

**Freeport School District
Freeport, Illinois
Office of the Superintendent
“Making a Difference For Each Student”**

Superintendent’s Newsletter Vol. 10 No. 2

September 30, 2011

This is the second in the tenth series of occasional newsletters. I welcome your comments and suggestions. If there is something you would like me to address, please let me know.

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Student and Staff Dress

We are two-thirds into the implementation of our ‘uniformity of dress’ code for students and the middle school students began complying with this regulation this year.

Just to provide everyone with the background, this step toward uniformity of dress, or limited options of dress, was put into place after an unsuccessful attempt at having students adhere to a less restrictive dress code.

A committee led by Pat Norman, Ryan Pierce and Yaa Appiah, which included teachers, administrators and parents after careful and deliberative study recommended the tightening of our dress code including a uniformity of dress, limiting the options for students in what and how they could dress. This plan is in place this year with the elementary and middle schools, which will be followed by the high school next year.

Almost every time I speak about this subject in the public, I am asked, “What about the staff ?” In fact this question was raised over a year and a half ago at a dialogue between the FEA and the Board of Education. I wrote about this in the newsletter of August 2010. Here it is again.

We realize that if we required a certain dress for employees, it would be a change in work conditions for some and therefore an item for collective bargaining. So, as in the past, when we have addressed this issue, we (specifically the FEA and the Freeport School District) have agreed without a written statement that we would all adhere at least to the standards that we hold for the students. It might be a good idea to review the standards of dress at each school level and have a discussion about what implications those standards have for the staff at that same level. This does not mean that there will be limited colors, shirts, pants and skirts, but all other standards are in place. The sticky point seems to be the wearing of jeans by staff. Our students in Grades K-8 are not allowed to wear jeans. Our staffs in those schools are expected to adhere to the same standard. Next year, it will be district wide. We have made exceptions to this agreement on special occasions, when the requests have come into the Office of the Superintendent.

If you have individual questions about what is appropriate to wear, please talk with your immediate supervisor. If an administrator has a question about the appropriateness of your dress, the administrator will handle this situation individually with discretion and tact.

Pretzel Fans Club Fundraiser

The Pretzel Fans Club will be hosting the Pretzel Pride Dance, Saturday, November 26th, 7:00pm to Midnight at the Masonic Temple Ballroom. Parents, alumni, faculty, and adult fans are invited to attend this informal fundraising event supporting Freeport High School’s Athletic Program. Dancing, a 50/50 raffle, silent auction, and authentic Pretzel gear will be highlighted. DJ services will be provided by Time Warp Entertainment. Hors d’oeuvres, beverages, and a cash bar will be offered. Advance tickets are \$15 and include a \$3 beverage credit. Tickets may be purchased at the Freeport High School Business Office (7 am – 3 pm), Cub Foods, Sullivan Foods, Imperial Palace, Freeport Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Stephenson County Visitors Center. Tickets are \$20 at the door.

Our Mission

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we educate every student for the challenges of today and the opportunities of tomorrow
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Lesson Plans

Many schools have been using lesson plans. The question then arose, “Why are we not using lesson plans district-wide?” We are not going to establish a district wide lesson plan format because of the great variance in what we are teaching and the grade levels involved. There have been some excellent models generated in our school district at elementary and secondary levels, examples of which are being sent along with this newsletter.

A discussion was held over the past few weeks among members of the FEA and school district administrators. The context for this discussion was prompted by an inquiry about having a template available where one does not exist for submitting lesson plans. We are not prescribing a template by merely making some viable examples available for those schools that need them. Another part of the discussion addressed the question of why are we asking people to submit lesson plans.

It is reasonable for principals to require staff to submit evidence of planning through the use of lesson plans so that we have another way to ascertain that the intended curriculum of the school district is being taught. Where principals have required this heretofore, they will continue with the current practice and modify their practices both in format and process, as they evaluate the effectiveness of the practice.

In those instances where there is not an established practice for requiring lesson plans, principals and school improvement teams should select viable models for lesson planning from among those models shared, but with the understanding that teachers will provide at least a student friendly learner objective.

The next logical step, once the objective is well stated, aligned with the standards of our adopted curriculum and/ or state standards and is capable of being evident to students, is to state how the teacher will know when the students have achieved the objective. Once these two elements are clearly in place, the next step is to describe the activity (or activities) that facilitate the achievement of the objective. These steps described are for schools where they are just beginning the requirements for lesson planning. Other schools have already pursued this issue and have followed a path that is working based upon the school’s needs. In those cases, this description is not intended to change the path.

We have asked principals to provide helpful feedback to teachers on their lesson plans within a reasonable time frame and according to the need of the situation. If there are major problems, for example with the writing of objectives, the principal should bring this to the attention of the teacher immediately and provide help in the writing of objectives. Principals have also been asked to compare and contrast the information gathered from submitted lesson plans (objectives) with information gathered from data walks. If there is a disparity between the two, this should be the basis for a conversation at a staff meeting or a staff development session.

Freeport School District Has Talent

We are putting together an extended lunch break during our upcoming institute day on October 21st, and will be including a showcase of the talent in our school district. We have some people who have agreed to perform in front of our staff in the Jeannette Lloyd Theatre and we have 3 to 5 minute slots available for people on our staff to display their talents: sing a song, recite a poem, perform a skit, play an instrument, do some magic, or something else either individually or in groups. We are expecting this to be fun and provide a break and some relief in the middle of our

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Freeport School District Has Talent continued

professional development activities. The showcase of talent would be followed by lunch served by the district to all staff in attendance. If you are interested in performing or would like to suggest someone whom we can ask to perform, please let Pat Norman know at Extension 306.

Rumor Buster

Each time I write one of these newsletters, if there are rumors that I know of, I am going to take a ‘rumor’ or two (this time we have none) and try to either confirm or dispel. If you would like a rumor dealt with in one of these newsletters please send it to me. Sorry, no anonymous mail is read in our office. But remember, there is nothing wrong with questioning a rumor. It is in the interest of open and honest communications.

No rumors, yet. Let me know if you have a rumor you would like me to address.

Upcoming Events during October

CareerTEC Exec Comm	October 4, 2011	CareerTEC Office
Homecoming Parade	October 5, 2011	Empire Street
Board of Education Meeting	October 5, 2011	Center School
Administrative Faculty Adv. Com.	October 6, 2011	Board Room
District Leadership Team	October 11, 2011	Board Room
Freeport Commun Public School Fund	October 18, 2011	Board Room
Supt Student Adv Council	October 18, 2011	FMS Conf Ctr
Secretaries Advisory Committee	October 19, 2011	Central Office Conf Rm
Board of Education Meeting	October 19, 2011	Board Room
Institute Day	October 21, 2011	District
District Leadership Team	October 25, 2011	FMS Conf Ctr
Retirees Luncheon	October 28, 2011	Farm Bureau

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