

The Newsletter of the DeKalb County Regional Office of Education



Letter from the Regional Superintendent

On October 9, 2015, 8 am – 1 pm, over 800 DeKalb County educators convened at Kishwaukee College for their first county-wide Institute Day in at least 15 years. The DeKalb Regional Office of Education decided to revisit a tradition long since forgotten in DeKalb County with the purpose of providing high quality professional development and building professional relationships across the county. The participating districts were Genoa-Kingston, Hiawatha, Sycamore, Sandwich, and Somonauk and Kishwaukee Education Consortium.

The event was made possible through the contribution of funds from Kishwaukee College in addition to institute funds from the ROE. The Institute Planning Committee, facilitated by Amanda Christensen, Regional Superintendent of Schools, consisted of representatives from each of the participating districts and Kishwaukee College. This committee also collected feedback from participants for future planning.

The program included the keynote speaker, Dr. Anthony Muhammad, author of several books on transforming school culture and addressing achievement gaps. Dr. Muhammad is one of the most sought after educational consultants in North America. He is recognized as one of the field's leading experts in the areas of school culture and organizational climate. Dr. Muhammad's keynote was entitled, *The Will to Lead: Creating Healthy School Cultures*.

In addition to the keynote, over 80 breakout sessions were available for participant selection. The main strands of workshop sessions were content/instruction, assessment, learning standards, social emotional learning, special education, technology, community and school climate, and professional learning communities. Session presenters brought their expertise from their own districts, ISBE, Illinois Center for School Improvement, NIU, Northwestern Illinois Association, Safe Passage, Streamwood Behavioral Healthcare System, Hillman Pediatric Therapy, Peoria District 86, Peatonica District 321, and Kishwaukee Intermediate Delivery System (KIDS).



Important supporters of education delivered the welcome addresses: Dr. Mark Lanting, Vice President of Instruction at Kishwaukee College; Representative Bob Pritchard; and Dr. Lisa Freeman, Executive Vice President and Provost, Division of Academic Affairs from NIU.

In the picture to the left I am welcoming attendees and preparing for an exciting day! See page 4 for more photos of the event and a list of those who served on the planning committee. Photos courtesy of Margaret Jankauskis.

Amanda Christensen

Bus Driver Safety

Initial Class Schedule

All Initial classes are held from 8:00 am—4:30 pm at the Regional Office of Education, 2500 N. Anne Glidden Road in DeKalb in the Five Seasons Room.

Next Initial Class: October 24, 2015 (\$10 Fee).

Refresher Class Schedule

Refresher Classes are held at various locations across DeKalb County (\$10 fee)

Next Refresher Class: December 10, 2015 at DeKalb High School, 6-8pm



National School Bus Safety Week is Oct. 19-23 **School Bus Driver Appreciation Day is Oct. 22**

There is nothing more precious to a parent than their child. Each day, in communities across Illinois, parents entrust school bus drivers to deliver their children safely to school and back again. Twenty-five million children in the United States ride to and from school on 440,000 school buses over 4.3 billion miles each year.

This month, parents and school districts have a chance to acknowledge the hard work of their school bus drivers on School Bus Driver Appreciation Day, while at the same time reminding students about safety during National School Bus Safety Week.

According to the Illinois State Board of Education, most children are injured because they hurry to get on or off the bus, act before they think or look, have little experience with traffic, assume motorists will see them and don't always stay within the bus driver's sight. Parents are encouraged to teach their children to get on and off the school bus safely by:

- Staying away from the “danger zone,” when loading. The danger zone is the area approximately 10 feet wide on all sides of the bus where children are most in danger of being hit;
- When unloading, look before stepping off the bus to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road). Move away from the bus;
- Before crossing the street, take five “giant steps” out from the front of the bus (Illinois has the school bus crossing arm) until you see the driver's face. The driver will signal you when it is safe to cross the roadway; and
- Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped. Continue to watch for traffic when crossing.



Photo of a student handing a bus driver a Thank-You Card.



Join us for a friendly youth & family cooking competition

**Saturday, December 5th
5:00 - 7:00pm**

**Kishwaukee College Conference Center,
Malta**

\$10 registration fee, includes t-shirt.
Registration deadline 5pm, Friday, 11/6.

3 categories: • High School • Middle School • Family,
which includes elementary-age kids with an adult helper
and Big & Little matches

Winners receive a personalized chef's coat



Event tickets:
\$15 Adults
\$10 Children 10 and under
\$40 Family Four Pack

To register a child to participate
or to purchase tickets to attend,
call Erin at 815.758.8616, stop by
Family Service Agency or visit us
online.

**Chinese Auction
Music
Balloon Animals
Caricatures**



Proceeds from
Cooking for Kids' Sake benefit

**Big Brothers Big Sisters
of DeKalb County**

a program of
Family Service Agency
Promoting, Supporting & Empowering

14 Health Services Drive
DeKalb, IL 60115
815.758.8616
www.fsadekalbcounty.org

TRUANCY/OUTREACH

Truancy Workers for DeKalb County

Jasmine Hollins jhollins@kidsroe.org
DeKalb (6-12) Office 815-217-0465
Sycamore (6-12)
Indian Creek (K-12)
Hinckley-Big Rock (K-12)

Kirstie Ruckoldt kruckoldt@kidsroe.org
Genoa-Kingston (K-12) Office 815-217-0470
Hiawatha (K-12)
DeKalb Elementary (K-5)
Sycamore Elementary (K-5)

Denise Curran dcurran@kidsroe.org
Sandwich (K-12) Office 815-217-0471
Somonauk (K-12)
Denise Curran—Credit Recovery & Homelessness
Coordinator

Outreach workers are available to work with
schools and Court Services to ensure regular
attendance for all pupils. DeKalb County
Truancy Intervention Program is supervised by
Jeff Smith, Assistant Regional Superintendent
(815-217-0461).

COMMON SIGNS OF HOMELESSNESS IN STUDENTS

Transportation and Attendance Problems

- Erratic attendance and tardiness
- Numerous absences
- Lack of participation in after-school activities
- Lack of participation in field trips
- Inability to contact parents

Poor Hygiene

- Lack of shower facilities / clothes washers
- Wearing the same clothes for several days
- Inconsistent grooming

Lack of Personal Space After School

- Consistent lack of preparation for school
- Incomplete or missing homework (no place to work or keep supplies)
- Unable to complete special projects (no access to supplies)
- Lack of basic school supplies
- Loss of books and other supplies on a regular basis
- Concern for safety of belongings

**IF YOU KNOW OF A
CHILD IN NEED,
PLEASE CONTACT THE
LOCAL SCHOOL OR
THE COUNTY LIAISON
FOR SERVICES FOR
HOMELESS FAMILIES,
DENISE CURRAN AT
THE DEKALB ROE.
READ FUTURE ISSUES
FOR SIGNS OF
HOMELESSNESS IN
CHILDREN AND
SERVICES THAT THE
DEKALB ROE AND
SCHOOL DISTRICTS
PROVIDE.**



Photo, above: Keynote speaker, Dr. Anthony Muhammad

Photo, below: A group of art teachers learning how to make block-print koinobori-carp windsocks as curriculum for their art students.



The Institute Planning Committee members have contributed their time, care, and positive energy to today’s event and should be recognized and thanked:

Stefanie Hill, Genoa-Kingston CUSD 424	Dawn Greenacre, Sandwich CUSD 430
Karen Simmons, Genoa-Kingston CUSD 424	Amanda Taxis, Somonauk CUSD 432
Jared Poynter, Hiawatha CUSD 426	Jay Streicher, Somonauk CUSD 432
Melissa Irick, Hiawatha CUSD 426	Amanda Christensen, DeKalb ROE
Nick Reineck, Sycamore CUSD 427	Jeff Smith, DeKalb ROE
	Margaret Jankauskis, DeKalb ROE and KIDS
	Pat Zilm, Kishwaukee College
	Michele Bolden, Kishwaukee College
	Tom Choice, President Kishwaukee College
	Sycamore School District for creating the cover



Photo, above: A professional learning community across districts facilitated by a teacher leader.

Institute Day Professional Learning Community Options:

- All grade levels PreK—5
- PreK—12 PE and Health, Art, Music
- Reading Specialists
- Grades 6-8 Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts
- Special Education
- Counselor, Social Worker, School Psychologist, Nurse, Speech Language Pathologist
- Grades 9-12 Career Tech Education, Science, English/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Family and Consumer Science
- Bilingual and English as a Second Language



Education is the key to success



From Sandwich CUSD 430...

Sandwich Middle School has implemented the new STEM, Gateway program (science, technology, engineering, math) at all grade levels. They are really excited about this program and the district has spared no expense to bring it to fruition. All students this year will participate in the modeling and design unit from PLTW (Project Lead The Way).



Design & Modeling: Students apply the design process to solve problems and understand the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives. They work in teams to design a playground and furniture, capturing research and ideas in their engineering notebooks. Using Autodesk® design software, students create a virtual image of their designs and produce a portfolio to showcase their innovative solutions. Next year the 7th and 8th grade will be doing the Automation and Robotics unit with the 6th grade doing Design and Modeling.

Automation & Robotics: Students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms. In the third year an optional STEM course will be added to 8th grade! Thus 6th grade will do Modeling, 7th Robotics, and 8th TBD.

From Hiawatha CUSD 426...

MATH FACT & WORD WALL DURING BATHROOM BREAK:

What do you do while waiting for your turn to enter the bathroom? Practice math facts, of course! Hiawatha Elementary students are on a mission to learn their Math facts so they are taking every opportunity to practice. These first grade boys are taking turns covering the answer while their partner figures out the problem. They know that there are several ways to solve a problem, such as using your fingers, using objects, or touch math until they are memorized. It is necessary to memorize addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts to be successful in Math and Science. On the other side of the hall is a word wall that students work on. Check out the word and math wall the next time you are at our school. This is just one example of positive academic activities happening at Hiawatha PreK-8 school.





From DeKalb CUSD 428...

DeKalb High School, NIU welcome students from Taiwan

Article credit: Paul Baker, NIU

Northern Illinois University and DeKalb High School earlier this month welcomed nine students from Taiwan, who spent three weeks attending classes at both institutions, while immersing themselves in American culture.

The nine juniors and seniors lived with DeKalb High School students and their families during their stay. They are the second group of Taiwanese high schoolers from Miaoli County in western Taiwan to visit NIU and DeKalb in the past two years as part of a program called Open Imagination.

“Open Imagination was really a team effort,” said Terry Borg, director of the NIU College of Education’s Office of External and Global Programs, who helped plan the visit. “The Education Bureau of Miaoli came to us with this grand idea about opening their students’ minds to a different way of learning.”

The students spent time shadowing host students and attending classes at DeKalb High School and at NIU participating in classes that align with their career goals -- law, science and medicine, diplomacy and marketing, to name just a few.

According to Borg, the visiting students are not the only ones to benefit from the experience. “Open Imagination is just as important to our local students,” he said. “This has provided them one-on-one personal experiences with their peers from halfway around the world. It makes the world a little smaller.”

“Open Imagination is extremely important to our students,” said Tamra Ropeter, principal at DeKalb High School. “Getting to know other cultures, what other countries’ educational systems are like – it’s invaluable.”

The students’ experiences were not confined to the classroom. Another Open Imagination supporter, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Chicago, feted the Taiwanese students and their DeKalb hosts to an afternoon of Taiwan and Chicago cultures on Sept. 12 with a reception featuring an orientation to the city, lunch and a song and dance revue that evening at the Taipei Cultural Center.

The students also visited the Museum of Science and Industry, the Field Museum and Cantigny Park, including its First Division Museum, which documents the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division’s participation in the two World Wars and Vietnam, and its Robert R. McCormick Museum, which traces the life and times of the longtime president of Chicago’s Tribune media empire, Colonel Robert McCormick.

Borg said he hopes that this year’s Open Imagination Project can be expanded to include a reciprocal visit from DeKalb High School students this spring.



Check out our website www.dekalbcounty.org/ROE or call us at 815-217-0460 to find out how to become a paraprofessional or a substitute teacher!

If someone has not earned 60 semester hours of higher education, but is at least 21 years old, he or she can take the Parapro Assessment to qualify for the Educator License with Stipulations. The DeKalb Regional Office of Education is the local provider of the ParaPro Assessment.

Testing available by appointment only.

Tuesdays 9:00am – 4:00pm

Test may take 3 hours. Starting time must occur by 1 pm.

Cost is \$70.00 (cash or check)

Information regarding the ParaPro Assessment and about ParaPro Test Prep is available online at www.ets.org.

If someone has a bachelor's degree, in any area, he or she is eligible for a Substitute License. A Substitute License allows you to work as a substitute teacher and as a paraprofessional. Please allow for 4-6 weeks for a sub license to be issued by the Illinois State Board of Education. Substitute teachers are required to have a physician's statement of good health and a criminal background check conducted. Fingerprint appointments are available at the ROE and cost \$60. Call the DeKalb ROE for details regarding license application, fees, and enrollment in DeKalb County schools.

Testing Center Info

The ROE testing center is open on Tuesdays from 9am to 4pm, but Constitution Tests must begin no later than 2 pm. There is no fee for the Constitution Test. Please have valid photo ID available, confirm identification in main office prior to checking in (schedule by calling the ROE). The ETS Paraprofessional Assessment is also available (schedule by calling the ROE). ROE Testing Center offers all Pearson VUE tests (schedule online with Pearson).

Fingerprinting Services

The DeKalb ROE is a licensed FIRM Systems provider of criminal background checks. Examples of individuals who can be fingerprinted on-site:

All School Personnel	*	Health-care Workers	*	Daycare Workers
Parent Volunteers	*	Student Teachers	*	Bus Drivers
Concealed Carry	*	Medical Cannabis		

Authorization forms are required from the organization ordering the background check. **NEW EXPANDED HOURS DURING the lunch hour Monday – Thursday!**

Regional Office of Education
2500 N. Anne Glidden Rd.
Suite C
DeKalb IL 60115

ROE CONTACT INFORMATION:

Amanda Christensen, Regional Superintendent..... achristensen@kidsroe.org
Jeff Smith, Assistant Superintendent.jesmith@kidsroe.org
Barb Clark, Educator Licensurebclark@kidsroe.org
Deb Petrie, Bookkeeper.....dpetrie@kidsroe.org
Cindy Harness, Administrative Assistant.....charness@kidsroe.org
Ashley Davis, Fingerprint Technician..... adavis@kidsroe.org
Jessica Robbins, Fingerprint Technician..... jfogsanger@kidsroe.org

Phone: 815-217-0460

Fax: 815-217-0467

We are on the Web!
www.dekalbcounty.org/ROE/roe.html



THE REGIONAL REPORTER

The newsletter of the

DEKALB COUNTY REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Amanda Christensen, Regional Superintendent

2500 N. Annie Glidden Road, Suite C, DeKalb, IL 60115