



The Knightly News

by Supt. Shannon Cheek

Hello Knights and Knight supporters! I hope you have had a great week and are looking forward to a great weekend. In a previous article, I spent some time visiting with our elementary students and reported the results. It was a fun day filled with excitement and a day that made me realize how well our elementary/JH teachers do at preparing our students for the daily challenges they will face. I also wanted to take a moment and brag a little on our high school, its teachers, aides, support staff and administration.

A large responsibility of any high school should be to provide a broad range of opportunities to help assist students find their passions and expand upon those. In addition, high school should be able to offer activities and classes that will challenge all students and provide them with the roadmap they need to be successful in whatever avenue they choose to pursue.

Sometimes in smaller school districts, for whatever reason, those opportunities are limited, but in our district I'm proud to report the opportunities are plentiful.

Let's start with the academic opportunities our district provides our students. In exploring the high school handbook you will find a wide range of academic options ranging from the traditional offerings in the core subjects that many school districts offer. In addition to the core curriculum, Arthur CUSD #305 offers a wide range of alternative classes to spark students interest as well as provide them with the challenges and opportunities needed to be successful.

I'm proud to work in a district that still values classes within the career and technical education field. Classes within the CTE division of the high school include various Agriculture, Industrial Tech-

nology, and Business classes as well as a comprehensive list of Family and Consumer Sciences courses. Some of the specific classes offered in the CTE division include Agribusiness Management, Plant and Animal Biology, Electrical Trades, CAD I and II, Culinary Arts, Food and Nutrition I & II, Accounting I & II, and Marketing to just name a few.

Oftentimes in many districts these classes go unnoticed and are under-appreciated, but not in the Arthur CUSD 305 school district. In many cases these classes are so popular that we have a waiting list for students to enroll due to space concerns.

I'm also very proud of the wide variety of classes we have to offer at the high school. We still offer a comprehensive Music and Band program that offers classes to support the marching band as well as music appreciation that helps expand our students' understanding and love of music. The Social Studies department offers a range of classes to allow students the opportunity to explore history in various forms. Classes within the Social Studies department include but are not limited to US History, Sociology, Geography and Civics. If Science is an interest, we can satisfy that as well. The Science department touches on Zoology, Anatomy and Physiology, Physics and Advanced Chemistry. They are also utilizing technologies (virtual reality goggles) to assist in the teaching of various subjects such as Anatomy and Physiology.

We also still understand and appreciate the value of maintaining a healthy lifestyle that includes an understanding of basic health and the importance of Physical Education. We offer a comprehensive Health curriculum and students are required to take Physical Education on a daily basis.

Within the Math department we offer classes to challenge all students and expand on their knowledge of the world of Math. Offerings include everything from Algebra I, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus and College Prep Math. If Math is your passion, we have you covered.

Our English department provides challenging courses as students work through their early years of high school and then opportunities for students to branch out and be in journalism as they write the school paper and produce the school yearbook, if they are avid readers there is a Best Sellers class, and for our future authors there is even a creative writing class.

And last but not least I'm extremely grateful to be in a district that offers a comprehensive Foreign Language program. We are blessed to have not just one, but two Spanish teachers and a wide range of offerings in Spanish.

In addition to our traditional offerings at the high school we offer a very extensive range of dual-credit courses through Lake Land Junior College and Eastern Illinois University. Some of the classes that have been offered in the past include Statistics, Pre-Calculus, CAD, Composition, Sociology, Introduction to Speech Communications, and Environmental Sciences to just name a few. If preparing for college is the end goal, the dual-credit offerings are a great way to explore the college curriculum at a discounted rate. Some students have been able to save themselves up to one year of college tuition by taking advantage of all the opportunities we have at Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond High School. We have appreciated the partnerships we have formed with both Lake Land and Eastern Illinois University.

The high school also provides students with alterna-

tive learning opportunities including work co-op, CEO and a relatively new program entitled Blended Learning. The work co-op program allows students the opportunity to earn credits towards graduation while building those work related skills. The CEO program is a program that promotes students interested in entrepreneurship the opportunity to work with business leaders, as well as other students in other districts to learn about business and also develop their own business in the process. Finally, Blended Learning opportunities were created three years ago for those students that qualify.

Blended Learning courses include a combination of in-class and independent learning each week. Students on average will attend in-class learning 2-3 times a week and they will engage in independent learning during the remainder of the week. This provides students the flexibility to create a schedule that fits their circumstances as well as providing them the responsibility of creating a schedule that mirrors that of a college student.

As you can see the high school does a phenomenal job of offering an extensive variety of academic opportunities for the students but I would be remiss not to mention our extra curricular activities. The traditional activities are offered such as Cross Country,

Track, Football, Baseball, Softball, Volleyball, Bass Fishing, and Soccer to name a few. I'm proud that in addition to the traditional offerings we still offer various co-curricular activities that students can also participate in. Some of those activities are Scholastic Bowl, Marching Band, FFA, Pep Band, Game Club, Drama Club, Yearbook, Newspaper and Art Club to name a few. This is in no way an extensive list but as you can see there are many opportunities for students to participate and get involved.

Last and certainly not least the high school does a great job of promoting leadership, service above self and mentorship. The high school has several student leadership opportunities, including student council and the Principal's Advisory Council. These groups provide students a platform to develop their leadership skills as well as provide a student voice into the decision making process for the high school. All students are also required to complete a service hour requirement for graduation. This encourages and promotes personal responsibility for serving others and putting others needs before their own. I'm proud that our district still has this requirement for graduation.

As you can see there are many great things happening at ALAH HS and I commend the teachers, support staff and the administration for

their willingness to support so many opportunities for our students. I also want to thank the teachers, support staff and administrators for their willingness to try new things, explore alternative opportunities for our students and provide them with the leadership opportunities to be successful in whatever road they choose to take after high school. I am excited about what the future holds for our district and high school, especially since the staff has a servant leadership approach to assisting all students. They want the students to succeed and are always searching for opportunities to support them in all their endeavors.

I've said it before, but it bears repeating that I'm grateful to continue to have the opportunity to lead such a great district. The staff and communities are dedicated to serving and supporting the students and that is a recipe for success. If any of this information has sparked some curiosity about the high school, or any of our schools in the district, please feel free to reach out to myself or any of our principals. Our contact information is located on the website at www.cusd305.org. Thanks for taking the time to read this narrative and I hope you have a great rest of the week.

Mr. Shannon Cheek
Superintendent
Arthur CUSD 305

**Does your curb appeal
need a makeover?**



**Get started by talking
to us about our
Home Equity Loans.**



- Bonnie Gerkin - Karri Stutzman - Dawn Boddy

**Stop by our booth at the
Arthur Home and Garden Expo
March 10 & 11
at the Otto Center.**



201 South Vine • 217-543-3381 • www.arthurbank.com



In Our Community

THE ALAH FFA ALUMNI & SUPPORTERS

BISCUITS & GRAVY BREAKFAST

Join us Saturday at the
Arthur United Methodist Church, on
March 11, 2023, from **6-9 AM** for breakfast
and a silent auction.



No charge for breakfast
but donations are
accepted!

Ad compliments of:

Ask us about our 2023 Christmas Club Savings!



State Bank of Arthur

A Division of **Morton Community Bank**
Member FDIC