

Stewart Shuttle

Volume 23, Issue 1

September, 2010

The Principal's Position

Welcome back to school! I'm sure your student has been coming home tired each night. The beginning of the year includes learning school wide behavioral expectations, classroom procedures, and lots of testing! The testing is necessary to enable the classroom teacher to find out how best to assist each student in the classroom. The information gathered will help us to differentiate instruction to challenge your student at Stewart. Even after gathering this information, we still need parental involvement to positively impact student achievement.

The following model has been adapted from the work of Kathleen Hoover Dempsey of Vanderbilt University. It identifies key messages and sequential steps that increase the probability that desired outcomes will be internalized by students thereby enhancing performance and achievement.

What helps students learn?

Students must...

1. Feel **confident** they can succeed;
2. Be **internally motivated** to do well in each class;
3. Know how to **regulate** their own learning; and
4. Know how to **ask for help**.

Step 1: The 3 most important messages parents can give their children

- You need to **try hard**
- **Homework** is very important
- **School and education** are very important

Step 2: WHAT parents can do to help their children learn

- Discuss your **values**, goals, expectations, and aspirations.
- Learn more about how to help your student **learn at home**.
- Maintain clear **communication** with your children's teachers.
- Learn more about how to be involved in learning **at school**.

Step 3: HOW parents can help their children learn

- **Positively** encourage your child in all their academic efforts.
- **Model** ways your child can be academically successful.
- **Reinforce** your child when he/she does something well.
- **Teach** your child.

Rhoda Harris, Stewart Principal

Family Messages

This is what you can do to help your child do well in school: When grown-ups share family stories that have a beginning, middle, and end, children learn about their own history and gain experience with how stories can be told, read, or written. Tell your child about one of your favorite days in school, a time when you were sick and got better, or something about when your child was a baby. These are great stories to share with children. Talk with your child by telling family stories.

IowaParents.org

Linking Iowa Parents and Educators for student success

Building Strong Reading and Math Skills



From the Title Team

Lisa Hixson, Debbie Jewell, Becky Martin,
Katie Steele, Roberta Wilson

Each month the Title Team will be writing a piece for the Shuttle with quick ideas to use at home to help build strong reading and math skills. This month we have a list of reading activities and math websites to enjoy at home.

Preschoolers

- Read a bedtime story
- Read the same books over and over
- Give your child markers or paper and pencils and encourage "writing"
- Give your child a chalkboard and chalk
- Write messages to your child
- Label your child's possessions
- Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator

5 & 6 Year Olds

- You read to me and I'll read to you
- Fill in the blanks. Read poetry and verse that rhymes. Stop before the end of the line, having your child fill in the missing word
- Play sound games. A simple starter is "Riddle, riddle, ree. I see something you don't see and it starts with T."
- Create a newspaper
- Write a wish list
- Make a calendar and note events
- Write a fill-in-the-blank story
- Start a memory box
- Cook from a book

7 & 8 Year Olds

- Write a book about something real or imagined
- Keep a journal
- Write a thank-you letter
- Write your own cards
- Keep score at sports events
- Start a scrapbook
- Explore your family's letters and albums

9 & 10 Year Old

- Read riddles
- Play thinking games
- Work on projects
- Support scout activities
- Create a camera story
- Write a text for wordless books

11 & 12 Year Olds

- Put a book in your child's room
- Tell about a book you enjoyed
- Start your child on a new book series (ex. Henry and Mudge, Magic Tree House)
- Share newspaper articles
- Keep a journal
- Discuss materials read

Math Websites

<http://www.aaamath.com>

<http://www.coolmath4kids.com>

<http://www.funbrain.com>

<http://www.funschool.com>

<http://www.primarygames.com>

Click on "Math"

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A Note From The Nurse

Welcome back to a new school year!!!! We are off to a great start!!!!!! Please know that my door is always open if you have concerns or questions about your child or children. As the school nurse here at Stewart School, it is my job to keep the students healthy and ready to learn.

If you want your child to have over the counter medication during the school day, such as cough syrup, allergy medication, Tylenol, or Ibuprofen, please just send a note with directions. These directions should include time to be given and correct dose to be given. I will be happy to give these medications at school with your permission and directions. If the medication is prescribed from the doctor, the medication needs to be in the original bottle. I would also need directions as to the dose and time to be given.

I am currently in the process of checking all 500 heads for head lice. I have sent a blanket letter home in regard to head lice. This letter gives recommendations for treating head lice. It also recommends that you check your child's head each week for head lice, making it part of your hygiene routine. If there is case of head lice in your child's classroom the teacher will put that information in the weekly newsletter, so you are aware, and can check more carefully.

Our goal at Stewart School is for each student to be successful. As a team of students, parents, teachers, guidance counselors, principals, and nurses we will strive to achieve this goal. Until next month...

Shelly Hoffman
Stewart Nurse

SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF

Every month, Stewart will feature a staff member to highlight for you to get to know. This month's staff member is Alicia Smith. She is our new Alternative Kindergarten teacher. Please read a little bit about her:

I was born and partly raised in Dayton, Ohio to a photographer and a music teacher. I moved to Wisconsin as a child and graduated from High School in Tomah, which is located outside of LaCrosse. I attended college at Mankato State University, Minnesota, with a major in Elementary Education and a specialty in Preprimary Education. An avid reader, shopper, and movie-buff, I also enjoy camping and being outdoors. You might see me around Coralville and Iowa City, as that's where I'm currently living with my cat Maggie. Please say "hi" when you do!

SAM I AM

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new school year at Washington Community Schools! I'm excited to announce that I am the School Administration Manager, or SAM, for Stewart and Lincoln Elementary. This new position is designed to restructure the role of the principal.

Historically, principals have been managers: maintaining safe buildings, overseeing the budget, complying with regulations and mandates, coping with personnel issues, and communicating with parents. Now, the principal's role has expanded to include accountability for student achievement. This means focusing more time and energy on training teachers to be their best, also known as instructional leadership. Studies have shown that the more a principal is an instructional leader, the better students achieve.

To allow for greater instructional leadership, the School Administration Manager, or SAM, role has been developed. As such, I will be working with teachers, students, and parents to promote our Character Counts program and manage behavioral issues so that Mrs. Harris can focus more of her attention on improving student achievement. I'm looking forward to a great year working as your School Administration Manager to further develop quality schools in Washington, Iowa!

Your partner in education,

Ryan Gratz
Stewart Elementary SAM

COLLECT WAGONS, RAISE MONEY

Stewart and Pizza Ranch are teaming up together to raise money for Stewart! It's easy to do- here's how:

Step 1: Collect the Pizza Ranch Wagons from your pizza and chicken boxes

Step 2: Bring the wagons to the Pizza Ranch or to Stewart Elementary in the Media Center

Step 3: Pizza Ranch donates 25¢ to your school for each Wagon collected

Step 4: Stewart Elementary will strike it rich with Ranch Wagons!!!

BREAKFAST AT STEWART

Breakfast will be served at Stewart from 7:45 – 8:05. Any students coming into the gym to eat after 8:05 will not be able to receive a breakfast. Also, children may not arrive at school before 7:45, as there is no supervision until this time. Thank you for your help with these two issues.