

Special Edition

A Newsletter to Parents and Staff

From Butler County School Board Council Special Education Program

Volume 20, Issue 1

Spring 2007

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Storage room transformed into bakery/coffee shop

Nancy Olson is constantly thinking of ways to expand the learning opportunities for her Andover High students. Before school started in August, she and Paraeducator Rodger Charles created the Andover Skill Development Center out of a storage room in the Andover Stadium building located across the street from AHS.

Years ago the room was a cafeteria. Today it houses a craft corner, the Stadium Grounds Coffee Shop, the Stadium Bowl Bakery and work centers.

Olson, an AHS interrelated teacher, said, "Andover Skill Development Center is a joint project of Andover High School and Butler County Special Education. The purpose of the center is to assist students with developmental and related disabilities in gaining vocational and daily living skills for adulthood.

"In the craft corner students work on jewelry making and other marketable crafts like beaded lanyards and Christmas ornaments. The goals are to assist students in developing leisure/

hobby skills and to teach crafts students can market now or as adults—maybe to have their own business in their home."

In the Stadium Bowl Bakery, Olson said students are gaining baking and food service skills. She said the bakery's specialties are cinnamon rolls, brownies and chocolate chip cookies. She said the equipment and furniture for the bakery and the coffee shop were scavenged from the school district and from businesses like Via Christi.

Olson said that district faculty and staff can order baked

goods from the bakery and her students will deliver them. She explained that repetition is key for her students in

See *Andover Skill Center*—Page 4



Above, Paraeducator Roger Dutton supervises Andover High students (l-r) Kyle Loucks and Bradley Nelson in the Stadium Bowl Bakery.

Direct Line from the Director

By Greg Buster, Director

Educationally Related Physical and Occupational Therapy

Did you know the Butler County Special Education Cooperative has four occupational therapists and three physical therapists on staff that focus on providing support for students with physical disabilities? Their main role is to help students access their educational environment.

Physical disabilities may include cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, spinal cord injuries, sensory motor dysfunctions, specific learning disabilities, autism characteristics, amputees, and other congenital, neurological, and orthopedic diagnoses.

The purpose of the educationally related OT/PT services is to assist students with a disability to benefit from their educational program. Student goals may include:

- Maintaining the student in the best position for learning.
- Promoting development of normal movement patterns and motor control to assist with attaining educational goals.
- Facilitating balance and coordination to access the educational setting.
- Providing consultation on adaptive equipment, architectural barriers and both pre-vocational and vocational job sites.
- Assisting in the selection, fabrication, adaptive seating devices, self-help aids, etc.
- Assisting in the selection of augmentative or alternate communication devices to allow students best access for operating these devices.
- Consulting with parents, school staff and physicians.

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Tia Shepherd introduced to sport of bocchia ball

Hi, my name is Tia Shepherd. I am in the sixth grade at Andover Central Middle School and I've been in a power wheelchair for one and a half years. Recently I got the opportunity to meet Lee Lobmeyer and she taught me how to play Bocchia Ball for people in wheelchairs.

Bocchia Ball is a Paralympic sport. It can be played one-on-one or two-on-two or in groups of three. Each team has their own color of balls. The point of Bocchia Ball is to try to get your ball close to a white ball called the Jack.

Lee is an Internationally Trained Bocchia Ball Referee. I had the most amazing time with her. She can't walk because she got sick. She is a stay-at-home mom with three kids, one is 25, the second is nine and the third is six. She didn't go to public school until fifth grade. Before having a family she worked as a social worker.

There are plans to have a Bocchia Ball team in Andover. I hope so as I've been told I'm a natural and want to join the team.

—Tia Shepherd, Andover Central Middle School



Above, Andover sixth grader Tia Shepherd (right, center) tells her bocchia ball assistant, Brenda Clarkin, where to position the ball ramp. In paralympic competition, the assistant can never look at the court and the player must use physics and mathematics to tell the assistant how to arrange the ramp to get the ball to go in the desired direction at the desired speed.

Schools finding success with comprehensive reading program

Several Butler County schools use the comprehensive reading program Success for All (SFA) to provide 90 minutes of uninterrupted, daily reading instruction. With this program students are grouped across classes and grades by reading level.

Rose Hill Intermediate School adopted SFA over five years ago. Principal Kevin Collier said, "We've had pretty significant growth in our reading scores since implementing the

program. The year before we started 52% of our students scored proficient or above on the state reading assessments. Last year 84% of our students were proficient or above on the state assessments in part due to teaching children at their instructional level and getting them the skills they need before they move on."

Remington Elementary teacher Michel Buster said her school also saw an increase in reading scores after implementing SFA.

Buster said, "In addition, our middle school teachers tell us the students are better prepared for middle school. It's taken a couple of years to see results. We see the most results in students we've had in the program the longest." (Remington Elementary has been using SFA for four years).

Buster explained that students are assessed then placed in instructional reading level groups. She said every nine weeks they are assessed again and are moved up to a higher level or may stay in the same instructional group.

Collier said, "Once students are placed in their instructional groups, then we are giving them research-based instruction that is consistent throughout the building. Therefore, if students move up to a new class they will be in a reading class run the same way with just a different level of text."

"In kindergarten, the program is called Kinder Roots," Buster said. "It is a full-day program of reading, language and math. Reading Roots is the program for students reading on the first grade level. Roots' emphasis is on phonics instruction and 'how to read.'

"Once students test at the second grade level, they go into the Reading Wings program. The focus in Wings is on comprehension."

Buster said her school tries to keep the group sizes around 16 and within the groups are teams of four or five students. She said students within teams are partnered.

"Part of SFA is learning from your peers," she said. "Our building is focusing this year on clarifying words. If students don't know a word, they ask their partner. If the partner does not know the answer, then they ask the team. If the team doesn't know the answer, then we work on the word as a class."

Buster explained that each lesson targets a core reading/comprehension skill (e.g., drawing conclusions, identifying cause and effect relationships, comparing and contrasting information). Each lesson includes demonstration and explanation through teacher modeling, comprehension questions for discussion as well as written response, vocabulary practice and tests that require independent reading.

"One-on-one tutoring is another part of SFA," she said. "It is about 20 minutes a day for students who are struggling. Tutoring is done whenever you can get it in during the day, except during SFA time or during math instruction."

"Also included in the program are targeted treasure hunts, or reading workbooks. The workbooks target a specific skill and focus on comprehension."

"This program is very structured and it takes the students a while to learn the routine. What I love about Success for All is it tests students and places them at the instructional level where they belong—even the students who are advanced. All students receive individualized instruction through this program."



Above, Interrelated Classroom Teacher Michel Buster reads with a group of Remington Elementary fourth graders (l-r) Gage Souter, Moses Williams, Preston Meeks and Yiselda Rivera.

SEARCH TO FIND CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Butler County Special Education Cooperative is seeking to identify every student from birth through age 21 who lives within the boundaries of the nine school districts in Butler County who has developmental delays or may be in need of special education. If you have a child or know of a child who you think has development delays or special needs, contact the cooperative at 800-353-8561 or 316-322-4800.

Areas of special education include: birth through age two (infant-toddler), early childhood-disability, visual impairments including blindness, hearing impairments including deafness, deaf-blindness, autism, traumatic brain

injury, emotional disturbance, specific learning disabilities, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, speech or language impairments and gifted.

Parents are advised that all special education services are designed to offer the utmost in educational opportunities for each qualifying student, as well as to provide assistance and support in the areas of physical, mental, emotional and social growth. State and federal laws are followed in providing each student with a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Special Edition

The newsletter *Special Edition*, from the Butler County School Board Council Special Education Program, is intended to provide information to parents and staff about special education activities and classrooms throughout the county.

Special Edition is published semi-annually by Butler County School Board Council, USD 490 Director of Information, Jacalyn Clark. BCSBC Special Education Program, 124 West Central Avenue, El Dorado, KS 67042, (316) 322-4800, www.bcsbc.org.

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Circle USD 375
Douglass USD 396
El Dorado USD 490
Flinthills USD 492
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Circle's Siebels receives state award

By Pam Miller, *Interrelated Teacher*

The first annual state meeting of the Kansas Infnitec Coalition (KIC) was held Friday, October 5, 2007 at Emporia State University.

KIC is a collaboration between participating Kansas school districts, the Kansas State Department of Education and UCP (United Cerebral Palsy)-Infnitec.

The coalition partners are committed to sharing resources for the development of state of the art assistive technology services which empower all students to succeed.

At the meeting, Paul Dulle, President and CEO of

UCP/Infnitec, and Kansas Commissioner of Education Alexa Posny presented awards to nine students from different Kansas schools.

Circle High School Senior Christy Siebels was nominated for an award by Kristen Wiebe, assistive technology coordinator for Butler County Special Education Cooperative. Christy was selected one of the Coalition award winners because of her positive attitude and her hard work using assistive technology.

See more at <http://www.myinfnitec.org/MyInfnitec/>.

School psychologist's role is changing

The role of school psychologist is in a state of flux according to Julie Watkins, school psychologist in the El Dorado school district.

"The school psych's original role of IQ tester and going to meetings has changed because IQ tests have been marginalized," Watkins said. "Curriculum-based assessments have changed how we document if a student has a learning disorder. The IQ achievement description model is used everywhere but it is not supported by research. The new model is based on the presence or absence of skills, or skill deficiencies.

Watkins said that the new role of the school psychologist is more that of evaluation coordinator—to make sure a student's evaluation addresses all areas of suspected disability. In addition, she said, school psychologists must take on the increasing role of mental health provider.

"School psychologists are often the only mental health professionals that children have access to," she said. "We act as a screener to see if the child is having issues with mental illness and we direct children and their parents to mental health support in the community. Many school psychologists are not trained in mental health. They are more like educational diagnosticians.

"To keep up with our changing role, school psychs must always be reading peer-reviewed journals as well as books in many areas, in addition to the professional development required by licensure."

Watkins believes school psychologists must become experts in learning disabilities, cognition and learning, mental health and illness (e.g., autism and ADHD), child development, moti-

vation/resistance/behavior modification, culturally competent assessment and consultation, working in schools and supporting research-based practices.

She said that school psychologists continue to make sure schools are acting in accordance with special education laws and help teachers with IEPs and the integration of special education students into regular education classrooms.

"The big push in school psychology now is RTI (Response to Intervention) with different levels of support for students so that children who need the most support are in special education," Watkins said.

"The steps would be: if regular education is not working for the child we might try small group learning; if small groups do not work then we look at intensive individualized instruction; if a child needs intensive individualized instruction on an ongoing basis then that is what they would need special education for.

"RTI puts more responsibility for remediation on regular education. This fosters more cooperation between regular education and special education, so special education is used for support. RTI is supposed to assist regular education and special education to work together to deliver a range of services to children who need help.

"The more helpful you are, the busier you are. I always want to be accessible to parents and teachers but I do a lot of paperwork. I always wish there were more hours in my day to do my job. What we're expected to know is so wide-ranged.

"It's definitely a fun job! I can't imagine doing something else."

Popular lecture seminar continues

The fifth annual Butler County High School Gifted College and Career Lecture Seminar provided over 100 students with thought-provoking sessions on careers, philosophy, global climate change and more.

The seminar held November 16 at Butler Community College offered students the opportunity to attend four presentations in areas in which they were interested. Presentation topics included how we use energy and why energy conservation is important, educating the digital native, deciding on a major, leadership and survival tips, global climate change, the nature of philosophy, ACT/ SAT information and cadaver dissection.

Gifted Facilitator Nancy Cadwell said, "It was a fun seminar. I, personally, enjoyed the Global Warming/Climate Change lectures and was encouraged that some of the students were really

taking notice of what they can do to help stem the tide of global warming by some relatively simple actions."

Douglass Gifted Facilitator Marjorie Landwehr-Brown said, "This year our theme was 21st Century skills and what traits and characteristics employers are looking for in college graduates. I have had three students select their college majors and possible careers based on information they gained from this seminar. This event clearly is a benefit for gifted students across Butler County."

"We had some amazing speakers with great presentations," said Gifted Facilitator Charlie Mahoney. "This lecture seminar also provides an opportunity for high school students to interact with each other. It is such a positive event that we look forward to continuing it for many years to come."



Free Preschool Screenings

Count Your Kid In is a free developmental screening for infants and preschool children. The purpose is to help parents identify potential learning problems and find help.

If your child has difficulty walking, talking, seeing, hearing or learning, please call the Special

Education office at 322-4800 or 1-800-353-8561 to schedule a free appointment.

Dates/locations of screenings:

January 4, 2008 / El Dorado
January 11, 2008 / Augusta
January 25, 2008 / Towanda
February 22, 2008 / Haverhill

Students explore effects of global warming

Fourth and fifth grade students from across Butler County gathered at the Douglass Middle School Sports Complex December 5th to explore and present on global warming and its effect on diverse cultures from around the world. The students came together to participate in the first annual Douglass Global Festival, sponsored by Douglass Global Learning and Butler County Gifted Facilitators.

The event featured guest speakers and student-created presentations about 13 nations. The day started with a Parade of Nations, after which students either manned their district's booth or they visited the booths created by students from other districts. At each booth were student-led presentations about a country often with samples of food, dance, art, music, etc., of the "adopted" country.

Organizer Marjorie Landwehr-Brown, Douglass Global Learning Director, said, "The students chose a country to research. Their research centered around the history, culture, the people and the effects of global warm-

ing on the country. We wanted student-led learning. We didn't want to tell them what to do so their creativity would come through. As a result we had a wide variety of projects in the booths.

"These students will have the opportunity to live and work in a global society, a society where the problems extend beyond any national border. We are helping to prepare our students for problem solving on a global platform. Our students need to understand not only the issues with global warming, but also have the necessary collaboration skills between different cultures to solve those issues. That is part of the mission of Douglass Global Learning."

In addition to visiting the booths of other districts, the students had the opportunity to hear presentations from a Chinese teacher and a Belgium student, as well as attend a question and answer assembly about global warming.

Butler County school districts involved were Andover, Circle, Augusta, Rose Hill, Remington, El Dorado, Douglass and Bluestem.

Faculty present at national and international conferences

Nancy Cadwell (Rose Hill) and Nancy Thomas (Bluestem/Flinthills/Remington/Whitewater) represented the Butler County Gifted Facilitators at the National Gifted Education Conference in Minneapolis, MN in November. They presented on "Rural Gifted Isolationism - Building an Academic Social Network for Students/Parents/Facilitators."

Marjorie Landwehr-Brown (Douglass) and Charlie Mahoney (El Dorado) presented on the same topic at the World Gifted Conference in Warwick, England in August.



**Happy
Holidays**



Above, Douglass elementary students (l-r) Rip Fraley, 5th grade, Megan Demel, 4th grade, and Kellie Rieg, 5th grade, set up their booth at the Douglass Global Festival. Festival participants researched the culture, food, dances and literature of a country as well as the affects of global warming on that country.

Left, Andover 4th Grader Madison Monroe prepares a map of Italy for display at her school's booth at the Global Festival.



Andover Skill Center

Continued from Page 1

learning new skills. Therefore, she said, the students get good at a bakery item before adding a new product to their menu.

The Stadium Grounds Coffee Shop is a coffee shop for district employees run by Olson's students.

"Students learn how to set up the tables, clean up and prepare baked goods for their own coffee shop. Besides good employability skills, students work on communication and the work skills needed to be employed in the food industry," Olson said.

Charles said the coffee shop has been used by teachers and administrators for meetings and is open during the school day for maintenance and grounds crews to stop by for a cup of coffee. He said the students can serve the customers or the coffee shop can be self-serve.

Students scrub the floors and clean the tables before shutting down for the day.

Charles said that community groups could also use the facility for meetings. He said the bakery would provide rolls, brownies or cookies if the group wanted them.

Olson said, "What this center can develop into is very exciting. Students come in here and get busy. When they learn new skills they are so proud of themselves.

"In the work centers, students do piece work for area businesses. We evaluate specific student strengths and help students develop those skills. We plan on starting a recycling project through which we would collect plastic bottles and aluminum cans from district facilities, prepare them to be recycled and then take them to Wichita to sell at a recycling center.

"We're having fun with it and we're really proud of our development center."

Direct Line

Continued from page 1

More specifically, physical therapists address functional mobility issues, such as rolling, crawling, standing, and walking. They also may monitor and assist in the selection of braces, splints, and prosthetics.

Occupational therapists address the areas of oral-motor skills needed for eating and swallowing, deficits in fine motor or refined arm/hand movement skills, self-help skills such as dressing, mealtime management, hygiene, and toileting.

Each building and program within the cooperative is assigned an OT and a PT. These professionals work closely together to provide programming for identified students.

Therapists collaborate and team with school staff that carry out the appropriate program for each child.