



Centreville Elementary
Bulldog Bark

**Month of
September
Special Edition**

Visit our website at www.cpschools.org
for a complete list of activities and calendar of events.

September
12-10/3 PAC Fundraiser
29 Picture Day

October
5 National Walk to School Day and
the beginning of our Walking

Principal– Becky Stauffer
Secretary– Ardell Bontrager

Counselor– Diana Kamphues
Attendance Secretary– Sally Reed

Elementary Office 467-5200
Attendance 467-5203

NONACADEMIC “LIFE SKILLS” VS. ACADEMIC STANDARDS

In the September edition of the Bulldog Bark, I stated that our staff was implementing standards based grading and reporting. The staff has been very busy learning and preparing for this new initiative. This educational process of moving towards Standards Based Reporting was brought to us by our ISD and the Robert Marzano Educational Team.

To quickly summarize and hopefully not overwhelm you, Standards Based Reporting is what our K and 1st grade report cards have looked like the last two years. It is communicating to parents what specific state/national standards your child has mastered or needs to improve upon. Though we have been reporting on the standards at report card time in the lower grades, we have not been monitoring our students’ progress daily and weekly on the standards in all grade levels. This year 2nd grade will have Standards Based Report cards.

It is a new process that we at Centreville, as well as all the schools in St. Joseph County, have begun the journey towards implementation. Learning how to monitor and report progress towards the standards is a huge learning curve we, as a district staff, have committed to implement over a 3-5 year process. It will take a great deal of training and time for staff, communication to students and parents, patience and a lot of hard work for all to do what’s best for kids. For parents, we will need to communicate to you as we take each step. And our first step is tracking and reporting to you and your students Nonacademic or “Life Skills” vs. Academic Skills.

Nonacademic or “Life Skills” are those skills that prepare your children to be productive citizens that contribute positively to our world. For example, these skills we have identified are Participation, Work Completion, Behavior, Effort and Working Together in Groups. Often in education we give students credit for these skills by including them in academic grades. However, as adults we know that in life we do not get extra pay for showing up to work on time. It is the expectation. In education, we have learned that extra credit often masks the actual knowledge your child has of the content that is being expected of them. So instead of giving extra points, we will be tracking how well your child is responsible for their work, materials, behavior, as well as, respecting others and working as a team and reporting these very essential skills to you as Life Skills. Our hope is to clarify for you and your student what their actual strengths or weaknesses are. Is it mastering number sense and place value in mathematics (Academic Skills) or is it mastery at working together with their peers to solve a problem (Life Skills)? Both are essential, but reporting separately helps clarify where the strengths are, as well as the areas for improvement.

In the coming weeks, your child will bring home, if they haven’t already, more information on the Life Skills being expected in their grade level. Included are the specific behaviors and skills, as well as, how the skills will be tracked and reported to you. K-2 teachers have worked to have a set of consistent Life Skills while 3rd and 4th grade teachers have teamed up for a consistent set of expectations. 5th and 6th grade teachers also have a consistent set of Life Skills which they have correlated with the incentive trips that they offer to students. The criteria and expectations will be coming to you by the first of October. At Parent/Teacher conferences you will have an opportunity to discuss Life Skills to a greater extent with your child’s teacher.

This is a huge task that will change the way we report to you on your child’s education. We are committed to this innovation because we believe it is what’s best for kids. I will work to keep you informed along the way. Please feel free to call me with questions. If you want to learn more on your own, you can find a more information from Robert Marzano’s website and his books on Standards Based Grading and Reporting.

Thank you, Becky Stauffer