

Aurora Public Schools

Superintendent's Bulletin

October 26, 2007



MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT JOHN BARRY

As you know, we are encouraging you to bring forward any initiative implementation issues so we can problem solve and hopefully smooth out any bumps. You have, and will continue to have, opportunities to voice issues at the monthly principal break-out meetings and through the principal representatives on the VISTA Implementation Team (VIT replaced Cabinet).

To be sure that teachers have an opportunity to share their insights as well, we would like you to set up an avenue for teachers in your school to bring forward implementation issues. Please encourage your teachers to either bring their issues to you or to their building association representative. Then, depending on the urgency of the issue, please contact your student achievement director for help right away, or contact your principal representative on VIT, or make a note to bring it to the monthly principal meeting.

We want to hear good ideas from everyone and appreciate your role and your teachers' role in bringing them forward.

Thanks!

As a reminder, the three principal reps on VIT are Scott Habermehl, Fred Quinonez, and Jane Shirley.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

First Grade Student Screening for Potential Gifted and Talented Designation (Division of Accountability and Research)

Aurora Public Schools has been cited by the Colorado Department of Education with a deficit in the universal screening of all students for potential Gifted and Talented designation. All other metro districts have complied with Code's recommended assessment screening in past years. In order to come in line with best practices and comply with CDE recommendations, the decision has been made to test all *first grade* students not already identified as gifted.

The actual testing window has been set for November 19 – December 19.

Please read the e-mail attachment for additional information and reference deadlines that require action.

CSAP and CSAPA Trainings (Division of Accountability and Research)

Accommodations training for CSAP will be held in November. We have separated the trainings into two levels: 101 for staff new to CSAP and regular (refresher) trainings for those who have

coordinated CSAP previously. It is required that each school sends a team to one training. The team should consist of the School Assessment Coordinator, a Special Education representative and an ELL representative. Please RSVP to Claudia Paz (Technician, Accountability and Research) cpaz@aps.k12.co.us, and refer to *reminders* in this bulletin for schedule of trainings coming up. Training schedules can also be found in the Division of Accountability and Research newsletter & on our Web site www.aps.k12.co.us/assessment/.

CELA Training (Division of Accountability & Research and ELA Department)

November 26, 2007: Division of Accountability and Research and the ELA Department will co-sponsor CELA trainer of trainers workshop at Summit Event Center.

8:00-11:30 CELA Administration

Who Should Attend: ELA teacher or other teacher with principal responsibility for CELA administration should attend (only one person per building please).

12:00-2:30 CELA Test Coding

Who Should Attend: The person who will take care of test coding for CELA (only one person per building please).

*Principals or administrative designees are welcome, but are not required to attend.

**Please RSVP who will be attending by November 8, 2007 to Linda Hicks.

INFORMATIONAL

Interim Assessment Update (Division of Accountability and Research)

A feedback survey on the first quarter interim assessments went out to all teachers on Tuesday, October 23. We will be collecting feedback either from the survey or by e-mail through Wednesday, November 7.

External Research Requests (Division of Accountability and Research)

The Division of Accountability and Research receives numerous requests from external organizations to conduct research within APS schools. We serve as the point of contact for these requests which is more convenient for researchers working with multiple schools and helps limit the time schools need to spend on these efforts. Schools receiving research requests directly should refer them to our department. All research is evaluated and approved at the district level. However, the school principal has the final say in permitting research within their school. All researchers should be able to present the district approval letter when contacting school staff about their research.

The research application and review process are described within the APS Web site at the following link: <http://www.aps.k12.co.us/assessment/>. Please e-mail Dan Jorgensen at ddjorgensen@aps.k12.co.us or call 303-340-0861 (ext. 28396) with any questions related to the research process.

Survey Requests (Division of Accountability and Research)

A number of district and school personnel have recently requested assistance with the implementation of questionnaires and surveys. The Division of Accountability and Research

manages such requests including support with the survey design, distribution, and analysis of results. A copy of the survey or questionnaire form should be submitted to the Accountability and Research office at least one month prior to the desired initiation date. The survey or questionnaire form will be evaluated by department staff as well as by personnel in the educational area(s) to which the project applies. Priority will be given to surveys that can be administered with the least amount of disruption to students and staff while also providing useful information to APS. If you're interested in conducting a survey please contact Dan Jorgensen at ddjorgensen@apsk12.co.us or call 303-340-0861 (ext. 28396).

Changes and Updates to the CELA Test (Division of Instruction)

November 16, 2007: District Assessment Team will meet at CDE to discuss changes and updates to the CELA test.

Holiday Schedule (Division of Human Resources)

From: Kari Allen, Chief Personnel Officer

As we approach the month of December, I would like to remind you of the holiday schedule for 12-month employees. The paid holidays are Monday, December 24; Tuesday, December 25; Monday, December 31 and Tuesday, January 1. Please remind your 12-month employees that these dates are the only paid holidays. If they wish to take additional time off during the winter recess they will be expected to seek approval from their supervisor and take vacation time.

The administration building will be closed during the first week of the winter recess, which is December 24-28. There will be no switchboard coverage. Some administration building staff members may be working but the building will be closed.

During the second week, December 31 – January 4, the administration building will be open (except December 31 and January 1). Staff may be reduced as individuals take additional vacation time if they desire and have approval from their supervisor.

Please let me know if you have questions or concerns regarding the winter break schedule. We were building our own schedules in Human Resources and thought this would be a good time to remind supervisors to plan with their respective staffs regarding the holidays.

Partnership for Choice Campaign (Aurora Education Foundation)

The Partnership for Choice Campaign is well underway in the APS District. By now, each of you should have received a packet describing the choices to make during the campaign which runs from October 15th through December 3rd. The form allows each employee in the district the choice to give to United Way programs, Partnership for Colorado programs or to the Aurora Public Schools Education Foundation. We are asking each employee to consider a contribution through payroll deduction or a one-time donation to the Aurora Public Schools Education Foundation to help the foundation continue to support the programs and projects that benefit the Aurora Public Schools. We would like to thank the employees of APS for your support and contributions, which are tax-deductible. If you have any questions about our programs or projects, please contact the foundation at (303) 326-2042 or ext. 28942 or visit our Web site at www.apsedfoundation.org. Principals, please share this information with your staff. We will also feature this information in the next edition of ENews.

REMINDERS

DATE	ACTIVITY/EVENT	CONTACT PERSON	TIME	LOCATION
November 6-7	NISL Cohort 1-Units 12 & 13	Amy Weed/ Linda Damon	7:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.	ESC2 1 st Fl. Conf Rm.
November 6	Secondary Dean's Meeting	Barbara Cooper	2:00 – 5:00 p.m.	ESC Peoria – Board room
November 12	CSAP Accommodations 101	Marybeth Lehto	9:00 -11:00 a.m.	ESC2 Conf A
November 14	Accommodations, elementary	Marybeth Lehto	8:00 -10:00 a.m.	ESC2 Conf A
November 14	Accommodations, secondary	Marybeth Lehto	10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	ESC2 Conf A
November 15	K-12 Principal Meeting	Amy Weed	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	ESC2, 1 st floor conference room
November 29	Accommodations, secondary	Marybeth Lehto	8:00-10:00 a.m.	ESC2 Conf A
November 29	Accommodations, elementary	Marybeth Lehto	10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	ESC2 Conf A

QUOTE

"There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."

-John F. Kennedy