

# Madison News - 9-9-2013

Our year is off and running! It has been a little different start to our year with several early out days due to the heat, but I am hoping those days are now behind us. I wanted to touch base on a few items as the year gets going.

- \* We have several new teacher faces this year. **Mrs. Kristy Huerter** is new in our kindergarten hallway. Mrs. Huerter has worked previously in our district and brings several years of lower elementary experience to Madison. **Mrs. Sara Blom** is a new member of our first grade team. Mrs. Blom brings several years of experience to Madison as well. She was also a frequent substitute teacher for us last year, so she is well known in our building already. **Ms. Maggie Mielenhausen** is the newest member of our third grade team. She student taught at Madison last year and we liked her work so much that we hired her! We also have a new teacher in preschool, **Mrs. Stacey Sikkema**. Stacey worked at Madison as an associate last year, so she seems like a familiar face too! If you stop in the library you will also see a new face. **Mrs. Pam Ferguson** is our new librarian and brings many years of successful school experience to Madison. **Mrs. Katie Trainer**, our last new teacher is not one you will probably see much of since she is the preschool teacher for our new preschool class that meets at Pella Early Learning Center. We are pleased and excited about all of our new staff at Madison!
- \* We have scheduled our **Open House** this year for October 10th from 5:00-7:00pm. More information to follow on that event.
- \* I want to remind you about using the east parking lot for drop off and pick up times. The front drive lanes need to be kept open for bus traffic, both before and after school. If you need to pick up or drop off your child *during the day*, you are welcome to use the main drive on the south side of the building.
- \* We are working on a new concept this year called **Professional Learning Communities (PLC's)**. This process focuses on *student learning* (vs teaching), *teacher collaboration* and is *results focused*. We will be taking a closer look at student achievement data as a driver for how we instruct students. The second aspect of PLC's involves teachers collaborating together to help students achieve at a higher level. This means that the grade level teachers are working more closely together to meet the needs of all the students in their grade level and not just the students in their individual classroom. Do not be surprised if your first grader comes home and says they spent some time in another first grade classroom that day working on math, for example. The teachers at each grade level are sharing students more frequently as a way to more efficiently meet student needs. This also involves our Reading Plus teachers, community reading volunteers, Central College students, classroom associates and parent volunteers. As you can see, we have a number of adults at Madison that are working together to provide an efficient and effective learning process for your student. Our goal is to place resources where they are needed so our students can learn at a high level.
- \* This Wednesday we are remembering our national **Patriot Day** by dressing up in red, white and blue. Patriot Day is meant to remember citizens who lost their lives during the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks. Teachers will be lightly addressing the meaning of the remembrance in their classrooms in an age appropriate fashion. It may be a good idea to have that discussion at home prior to Wednesday, just so home and school are on the same page with this issue.
- \* School pictures are scheduled for September 30th.

Be sure and join us for lunch sometime! We love having visitors in the building!