



Bobcat Insider



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For Employees of the Marshalltown Community School District

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Inks receives advocate award for her support of English Language Learners



Rachel Inks, pictured second from right, received the Dan Chavez Beyond the Horizon - Individual Advocate Award at the Iowa Culture and Language Conference in Coralville on November 16. Also pictured are MCSD colleagues, from left, Pam Brewer-Michael, Shauna Smith, Anel Garza and Dr. Lisa Stevenson.



Rachel Inks, English Language Learner and Migrant program coordinator for MCSD, received the Dan Chavez Beyond the Horizon – Individual Advocate Award at the Iowa Culture and Language Conference in Coralville on November 16.

The honor was awarded to Inks for her advocacy for English Language Learners.

Inks said she was humbled by receiving the award (which came as a surprise) and accepted the award “on behalf of the collective work and innovative practices occurring all across classrooms throughout the district.”

Inks was nominated for the award by MCSD Director of Instruction Dr. Lisa Stevenson.

“Rachel has worked for almost two decades to support the needs of immigrants, refugees, and ELs in the Marshalltown area,” Stevenson said. “Rachel, most definitely, has left an impact on the staff, students, and families in Marshalltown. She is very forward thinking and wants the best for all of our Iowans here in Marshalltown - EL or not.”

4 questions with...

**Jenny Butler, 5th grade
literacy teacher
Lenihan Intermediate School**



What led you into teaching and what do you enjoy most about the profession?

Jenny: “I have always liked working with kids. During high school my Spanish teacher, Sra. Emerson, had us tutor students in Spanish. I loved working with a couple of students in one of our elementary classrooms. This helped me finalize my decision to become a teacher. I am a reading teacher and I get the most enjoyment by increasing my students love for reading! I love sitting with my students in their literature discussion groups and hearing their excitement over the books we are reading.”

If a movie was made about your life, what would be the title of it and why?



Jenny: “ ‘Sports Fan.’ This is because my kids and I are often found supporting the Bobcats in many sporting events that my husband coaches at MHS and Miller. I also was recently very excited over the CUBS winning the World Series! Go Cubs Go!”

What’s the best piece of teaching advice you’ve received in your career?

Jenny: “The best advice was from a previous teacher I had...they told me that there is always tomorrow. Do the best you can to make a difference each day and to know that there will always be a to-do list for tomorrow.”

What is something unique about you (hobby, activity or interest)?

Jenny: “Recently my new hobby is photography. I love taking pictures of our son and daughter and of our friends and family.”

Student and staff showcases scheduled for board meetings

New this year are student and staff showcases from each school at the Board of Education meetings. Miller kicked it off with the Student Council presenting on November 8. Here is the rest of the tentative showcase schedule for the school year.

Nov. 21 - Fisher
Dec. 5 - Lenihan
Dec. 19 - MHS
Feb. 6 - Anson
March 6 - MLA

March 20 - Hoglan
April 3 - Rogers
April 17- Woodbury
May 1 - Franklin



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Woodbury Principal Anel Garza as Cat in the Hat with Julie Thede as they get into the spirit for National Young Readers Week.

Woodbury principal transforms into Cat in the Hat

Woodbury Elementary School Principal Anel Garza isn't afraid to go above and beyond the call of duty to motivate her students. As you can see at left, she was transformed into Cat in the Hat on November 11 to kick off National Young Readers Week.

Also pictured is Woodbury instructional coach Julie Thede. Thede said the students loved seeing their principal in the outfit.

"Students were thrilled to see Mrs. Garza dressed as Cat in the Hat and to have her share her favorite English and Spanish books with them," Thede said. "It was a great way to reinforce the importance of being a good reader and that reading is fun. She visited classrooms at every grade level and 'read her heart out.'"

Thede said acts like this are typical of the dedicated principal and staff at Woodbury.

"Mrs. Garza strives to make every child in the school feel important and included in our community of learners," Thede said. "Organizing events like this supports that inclusion and community feeling that the Woodbury staff cultivates."

Staff's hidden talents on display during Woodbury balloon event

Curriculum Leader Shauna Smith, on the left in photo, and Woodbury Counselor Heidi Williams display their balloon animal making skills during a special assembly at Woodbury on October 27. The assembly was held to honor students with perfect attendance during the first quarter. Some students were literally mesmerized at their balloon making skills.





Kevin Kenealy, David Carpenter and Jon Jenkins

MCS D group attends Standards Based Grading conference at AEA in Cedar Falls

A group from the Marshalltown Community School District attended the Standards Based Grading (SBG) conference in Cedar Falls at the AEA on November 9. This group was learning about SBG, districts that have implemented such systems at the district level, as well as classroom and building practices that might apply to the work that Marshalltown High School and Marshalltown Learning Academy are moving towards.

Staff from MCS D who attended included Lindsey Ambrose, Dee Burt, and Brad Weidenaar from MHS and Jon Jenkins, Kevin Kenealy and David Carpenter from MLA.



Brad Weidenaar, Lindsey Ambrose and Dee Burt

Faas earns masters in curriculum/instruction

- Teacher librarian continuing to work toward administrative license

Erin Faas, teacher librarian at Rogers Elementary, completed her Masters of Education in Curriculum/ Instruction and Teacher Leadership through Buena Vista University in August. She started working on this degree in January 2015.



Erin Faas

She adds this degree to her current B.A. in Elementary Education and M.A. in School Library Media Studies. She is continuing her education by working toward an administrative license through Viterbo. She will graduate in May 2018 with her Principal/Director of Special Education Administrative license. Erin is in her seventh year with the district, working three years at Lenihan before transferring to Rogers.

Instructional coaches part of recent statewide CBE work

There were three MCS D instructional coaches who went to Des Moines recently as part of the Competency Based Education team to work on a statewide committee which is writing ELA competencies, nesting standards under those competencies, and creating proficiency scales.

The MCS D group included Brad Weidenaar from MHS and Paula Johnson and Sammi Jo Luse from Miller.

“It is interesting work that has implications for our district’s move toward SBG and certainly a possible state move to allowing wider usage of CBE,” Weidenaar said.

Submit Bobcat Insider news to Andrew Potter, communications director, phone 754-1000 or by email at apotter2@marshalltown.k12.ia.us.