

## Mr. Bilderback Named as Director of the Year!



Mike Bilderback, Director of the Special Services Cooperative of Wamego, received the Special Education Administrator of the Year Award in Wichita, Kansas on March 1st. Mike is an Executive Board member of the Kansas Association of Special Education Administrators (KASEA). He also is a Board Member of the WebKIDSS Board of Directors which provides a web-based IEP system for 214 school districts and both State Schools in Kansas. He also has held the Region 2 chairpersons position for the past 2 years.

Some of Mr. Bilderback's accomplishments this past year are: addressed critical special education funding issues at the Statehouse; is currently involved in the development of a new Web-based programming system to be implemented by the State Department, and used by all school districts across Kansas; wrote grants to further develop high school and young adults transition services for six school districts regionally totaling \$67,500 over the past two-years (i.e.: Project EXCELL and Project SEARCH). Project EXCELL has received two University regional awards, and is competing for national recognition. Project SEARCH is an international recognized program coming to Kansas for the first time with only 5 grants offered for the 2011-2012 school year. Mike is the acting chairperson for both steering committees.

Mr. Bilderback was nominated by the Special Education Administrators from Region 2 and was unanimously selected by the KASEA awards committee for this honor.

Mr. Bilderback has been employed by USD320 since 2001. Congratulations Mike, we are proud of you and your work!

## District Capital Outlay Fund

By: Doug Conwell, Superintendent

The recent petition that has been passed around town has provided an opportunity for a couple of discussions that I believe need to occur. The two issues for discussion are first, one of trust in the district's Board of Education to serve as a governing body that is trusted by the community to determine the needs for our school children and how to handle public funds. The second issue concerns how the capital outlay fund has been used by the school district and the importance of this fund.

### The Issue of Trust

Let me begin by addressing the issue of trust and the use of public funds. Local school boards are created by the state constitution to provide communities with a governing board that has the power of taxation for the purpose of creating and oversight of a community's school system. A review of the history of taxation (mill levy for the purposes of operating public schools) by the our school district illustrates the care with which your Board of Education has addressed taxation for the purpose of operating our schools. The chart below shows the districts mill levy rate for the past ten years. For a quick review, a mill is the unit of taxation used for local property taxes and equals 1/1000th of the total assessed valuation for the school district. The current assessed valuation for our school district is \$69,325,773 which makes one mill equal to \$69,325.

USD Nam	School Year	General	Supp.	Capital	Bond &	Total
		Mill	General	Outlay	Int.	Mill
		Levy	Mill Levy	Mill Levy	Mill Levy	Levy
Wamego	2011	20	19.45	1.36	16.59	57.41
Wamego	2010	20	19.81	0.99	15.59	56.39
Wamego	2009	20	20.54	0.27	15.64	56.45
Wamego	2008	20	16.85	3.99	15.12	55.96
Wamego	2007	20	15.19	3.98	15.23	54.4
Wamego	2006	20	15.22	3.99	17.11	56.32
Wamego	2005	20	14.1	4	18.39	56.49
Wamego	2004	20	13.39	3.98	19	56.37
Wamego	2003	20	12.17	4	20.31	56.48
Wamego	2002	20	10.83	3.99	23.19	58.01

There are a couple of important points to consider as you review this information. First, for seven of the past ten years, the mill levy has remained constant at approximately 56 to 56.5 mills. Second, this year the mill levy increased due to the increase in the B&I fund for the construction project at Central Elementary School. Of course this increase was approved by our citizens in an election in November of 2009.

During this ten year period of time, there have been many significant events for our school district. In November 2002, the community approved a \$16.9 million dollar bond issuance for additions and renovations to Wamego High School and West Elementary School. It is important to remember that the BOE waited until the bonds were paid off on the Wamego Middle School before proceeding with this work. Then in November 2009, when it was apparent that significant needs existed at Central Elementary School, the BOE worked to structure the bonds so the mill levy would only increase by 1 mill. We have added a significant amount of technology through these years as well as paying off the lease purchase on the renovation to the construction technology building (the old shop building) at WHS. We have done several roof replacement projects, purchased buses according to our replacement plan, and replaced a gym floor due to a water issue that was not covered by insurance. The point to be made here is that it is very important to the BOE to keep the mill levy at as constant of a rate as is possible even as we address significant projects in our school district.

Another point to be made was that during this time we have seen increases in the district's assessed valuation and decreases in state funding. Between the years of 2002 and 2008, we saw an increase in the assessed valuation in our district. The BOE used this increased revenue wisely by investing in teacher and classified pay and benefits; investing in programs for our at-risk students; and investing in technology to name but a few things. In late 2008, the state started to make significant cuts in school funding. To date approximately \$700,000 has been cut from the district's budget. The BOE has been consistent in saying that they do not want to increase taxes to address the budget cuts from the state. To date they have kept to this position. To see a list of what our students and employees have lost during the past two and one-half years see my other article in this newsletter.

Last, a review of the different areas of the budget for which a mill levy is assessed shows a shifting of funds from the capital outlay fund to the supplemental general fund (LOB) in the past two years. People have asked me why this is happening. Let me clarify the purpose for shifting the mill levy. All school districts in Kansas receive state aid for their LOB but they do not get any state aid for the capital outlay fund. For USD 320, this state assistance amounts to approximately 44% (give or take a percent or two depending on the school year) of the amount of money raised by the district LOB levy. This year USD 320 received \$1,181,872 in state aid. Because this money comes from the state, it is money above and beyond what the taxpayers of our school district pay for the LOB.

For many years, the state has given the authority to local school districts to levy up to 30% of their general fund budget for the purpose of establishing a LOB fund. Up until 2009, the BOE held the LOB at 27%, or less, of the general fund. The board had no interest in using all of the LOB authority because it would have meant raising taxes as the district was using 4 mills of taxation at the time through the capital outlay fund.

In 2008, the state started to make significant cuts to public education. One of the ways to help offset a small portion of these cuts was to shift the mill levy out of the capital outlay fund and into the LOB fund so that we could capture as much of this state aid as possible to help address these budget cuts. Doing this has allowed the school district to offset budget cuts by approximately \$80,000 (additional state aid by moving the mill levy) this year while still having the

See Capital Outlay, Page 3

## It's Assessment Time!

By: Vici Jennings, WMS Principal

You are probably hearing from your children that they are gearing up for state assessments at the middle school. It's all true! We are entering one of our busiest and stressful times of the year. Over the course of six weeks throughout February, March and April, 303 students will participate in approximately 700 assessments. Assessments cover reading and math for all three grades, and seventh grade will also take a science assessment.

People often ask **WHY** we give state assessments. The assessment system is two-fold – school accountability and student academic progress. As we finish each year's assessments, our goal is to first, meet the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) standard set by the legislature for each test, and second, to learn more about our students' progress and where we need to supplement learning. We use the scores established as one piece of data for student scheduling needs, like math lab or reading interventions. The same data is used by classroom teachers when determining differentiated strategies in their classrooms, depending on their students' needs.

**WHAT** can be done at home to help students prepare for and participate in state assessments?

- First, and I think, most important, is making sure students are in school. It is very possible to finish a homework assignment without a teacher sitting nearby, but the lecture and examples during instruction is invaluable. That can't be replicated in its entirety for an absent student. Same thing holds true for appointments – keeping them to the bare minimum helps students' continuity in the preparation and testing environments.
- Second, parents reinforcing the need to complete class work, study for quizzes and exams, and practicing skills (multiplication tables or finding details in reading) is invaluable support.
- And finally, the obvious support is plenty of rest, breakfast on test days, and lots of encouragement from you!

If you have any questions about the assessment process, please do not hesitate to share those with the instructors and me. We will do our best to answer. In the meantime, if you'd like to know more, I would direct you to the Kansas Department of Education website <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=420> and our assessment calendar online at the USD 320 website under Curriculum/Assessments.

## Middle School Teacher Nominated for Master Teacher Award



Wamego Teacher's Association nominates Ms. Tami Cook for the annual Master Teacher Award granted by Emporia State Univer-

sity. Each year faculty is asked for nominations from the Wamego Teacher's Association for this award. This year, Ms. Cook was selected to represent our district. Ms. Cook teaches sixth, seventh, and eighth grade reading. When selecting a nominee the following criteria are followed:

A candidate for the award must have served at least five years in the schools in Kansas as a teacher or administrator. The professional service may have been at the elementary, secondary,

or college level.

The master teacher should exemplify teaching or administrative effectiveness, constructive service in the community, zeal in promoting the advancement of education, and a sincere interest in professional organizations.

The Code of Ethics of the Education Professional adopted by the National Education Association shall serve as a guideline by which the attitude and competency of the master teacher should be appraised

USD 320  
Wamego Public  
Schools  
510 East Highway 24  
Wamego, Kansas  
66547

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 8  
Wamego, Kansas  
Non-Profit Org.

POSTAL PATRON

# Current Budget Cuts and Those Pending

By: Doug Conwell, Superintendent

In the Governor's budget proposal to the legislature, it has been proposed that additional cuts in the Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP) be decreased for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. What this means for USD 320 is that, if approved by the legislature and signed by the Governor, that we will lose approximately \$133,000 in funding this year and an additional \$278,314 in funding for the 2011-12 school year. There is a bit of good news for this school year though. An increase in our weighted enrollment should provide us with enough revenue to offset the loss of state aid this year. However, my early projections regarding our enrollment for 2011-12 shows that that we stand to lose \$255,000 in state aid. This means that there will be another series of cuts to offset the loss of these funds.

Before I address the list of possible cuts that is part of the plan developed by the district last year, let me share the cuts that have been made to date. By all accounts, the district has lost a little over \$700,000 since the spring of 2008. Because most of the general and supplemental fund budgets are comprised of fixed costs, the vast majority of cuts have come in the form of cuts to personnel (including reduction in work schedules), and programs. The following is the list of cuts that have impacted personnel, parents, and programs.

History of Budget Cuts that Have Directly Impacted Students and Personnel		
Reduce Extended Contracts	\$3,031	\$3,031
Math Aides	\$53,363	\$56,394
Eliminate HS Custodian	\$26,887	\$83,281
Eliminate 1/2 custodian (from Jan. 21 forward)	\$12,262	\$95,543
Eliminate summer maintenance helper	\$5,077	\$100,620
Reduce number of school days (eliminate 1/2 day in May)	\$3,365	\$103,985
Eliminate summer school program	\$53,000	\$156,985
Limit use of subs for custodial services	\$6,000	\$162,985
Eliminate as much overtime as possible	\$7,500	\$170,485
Reduce professional development expenses including sub costs	\$19,000	\$189,485
State aid from moving cap outlay to LOB	\$80,400	\$269,885
Reduce number of 1/2 school days used	\$5,283	\$275,168
HS professional development days added back (no school for HS)	\$2,040	\$277,208
No National Trips	\$6,000	\$283,208
Reduce 1/2 day kindergarten at start of the year to 15 days	\$625	\$283,833
Reduce Professional Development Expenses	\$7,500	\$291,333
Reduce building budgets by 3%	\$3,800	\$295,133
Reduce Library Funding	\$4,750	\$299,883
Eliminate HS enrollment practice	\$7,500	\$307,383
Eliminate tuition reimbursement & National Board Support	\$2,100	\$309,483
Retirement of second science teacher/hiring new teacher	\$10,169	\$319,652
Fees for summer music	\$2,500	\$322,152
Eliminate one 0 hour band and one 0 hour vocal	\$5,405	\$327,557
Eliminate contract with CTE coordinator	\$24,342	\$351,899
Eliminate MS librarian position	\$49,391	\$401,290
Increase Pay to Play (MS \$10)	\$3,000	\$404,290
Eliminate ACE Teacher HS	\$48,875	\$453,165
Eliminate .5 HS Math	\$21,935	\$475,100
Eliminate HS Science	\$44,805	\$519,905
Eliminate MS Language Arts Teacher	\$41,083	\$560,988
Eliminate MS Chess Club Sponsor	\$1,079	\$562,067
Eliminate MS Lunch Aid	\$4,566	\$566,633
Eliminate .5 Building Aid at West	\$12,509	\$579,142
Eliminate Extended School Day CE	\$4,135	\$583,277
Eliminate Extended School Day WE	\$12,404	\$595,681
Eliminate 1 FCCLA Sponsor MS	\$1,079	\$596,760

As you can see, we have already lost a lot of personnel and services for our students. As new teachers have replaced retired teachers we have been able to save funds. We have also reduced postage costs; rolled back thermostats and turned off lights; cut back on copying and paper usage; moved a few eligible expenses to the capital outlay fund; cut back on textbook and miscellaneous curriculum funds; and other discretionary spending. We have been trying to do the best that we can to keep up with technology in our schools but starting this year, most of our annual computer replacement program will have to be funded by the capital outlay fund or we will simply not replace computers. The district budget is exceptionally tight and getting tighter.

It is important to note that there are specialized funds we

have in our overall budget. However for each of these funds, there are limitations on how they can be used. In my other article in this newsletter, I illustrate the constraints on the capital outlay fund. I also point out what on-going costs that are paid for out of this fund that will have to be moved to the general or supplemental general funds is there is no longer a capital outlay fund. We have a bond and interest fund that can only be used to pay off the bonded indebtedness of the district. We have a contingency reserve fund that can be used to help pay for the general costs of operations. We have been holding this fund level as it is to be used for the time when our annual expenses exceed what we have in revenue to help us from violating state law for overspending our budget. We are fortunate that we have not had to use it

yet. It also serves to give us cash in the back to help cover payroll when the state does not send school districts all of our state aid on time. This has happened numerous times in the past two years.

OK, so we now have to plan for approximately \$255,000 in cuts for the next school year. In this newsletter you will see the most recent version of the budget reduction plan adopted by the BOE last spring. In all likelihood, these are the positions and programs from which the BOE will base the decision to cut. The BOE will begin the process of budget cutting in the near future. Please note that at this time the BOE has not expressed any plans to increase taxes to offset the loss of state funding. Also, I presented an option to the BOE that would have the district apply funds from new facility weighting that we will

receive the next two years towards helping to reduce budget cuts. This is a short term option that provides the district time in hope that the economy rebounds and the state will increase BSAPP within two years or that we might see enough of an enrollment increase to help offset these dollars.

Let me share one last thing that needs to be covered so that you have a more completed picture of the situation. As I stated last year, the current economic situation will impact schools for the next three to five years minimum. We will also lose federal stimulus funds to our cooperative this coming school year. We believe at this time that our special education budget can absorb the loss of these funds for the short term. If you are reading the news articles concerning the work of the legislature, you will see

that the House is opposing the full funding of special education programs this year. If full funding is not approved by the whole legislature and the governor then public education stands to lose approximately \$16 to \$25 million in federal aid to schools for several years to come. If this happens then the costs for fully funding special education will fall on to the state. The state will most likely shift this burden back to the local level. So, we will have to find some means to fund special education according to state and federal laws which means even more funds coming out of our general and supplemental budgets.

Please review the budget reduction list that follows so that you are informed as to what may be lost in the coming school year and beyond.

see **Budget**, page 4

## Early Experiences Matter! Infant Toddler Services in Your Area



Pictured from L-R Infant Toddler Staff: Kelley Brummett, Cristina Hargitt, Tami Litney, Anna Nippert, and Tara Roberts. Picture taken while attending The Zero to Three, 25th Annual Training Institute in Phoenix, Arizona

Do you have questions about how your toddler plays with you or others? Have you wondered if your baby can hear you singing a lullaby? Have you and/or your child been frustrated because you can't quite understand each other? If you answered yes to any of these, or any similar questions, then Infant Toddler Services may be here to help!

Infant Toddler Services, also known as Tiny-K, is a free program that provides a variety of services to families and children ages birth to three with developmental delays and/or disabilities throughout the State of Kansas. Our local network, the Pottawatomie/Wabaunsee Infant Toddler Services program, is administered through the Wamego Special Services Cooperative and serves families in the school districts of Wamego, Rock Creek, St. Mary's, Mill Creek Valley & Mission Valley.

Our mission is to build upon the capacity of family members and caregivers to enhance their child's learning and development through everyday learning opportunities. We are available to answer questions about your child's development, conduct developmental evaluations to determine if a delay exists, and if a developmental delay is present, provide ongoing special services to children, parents and caregivers throughout the community, including at child care, in your home, and at community playgroups/activities.

Services through our program are dynamic and based on the needs of families and children. Topics that are frequently discussed include speech/language development, motor development, play and interaction skills, attachment, behavior and guidance/discipline, hearing and vision, and access to community resources, among many other things!

So, if you are wondering about how well your child walks, talks, hears & plays, call us with your questions or to schedule an evaluation. You can reach the Pottawatomie/Wabaunsee Infant Toddler Services program at 785-456-7366 or by email at ITS@usd320.com or check us out on Facebook!

*"The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."*

Denis Waitley

## Capital Outlay con't from page 1

funds needed for capital outlay purposes by transferring an equal amount of funds back into the capital outlay fund. Had we not experienced the severe cuts in state aid in 2008, the capital outlay fund would likely have remained at the 4 mills and the LOB would be approximately 27% of the general fund budget.

I share all of this with you to illustrate the fact that the BOE has, for many years now, been very conscientious about the district mill levy and has worked very hard to keep the mill levy rate steady. When it came time to improve district facilities, they made sure it was done with little to no impact on the overall district mill levy rate. As the state has cut the school district budget to the tune of \$700,000, the BOE has not raised the mill levy rate. At some point in time though, state cuts may well reach the point whereby our public fully understands how this is hurting students and/or all of the work that has been accomplished upgrading our schools will be for naught because we will not be able to afford the type of upkeep worthy of the investment our community has made since the Wamego Middle School was built. Earning the public trust means that you take care with public tax dollars, publicly owned facilities, and most importantly the education and well-being of the children parents entrust to us. I believe the USD 320 Board of Education's record speaks for itself on these matters.

How is the Capital Outlay Fund Used?

What is the purpose of the capital outlay fund? As defined by law, a school district can establish a capital outlay fund for the purpose of: "acquisition, construction, reconstruction, repair, remodeling, additions to, furnishing and equipping of buildings necessary for school district purposes, including housing and boarding pupils enrolled in an area vocational school operated under the board, architectural expenses incidental thereto, the acquisition of building sites, the undertaking and maintenance of asbestos control projects, the acquisition of school buses and the acquisition of other equipment and for the purpose of paying a portion of the principal and interest on bonds issued by cities under the authority of K.S.A. 12-1774, and amendments thereto, for the financing of redevelopment projects upon property located within the school district."

USD 320 has had a capital outlay fund for more years than I can easily research. The following are the types of items that can be purchased using the capital outlay fund:

Architectural fee (incidental to construction)	Math Equipment
Athletic field expansion	Mowers
Athletic equipment (restrictions apply)	Musical instruments
Boilers – replacement	Parking lot
Building for athletic games, etc	Projectors and screens
Buses (school buses, athletic buses)	Property
Computer equipment (restrictions apply)	Remodeling kitchens facilities
Fire Extinguishers	Cleaning and painting (attributable to new construction & remodeling)
Files	Science & laboratory equipment
Furniture	Scoreboards
Globes	Television equipment
Improvement to sites	
Lighting athletic fields & school grounds	
Tractors/maintenance equipment	Vehicles

These examples illustrate the array of items for which a capital outlay fund can be used. Capital outlay funds cannot be used for salaries, employee benefits, books, general supplies & materials, utilities, trips, mileage, pest control, some repairs, etc. All of these types of items have to come out of the district's general and supplemental funds. The point here is that there are regulations that specifically govern what can and cannot be purchased from the capital outlay and the general/LOB funds. So what has the district used the capital outlay funds for during the past couple of years?

The following is a list of items that have been purchased through our capital outlay fund in the recent past.

Tech equipment (new) <sup>1</sup>	Software (comes with the new tech equipment)
AED defibrillators	
Band instruments (annual purchase, replacement and repairs)	
Roof replacement and repairs	
Robotics equipment	
Classroom furniture needs	Radios for safe communications
Property	Custodial cleaning equipment
Equipment for grounds & maintenance	Bus replacement <sup>3</sup>
Vehicle replacement	Bus cameras for safety purposes
Athletic equipment	Contract work with engineers & architects
Environmental sampling/remediation <sup>5</sup>	HVAC equipment and repair
Plumbing/electrical equipment/repair	Door & lock replacement/repair
School bleacher repair	
Lease payments for construction technology building	
Fire alarm repairs	
Fire system corrections based on fire marshal inspections	
Corrections needed for health inspections	

1 – Due to budget cuts, the capital outlay fund is now the primary source of funding for computer equipment replacement.

2 – We have been on a roof replacement schedule for a few years now based on annual inspections by our insurance company and the age of our roofs. New roofs tend to cost anywhere between \$45,000 and \$100,000.

3 – State law requires buses to be replaced every 25 years. We have an annual bus/vehicle replacement schedule to ensure that we meet state law and place our students and employees in safe vehicles. A typical school bus runs around \$65,000.

4 – As the school district was planning for additions and renovations to the WHS, West, and Central schools, we used the capital outlay fund to pay for architectural and engineering services. When we addressed the foundation leak at West, we used this fund to pay for the engineer to provide the schematic for the work.

5 – We used this fund to pay for two separate incidences of mercury spills in the past 10 years and for air quality sampling at West and WHS to check on possible mold concerns.

There are many other items that could be included that we do most every year but did not make this list. These are all items that if there is no capital outlay fund will have to be moved to the general or supplemental fund budgets. Our general and supplemental funds cannot absorb any of these expenses! These budgets have seen state cuts of over \$700,000 the past eighteen months with more coming in 2011 (at this time approximately \$250,000). We fully expect more cuts to these budgets in 2012 and possibly 2013. If the capital outlay fund does not exist then at some point very soon when we have to buy a school bus for \$60,000 then we will have to cut something of equal value from the general or supplemental fund.

It is my opinion that it would be a true shame for this district to have invested in what amounts to approximately \$30,000,000 in school property and facilities over the past seven years then let it move into disrepair because the district does not have a capital outlay fund to help with maintenance and upkeep. It would be a travesty to have to cut even more from our general and supplemental funds because we have equipment and other expenses that occur every year but we no longer have a capital outlay fund which to use for these expenses. I urge you to read my other article in this newsletter to see what our school district has already cut over the past eighteen months due to state budget cuts.

I am saying these things not as a scare tactic though it should be very scary if you care about our schools. As the person who knows this district's budget the best, I am simply telling you the truth. Whether you like the facts or not, not having a capital outlay budget will cause problems for this school district that will take years to correct. If you do not know the facts then you need to become informed because the capital outlay fund is a very valuable tool for our school district. As for the issue of trust when it comes to taxes and the local school board, you elect people to keep an eye out for your interests as well as our children's interest.

Questions heard regarding the district's capital outlay levy

**If you are so broke, why are you buying houses next to the high school?**

The purchase of property was done through the capital outlay fund. I would encourage you to read again the purposes for the capital outlay fund. It has been the stated position of the BOE to purchase the property at the corner of 8th and Poplar for several years. As part of this position, the BOE stated very clearly that they did not want to pursue ownership of this property through the eminent domain process (the power of a governmental entity [federal, state, county or city government, school district, hospital district or other agencies] to take private real estate for public use, with or without the permission of the owner), they want the acquisition of this property to be fair and amicable. So, as these homes became available, the owners approached the school district in regards to purchasing the property. It is the responsibility of the BOE to think long-term with regard to the interests of the school district. Further, acquiring this corner was a recommendation of previous district facility committees. The BOE made the choice to use capital outlay funds for this purpose. The discussion on the tentative plans for this land includes teacher parking for Central Elementary and perhaps space for future needs at WHS or Central Elementary.

**What does "authority" mean in regards to the capital outlay resolution and is the BOE planning to raise taxes?**

When the BOE approved the resolution for the capital outlay they were very specific in their comments regarding their intent to not raise taxes. I would refer you to the history of the district's mill levy rate to see their commitment to this position. However, with the uncertainty surrounding the depth of future cuts to education, they did feel that it would be prudent on the BOE's part to levy at the maximum authority just as they have in the past. The authority to levy up to 8 mills does not mean that the BOE will levy do so.

**The school district keeps saying that they do not have any money yet they have purchased a lot of furniture and technology at Central Elementary School this year, how can this be?**

All of the furniture, equipment (including Promethean Boards and future computer purchases), and supplies for classrooms and offices has been purchased from the bond fund for the addition and renovation of the school. All of this was part of the overall plan for stemming from the bond issue. We are doing our absolute best to provide everything we need, including significant technology upgrades, for Central out of these funds. With the reduction in the district bud-

See **Capital Outlay**, Page 4

## Wamego High Plans Enrollment Conference Night for March 15.

By: **Tim Winter, WHS Principal**

March 15 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Wamego High School will host our first annual enrollment conference for all parents and students grades 9 through 11. Each student and their parents will be scheduled to meet with a designated teacher to begin the enrollment process for the 2011/12 school years. The designated instructor will review local, state, and board of regents graduation requirements for all students, and discuss the student's progress towards these requirements. We will also address any enrollment or course work questions you may have. Through this discussion the students and parents will be able to choose a plan of study to satisfy all requirements and choose courses which will best meet the student's current needs, and provide a foundation for future course work and career aspirations. For parent and students who are unable to attend on March 15, we will do our best to schedule an alternative time. We are very excited about this first time enrollment night of this format and we hope all parents and students will benefit.

In other news at Wamego High, it is the time of the year when we begin our state testing, which is mandated by Kansas State Department of Education. We will assess 10th graders in math, and 11th graders in reading and science. The math and reading assessments have three parts and the science assessment has two parts. Students have an unlimited amount of time to complete each part, but most students will complete each part in 30 to 45 minutes. All tests are taken on computers online, which provides a more comfortable testing environment for students, and a quicker turn around on individual and school results. These are very important assessment for students and for Wamego USD 320 as we use this test data to help us measure our effectiveness as an educational institution. Please insure that your student receives an appropriate amount of rest and nutrition prior to these testing dates and always encourage them to do their very best on anything they attempt.

Thank you for all your support and as always, please support our students in all that they do. Go Red Raiders!!!

## Big Dreams Start Here, One Relationship at a Time

By: **Amy Flinn, West Elementary Principal**

All of our students come to school with dreams they have for their future. While each of us understands and values the importance of such things as research-based instructional practices, high quality professional development for teachers, and achieving high levels of success with our students, none of this can be achieved without one key factor in place—relationships—building relationships, that is, with the children in our care.

We do have the power as educators to inspire our students and ignite passion within them to achieve their dreams, and these dreams start with a connectedness to school. In order to achieve this "connectedness" for each and every one of our students, we must first focus on building those critical relationships with them. Without this effort, our best laid plans will fail. No school improvement plan will be truly successful without first looking at our school culture and how we interact with our students and each other each day. Do we know our students by name and do we call them by name when we meet them in the hallways? Do we know what they are interested in? What they are passionate about? Do we know their parents or caregivers? Have we made the effort to build a relationship with their parents or caregivers so that they, too, feel connected to school and can partner with us in helping their children realize their dreams? These are questions we must ask ourselves and be able to answer if indeed our goal is the success of each student that comes through our school doors.

First and foremost, our students must feel safe when they come to school. Not just physically safe, but emotionally safe as well. Our school has had a bullying prevention model in place for the past seven and a half years. The reason for our success with respect to this issue is the commitment of each staff member in making our school a safe, nurturing environment for children. This includes both certified and classified staff—from our classroom teachers to our cooks and custodians—each adult in our school understands his/her role in protecting our students from bullying behaviors and willingly step up to intervene if indeed a child is a target of bullying at school.

Our school has many attributes that make us a high functioning team. In addition to the sound instructional practices in place, the high quality professional development opportunities for teachers, and extensive materials and resources to support instructional goals, we have what I consider the most important attribute—caring people that understand the importance of making connections with students.

Our school has implemented the Professional Learning Communities model. When I think of those words, "professional learning community" with respect to our school, I think about a group of caring, focused, hard-working individuals that work together to support one another in achieving our goals, which ultimately is the success of our students—and for our students, is the realization of their dreams. Yes, big dreams do start here, and we can make them happen, one relationship at a time.

## “Hoop It Up For Hope”

Fundraiser for Children's Mercy Hospital and Clinics

April 2, 2011 at 6:30pm



**Budget**, cont' from page 2

Proposed Budget Cuts	Item	Total	Location
HS Principal Pay (Difference in current contract and new contract)	\$5,405	\$5,405	HS
Increase pay to play (\$10)	\$3,000	\$8,405	MS
Cut Special Education Assessment	\$50,000	\$58,405	
Textbook line in budget	\$30,000	\$88,405	
General Supplies Fee (\$20 per student)	\$26,800	\$115,205	
Renegotiate a new contract with MS counselor	\$7,700	\$122,905	MS
Charge for in town transport services to day care/other (\$75 per semester)	\$3,750	\$126,655	TR
Paper 10% cut	\$406	\$127,061	MS
Include Cheerleaders in sports fees (\$50)	\$640	\$127,701	HS
No phase in for kindergarten	\$1,259	\$128,960	CE
Lunch aide	\$4,566	\$133,526	MS
Increase pay to play to \$50	\$5,250	\$138,776	HS
Eliminate Halftime Building Aide	\$12,509	\$151,285	WE
Chess sponsor	\$1,079	\$152,364	MS
One KAY sponsor	\$1,090	\$153,454	MS
Eliminate Language Arts Teacher	\$41,083	\$194,537	MS
FACS Extended Contract (reduce 10 days)	\$1,568	\$196,105	HS
FACS Extended Contract (reduce 10 days)	\$2,189	\$198,294	HS
Vocational Agriculture Extended Contract (reduce 15 days)	\$2,336	\$200,630	HS
Reduce Director of C&I pay <sup>2</sup>	\$3,565	\$204,195	DO
Cross country coach	\$2,966	\$207,161	MS
Eliminate Extended School Day	\$4,135	\$211,296	CE
Eliminate Extended School Day	\$12,404	\$223,700	WE
Eliminate At-Risk Supplies for ESD	\$1,200	\$224,900	WE
Postage 10% cut	\$282	\$225,182	MS
FCCLA Sponsor	\$1,079	\$226,261	MS
Power lifting team travel	\$1,350	\$227,611	HS
Loss of district office position	\$21,230	\$248,841	DO
Charge for transportation under 2.5 miles (approx. 88 families @ \$50 per semester) <sup>15</sup>	\$13,200	\$262,041	TR
Eliminate ACE or HELP Position	\$43,875	\$305,916	HS
Eliminate extra duty pay: <sup>9</sup>	\$1,353	\$307,269	HS
Eliminate 1 coach for ea. Sport <sup>6</sup>	\$8,628	\$315,897	MS
MS Custodian <sup>5</sup>	\$26,754	\$342,651	MS
HS Custodian <sup>5</sup>	\$27,689	\$370,340	HS
Take Indirect funds for FS & Title I <sup>1</sup>	\$15,000	\$385,340	
Eliminate Tech Paths	\$4,100	\$389,440	DO
Trips <sup>11</sup>	\$1,063	\$390,503	HS
Reduce to 1 Librarian K-12	\$30,766	\$421,269	WE
Reduce to 1 Librarian K-12	\$30,766	\$452,035	CE
Eliminate FACS Position	\$39,226	\$491,261	MS
Reduce Supt Pay another 3% (reduced 2% in 2009-2010)	\$3,000	\$494,261	DO
Reduce Principal Contract to 10.5 months <sup>4</sup>	\$3,345	\$497,606	MS
Reduce Principal Contract to 10.5 months <sup>4</sup>	\$2,930	\$500,536	CE
Reduce Principal Contract to 10.5 months <sup>4</sup>	\$3,429	\$503,965	WE
Reduce Principal Contract to 10.5 months <sup>4</sup>	\$3,226	\$507,191	HS Asst
District newsletter	\$2,600	\$509,791	DO
Reduce Library Fund	\$1,000	\$510,791	CE
Reduce Library Fund	\$5,000	\$515,791	MS
Reduce Library Fund	\$3,500	\$519,291	HS
Reduce Library Fund	\$1,000	\$520,291	WE
Student council sponsor	\$1,439	\$521,730	MS
Counselor extended contract reduced to 5 days	\$922	\$522,652	MS
Counselor Extended Contract (reduce 3 days)	\$1,204	\$523,856	HS
Eliminate sponsors: <sup>10</sup>	\$26,393	\$550,249	HS
Science club sponsor	\$1,214	\$551,463	MS
Loss of tech position	\$12,430	\$563,893	TE
Eliminate Summer Band Lessons (Increase fees)	\$668	\$564,561	WE
Eliminate Summer Band Lessons (Increase fees)	\$3,861	\$568,422	MS
Eliminate Summer Band Lessons (Increase fees)	\$1,200	\$569,622	HS
Eliminate assistant coaching positions: <sup>8</sup>	\$20,579	\$590,201	HS
HS Math Position (.5)	\$43,870	\$634,071	HS
HS Science Position	\$44,805	\$678,876	HS
Reduce Music Teaching Staff <sup>3</sup>	\$10,000	\$688,876	CE
Reduce Music Teaching Staff <sup>3</sup>	\$16,890	\$705,766	WE
Eliminate Robotics Club	\$1,118	\$706,884	WE
HS Activities (pay to participate \$50) <sup>12</sup>	\$5,000	\$711,884	HS
Eliminate the girls' tennis program	\$2,967	\$714,851	HS
Eliminate the boys' tennis program	\$2,972	\$717,823	HS
Eliminate the boy's golf program	\$4,804	\$722,627	HS
.5 HS Business plus CTE Coordinator <sup>7</sup>	\$25,335	\$747,962	HS
Yearbook	\$360	\$748,322	MS
Reduce Professional Development Fund	\$3,000	\$751,322	CE
Reduce Professional Development Fund	\$4,100	\$755,422	HS
Reduce Professional Development Fund	\$3,600	\$759,022	MS
Reduce Professional Development Fund	\$3,000	\$762,022	WE
Eliminate MAP Testing in Grade 9	\$3,000	\$765,022	HS
Eliminate MAP Testing in Grades 3 & 4	\$2,629	\$767,651	WE
Eliminate MAP Testing in Grades 6 & 7	\$3,261	\$770,912	MS
Employee appreciation	\$2,600	\$773,512	DO
Reduce General Teaching Supply Funds	\$6,420	\$779,932	CE
Reduce General Teaching Supply Funds	\$6,420	\$786,352	WE
Reduce General Teaching Supply Funds	\$8,000	\$794,352	HS
Reduce General Teaching Supply Funds	\$6,500	\$800,852	MS
Eliminate Field Trips	\$624	\$801,476	MS
Eliminate Field Trips	\$854	\$802,330	CE
Eliminate Field Trips	\$2,535	\$804,865	WE
Eliminate freshman only out of town events <sup>13</sup>	\$2,016	\$2,016	HS
Eliminate Wrestling Program	\$9,871	\$814,736	HS
Eliminate Wrestling Program	\$5,589	\$820,325	MS
WMS AD person	\$54,368	\$874,693	MS
Cut in schedule of total days <sup>17</sup>	\$81,000	\$81,000	Reduce Contract by 3 days
Reduction of pay for Teachers <sup>17</sup>	\$40,000	\$120,000	
Reduction of pay for Admin (Sup, principals and asst principal) <sup>17</sup>	\$13,483	\$13,483	
Increase taxes	\$40,000	\$40,000	
HS English			

# Scholars Bowl Team Places Third At NCKL

The Wamego High School Scholars Bowl team participated in the NCKL tournament on Monday, January 21. Wamego High has won this tournament the past 3 years. While this year's team did not win the league championship the players had one of their overall best efforts of the scholars bowl season. The Wamego team did claim 3rd place by defeating Marysville and Clay Center and lost the remaining matches by the slightest of margins.

The team captain is Nathan May and the team members at this league championship were Richard Vargas, Reid Bowser, Max Lindner, and Devon Stallard.

Every team member played an integral part in the success of the team. The next outing for the scholars bowl team will be the Regional Tournament hosted by Wamego High School on Thursday, February 3. Fifteen 4A schools will participate in this regional event with the top 3 qualifying for the state tournament. The Wamego squad appears to be one of the favorites to push for the state qualifying finish.

## Capital Outlay, cont' from page 3

get, there will not be funds available to do these things in the foreseeable future. The goal is to minimize future needs at Central so what money is available in the next few years in our capital outlay fund to be used for furniture and equipment can be focused on the other three schools.

## What is the problem with the voters approving any tax increase proposed by the school district?

When it comes to the capital outlay fund, the school district can only approve a mill levy authority once in a five year period of time. Once that levy is set it cannot be changed. Locking in at a specific amount that is not as much as you might need only hurts the school district's ability to respond to needs that may arise in that five year period of time.

## Middle School Parent/Teacher Conference March 17th 8-4

## Parent/Teacher Conference Central/West Elementary March 15, 4-8pm, March 16, 4-6pm, March 17, 11-8pm

