

CUSD 305

from page 3

quests in Skyward.

- Student Council is planning their annual Winter Follies. This will be an afternoon filled with students sharing their talents from music to comedy. The program will happen on Friday, February 17th in the afternoon.

- Two of our juniors, Evan Fowler and Sara Rogers, attended the ILMEA State Music Conference in Peoria. They were each awarded a \$4,000 scholarship if they choose to attend Millikin University after graduation. They attended workshops and performed with other top vocalists from across the state.

- The ALAH Drama Club is preparing for their performance of The Three Musketeers on March 10 and 11. Drama club advisor this year is Spanish teacher Faith Rund. Performances will be at 7 p.m. on both evenings.

Upcoming Dates:

- February 27 - All School Assembly - We All Rise Together sponsored by Marisa's Purpose
- March 1 - PSAT 8
- March 2 - Student Council Blood Drive
- March 10 - HS Play @ 7 p.m.
- March 11 - NHS to Polar Plunge

March 11 - HS Play @ 7p.m.
 March 12 - NHS Induction

Arthur Grade School Principal's Report

Spelling Bee: February 15, our AGS sent our spelling champions to the Douglas County Spelling Bee. Competing in the bee were Ella Oye, Trinity Schrock, Cameron McGill (Laila Sanchez was alternate). We are so proud of our students participating in the event.

District-Wide Book Study: Shifting the Balance: Beginning this past week, 17 teachers from across the district joined together in the study of a book, Shifting the Balance (6 ways to Bring the Science of Reading into a Balanced Calendar classroom). 28 people have signed up and have read the books, which focus on how to add research-based practices to what we are already doing and the importance of phonemic awareness and phonics in learning the read. This event is being led by 5 teachers in our district: Rochelle Luttrell, Vanessa Davis, Jenny Rau, Emily Crossman, and Denise Strack. We have been really pleased by the response and thank the teachers for taking time out of their busy days to push themselves professionally and move us forward as a district.

100 Day Party time hit our

younger grades at AGS with the celebration of our 100th day of school. Students keep close track of the dates with their daily calendars. In the cold of winter, it was wonderful to have our celebrations throughout the building.

Committee work updates

a.) Reading Committee: The committee is examining our school-wide STAR Scores, along with our diagnostic data to determine trends that we are seeing among our students. Michaela Ponstein leads this group and helping to lead discussions on our next steps.

b.) Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) Committee: Our most recent PBIS Meeting included Ami Flammini, from Midwest PBIS, who help to coach us through our systems and give us some ideas of how we can tighten up some areas. This will include some work with the displaying and implementation of school rules, along with the Check In/Check out the system that pairs students with teachers to help promote positive behavior days. This work will continue to provide mental health professionals into the building to support students in need. Jessica Clarkson chairs our committee and we are lucky to have her leading the process.

c.) Math Committee: Cur-

rently, our Math Committee is examining and supporting the possible adoption and piloting of math materials. This includes the use of assessments, manipulatives, and other components of these curricula and how they fit together. A big thank you to Melissa Hopkins, Rhonda Rhodes, Roger Punches, and Brianne Eads for their work on this important project.

d.) School Improvement Team:

Along with an examination of our most recent STAR data that was presented in the last report, our school improvement team is working hard to examine the overall direction of all of our committees and the distribution of our state grant. They are also revisiting our school improvement goals that were delivered early this year to the board to make sure we are following through on our action steps.

5.) 2nd Grade Valentines:

AGS Second graders will be partnering with a local nursing home to give residents valentines for the holiday. Our students showed kindness and made the day for our neighbors. Great job to Ms. Davis and Ms. Cohan.

6.) Scholastic Bowl:

The AGS Scholastic bowl has begun with 15 students who are studying hard. We have students working to master Alge-

bra 2, Geography, History, and anything under the sun. We look forward to seeing their success.

Atwood-Hammond Grade School Principal's Report

Piatt County Spelling Bee held at AHGS: Atwood-Hammond is honored to host this year's spelling bee for Piatt County. We will host students, staff members and families from Monticello, Deland-Weldon, Cerro Gordo and Bement-Ivesdale. We will hold a brief reception prior to the Bee for all attendees complete with beverages and treats. The Bee will be held in the gym starting at 9 am. Board members are welcome to attend as well. Our three finalists were Carter Fleming (4th-grade), Ava Jacot (6th-grade), and Bella Romine (7th-grade). Bella Romine was our top finalist for our school Bee this year. She won on the word: Cottonwood. Congratulations Bella!

Atwood-Hammond Knights School Sign:

Our sign insert is finally in and complete. Brad DeHart was instrumental in so many ways for this process, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize him and his efforts. From the start Brad was the one that recommended a local sign maker in Arthur, when I was unfamiliar with the area and didn't know that com-

pany did signs. He was helpful in introducing me to the workers there as well as the manager getting them measurements and details for the installation. He was then, with the help of three student council members, Solomon Binion, Mace Stirret and Anden Berry, able to insert the new sign, where it looks great both day and night. It is fitting and appropriate in unifying our communities and the district to have the new sign in and the old one taken out. We want to celebrate and honor our heritage and will do that by using the old Charger inserts in a display case dedicated to trophies from that era.

Mr. Farmer Honored with Official Proclamation:

Mr. Farmer, our esteemed retiring Girls Basketball Coach was honored by State Senator Chapin Rose with an official State of Illinois Proclamation. Senator Rose sent Mr. Farmer the official proclamation and certificate for him to share with the school and community. Congratulations again to Coach Farmer for his many years of service to the school, sports teams and communities of the Atwood-Hammond Grade School.

Lovington Grade School Principal's Report

• **100th Day:** We celebrated *See CUSD 305 on page 9*

Arthur CUSD #305 Community Survey Results

Community Survey Executive Summary

In December 2022 - January 2023, Creative Entourage conducted an online survey in Arthur CUSD 305. The purpose of the survey was to better understand area residents' perceptions of and priorities for the District. Three hundred sixty-one (361) respondents completed the survey.

Voting in the June 28 election

Nine in ten (90.3%) respondents indicated that they had voted in the June 28, 2022 election.

When asked to indicate how responsible they thought several factors were for voting "no" on a District proposal in that election, the amount of the increase and a lack of information were most likely to be cited as key reasons, along with concern about closing schools and the state of the economy.

- Tax increase was too much (54.6% highly responsible (9-10)
- Too little information was provided/people didn't understand the proposal (48.4%)
- Concern that the elementary schools in Atwood and Lovington will eventually be closed with all schools in Arthur (47.5%)
- Uncertainty of the economy (38.3%)

Among reasons that voters might have voted "yes," fewer than two in five respondents rated any listed reason as highly responsible (9-10 on a ten-point scale). High school facility needs topped the list.

- The high school is in need of renovation. (36.5% highly responsible (9-10)
- It makes long term sense for junior high and high school students share facilities such as athletic fields and career education facilities. (26.0%)
- The plan improved safety and security at all buildings. (16.2%)

Plans for moving forward

When asked about "various approaches for moving forward," a majority (53.6%) of respondents favored an approach that would "renovate the high school, keep grades 6-8 in the elementary schools, and make needed renovations and repairs in the elementary schools." Three in ten favored two ideas that would involve new construction:

- Build a new High School campus in a central location not within any of the villages (30.1%, total favor)
- Place the original proposal back on the ballot to provide junior and senior high education in a renovated building in Arthur and make essential improvements in the elementary schools in Arthur, Lovington and Atwood. Then do a better job communicating the benefits of this proposal. (30.0%)

When asked specifically about the need to renovate the high school, three quarters agreed that there is a "great" (39.3%) or "moderate" (35.8%) need.

Statements about local public schools

Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with four statements "when thinking about the Arthur Community Unit School District." More than four in five agreed with two statements about the need for renovations:

- We need to keep our school buildings up-to-date and in good condition to protect our community's investment in those facilities. (91.6%, total agree)
- All spaces in schools should be air conditioned. (80.5%)

District job performance

Most respondents gave high marks to the District with respect to facilities, staff and preparing students:

- Providing students and classrooms with up-to-date instructional technology. (66.1%, excellent/good)
- Keeping up with the repair and maintenance of school buildings (55.9%)
- Preparing junior high students for the transition from JH to HS (54.2%)
- Attracting and retaining high quality staff (53.4%)
- Preparing students for the workforce (52.4%)

In two cases, majorities gave negative ratings to the District's performance:

- Communicating with members of the community (65.5%, not so good/poor)
- Bringing together all parts of the district (53.5%)

Listed below is the overview of the actual data. Thanks to everyone that provided the much needed and valuable feedback.

Arthur CUSD 305 Community Survey January 2023 Overview of Data

In December 2022 - January 2023, Creative Entourage conducted an online survey in Arthur CUSD 305. The purpose of the survey was to better understand area residents' perceptions of and priorities for the District. Three hundred sixty one (361) respondents completed the survey. Complete results of every question asked are below, and results are weighted by parent and gender.

	Yes	%
Sometimes people get so busy, or are on vacation, or not registered, that they are unable to vote on election day. Were you able to vote in the June 28th election?	Yes	90.3%
	No	9.7%

Listed below are several reasons we've heard for why people voted "no" on the proposal. For each, on a 10-point scale, indicate if you think it was greatly responsible for "no" votes — a "10" on the scale — or not at all responsible — a "1" on the scale

	Top 2 (9-10)	Mid 3 (6-8)	Bottom 5 (1-5)	Mean
Tax increase was too much	54.6%	25.1%	20.3%	7.9
Uncertainty of the economy	38.3%	27.0%	34.7%	6.9
Didn't like moving grades 6-8 to a combined high school/junior high building	37.3%	16.7%	45.9%	6.1
Concern that the elementary schools in Atwood and Lovington will eventually be closed with all schools in Arthur	47.5%	15.2%	37.2%	6.9
Didn't fully address needs to improve the elementary schools	30.8%	22.8%	46.4%	6.1
Too little information was provided/people didn't understand the proposal	48.4%	22.1%	29.5%	7.2

Of course, many voted "yes." Using the same scale, please evaluate reasons that people may have voted "yes" on the bond proposal.

	Top 2 (9-10)	Mid 3 (6-8)	Bottom 5 (1-5)	Mean
The high school is in need of renovation	36.5%	28.4%	35.2%	6.8
It makes long term sense for junior high and high school students share facilities such as athletic fields and career education facilities	26.0%	28.7%	45.3%	5.9
The plan came from engaging our community	10.4%	14.0%	75.6%	3.9
The plan provided space at the elementary schools for improved early childhood education and other programs	11.6%	16.9%	71.6%	4.4
The plan improved safety and security at all buildings	16.2%	26.1%	57.7%	5.2

Some people are suggesting various approaches for moving forward. For each of the following, indicate if it is something you could strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose.

	Strongly favor	Total favor	Undecided	Total oppose
Place the original proposal back on the ballot to provide junior and senior high education in a renovated building in Arthur and make essential improvements in the elementary schools in Arthur, Lovington and Atwood. Then do a better job communicating the benefits of this proposal	13.1%	30.0%	20.0%	49.9%
Renovate the high school, keep grades 6-8 in the elementary schools, and make needed renovations and repairs in the elementary schools	24.4%	53.6%	23.3%	23.1%
Build a new Junior High/High School campus in a central location not within any of the villages	11.3%	26.5%	19.3%	54.2%
Build a new High School campus in a central location not within any of the villages	14.0%	30.1%	16.1%	53.8%
Build a new high school at the existing site and keep grades 6-8 in the three elementary schools	11.3%	25.6%	25.2%	49.2%

Following are some statements that people might make about their local public schools. For each, indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree when thinking about the Arthur Community Unit School District

	Strongly agree	Total agree	Total disagree	Other, don't know
We need to keep our school buildings up-to-date and in good condition to protect our community's investment in those facilities.	57.4%	91.6%	7.5%	.8%
Our high school building is in need of extensive renovation.	37.7%	64.5%	24.7%	10.8%
It would be good for kids to have a centrally located junior high and remove grades 6-8 from the elementary schools.	18.6%	41.7%	50.8%	7.5%
All spaces in schools should be air conditioned.	51.9%	80.5%	17.9%	1.6%

	Great need	Moderate need	Not much need	No need at all	Other, don't know	%
Forgetting about a specific proposal, how much need is there to renovate and improve the district's high school?						39.3%
Is there a...						35.8%
						11.7%
						5.1%
						8.0%

For each of the following, please rate the job performance of the Arthur district as excellent, good, not so good or poor

	Excellent	Excellent/good	Not so good/poor	Don't know
Providing students and classrooms with up-to-date instructional technology	10.9%	66.1%	15.7%	18.3%
Preparing junior high students for the transition from JH to HS	10.5%	54.2%	22.8%	23.0%
Preparing students for the workforce	10.7%	52.4%	27.4%	20.2%
Maintaining safe and secure schools	15.5%	74.8%	15.0%	10.2%
Keeping up with the repair and maintenance of school buildings	7.6%	55.9%	31.9%	12.2%
Communicating with members of the community	7.0%	29.1%	65.5%	5.5%
Attracting and retaining high quality staff	8.7%	53.4%	32.6%	14.1%
Bringing together all parts of the district	6.3%	35.5%	53.5%	11.0%

	%
Indicate below what describes you. Check as many as apply.	36.1%
Parent with children 18 or younger enrolled in Arthur District schools	5.7%
Parent with children 18 or younger enrolled in a non-Arthur District school	29.1%
Parent with children older than 18	13.1%
Arthur District staff and resident of district	1.2%
Arthur District staff and non-resident of district	70.1%
Community member	3.0%
Other, don't know	

	%
What are the last three digits of your ZIP code?	.4%
013	.2%
195	.2%
666	.8%
910	49.2%
911	4.3%
913	.3%
929	17.4%
936	.4%
937	.3%
938	2.9%
951	
953	

	%
Are you...	
Male	44.9%
Female	44.9%
Other	.2%
Prefer not to answer	9.9%

Thank you to all of you that participated in the survey and provided valuable insight and feedback. We will continue to strategize and develop a plan to improve our facilities and your input will be a valuable part of that process. Have a great rest of your week and enjoy the upcoming weekend.

Mr. Shannon Cheek,
 Superintendent,
 Arthur CUSD 305