

EPPING SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE NEWS

JANUARY 2010

The mission of the Epping School District is to focus on the potential of every student and engage each to be passionate, confident learners who demonstrate competence and have strength of character to reach their highest aspirations and thoughtfully contribute to a diverse and changing world.

Welcome to the Epping School District Office News. Feedback is always welcome. Please contact Paula (pvangundy@sau14.org).

NECAP Results

NECAP results were released on Thursday. When analyzing NECAP results the district uses them to determine the overall trend and to determine if we together are on the right track. The district continues to move forward in reading and writing. Mathematics results, however, are somewhat mixed. Please remember that data is used to assess where we started, where we are, and where we need to go. Progress has been made; we are moving in the right direction. It must be said that we need to bring the same urgency to mathematics that has been so successful in improving our language scores.

Student reading proficiency in grades 3 to 8 has consistently increased every year from 60% in 2005 to 78% in 2009. For the third year in a row Epping has performed above state average. Another exciting factor is that over the five-year period students performing substantially below proficient have decreased from 17% to 6% and students performing with distinction have increased from 10% to 22%. Student reading proficiency in grade 11 has shown a huge gain from 52% last year to 74% this year. For the first time Epping has performed above state average. The 2009 results also indicated that students have continued to gain reading proficiency as they have moved through our system from elementary to middle school. This was concluded by reviewing grade 7 and 8 student cohort data for the past 5 years.

Student mathematics proficiency in grades 3 to 8 has decreased from 71% in 2008 to 69% in 2009. There is some good news in that students performing with distinction have increased from 17% to 20% in grades 3 to 8.

Student writing proficiency was limited to the high school this year. (Elementary and middle school students took a pilot test.) Student writing proficiency in grade 11 has shown a huge gain from 26% last year to 58% this year. Again for the first time the high school has performed above state average.

At this time we do not know how these results will impact AYP. The state results are anticipated on or around March 31st.

The data supports the reading, writing, and data initiatives and your efforts! Thank you for all you do on behalf of Epping Children!

School Budget Update

The 2010-2011 budget has been impacted by declining student enrollment in the middle and high

schools and the economy. Class sizes, course enrollments, and special education case loads were reviewed and it was decided to maintain student programming and not recommend cuts in teaching staff. Administration and support staff positions were also reviewed taking into consideration student enrollment. It has been decided to combine the middle school principal and high school principal positions to one position and to reduce one guidance position in the middle and high schools. The schools will remain separate, but share more staff to improve the economy of scale and help with the budget issues. For more budget information please visit the district website at www.sau14.org.

As a result of these changes the district has advertised for a middle school and high school principal. The selection process will include committees comprised of school staff, students, parents, and community members. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please email pvangundy@sau14.org. Please state which school you would like to represent and in what capacity. Committee participants must be available for one session to develop interview questions and another to conduct interviews. More information will be forthcoming.

The next budget step is deliberative session which will be held at 7:00 pm on February 4th in the Middle School Gymnasium. Articles may be amended at this meeting. Voting on these articles will take place on March 9th.

Professional Development Committee News

The District Professional Development Committee met to receive input from several subcommittees and to take action on the following issues/concerns.

1. Allied Health certified staff (speech, occupational, and health staff) are subject to certification through a state health agency and per the ESD Master Plan. It was agreed that there needed to be a balance recognizing that this was an issue and the need for Allied Health staff to be involved in district initiatives. It was decided that the goal, professional review, and documentation process would still be followed with the understanding that an attempt would be made to align the goal to the health agency and district criteria. It was also decided that Allied Health staff would be provided options on professional development days. This included attending an in-school PD session if requested by administration, having the option of attending out-of-school workshops if available that day, or working with their professional learning team on issues relevant to their work.
2. Paraprofessional certified staff are subject to two certification processes - hours and district plan. It was agreed that the district should not require two different processes. It was decided that paraprofessionals would follow the goal, professional review, and documentation process and that paraprofessionals be included in professional learning teams. Paraprofessionals mid certification cycle could continue counting hours, but it was not required by the district.
3. The need for exemplars for PD forms at each school. It was decided to expand exemplars to include both the action plan and professional review forms. The subcommittee was directed to continuing working and report back in June.
4. Approval of revised Master Plan to match the PD Guide. The revised PD Master Plan was approved and placed on the district website. Please note that changes are highlighted in yellow.

Prescription Drug Benefit Changes This Month

New prescription drug benefits/procedures went into effect January 1st. Local Government Center

disseminated this information by letter and also in recent publications. Please read these materials to understand how they impact you. Please contact LCG at 800-527-5001 or memberservices@nhlhc.org with questions.

1. Maintenance Mail Program – You may fill a 34-day supply of a new medication at a retail pharmacy with up to two refills. Future refills must be done through the mail service.
2. Generic Equivalent Program – You will still be able to purchase brand-name medications, but when doing so will be required to pay the copayment plus the cost difference between the brand-name and its generic equivalent.
3. Specialty Drug Program – You will need to contact Caremark for specialty drug needs.

Slice of Life Activation Kit Mailings This Month

Each year, all LGC HealthTrust subscribers and their medically covered spouses are eligible to take the *Slice of Life Program's Get Healthy* Personal Health Analysis (PHA) between **January 1 and March 31**. The PHA is a simple questionnaire designed to identify specific health risks. It can be completed on line, which earns participants a \$75 incentive. A paper PHA can be completed to earn a \$50 incentive; call 866.564.5237 to request a paper version.

After completing the PHA online, participants can immediately download a detailed Personal Wellness Report which determines their eligibility for a low, moderate or high health risk program. Gordian Health Coaches are then available to guide, educate and encourage those with specific lifestyle risks or chronic conditions and help them manage and improve their health. The Health Awareness reimbursement program is also available to subscribers and spouses who complete a PHA in 2010. Please note that reimbursement for up to \$300 in health facility memberships, health classes, and other health awareness programs is subject to the completion of the PHA.

This year for the first time, LGC is offering the \$300 reimbursement for fitness exercise done at home. **For self-reported physical activity** (reimbursable for LGC HealthTrust subscribers, retirees, spouses and dependents 18 years and over):

- Complete the Self-Reported Physical Activity Request Form portion of LGC's Health Awareness Program Reimbursement Request Form verifying 30 minutes of physical activity on each of 8 dates per calendar month. Form is available on LGC website.
- Then follow the form's instructions for submission to receive \$25 for each month you meet self-reported physical activity requirements.

Please Do Not Turn Off the Heat

It is winter and heat turned off in several classrooms has resulted in frozen pipes over the holiday break. Please do not turn the heat off in your classroom. It will result in frozen pipes over weekend, holiday, and vacation periods.

ETV School Programming

Please let the ETV/Communication Coordinators know if you are planning a special student project/event. School Communication Coordinators are Cheryl MacLeay, Sue Thompson, and Eric Anderson.

Website

New information is being added throughout the school year. If you are planning a special event, please let the Website Coordinators know so that your event may be placed in the district/school calendar. School and district contacts are Cheryl MacLeay, Kyle Repucci, Jon Altbergs, and Paula VanGundy.

The district website recently lost the file links for the personnel and professional development pages. We are in progress of re-linking these files.

Go Green!

At the end of the school day please take a few minutes to turn lights out, turn off all computers and other electrical devices, and lock the classroom door. This practice will reduce our energy consumption and insure security of our computers and equipment and make for better functioning computers. Computers that run all night pull in dust causing computers to overheat. Also please help us in insuring the safety of students and staff by not propping open doors.

Slips and Falls

Just a reminder that winter is still here. Be extra cautious when getting in and out of your car, walking in the parking lots, and on the sidewalks. On wintry days please be aware of the weather conditions and dress appropriately and watch out for your surroundings. We want everyone to have a safe winter season with no injuries.

Delays and Closings Procedure

Please note that when a storm is predicted, but has not actually started prior to 6:00 am, the district may call for a 2-hour delay to determine the accuracy of the forecast. The district may then change the delay to a cancellation by 8:00 am. This practice was put in place after a previous situation in which the storm prediction was inaccurate and school was cancelled for the day. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we attempt to make good decisions regarding school delays and closings.

2010 IRS Mileage Rates

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2010, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be **50 cents per mile for business miles driven**. The new rates for business purposes are slightly lower than last year's. Last year the rate was 55 cents per mile. The mileage rates for 2010 reflect generally lower transportation costs compared to a year ago. Please calculate mileage to and from school when submitting mileage reimbursements.