

THANK YOU FOR BEING OUR GUEST!

Guest Staff Services October 2023



We're Back!!

Did you miss us? Getting back into the swing of the new year is a busy time. We know you were busy back in the classrooms at the beginning of August and we were busy too; so we waited until now to send another issue. Tell us what you appreciate most about our newsletter, and what you would like to see in future editions! We hope your year is going GREAT!

All Guest Staff

When you come to **AMAC** for any purpose, you **must** use your badge and come in the south entrance between Curtis and AMAC.

Guest Teachers and Paras

If you are interested in a long term assignment, please click [here](#) to let us know. We'll work to find a great fit for you!

For helpful videos in the following subjects, please click on the subject below.

[STOIC Classroom Management](#)

[Verbal De-Escalation](#)

[Guest Teacher Learning Hub](#)

If you have moved or changed your phone number, please change your contact information in PeopleSoft by clicking [here](#). You must be signed in to do this.

Need to contact our office? Call 973-4593 or email us at GuestStaffOffice@usd259.net

IN THIS ISSUE

DATES TO REMEMBER

LINK FOR SCHOOL MAPS

UPDATED BOE ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

WINNERS FROM AUGUST NEWSLETTER

ROVING PARAEDUCATOR PROGRAM

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT - FIRM AND FAIR

BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

HIGH SCHOOL BRAIN BREAKS

Dates to Remember

October 10-11 - High Need Guest Teachers - Elementary

October 12-13 - Conferences - No School

October 12 - **Guest Para Inservice** 1-3pm AMAC

October 13 - **Guest Clerical Inservice** 8-10am AMAC

October 13 - **Safety Services Training** 12:30-4:30pm @SSC

October 16-19 - High Need for Guest Teachers

October 24-25 - High Need for Guest Teachers - Secondary

October 26-27 - High Need for Guest Teacher - Elementary

October 30 - Guest Staff Hiring Fair 2-5pm AMAC

November 10 - Veterans Holiday - District Offices Closed

November 16 - Library Training 9-11:30am

November 22 - No School

November 23-24 - Fall Recess - District Offices Closed

November 28 - December 1 - High Need for Guest Teachers

December 18 - January 2 - Student Winter Recess

December 22-January 1 - District Offices Closed

January 2 - District Inservice (more info to come)

BOE Cell Phone Policy Change

At the BOE Meeting August 10, the BOE modified Policy P1464 - Student Behavior - Regulations. This is not the entire policy, but it is the portion of the policy relating to electronic devices.

Personal Electronic Devices

a. Student use of Personal Electronic Devices during the school day is regulated as set forth below:

- 1) Elementary Schools: While in the school building, students are required to power off and store Personal Electronic Devices in their backpacks or other classroom storage areas. Items intended to look like or simulate such devices are also prohibited during the school day.
- 2) Middle Schools: While in the school building, students may not use Personal Electronic Devices unless permission is granted by an administrator. At all other times, these devices must be silenced and stored away.
- 3) High Schools: While in the school building, students may use Personal Electronic Devices, before and after school, during passing periods, and at lunch. At all other times, these devices may not be used unless permission is granted by an administrator.
- 4) Students also will comply with BOE Policy 1230 – Acceptable Device and Communication Use by Staff, Students, and the District.
- 5) Personal Electronic Devices include, but are not limited to, cellular phones, including smart phones; tablets; student-owned computers; accessories such as headphones, earbuds, speakers, and other AV or technology equipment; and other personal communication devices that have the potential to be disruptive to the educational process.
- 6) The school day is the time between the beginning time and ending time set for the building the student attends and extends to school-related activities.

a) Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of their cellular telephones and other Personal Electronic Devices. The Wichita Board of Education shall not assume responsibility or liability for the theft, loss, or damage to a cellular phone or other Personal Electronic Device, nor does it assume responsibility for the unauthorized use of any device.

- 7) Students using personal electronic devices to record and/or distribute disruptive, violent, or inappropriate behavior is prohibited.

For a complete list of all BOE policies, please click [here](#).

New Program - Roving Paraeducator

The role of a paraeducator is to assist the teacher in the education of students including instructional assistance, organization, record keeping, management of student behavior, classroom safety, and communication with students, support staff and parents. Students may have cognitive disabilities, communication disabilities and social, behavioral and/or emotional disabilities. Students served are in need of academic and/or adaptive behavior skills instruction.

The Roving Para is utilized throughout the district to support students and fill in gaps where needed in a variety of classroom settings. This is a permanent, benefitted position and can lead to other full-time opportunities. Let us know if you may be interested or know of someone that may be a great fit for this program. Email Stacie at sdenison@usd259.net for more information.



We have winners!

We drew 3 names from people that responded to a hidden note in our August Newsletter.

Congratulations to **Rachel Hawpe, A'Keeya Jones and Karen Weese** on your Fuzzy's and Chik-Fil-A gift cards! We will mail them to your home address!

We appreciate you!

Thank you for the support you provide to our students and staff each and every day. You are vital to their success!



You asked - We listened! A suggestion was made that we provide school maps with the Main Entrance marked. Please click on [00-Floor Plans PDF's](#) to see school maps with the Main Entrances clearly marked. You must be logged in with your District account to view these maps.



Your Guest Staff Services Team!

L-R: Penny McNeill, Recruiter; Bridgette Warren, Assistant; Stacie Denison, Manager, Elizabeth Shively, Assistant

Classroom Management: Firm and Fair

Two key attributes of successful teachers are firmness and fairness. your ability to emulate these qualities have a significant impact on the behaviors students exhibit in the classroom. Students report and respond well to teachers who demonstrate that they are not easily swayed by student pleas or protests and who treat all students the same, regardless of ability, personality, or past experience. While no step-by-step instructions exist for being firm and fair in the classroom here are some suggestions for these two areas.

BE FIRM. The ability to be firm is directly related to establishing realistic expectations and consequences. it involves saying what you mean, and meaning what you say. When expectations are not met, consequences must be enforced. the quickest way to throw firmness out the window is to make unrealistic expectations, or threaten consequences that cannot be carried out. Be realistic in what you expect and don't make threats you can't (or shouldn't) carry out.

BE FAIR. Being fair as a teacher has two different components. First, you need to be fair in your interactions with different students. You can't enforce consequences for misbehavior with one student and overlook a similar behavior of another student. Second, you need to be fair to the class as a whole. Your expectations and associated consequences should be communicated before any activity. Making up the rules and consequences as you go isn't fair. Students need to know what you expect and what the consequences will be so they can make informed choices regarding their behavior.



Bringing out the Best in Middle School Students

Middle school age is an unsettling time for the tween and the teachers who teach those grade levels. It is much easier to connect with these students when you appreciate their strengths and understand their distinct characteristics. Middle schoolers often feel confused about themselves and may baffle or offend you. They may withdraw or lash out if they feel that their voices are not being heard. They truly want to make meaningful contributions but don't always exhibit behaviors that communicate that. There are several developmentally-appropriate evidence-based strategies that can be utilized to reach these young adults.

- You, as the adult, shadow a middle school student for an entire day and see the trials they go through on a daily basis. Walk in their shoes, talk with them and see what is going on. You may find out information that may give you an understanding of what is really happening with that child.
- Tweens are more likely to deny that they are emotionally struggling. Communicate that you will be an emotional support. Recognize the fact that you may need to put instruction on hold to deal with an emotional issue. Middle schoolers lack experience on how to center themselves, so providing coping strategies is important.
- Give students a voice. This age group craves approval and doesn't like to draw attention to their strengths. Ask them to self-assess their personality traits. Use these indicators to form collaborative groups where students are using their strengths in a group setting.
- Middle school students need to be heard and feel they have a choice. They will rebel at times. Make it clear that you value and appreciate their ideas.

Self-efficacy, autonomy, a sense of control and valuing middle school students contributions can lead to complying with expectations and be engaged in their learning and school community.



High School Brain Breaks

Kids, like adults, cycle through periods of attention and inattention—though the duration of the interval changes with age and is variable across individuals. By high school, [according to neurologist and classroom teacher Judy Willis](#), concentrated study of “20 to 30 minutes for middle and high school students calls for a three-to-five-minute break.”

Regardless of attention spans, brain breaks can prevent older students from feeling overwhelmed and provide space for reflection, joy, and connection during a packed school day. They're also a crucial part of the learning process.

“According to one popular school of thought, it's the active, repeated manipulation of material that lays the neural foundations for skill development,” [writes Youki Terada, Edutopia's research editor](#). But breaks are often misconstrued as a pause in the active learning process, instead of “the period when our brains compress and consolidate memories of what we just practiced,” neuroscientist Leonardo Cohen and his team explain in a [June 2021 study](#). In fact, Cohen continues, incorporating breaks into learning “plays just as important a role as practice in learning a new skill.”

Brain “breaks” can take many different forms inside of the classroom, depending on the aim. To boost students' mood, Willis suggests activities that increase restorative neurotransmitters like dopamine: anything that involves “laughing, moving, listening to music, and interacting with peers.” Likewise, brain breaks that incorporate physical activity not only provide a moment of stress relief for students but also increase the blood flow and oxygen supply to the brain—stimulating brain activity and helping students regain focus in the face of fatigue.

1. **“Train Your Brain”:** A fun activity that starts by having students touch the tip of their nose with their right index finger and then touch their ear with their left hand index finger. Then have them switch the position of their hands, touching the tip of their nose with their left hand index finger and moving their right index finger to touch their ear. Kids should keep doing this until they can get it right, which may take only a few tries for some and much longer for others. To add an element of competition, see which student can do this activity for the longest without messing up.

2. **Would You Rather:** Pair students up and have them discuss fun “would you rather” questions. Here are some examples of prompts:

- Would you rather live in a world with no technology or a world with no nature?
- Would you rather have the ability to speak with animals or the ability to speak all human languages fluently?
- Would you rather have your favorite movie character as your best friend or your favorite book character as your sibling?

To add an element of movement, do this activity together as a class. Announce the prompt out loud, and have students go to one side of the room or the other to show which option they'd rather choose. A select couple of volunteers can raise their hands to explain their reasoning.

3. **Rest and Reflect:** Try turning off the classroom lights, setting a timer for three to five minutes, and playing some soft, calming background music. Students can close their eyes and breathe deeply while they briefly pause and allow their minds to clear, processing what they've just learned and preparing themselves for the next portion of class.

4. **Jigsaw Jumble:** Looking for a brain break that will have your classroom silent for several minutes? Try providing small groups of students with a handful of puzzle pieces. The group must work to put the pieces together using only nonverbal communication. No talking allowed!

5. **What Is That?:** Find a picture of something your class may never encounter in your subject area and display it for students to see. “I showed a physics class a murmuration of starlings but did not tell them what it was,” [explains former principal Peter Embleton](#). “No phones or computers, they had to figure out what was happening and why.” This not only ignites student curiosity but may introduce your class to something they didn't previously know existed.

6. **Rock, Paper, Scissors:** Transform the classic game of rock, paper, scissors into a brief class tournament. Start by pairing students up; the winners of the first round move on to compete against another winner in the classroom, while the losers of the round sit back down in their seats. Winning students continue to compete until one final student is left standing.

11. **1, 2, 3, Math!:** Similarly to rock, paper, scissors, students play against each other in pairs. After the players say “1, 2, 3, Math,” each displays one, two, three, or four fingers in the palm of their hand. The first of the pair to correctly call out the sum of both players' fingers wins that round and a point. The first person to win three rounds is the champ. Sourced from:

7. **Cup-Stacking Challenge:** Break students into small groups, and provide each group with three cups and two index cards. Each group stacks these items in the following order until they create a vertical tower: cup on the bottom, index card, cup in the middle, index card, cup on top. The aim is to quickly pull the index cards out so the cups fall into each other in a clean stack. Using a timer, see how quickly the whole class can complete the task. You can even have different classes compete against each other for the fastest time.