

VAN BUREN CHARGERS

October 2016

Personal Best, Active Listening, Respect, Responsibility, Trustworthiness

From the Principal....

So many good things are happening at Van Buren Elementary School this year. I'm excited to share some of them with you:

Every school in Iowa is required to write a school improvement plan that gives us direction on how to improve student learning. At Van Buren, we are working to improve three things: how we work together in our teams (we call them "professional learning communities"), how we use information about students to teach reading, and how we provide learning opportunities for our English Language Learners. It's a good plan and we believe it will result in more students learning well at Van Buren.

Our attendance rate is better than 96% this year. That's a great number, but we could be even better. I'm noticing an early trend related to our early dismissal Fridays. We've had more than 20 students absent each of the last three Fridays and I have to think that has something to do with the shortened day. Maybe. Great learning still takes place on our early dismissal days. We need everybody here every day, even on Fridays!

Our office referrals are down again (office referrals are how we document major student misbehavior)! Two years ago we had 68 office referrals in the first six weeks of school. We reduced the number of office referrals by 25% in 2015-2016 and our numbers in this year are identical to last year. Great news! That's thanks to some hard work by a number of groups: our PBIS team, all of the Van Buren staff, Van Buren families, and, of course, the kids. Thank you to everyone for reinforcing, teaching, and practicing our Van Buren PARRT skills. It makes a difference.

It's shaping up to be a great year at Van Buren. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kent Ryan, principal
319-558-3548

Welcome to the Library Media Center

We are very excited to share our library year with you! Our school library team works very hard to promote our book collection as well as the information literacy tools available to our students. Each class has a regularly scheduled instructional time, as well as frequent visits to the library for book borrowing. We are committed to preparing our students to becoming 21st Century citizens and life-long learners.

Kindergarten students select two books each week and return them the following week.

First and Second grade students select two books each week and return them the following week.

Third – Fourth – Fifth grade students select three books each week and return them the following week.

Fines are NOT charged for overdue books. Replacement fees ARE charged for lost or damaged books.

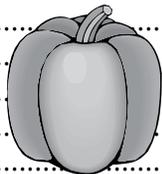
We look forward to seeing all our students in the library this year.

Please contact us with any questions or requests.
Mrs. Viner and Mrs. DeBuhr 319-558-2860



Calendar of Events

Oct 7	October Birthday Parties
Oct 11	6:30 PM PTA Meeting
Oct 13	Fire Dept Visit K & 3 rd Grades
Oct 14	Walk-A-Thon
Oct 20	4-8 PM Family Conferences
Oct 21	America Reads: Reading is Contagious
.....	Van Buren Pride Day
Oct 27	4-8 PM Family Conferences
Oct 28	No School for Students
Oct 31	3:10-3:30 Halloween Fall Parties
Nov 4	November Birthday Parties
Nov 8	6:30 PM PTA Meeting
Nov 10	Picture Make-Up Day



News from the Music Room

Fourth grade is busy studying the National Anthem! We have been learning the words to The Star-Spangled Banner. Students have studied the history (it was written by a lawyer in 1814!) and the vocabulary. Please ask your fourth grader if he or she can define any of these tough words:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| -dawn | -ramparts |
| -hailed | -gallantly |
| -twilight | -streaming |
| -gleaming | -glare |
| -broad | -gave proof |
| -perilous | -spangled |
| -o'er | -banner |



Mrs. Barnes, Van Buren Elementary Music Specialist

Second Grade News

2nd grade has had a very busy first few weeks back! In reading, we are working on building stamina for read to self. In math, we are working on our basic math facts to become more fluent in adding. Reading/spelling homework will be coming home on



Tuesdays and Math homework on Thursdays. In science we are studying the life cycle of plants and insects. Ask your student what kind of critters are in our classroom! Curriculum night for second grade will be on October

4th, from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Childcare will be provided. We hope to see you there!

Mrs. Dunkel, Mrs. Kottke and Mrs. Wolfe

Volunteer and Partnership Updates!

Cutting, Laminating, Sorting, Stapling, Sharpening etc...

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who give so much time to the piles of clerical jobs we continue to accumulate! We can't get these things completed without your help!

Thank you to BMO (formerly GE Capital) for the work on our campus this summer! We have a newly painted berm in back of the school and some new landscaping in front of the building! We also appreciate the generous supply of Kleenex, hand sanitizer and Clorox wipes. We are ready to defend cold and flu season now!

Rotary West recently used a portion of one of their weekly meetings to work on clerical projects for our classrooms! Lots of pencil sharpening too! They continue to collect Hy-Vee receipts for us, which really increases the money we receive from Hy-Vee. Rotary also collects Box Tops, Campbell's Soup labels and pop tabs. Thank you Rotary West!

A big THANK YOU to the following businesses and individuals for donating much needed school supplies and backpacks... Freedom Festival, Robyn Rieckhoff, HD Youth Center, Salvation Army, Famous Footwear, Calvary Baptist Church, Salem UM Church, Evelyn Prasil, Amy Schilling, Mary Nus, Kent and Maggie Klein, Rick and Julie Novak, Jenn Draper and Mary Ann Jackson. Thank you so much, friends, for your generosity!

Thank you so much to all the volunteers and business partners for giving your time and money to help our students be successful! We appreciate your commitment!

Would you like to become a Van Buren Volunteer? No job is more rewarding and you have the opportunity to work with wonderful students, staff and other great adults! Plus, we pay you in lots of smiles from our cute little faces! There are weekly opportunities, like the Rockin' Read Program, short term programs such as 5th Grade Speak Up!, one-time events including popping popcorn for Pride Days, chaperoning field trips, helping with the Annual Mile Run, Picture Days and there are even clerical jobs to do at home. Please contact Jan Hanks to help, 319-558-3284/jfields@cr.k12.ia.us

Follow the District on ,  @crschools, and 

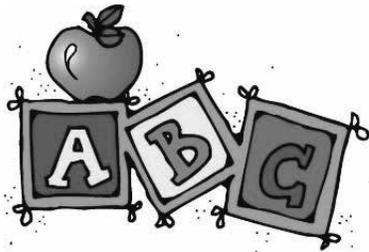
Van Buren Family Resource Center!

Our Resource Center is located in the Family Resource Room, #221, at the top of the stairs and to the right. Please stop in to see me anytime. We have limited supplies and other miscellaneous items available for your students. At Van Buren, we believe every child has the right to be successful. Tell me how I can help.

Jan Hanks, Enrichment/
Family Resource Coordinator
558-3284/jfields@cr.k12.ia.us

Collections

Please continue to bring in your Hy-Vee Receipts, Box Tops, Campbell's Soup Labels, Ink Jet Cartridges, Cell Phones and Pop Tabs! We even have a bin to recycle old household batteries! The collection site is outside the Family Resource Room, upstairs, at Van Buren! Please contact Jan Hanks with questions! 319-558-3284/jfields@cr.k12.ia.us



First Grade From A to Z by Lisa Betterton, Liesl Burgher, and Melena Urbanowski

Addition and subtraction Beginning to read Celebrating our successes December Holiday Unit Experiences with art, music and PE Field trip to Usher's Ferry Guided reading for more reading practice Hard working kids Investigations in math and science Jotting down sentences Kodak moments throughout the year Listening to others and being kind Making books Neat games in math and reading One hundredth day celebration Phonics to help us read Quality work Respectful and responsible Science including plants, pebbles, sand and silt, and sound Teamwork Using manipulatives to get a deeper understanding of concepts Varied thinking and problem solving Writing stories X-tra special children Youthful minds eager to learn Zany projects and lots of fun!

Counseling Corner:

Help Your Child Learn

Children learned how to make their brains "grow" by changing the way they think.

We used to think that our intelligence was fixed – meaning we were either smart or we weren't.

Scientists have proven again and again that simply is not true.

Our brain acts like a muscle – the more we use it, the stronger (and smarter) it becomes.

Making a mistake can be good because when we make a mistake, we try to correct it, and we learn from it.

We are exercising our brain as we make it grow which makes it stronger!

Please help your child STOP saying "I can't." For instance, if your student says, "I can't do math" instead encourage them to say, "I'm going to train my brain to do math."

Ms. Knabe is the guidance counselor at Van Buren. If your child is having problems at school or at home, please contact Ms. Knabe (319-558-3820) or email kknabe@cr.k12.ia.us

Fifth Graders Start Strong

Fifth graders have had a busy start to the year learning procedures and expectations. Our skills in math have been place value, rounding, and adding and subtracting decimals. In Social Studies, students are studying different types of maps to build our geography skills. We are becoming reading detectives by rereading and looking for text evidence to answer questions. Ask your child about their favorite story from our new reading series, Wonders. Helpful Hint: Multiplication is around the corner. Start reviewing and working on facts now.

Mrs. Strain and Mrs. Logan

Cedar Rapids Community School District takes your safety seriously and welcomes your input. Please contact your building principal/administrator and report any safety concerns that you may have. Thank you for helping us keep staff and students safe.



Cedar Rapids
Community School District

Kids on Course After School Programming Kicks Off!



Kids on Course has officially kicked off this year at Van Buren. We are in the middle of our fall enrichment session. Kids are enjoying many fun classes after school: soccer, show choir, dance, golf, ceramics, cross country, and many more! There are over 200 students in grades 1-5 participating in Kids on Course at Van Buren this year. Thank you to all of the families who filled out forms to get kids involved.

There are two Kids on Course staff members at Van Buren who run the program. Claire Stevens is originally from Ithaca, NY, but has worked in education and after school programs in Cedar Rapids for the past 3 years.

This is Claire's second year with Kids on Course at Van Buren. Greg White, also in his second year at Van Buren, is originally from Lincoln, NE, and has been in Cedar Rapids since 2011. Greg and Claire work at Van Buren during the day and run the after school programs.

Our Fall Enrichment Session will end on Thursday, October 27. The very next week our Learning Lab program starts after school on Tuesday, November 1 (No KOC programming on Monday, October 31).

Learning Lab is an exciting and fun environment designed to challenge all students to grow academically. There's no limit to what your student can learn. Learning Lab will ensure that he/she is on the path to college.

Learning Lab is mandatory for Kids on Course this year. In Learning Lab, students will work on projects in small groups with a tutor. The groups will be no larger than 7 students per every 1 tutor. Students will build their reading, writing and math skills by exploring different topics that interest them.

We are planning to have 1st and 2nd graders attend Learning Lab on Mondays and Wednesdays, and for 3rd-5th graders to attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Learning Lab will run after school dismissal – 3:45 pm until 5 pm. Students will be transported home after 5 pm according to what was marked on the Kids on Course enrollment forms.

We will send home some reminders and confirmations closer to November 1.

If you ever have questions about Kids on Course, please contact Claire (607) 592-3233 or Greg (402) 217-1378.

Art News

Did you know that every Van Buren student has their own art website!? It's true. I take photographs of all Van Buren student artwork and post it to their individual websites on the Artsonia online student gallery! The website is completely safe and is used by art teachers all over the world! As an added bonus, the online Artsonia Gift Shop has coffee mugs, pendants, t-shirts and all kinds of things for you to personalize with your child's artwork! Part of your purchase from Artsonia Gift Shop comes right back to us here in the art room at Van Buren. Registering for the Artsonia website is completely free, purchasing an item from the Gift Shop is optional. Watch your child's backpack throughout the year to learn how to register!

Mrs. Nus, Van Buren Art Teacher



The District offers an online Virtual Backpack site to support the efforts of community organizations wanting to share information about educationally-based programming.

Individuals or organizations wishing to post material on the Virtual Backpack submit items electronically and approved materials will appear online for families to access.

Organizations will find a link to submit flyers for consideration on the District homepage at www.cr.k12.ia.us. Families can access the Virtual Backpack from their school Web site.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Cedar Rapids Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (employment only), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status (students/program only) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. District employees with questions or a grievance related to this policy should contact the Executive Director of Human Resources, 319-558-2000. Students and others should contact the Manager of Student Equity, 319-558-2000. The District mailing address is 2500 Edgewood Rd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405-1015.