



BLANCO SCHOOL
Ruby Price, Principal/Superintendent
541-348-2326

➤ Mailing Address:	Physical Address:
➤ PO Box 8	48241 Hwy 101
➤ Port Orford, Oregon 97465	Langlois, Oregon 97450

Blanco Principal's Report February 2009

It is great to be back at Blanco where I have the privilege of serving as building principal. Blanco School is a busy place where the emphasis on student learning is evident everywhere. On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, the multi-purpose room is humming with the sound of SMART Volunteers and children reading together under the capable organization of Ginney Etherton, Volunteer Coordinator of the SMART program at Blanco. She is being assisted in her organizational efforts by Penny Sheehan.

The teaching and learning that is going on in our classrooms or extensions thereof is truly exceptional. I will focus this report on the exceptional work that is being done across the classrooms at both Driftwood and Blanco in the following goal areas:

Goal 2: To increase the percentages of students meeting and exceeding Oregon State Assessment Standards in math, science, and language arts.

Science and Math:

Blanco Science and Math teacher, Fred Betz, was notified by the University of Oregon Institute of Marine Biology that he has been selected to be a mentor teacher representative at the GK 12 National Meetings in Washington, DC in March, 2009. The GK Grant is a national grant that is set up to promote oceanography education and to make it come alive for K-12 students. The grant will pay for his flight/hotel/registration and food during the conference and travel as well as the cost of a substitute teacher during his absence. The level of science and math instruction that Mr. Betz brings to the students in 2CJ is truly exceptional; the information that he is able to disseminate to other district teachers is invaluable.

Mr. Fred Betz, working closely with Katie Bennett (Our GK12 Biology graduate student assigned to 2CJ), are planning two field trips to Port Orford this month, the 17th and the 26th of February. A formal science experiment is being planned. Students at Blanco and Driftwood will participate in studying what planktonic organisms settle to the ocean floor and take up residence under the Port Orford dock. Electronic devices will be installed to monitor light, oxygen and other factors.

Social Studies:

The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade social studies classes have been hard at work this year at both Blanco and Driftwood. According to teacher Bob Lemerande, students have exhibited excellent behavior and are working hard on academics. The sixth grade has been studying ancient civilizations including Greece and Rome. Seventh graders have been studying world geography and are currently learning about Europe. Eighth graders are studying U.S. History through the reconstruction era after the Civil War.

The seventh grade has also been busy fundraising and will once again be taking a trip to the Salem and Portland area on April 23 and 24. They will visit Mission Mill Museum, Oregon State Capitol, Trails End Museum, Evergreen Aviation, IMAX, and Champoeg State Park. The eighth grade has fundraised to go on the annual end of year graduation trip. They will be taking a jet boat up the Rogue River and that trip is tentatively scheduled for June 2.

Finally, a large number of students in our rather small school have been participating in seventh and eighth grade Knowledge Bowl. They have been able to make two teams for both grades. The students are competing hard and enjoying the experience. Players on the seventh grade team include Aimee Bussmann, Kyle Dahms, Riley Engdahl, Caitlin Happeny, MaKenna Hickey, Bennet Wahl, Ariel Elstad, Stephanie Gordon, and Mathew Hopkins. Eighth grade participants include Dalton Shields, Karissa Watson, John Foster, Heather Hardcastle, Olivia Hein, Christian Lathan, Beth McDonald, Camron Mundell, Jasmine Wenner, and Mike Wagner.

1st – 5th and Language Arts/Reading:

Our 1st-3rd grade classroom is always humming with teaching and learning as Kate Foster works very closely with her team to ensure that every child is learning to read, fluently and with understanding. Six first grade students have already read and passed the required test for 307 books at an average grade level of 1.7 with the supplemental reading program. Students in Penny McLeod's 4th and 5th grade classroom are thriving under her capable instruction. Dixi Howard, Language Arts teacher, reports that students in the entire school have read an average of 20 books per student in the last 18 weeks. Students not only are excelling in the number of books that they are reading, but they are exceeding the mid-year state recommended goal of words read. For example, at the 4th grade, students average 312, 259 words mid-year; this is far above the state recommended benchmark of 250,000 words.

Goal 3: To continue and expand effective methods of communication between school, home, community, and staff. A commitment of resources to Professional Learning Communities will focus on creating school environments that result in improved student attendance and achievement.

All 2CJ teachers participated in PLC (Professional Learning Community) work session on February 5, 2009. The focus of these collaborative teams is to determine what students need to learn (expectations), whether they are learning, and designing opportunities of time and other interventions to make sure that all students meet standards. The focus on Thursday, Feb 5th, was for teachers to collaboratively review and score student work samples in reading and math, thus aligning teacher expectations with state standards and developing instructional strategies to help student reach the benchmarks.

Blanco students are again proudly supporting Kiwanis Doernbecher Children's Cancer Program and its Coins For Kids With Cancer Program. Each year the students have a coin drive in their classrooms to see how much money they can raise for children at Doernbecher Hospital. This year the coin drive will be during the month of February with an ice cream party on Friday, February 27th, for the class that raises the most money. Doernbecher Hospital donates a certificate for a new bicycle and helmet to each school that participates in this fundraiser.

Parents are inviting 6-7-8 grade Blanco and Driftwood students to the Valentine Dance in the Blanco Multi-Purpose Room on Thursday, February 12th. The dance will be in the evening from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. This is another great example of the support that our parent community provides in creating extensions of the classroom educational experiences which greatly benefits our students.

Ruby Price, Principal

