting clear, consistent positive expectations
- Teaching and practicing those expectations throughout the school day in all environments
- Systematically recognizing when the expectations are being demonstrated well
- Being clear about the continuum of consequences

All of this work is supported and sustained with regular review of school disciplinary data to guide the implementation.

The grant activities will include the development of a district-wide leadership team. We will be developing a behavior matrix at each site and working with staff and students on implementation. The monies will provide a two-day Positive Behavior Institute in June where staff will dig into things such as restorative justice, using positive language, and learning the new matrix.

All staff will be participating in a book study. We are reading, “The Power of Our Words” by Paula Denton. This book is part of the Responsive Classroom Model and our staff will learn the power of using positive language with students and the positive effect it has on learning.

We will also be conducting a climate study this spring to get feedback from our students on how we are doing. We want to reach out to our families and guardians for important feedback on our new system too.

We have also applied to become a part of Minnesota PBIS’s Cohort 13. This is a two-year program our team would participate in with full support from Minnesota PBIS. We will have access to coaches, trainings, and fidelity checks within our schools.

We are so excited about this opportunity and look forward to sharing our data as the program progresses.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SWWC ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAMS

www.swsc.org/alternativeprograms

Updates from Student Activities

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

By Gail Polejewski, Career Development Coordinator
gail.polejewski@swsc.org

If a picture is worth a thousand words, the participants competing in the annual Digital Photography competition wrote a small book. Students from Dawson-Boyd, Marshall/Marshall Area Technical & Educational Center (MATEC), Mountain Lake Christian, Ortonville, Worthington, and Yellow Medicine East submitted photographs for the competition held at SWWC in Marshall on December 8, 2016.

Participants were allowed to submit up to three photos that fit into one of three categories - People, Nature and Landscapes, and Elements of Design. Students gave a brief presentation telling the story behind their photo and described any edits they made to their photos. The photographs were judged by professional photographers who gave the students helpful tips and feedback on ways to improve their photography. In addition to the competition, teachers and students brought their cameras and participated in a hands-on session to learn ways to take better action photos from professional sports photographer, Greg Devereaux.

Awards were given for the top three pictures in each category as well as a People's Choice award which was voted on by students and teachers.

Winners in Nature and Landscape (picture 1 at right)

1st Place: Molly Hartman, Ortonville
2nd Place: Julio Morales, Worthington
3rd Place: Cassie Herberg, MATEC

Winners in People (picture 2 at right)

1st Place: Carter James, Mountain Lake Christian
2nd Place: Christina Novy, Dawson-Boyd
3rd Place: Zachary Powelson, Dawson-Boyd

Winners in Elements of Design (picture 3 at right)

1st Place: Than Than Kyaw, Worthington
2nd Place: Brendan Schlichting, Dawson-Boyd
3rd Place: Kishaundra Buckingham, Dawson-Boyd

People's Choice Winner (picture 4 at right and below) Cassie Herberg, MATEC



Updates from Student Activities



**1st Place
NLS Black**



**2nd Place
Edgerton Red**



**3rd Place
GSL Blue**



Junior High Knowledge Bowl Regional - 1/5/17



**1st Place
NLS - Gold**



**2nd Place
GSL - Blue**



**3rd Place
Willmar Middle I**



Junior High Knowledge Bowl Region 6 Subregional - 12/19/16



**1st Place
Marshall I**



**2nd Place
JCC I**



**3rd Place
Mt Lake Emerald**



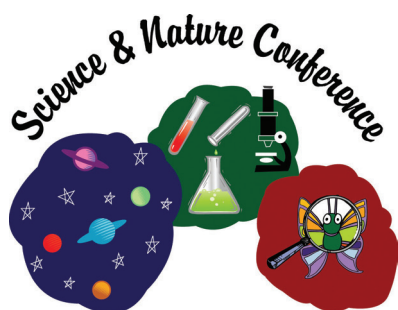
Junior High Knowledge Bowl Region 8 Subregional - 12/20/16

Updates from Student Activities

GETTING EXCITED ABOUT SCIENCE

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
andrea.anderson@swsc.org

Steve Belliveau will get students excited about Science on May 10! SWWC's Science & Nature Conference will spark interests, generate ideas and share an explosion of fun with students in grades K-8. There are a number of sessions to sign up for such as exercise science, kitchen chemistry, water conservation, reptiles, star gazing, electricity, cryogenics and so much.



Watch for more information
mid-February at
www.swsc.org/studentactivities

CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG WRITERS

By Andrea Anderson, Student Activities Coordinator
andrea.anderson@swsc.org

In early January, SWWC's Student Activities Department held its 25th Annual Conference for Young Writers. The keynote, Geoff Herbach, kicked off the day with a message that had a great impact on students about not giving up on your dreams. He shared personal stories and how he became a writer and life lessons that kids could relate to. One thing students took away from this experience is to keep trying, never give-up and don't let others bring you down.

After attending sessions, students commented about learning "how to write fluent poetry", "how to make great details on your fictional character", "how to add emotion to a character", "plotting stories", "how to hook your readers", what it takes to be a news reporter and conduct an interview, "about historic tales and truth tales", "how to make characteristics and a backstory for a villain", and so much more. These comments came from students who attended sessions such as Truth Tales, Killer Characters, The Power of the Hook, Senses in Writing, Create a Realistic Villain and Readers Theater. Topics like these and others inspired almost 600 students to be creative and use their imaginations to get their ideas on paper and create their own unique story.



Mark Your Calendars!
March 30, 2017

www.swsc.org/culinary

Updates from Teaching & Learning

To learn more about developing digital curriculum, contact Lisa Gregoire or Josh Sumption.

lisa.gregoire@swsc.org

josh.sumption@swsc.org

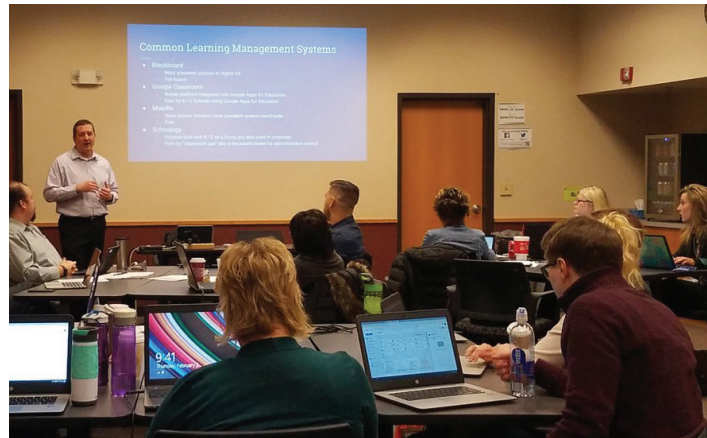
THE SOUTH COLLABORATIVE

By Kari Gjerde, School Improvement Specialist
kari.gjerde@swsc.org

SWWC began a new teaching and learning collaborative amongst eight school districts in the southern part of the SWWC service area. Heron Lake-Okabena, Hills-Beaver Creek, Edgerton, Ellsworth, Murray County Central, Red Rock Central, and Westbrook-Walnut Grove are participating in this collaborative. The administrators for the school districts actively collaborate to shape the direction of this collaborative through regular meetings.

The South Collaborative has begun by focusing on math and reading in grades 3 – 8. This fall, educators from the eight collaborative school districts met to professionally collaborate with each other around best practices, review relevant data, and focus on content area standards. The educators have met for day sessions throughout the fall and will continue to meet for a total of 3 – 4 times this school year.

DIGITAL CURRICULUM RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT - DAY 1



Updates from School Districts

WWG'S NEW SENSORY ROOM

By Paul Olson, Elementary Principal

The Westbrook-Walnut Grove Elementary School recently finished work on a new sensory room in Walnut Grove. The District has been planning this room since early fall. The WWG High School shop class built the overhead bars / jungle gym and mats were placed on the floor. This project and room would not be what it is today without the help from MCC schools, special education consultants, and the Walnut Grove buildings and grounds crew.

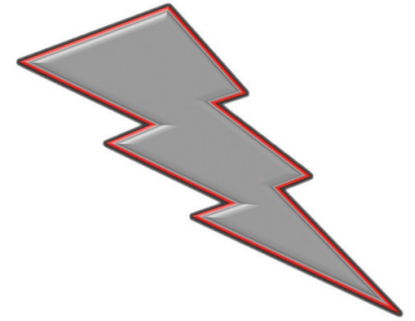
The district appreciates the sensory room equipment donated by our moms and dads. The parents have been extremely generous with the items they have chosen and purchased for this sensory room. The new sensory room will be a wonderful asset for the elementary and the students for many years to come.



WANT TO SHARE THE NEAT THINGS HAPPENING AT **YOUR** DISTRICT?

Send your article (approximately 250 words) and picture(s) to Shelly Maes for inclusion in upcoming issues of The Review!

shelly.maes@swsc.org



Student-Run Businesses at SWWC Learning Centers

Two of our alternative learning programs have student-run businesses. The students take great pride in their work! If you are looking for a unique gift ... or are in need of items for a group event, contact them!

Glassy Treasures at the Red Rock Ridge Learning Center

Glassy Treasures creates exquisite bottles and glassware. They have many on display at the Red Rock Ridge Learning Center in Windom that can be purchased ... and they also take custom orders. The students can do etching or vinyl designs on the glassware. Contact them at 507-831-6935.



Bel-Youth Press at the Belview Learning Center

Students at Bel-Youth Press create items with their screen press. They can create t-shirts for your next event or gathering ... as well as special items such as mugs. Contact them at 507-938-4111.

