

# TEACHER LINKS



Warren County School System, 2548 Morrison Street, McMinnville, TN 37110  
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## Did You Know...?

Dr. Jerry W. Hale, Director of Schools

### Did You Know.....?

- We have **1** nationally certified teacher – Barbara Hillis, Dibrell Elementary.
- **23** students in our system are diabetics.
- **62** volunteers serve in our VISOR program.
- We employ approximately **200** teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience.
- There are approximately **211** phone lines in our system.
- Our schools occupy **277.2** acres of land.
- **450** employees received flu shots through our Health Services Department this year.
- There are **1,081** employees in the Warren County School System.
- Over **4,000** feet of laminating film was used in the Teacher Center in August.
- Our district has **2,231** computers.
- Over **3,500** students ride the bus to/from school.

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- This year, **3,682** students receive free lunches.
- There are **6,720** prekindergarten through 12 grade students in our system.
- **96,905** lunches were served in our cafeterias during the month of September.
- Warren County School buses travel over **400,000** miles each year.
- The combined square footage of all Warren County Schools is **1,108,132** square feet.

## New Parent Involvement Standards & Accountability

By Bonnie Collier, Professional & Community Development Coordinator

On April 16, 2010, the Tennessee State Board of Education approved on first reading the adoption of new standards for Family School Partnerships. There are six standards for which schools in Tennessee will be held accountable on the 2011 Report Card.

**Standard 1 – Welcoming all families into the school community:** Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class and school.

**Standard 2 – Communicating effectively:** Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Standard 3 – Supporting student success:** Families and school staff continuously work together to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills

to do so effectively.

**Standard 4 – Speaking up for every child:** Families are informed and enabled to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Standard 5 – Sharing power:** Families and school staff are equal partners with equal representation in decisions that affect students and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Standard 6 – Collaborating with the community:** Families and school staff work together with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Thank you for making parents feel welcome in your schools and classrooms.

# SYSTEM-WIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLC FEEDBACK

## OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup> PD DAY

BY BOBBY COX, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TEACHING & LEARNING

First I would like to thank all of our teachers and administrators for working to implement the PLC process into our system. As all of you are aware anytime there is change there are difficulties that go with that change. I would like to summarize the feedback that was given to me from the team meetings on October 8<sup>th</sup> and try to clarify and respond to that feedback in an effort to help our schools, teachers, and administrators to understand the process and help us tweak the process to make it less cumbersome for all.

### Positives of the PLC implementation from team members

1. The process allowed for sharing of information with other teachers.
2. The process allowed for better collaboration with grade level teachers system-wide.
3. Collaboration allowed for sharing of intervention and enrichment ideas for use by teachers.
4. Teachers are more aware of standards and techniques for achieving these standards.
5. Teamwork!

### Challenges and responses to PLC implementation

1. **Loss of instructional time:** The loss of instructional time was repetitive throughout the feedback as a challenge. This is a major concern with me as well and as I told our Principals and Instructional Coordinators the time that you meet can be adjusted to the need for a meeting. If weekly works for your school then that can be continued if monthly works for your school that is fine but this is driven by the team and the leadership at the school level. We want to maximize instructional time for teachers not reduce it so if meeting times need to be reduced to once a month then that is a call that can be made at the school level.
2. **Paperwork is overwhelming:** The only paperwork that is required in this process is the one page team feedback sheet that goes to the Principal after each meeting and the data tracking of your students after the common assessments. Common Assessments can be given as little as one time a month. Remember we just want to know if students are learning the material taught during a certain time frame so overwhelming paperwork can be reduced to maximize instructional time but not cut out all together because if we don't document we will not accomplish our goal of knowing if students learn and are progressing toward proficient or advanced levels. Data and using data are key elements to us to improve student learning.
3. **The expectations of PLC are unclear:** The expectation of the PLC process is for our students to learn at high levels! Remember the four fundamental questions.
  - a. What do you want your students to learn?
  - b. How do you know if they learned it?
  - c. What do you do when they don't learn?
  - d. What do you do when they do learn?
4. **Central Office does not look at paperwork:** I am the sole person who goes through all PLC paperwork and notebooks as well as all data. Please be assured that I look through each piece of paper to gain knowledge of how this process is affecting teachers, students, parents, and schools. This process is work and it is not easy work but as we progress the work will get easier for all.
5. **Time!:** The word time was mentioned many times in the feedback and yes we all need more time. One of the underlying benefits of the PLC process is that it should make our time more productive not more burdensome. Sharing the load of making one common assessment per month or sharing ways to help students learn should help us be more productive by functioning as a team. We must share the load with changing standards and new test and learn to work collaboratively with other so that we can all succeed. We are working on some of the ideas like early release/late arrive one day a month for PLC time so thank you very much for your ideas of how to gain more time to collaborate.

In our professional development day I gathered this information and we will work on the things you as teachers feel are important to help you instruct our students. We will continue to implement this process but please know that the shell of the process is the same for all schools how it is implemented at the school level is determined by your leadership but falls within the system shell. We will continue to gather feedback and to adjust the process to meet the needs of all at the school level and to operate under a system guideline of implementation. Thank you again for all your work and for the work you will do in the future to make our school system not only good but great!



Joe Harvey, Warren County Schools Television Director, is offering training on how to improve the footage you take with your video camera. Any staff member is welcome to attend. (You may bring your camera if you would like, and Joe will try to answer any questions you have that are specific to your camera.)

The training will be held at the Central Office on November 8, 3:30-5:00 in Conference Room #1. Please call Bonnie Collier (668-4022, ext. 264) or email her ([collierb01@k12tn.net](mailto:collierb01@k12tn.net)) if you plan to attend.



### VISER Volunteers In Special Education Rooms

#### Who are our volunteers?

Our volunteers are parents and grandparents, retirees, business people and community members who care about schools and want to be involved in education in our community. We match volunteer talents to school needs. There's important work to be done! Volunteers perform many different duties in and out of classrooms and schools. Volunteers can commit to valuable service tailored to fit their schedules. They can volunteer for as little as an hour a week or a few times a year or as often as every day.

#### Why is volunteering good for me?

Research indicates that volunteers feel healthier and better about themselves and are more committed to the success of their communities. According to the Virginia Department of Education, more than 4 million school volunteers in America are helping more than 40 million students. When you volunteer, you're in good company.

#### Why is volunteering good for the schools?

Volunteers provide an extra set of hands, help increase community support for schools, and give teachers more time to concentrate on instruction.

#### Why is volunteering good for students?

Volunteers in schools lower the adult to student ratio, show students that adults outside of school think education is important, and help students see that community service is worthwhile.

For more information about the **VISER** program please contact Cynthia Campen, VISER coordinator at SPED office 668-1728 extension 256 or e-mail, [campenc@k12tn.net](mailto:campenc@k12tn.net)



VISER Volunteers: Rod McClellan, Diane McClellan, Grace Davenport, and Teela Young.



Student @ West Elementary receiving help on multiplication tables from VISER member.



### Einstein Fellowship - Application is Now Open!

The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship is a paid fellowship for K-12 science, math, engineering and technology (STEM) teachers. Einstein Fellows spend a school year in Washington, DC serving in a federal agency or on Capitol Hill. To be considered for an Einstein Fellowship for the 2011-2012 school year, apply online NOW, and submit your application and three letters of recommendation no later than January 4, 2011.

To learn more about the program and apply, visit <http://www.trianglecoalition.org/fellows/einapp.htm>. If you have questions about the program or application, contact Program Manager Kathryn Culbertson at [culbertsonk@triangle-coalition.org](mailto:culbertsonk@triangle-coalition.org).

### Teachers Participating in WRS Level I Certification

By Linda Wilson, Special Education Director



Staff members participating in the Level 1 Wilson Language Training are pictured front row left to right: Alana Starkey; Mitzi Pierce; Debra Odineal; Chris Walter, coordinator; Byna Ayers, trainer; Danielle Sliger; and Bob Bailey. At back are: Ann Roberts, Heather Dragon, Joe Ruch, Misti Hillis, and Steve Sliger.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, ten teachers from Warren County's Special Education Department started an intensive certification process in the Wilson Language Program. Mrs. Byna Ayers, with the Wilson Reading System and a resident of North Carolina, provided the first of eleven days of training to be provided to this dedicated group of teachers during this school year.

Wilson Reading is a research based program that has been demonstrated to be successful with students who have a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia, as well as those who are reading below grade level. In order to become a Level I teacher of the Wilson Language Program, these hard-working teachers will need to complete 90 hours of on-line instruction, a 60-lesson practicum, and demonstrate competency while being directly observed by Mrs. Ayers. There's lots of time, effort and study involved in achieving the Level I designation.

Last spring, the department trained 30 teachers in a four-day introductory workshop. Now, these 10 teachers are choosing to further increase their efficacy and skill in the use of this highly-structured multisensory language based program. The teachers acknowledge the challenges in undertaking this skills-based practicum, and they also confess to some apprehension about being watched by a trainer while they actually work with their students. Even so, they are excited to know that they are whetting their skills in the job of helping struggling students to become good readers.

## Walking Maintains Brain Volume, Prevents Cognitive Impairment

By Sonja Walker, Director of Health Services

October 13, 2010 — Walking at least 6 miles per week appears to maintain brain volume and preserve memory in old age, according to new research.

Kirk I. Erickson, PhD, with the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and colleagues reported the findings in the October 13 online issue of *Neurology*.

"These findings are really quite astonishing," Dr. Erickson told *Medscape Medical News*. "Other studies have previously shown that exercise is related to brain function," he said, "but the fact that we found that walking as little as 1 mile a day is related to brain volume 9 years later, and dementia 13 years later, is truly novel and really quite impressive," he said.

### Age-Related Loss of Brain Volume

According to the researchers, the volume of gray matter shrinks in late adulthood and often precedes cognitive impairment. Participation in physical activity and exercise has been "hypothesized to protect against the deterioration of brain tissue, but this hypothesis has not been tested in longitudinal studies," Dr. Erickson and colleagues write.

In the current study, 299 dementia-free people (mean age, 78 years) from the Cardiovascular Health Cognition Study were assessed for physical activity, as measured by the number of blocks they walked in 1 week. Nine years after the physical activity assessment, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans were used to measure brain size. Four years later, the participants were tested for cognitive impairment and dementia.

Participants were classified into 4 quartiles based on the number of blocks walked, and MRI measurement 9 years later ascertained that gray matter volume in the highest quartile differed from the other 3 quartiles (all  $P < .05$ ).

Participants who walked at least 72 blocks — approximately 6 to 9 miles — per week had more gray matter than people who walked less; however, walking more than 72 blocks did not appear to increase gray matter volume any further.

In the 4-year follow-up, 116 of the participants, or 40%, had developed cognitive impairment or dementia. Greater gray matter volume with physical activity was associated with a 2-fold reduced risk for cognitive impairment.

"Based on our results, we can conclude that there is a relation between the amount of walking earlier in life and brain volume in later adulthood and that greater volume of tissue related to walking is associated with a reduced risk of cognitive impairment," the study authors suggest.

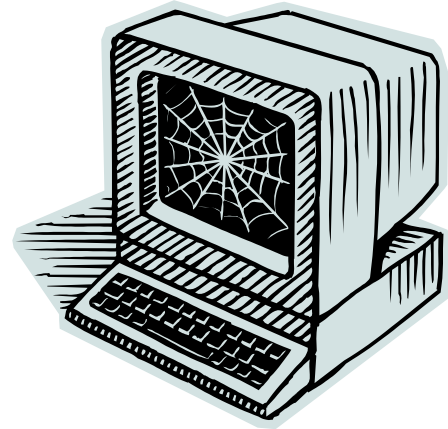
Dr. Erickson added that much more work is needed from randomized trials that assign people to an exercise treatment for long periods. "Only under these conditions will we be able to determine the extent to which exercise augments brain function in late life," he said.

### Another Reason to Exercise

"The results of this study are exciting in that they suggest an association between physical activity, in the form of walking, brain structure, and dementia across the period of a decade," independent commentator Art Kramer, PhD, with the University of Illinois in Chicago, told *Medscape Medical News*.

# Websites for Teachers

By Katrina Haley, Director of Technology



## Survey Sites for Teachers

[www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)  
[www.pollcat.com](http://www.pollcat.com)  
[www.websurveyor.com/free-survey-tools.asp](http://www.websurveyor.com/free-survey-tools.asp)  
[www.profilerpro.com](http://www.profilerpro.com)  
Google docs - Forms  
[www.zoomerang.com](http://www.zoomerang.com)

Example use for this in the classroom:  
Pre-Assessment

## Blogging

1. [www.edmodo.com](http://www.edmodo.com) - It allows teachers to create student accounts and monitor all their activity.
2. [www.kidblog.com](http://www.kidblog.com) - A great free way for students to blog with no email account necessary; teachers have total control of student content.
3. [www.gaggletn.com](http://www.gaggletn.com) - A semi-free (paid version removes ads) way for students to blog in a filtered environment. Gaggle will also filter Google Apps, provide forums, and filter YouTube as well. THESE CAN BE MADE PUBLIC NOW. We provide the paid version for grades 6-12.
4. [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) - Google's free blogging service that is very easy to use and has a beautiful user interface with lots of: themes, gadgets, and options to choose from.
5. [www.edublog.com](http://www.edublog.com) - A FREE or paid blogging solution for schools that is built around the Word Press Platform.
6. <http://blog.penzu.com> - A nice new (beta) site for blogging that allows users to choose if they want their posts to be public or private.
7. [www.21classes.com](http://www.21classes.com) - Teachers can create student accounts and monitor all blog entries before they are posted.

## Video Clips Online

<http://www.nbclearn.com/portal/site/learn>  
[www.UnitedStreaming.com](http://www.UnitedStreaming.com)  
<http://a9.com>  
<http://creativecommons.org>

## Student and Teacher Presentations

<http://jc-schools.net/ppt.html>  
<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/HA011411961033.aspx>  
[www.actden.com/pp](http://www.actden.com/pp)  
[www.keynoteuser.com/tips/index.html](http://www.keynoteuser.com/tips/index.html)  
[www.keynotethemepark.com/index.html](http://www.keynotethemepark.com/index.html)

## Multimedia Simulations

[www.iknowthat.com](http://www.iknowthat.com)  
[www.knowitall.org](http://www.knowitall.org)  
[www.cut-the-knot.org/Curriculum/index.shtml](http://www.cut-the-knot.org/Curriculum/index.shtml)  
[www.digitales.us](http://www.digitales.us)  
[www.ourtimelines.com](http://www.ourtimelines.com)  
[www.sfett.com](http://www.sfett.com)  
<http://myths.e2bn.org/teachers/>  
<http://museumbox.e2bn.org/index.php>

## Web Site Creation

[www.apple.com/ilife/iweb](http://www.apple.com/ilife/iweb)  
[www.lauyan.com/en/tw-home](http://www.lauyan.com/en/tw-home)  
[www.virtualmechanics.com](http://www.virtualmechanics.com)  
[www.coolpage.com](http://www.coolpage.com)

## Shared Calendars

<http://calendar.yahoo.com>  
[www.google.com/googlecalendar/tour.html](http://www.google.com/googlecalendar/tour.html)  
[www.calendars.net](http://www.calendars.net)

## Shared Bookmarking

<http://del.icio.us>  
[www.blinklist.com](http://www.blinklist.com)

## Course Management

<http://moodle.org>  
[www.globalschoolnet.org/GSH/](http://www.globalschoolnet.org/GSH/)  
[www.blackboard.com](http://www.blackboard.com)

## Web-Enabled Multiplayer Simulation Games

[www.girlsinc.org/gc/page.php?id=6.2](http://www.girlsinc.org/gc/page.php?id=6.2)  
[www.civ3.com/ptw\\_features.cfm](http://www.civ3.com/ptw_features.cfm)  
[www.jigsaw.org](http://www.jigsaw.org)

## Websites to use for Homework and Practice

[www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise)  
<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>  
[www.explorelearning.com](http://www.explorelearning.com)  
[www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com)  
[www.iknowthat.com](http://www.iknowthat.com)  
[www.cogcon.org/gamegoo/games/wiznpigs/wiznpigs.html](http://www.cogcon.org/gamegoo/games/wiznpigs/wiznpigs.html)  
[www.flashcardexchange.com](http://www.flashcardexchange.com)  
[www.3street.org/mouse](http://www.3street.org/mouse)  
[www.elizrosshubbell.com/levertutorial](http://www.elizrosshubbell.com/levertutorial)  
[www.pbskids.org/zoom/games/kitchenchemistry/virtual-start.html](http://www.pbskids.org/zoom/games/kitchenchemistry/virtual-start.html)  
<http://meted.ucar.edu/hurricane/strike/index.htm>  
[www.stellarium.org](http://www.stellarium.org)  
<http://instantprojects.org>

## Understanding and Improving Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Conditions in Tennessee

By Sherrv Trotman, Federal Programs Director

The "Teaching Empowering Leading and Learning" (TELL) survey will be administered in February to every licensed school-based educator across the state and will provide educators the opportunity to respond to questions that are intended to improve working conditions for teachers.

The proposal calls for 75 core questions in nine research-based working conditions areas:

- Time
- Facilities and Resources
- Community Engagement and Support
- Managing Student Conduct
- Teaching leadership
- School Leadership
- Professional Development
- Instructional Practice and Support
- New Teacher Support

The TELL survey is one of the strategies that Tennessee will use to recruit, retain, and develop effective teachers, eliminate the gap in the equitable distribution of effective teachers, and increase student learning. I believe we all agree that improving working conditions is a positive step toward school improvement.

### Textbook Committee Members 2010-2011

#### K-2 Committee

Nancy Ray- Bobby Ray  
Erika Knowles- West  
Carol Barrett- Eastside  
Sherry Hale- Hickory Creek  
Phyllis Boren- Bobby Ray

#### 3-5 Committee

Monty Childers- Morrison  
Jana Hendrix- West  
Lisa Rowland- Eastside  
Sherry Graves- Hickory Creek  
Tessa Turner- Bobby Ray

#### 6-8 Committee

Julia Rhoady- Irving College  
Elien Southard- WCMS  
DeDe Holmes- Dibrell  
Jennifer Wright- Centertown  
Pansy Gant- WCMS

#### 9-12 Committee

Marla Cantrell- WCHS  
Carol Rains- WCHS  
Carolyn LaFevor- WCHS  
Lucretia Brown- WCHS  
Nathan Smith- WCHS



### SYSTEM-WIDE OCT. 8 SIGHTINGS



In this picture from PE teacher in-service: Kathie Hodge, from West Elementary is fishing for math facts with their camping unit in P.E. at the B.E.E.C.H.

**Principals' Meeting: 10-25-2010**

- Foodland Plus presentations to principals – Dennis Lann and Richard McMahan
- Dr. Jane Allison
  - Attendance is great so far this year.
  - Congratulations to Irving College for their focus on attendance.
- Bobby Cox
  - Thank you to Beverly Ramsey and Delia Walker for creating K-5 curriculum maps/standards. (CD for all schools) OUTSTANDING JOB!!
  - Teaching-Learning meeting – November 9. Checking to see if Virtual Equipment will allow us to watch White River meetings. May need to adjust time of meeting from 9:00 to 11:00. Dr. Eaker will be here for the meeting. Visitors from Trousdale, Fentress, and Overton County will be attending, as well. TN SCORE representatives will be here, as well.
  - Feedback sheets – review and summary of feedback from Bobby. Please share with teachers. It is also in Teacher Links for November.
  - County-wide Science Fair (grades 6-8 and 9-12) being considered. Informational meeting on November 11 at 3:15 at CO.
  - ThinkGate is improving. Training schedule is being set for your schools.
  - PreK – playground evaluations are required. Maintenance person in your building will need to do this once each month. The check off sheet should go to your prek teacher for their notebooks. Carolyn Wilson will notify you when the state evaluators will be in your building.
  - All textbook materials will come from Tennessee Book Company. Everything will be standard. All companies must provide the same materials. MATH is being adopted this year.
- Dianna Zadeh
  - Handout – notes from TCAP training
  - At end of this year, will be writing a new grant for after school AIMS program (unclaimed lottery money grant).
  - ESL child count this month. We're up about 20-30 students.
  - OCR report information in as soon as possible, please.
- Sherry Trotman
  - NCLB meeting this week for Title I representatives and administrators. Will be reviewing monitoring issues and discussion. Morning session will cover RTI.
  - Re-authorization of ESEA (NCLB): tutoring programs – on September 30, 2011, all ARRA funds must be spent. All programs funded with ARRA money will cease at that time.
  - Title II A Accountability – CSR teachers, graduation coach paid from this. It is also where the money for PD comes from. Must match PD to data that guides school improvement plans.

**Principals' Meeting: 10-25-2010**

- Sherry Trotman (continued)
  - What is your comprehensive plan? This includes all travel requests and substitutes. Can only be used for core academic subjects.
  - One day workshops are not allowed under any federal program. Must let Sherry know how the professional development will be sustained and ongoing. Principals will be responsible for the follow-up activities for PD. Please keep with your SIP.
  - If you surplus federal inventory, you must turn in a surplus inventory sheet. Please keep a copy of the sheet with your federal programs files.
- Linda Wilson
  - December 6 and 7: special education fiscal monitoring. Possible inventory check in schools during visit. Make sure special education inventory is where it should be, and that it is being used with special education students.
  - Be diligent about making sure that IEP and actual services/schedule of students match. This is a funding issue.
- Katrina Haley
  - In process of upgrading some county schools to fiber lines.
  - Make sure Elmos are in secure places so they won't be pulled or knocked off shelves/tables.
  - Email Katrina for technology training needs. We want to be sure teachers are able to use equipment we have purchased.
  - Gaggle (student email for grades 6-12) now allows teacher in charge to filter YouTube.
  - More sites are now blocked. If you need to access a site that is appropriate for a school setting, email Katrina.
- David Bates
  - Fire marshal is visiting schools. Be sure notebooks are up to date.
- David Sneed
  - Please turn in accident reports within 24 hours of incident.
  - It is the parent's responsibility to get child from car and bring them to building. No restraint of any type unless child is in danger or may hurt another person.
- Robin Phillips
  - Review of child custody guidelines
- Dr. Jerry Hale
  - How do schools acclimate new students for what bus to ride? Please send suggestions to Ms. Fuston.
  - State bonus will not happen. Tax revenues were not high enough.

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“Educate Every Child  
 Every Day.”

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.warrenschools.com](http://www.warrenschools.com)

## Christie Allison's Observations of New Teachers

Kirsten Adcock @Warren County Middle School--

*Ms. Adcock taught a lesson on indefinite pronouns. As the students left the classroom that day, they had to name an indefinite pronoun as they left the classroom. She said, "Your ticket out of the classroom today is to name an indefinite pronoun." She stood at the door. If the student could not name an indefinite pronoun, then he or she had to go to the back of the line.*

## November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	3:00 Eastside Appreciation 1	3:00 Hickory Creek Appreciation 2	3 3	4 4	5 5	6 6
7 7	3:30 Video Training 8	9 9	10 10	Veteran's Day 11	12 12	13 13
14 14	National Parent Involvement Week			18 18	10:00 6:00 School Board Meeting 19	20 20
21 21	Thanksgiving Break				26 26	27 27
28 28	29 29	30 30				