

**West Elementary BOE Report from Principal Amy Flinn and West Items for the Good  
February 7, 2024**

**Enrollment:**

*No Change:*

*Third Grade: 122*

*Fourth Grade – 103*

*Fifth Grade – 127*

*Total – 352*

*New Students: 1 Fifth Grader*

*Withdrawn Students: 2 Third Graders, 1 Fourth Grader, 1 Fifth Grader*

**West Building Leadership Team Updates**

See attached: [West BLT Minutes from January 31, 2024](#)

**Math Coaching for Eureka Math 2.0**

Today, we spent another full day with Eureka Math 2.0 Coach/Trainer, Courtney Hickman, along with EM2 Curriculum Writer, Aly Schooley. It was a great day of learning and professional development! The coaches spent all day at West completing “Guided Observations for Leaders” with Mrs. Flinn in various classrooms, along with spending one hour each in all three grade level PLC team meetings. Mrs. Flinn will be debriefing with the teachers that were observed to give feedback and provide “praises” and “pushes”. The time spent with PLCs focused on the various math models that students will experience over the course of their elementary school years through EM2, along with specific instruction and training on the modules and content the teachers are currently teaching in each grade level. This included area and line plots in Third Grade, renaming fractions greater than 1 as mixed numbers in Fourth Grade, and multiplying and dividing decimals by powers of 10 in Fifth Grade. This was the last coaching session of the year for EM2. We are so grateful for this outstanding professional development and appreciate the BOE’s financial support of this effort.

**Behavior Training Updates**

Our BSEL (Behavior/Social Emotional Learning) team at West continues to learn and grow. Some of the professional development we are participating in beyond the work we are completing with the TASN BSEL Team includes the following: The BSEL Team traveled to Topeka all day on **Friday, February 2** for **Tier 2 and 3 Behavior Support: Developing a Problem Solving Process and Interventions**. This training was extremely beneficial in preparing our team to support students and teachers when dealing with challenging behaviors. BSEL Team members also did some work with our staff on increasing Opportunities to Respond at the **February 7** faculty meeting.

**Kansas Schools Visit Central and West Elementary to Learn**

Over the years, we have had many schools contact us to learn more about specific instructional practices, programs, and curriculum we have in place. This year, we have had 8 different schools contact us and/or visit our schools to learn from our teachers and staff. The areas they have been most interested in learning about include our literacy practices and core curriculum resource, CKLA, as well as math instruction and Eureka Math 2.0, FastBridge Assessments, and the MTSS process. On February 16, staff and administration from Troy Elementary will be visiting Central and West to spend time in classrooms learning more about our literacy practices and observing the teaching of CKLA in action. West and Central administration and teachers have already spent time on Zoom calls with staff from Troy to help build their background knowledge. We are excited to share our knowledge and expertise with other educators. Other schools who have visited or contacted us this year include the following: Tonganoxie, Royal Valley, Silver Lake, Fort Smith, Arkansas,

**West Elementary Items for the Good – February 7, 2024**

- **MTSS Team Professional Development Update:**

Winter benchmark testing is finally finished at West Elementary School! Our students were assessed in a variety of math and reading skills through FastBridge, our benchmarking program. The grade level teams have analyzed this data to ensure that we are making adequate progress. We use the data to create groupings based on student performance and to have a better understanding of how to best help all students.

<b>West Elementary School Percentage of <u>Accurate Readers</u> CBMReading - English</b>			
<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>3rd Grade</b>	82.4%	95.1%	
<b>4th Grade</b>	92.3%	94.1%	
<b>5th Grade</b>	90%	96.8%	

<b>West Elementary School - 2023-2024 FastBridge Data - CBMReading - English <u>Percentage of Fluent Readers</u></b>									
<b>CBMR 2023- 2024</b>	<b>Fall Tier 1</b>	<b>Winter Tier 1</b>	<b>Spring Tier 1</b>	<b>Fall Tier 2</b>	<b>Winter Tier 2</b>	<b>Spring Tier 2</b>	<b>Fall Tier 3</b>	<b>Winter Tier 3</b>	<b>Spring Tier 3</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	65%	70%		25%	23%		10%	7%	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	57%	60%		24%	27%		19%	13%	
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	60%	62%		20%	22%		20%	16%	

**West Elementary School - 2023-2024**  
**FastBridge Data - aReading**  
**Percentage of Broad Reading Skills (Comprehension)**

aReading 2023-2024	Fall Tier 1	Winter Tier 1	Spring Tier 1	Fall Tier 2	Winter Tier 2	Spring Tier 2	Fall Tier 3	Winter Tier 3	Spring Tier 3
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	77%	79%		15%	15%		8%	6%	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	69%	70%		15%	18%		16%	12%	
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	70%	72%		17%	17%		13%	11%	

**West Elementary School - 2023-2024**  
**FastBridge Data - aMath**  
**Percentage of Broad Math Skills**

aMath 2023-2024	Fall Tier 1	Winter Tier 1	Spring Tier 1	Fall Tier 2	Winter Tier 2	Spring Tier 2	Fall Tier 3	Winter Tier 3	Spring Tier 3
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	81%	86%		14%	11%		5%	3%	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	73%	77%		25%	21%		2%	2%	
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	62%	62%		25%	25%		13%	13%	

On January 4th, the MTSS Team led the West Staff in a complete FastBridge winter data dive. Teachers were sorted into multi-level teams to analyze and discuss current FastBridge data and longitudinal data. Teachers first looked at the data individually and then as a team. They wrote their observations on post-it notes as a group. All teams place their post-it notes on different large sheets around the room by categories, which were titled - Third Observations, Fourth Observations, Fifth Observations, General Data Observation, Longitudinal Observations, Reading - Ways to Prioritize, Math - Ways to Prioritize.

Within the multi-level teams, teachers completed a gallery walk as a way to analyze and discuss the themes and data dive observations that came from the post-it note discussions. The goal was to look at the data from a bird's eye view. After the gallery walk, each team member identified one theme, observation, or priority that would stick with them as they go into the next quarter.

- **West Spelling Bee Champions:**

We had an amazing School Spelling Bee on Tuesday, January 30 with Madison Walsh and John Masseion named as School Champions! Both students will represent West Elementary at the Pottawatomie County Spelling Bee in Wamego at the Columbian Theater on Saturday, February 17 at 10:00am. Best of luck to both spellers!

- **Third Grade News:**

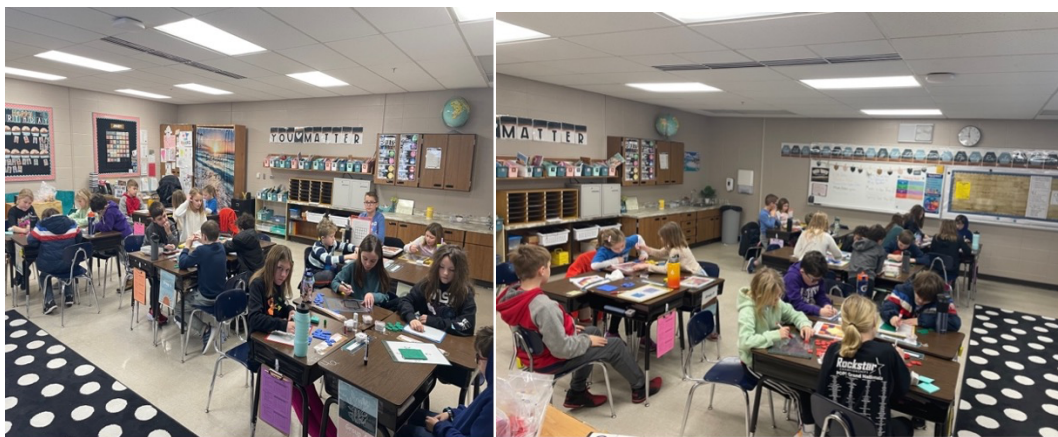
**Mini Society Interviews:**

Mini Society interviews were a huge success! Students were able to interview for one of the following Civil Servant positions for our classroom society: Treasurer, Money Cutter, and Paymaster. Throughout this social studies unit, students work to follow the expectations/rules set by the society that they have created. This learning experience helps them to understand more about entrepreneurship, economics, government, law, math, and ethics, which are included in the Kansas Social Studies Standards.



**Third Grade Math:**

We kicked off Module 4 in Eureka Math<sup>2</sup>. This module introduces Multiplication and Area Concepts of Area Measurement. Students formalize the use of multiplication to determine the area of a rectangle. They complete grids to show the rows and columns of squares within a rectangular array and connect the number of rows and columns to the side lengths. Students transition to using area models and relate the side lengths to area by writing multiplication equations.



- **Fourth Grade News:**

- **Fourth Graders Explore Energy in Science:**

Fourth Graders wrapped up their Energy unit in Science in which students learned about stored energy, energy transfer, renewable energy, electrical energy, and more. Much designing, constructing, and experimenting was done to visualize and explain different aspects of energy.



- **Fourth Grade Celebrates Kansas Day:**

Fourth Graders celebrated Kansas Day on Monday, January 29 by experiencing a day in the life of a one room schoolhouse. Instruction included handwriting, arithmetic, history, and reading. Students made butter by shaking cream and salt until it solidified. They also completed a beautiful, mosaic sunflower craft.



**Wamego Health Center Visits West Elementary Fourth Grade Classroom for Classroom to Careers:**

Fourth Grade students recently had a visit from their Classroom to Career partner, Wamego Health Center. Lori and Kari, nurses from the infection prevention team, gave a presentation about germs and handwashing. They had students use a special powder to simulate germs and then taught a 12-step handwashing process. Afterwards, their hands were inspected with a black light to make sure they were squeaky clean! The students loved this activity and we appreciate the support of Wamego Health Center and their participation in the Classroom to Careers program sponsored by the Wamego Chamber of Commerce!



- **Fifth Grade News:**

- Kansas Day Activities:**

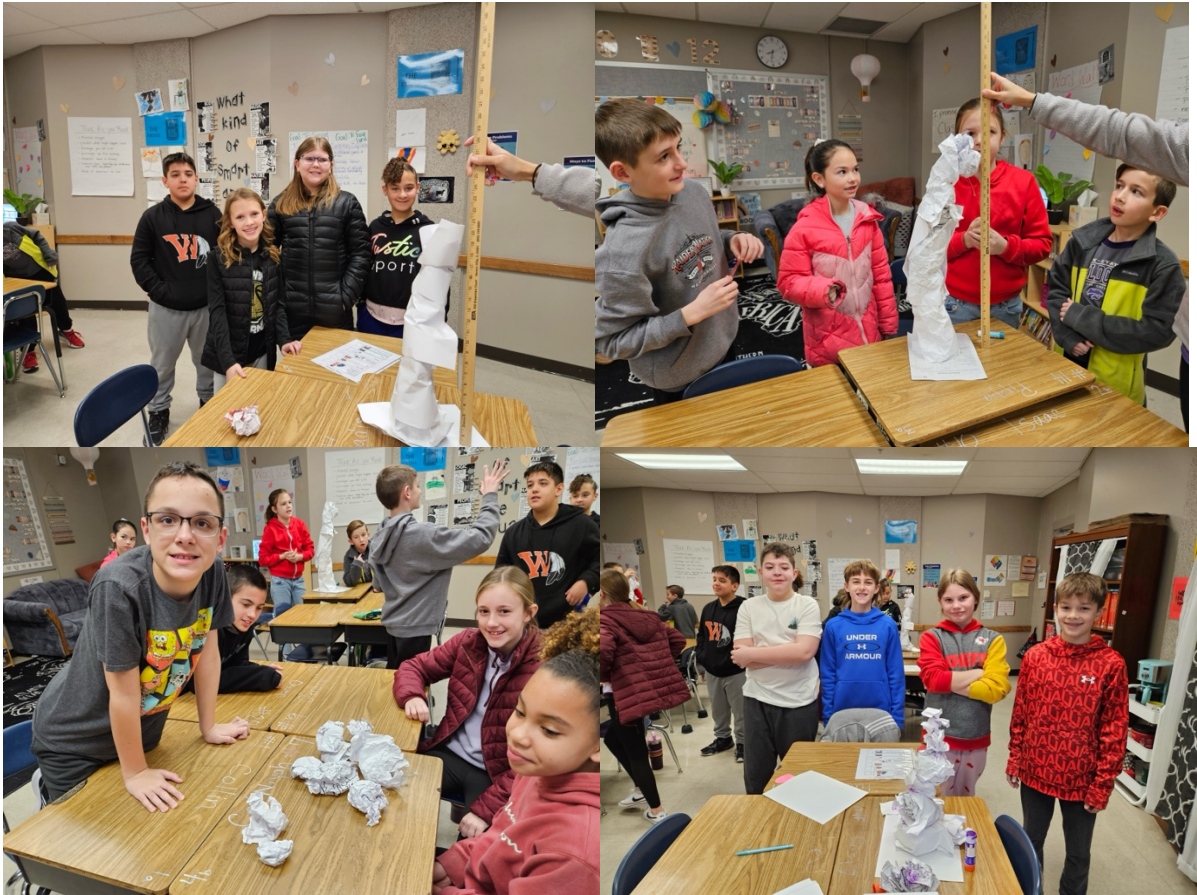
- Fifth Grade traveled to McCain Auditorium on the K-State campus on Kansas Day to enjoy a performance of “Keep Marching On: The March on Washington” by Mad River Theatre Production Company. When they returned to school, they enjoyed some Kansas Day activities and indulged in some yummy Kansas Day treats.



**Fifth Graders Study Measurement in Math Class:**

Students enjoyed applying their measurement skills with a “Snowman Measurement” activity during

the winter months.



- **National School Counseling Week:**

It is National School Counseling Week and we are celebrating our amazing School Counselor at West Elementary, Mrs. Robin Lumpkins Butler. Mrs. Butler is such an integral part of our school and our students' success. She has been our counselor for the past 21 years and has made a huge impact on the lives of many, many children and families who have been a part of our West Elementary and USD 320 family. Her passion for developing a growth mindset in our students and staff has been inspirational to us all and keeps us motivated to persevere when faced with challenges. She teaches us to use failure as a tool to overcome obstacles and to demonstrate grit in achieving our goals. She is an excellent role model for children and adults and demonstrates compassion and caring in her daily life and interactions with others.

Mrs. Butler, we celebrate you this week and every week! Thank you for all you do for each of us and for the positive difference you have made in so many lives! We love you!



- **Kansas Teacher of the Year Team for Region 1 Visits USD 320:**

We had a great day with the Kansas Teacher of the Year Team for Region 1 on Tuesday, February 6! We especially enjoyed celebrating our USD 320 Teacher of the Year winners, Kandy Williams and Kelly Estes! The two planned a very special day for their teammates, which included a catered breakfast by USD 320 Food Service, tours of our schools, and presentations from various groups and staff. They kicked off the morning by hearing a couple of numbers from the West Elementary Fifth Grade Honor Choir, along with other Fifth Graders from Mrs. Price's class. They also learned more about the West Elementary Student Council. They enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by Barleycorn's and got to hear from attendees of the Honor Flight and sponsors for this wonderful program. They also explored some of Wamego Middle School and heard a presentation by Chris Hupe and Corey Reeves on the annual, amazing Independence Day Celebration and Fireworks show Wamego has to offer. It was truly a fantastic day!







- **News from West Specialized Staff for January 2024:**

**Art News:**

We have been working with a Question of the Day during art for some time now. Instead of working using a team consensus for the responses, the students now move around the room to specific locations to illustrate their presence with their answers to a question. The questions have to do with a wide variety of topics involving art. When a student feels strongly about an answer that is not widely viewed by their classmates, Mrs. Havice gives the student(s) an opportunity to explain their thought process or reason for their answer. This is an example of how we are using Kagan Cooperative Learning Structures in the art classroom.

Third Graders are working on watercolor painting their sunflower pictures using a variety of actual sunflower colors with 16-color watercolor paint sets.

Fourth Graders are exploring Expressionism, and the Talking Chips structure has worked well to make sure that all group members have been able to voice their opinions, thoughts, and questions with the project.

Fifth Graders have been busy working in a group to understand the art method that involves drawing with grids. The structure Rally Table has been used to guarantee that all members of the group have been contributing that will produce a finished work of art featuring a cartoon character drawn one box at a time.

**Counselor News:**

During the month of January, the students began Unit 3: Empathy and Kindness in Second Step. During this unit, students will learn the importance of engaging in kind acts to help them develop empathy – the ability to understand and feel how someone else is feeling. Third Grade students are learning how empathy and kindness help build friendships and how they can identify acts of kindness for others. The Fourth Grade students are focusing on learning how to ask questions to help understand another person’s point of view. During Fifth Grade lessons, students are identifying a community problem and empathizing with those affected by looking at potential solutions.

Another project all the students are working on this month is creating a vision board. A vision board is a visual representation of their goals, hopes, and dreams now and in the future. All students identified personal and academic goals (short term and long term). The students also identified 2 or 3 careers that interest them. The remainder of their vision board will be filled with bucket list items. Finally, the students will create a digital vision board that will be posted on SeeSaw when they are completed.

### **Explore News:**

We are going to grow this year! Our plants have been growing and we are making goals to grow, too! Our plants have been transplanted into our Tower Garden. In Explore, Fifth Graders are continuing their work with stop-motion animation of the plant life cycle. Second semester we will continue to Explore new areas while we continue to watch our tower garden grow!

### **Library News:**

The Caldecott Medal is an award given each year to the most distinguished American artist of a picture book for children. Students used the award's selection criteria to evaluate several books as part of a Mock Caldecott in advance of the announcement of this year's award at the end of January.

Our school Read-A-Thon began on January 25! This program brings students together with family and friends to encourage reading and build literacy skills while also raising important funds for the school's PTO.

### **Music News:**

Despite all of our missed rehearsals due to bad weather days, the students continued to prepare for their upcoming music concerts. Fifth Grade performed on January 25th and Fourth Grade performed on January 29th. Third Grade will perform on February 26th. The honor choir students performed on February 3rd at Junction City Middle School.

### **P.E. News:**

As we like to do with the beginning of most semesters, we started off with a team building unit. We use the restart of the year to focus on things like teamwork, positivity, and filling whatever role is needed for the good of the group.

The students were put into various activities where they had to work together as a team to accomplish a task. We also discussed goal setting and how we can use that in sport, in class, and in life.

### **Technology News:**

We will be focusing on typing for the next several weeks. Fifth graders will reevaluate their end of the year typing goals and set new ones. They are encouraged to spend more time looking up at the screen while typing and not looking at their hands. Fourth graders will also be setting new end of the year typing goals. They are working on home row, capitalization, and punctuation. Third Graders are continuing to memorize their usernames and passwords. They are learning home row, proper hand placement, and mouse skills.

- **West StuCo Updates:**

#### **Kindness Greeters:**

Student Council members have created inspirational posters and pom-poms to greet students as they arrive to West in the morning. They have lined the hallways and brought many smiles to students on the mornings we have done this! It is great way to boost morale and for students to cheer on other students!



### **Snack Bag Packing:**

A part of our mission in StuCo is to partner with community organizations to engage in service. “Be the Light” is a local not for profit organization that provides weekend snacks for students across the district. We had a packing event and StuCo was able to pack 120 bags and get them ready for distribution. Another example of StuCo supporting other local students!



- **West PTO Updates – Read-A-Thon Time!**

We are in the thick of our annual Read-A-Thon fundraiser and we have already exceeded our goals and what we accomplished last year! I’ll be sharing more with the BOE in March on our final results. Last year, our students read over 150,000 minutes and raised over \$9,000 for our school! Stay tuned!