



# What's Happening in Wilson County Schools

Wilson County Schools  
Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 1 Issue 4  
November 2007



## A Message from the Director of Schools

Dear Wilson County Educators:

Classes were held for the first time in the new addition of Wilson Central High School on Monday, October 29, 2007. Final inspections were performed and the new cafeteria was opened on Nov. 5. The entire additional is now fully operational and a certificate of occupancy has been issued by the Fire Marshall.

Schools will be closed Nov. 21-23 for the Thanksgiving Holiday. Classes will resume Monday, Nov. 26. The Central Office will be closed on Nov. 22-23, so that employees can spend time with their families.

Many of our teachers were awarded mini-grants from the Chamber of Commerce on Nov. 7. These funds will be used to implement innovative projects in

their classrooms. The winners from the Wilson County Schools were Christine Meredith, Krista Bright, Connie Akins, Ella Williams, Darlene West, Margaret Pfeffer, Lori Maasen, Leesa Hubbard, Tra Smith and Peggy Morris. I commend these teachers for taking the time to pursue these grant opportunities and thank the Chamber of Commerce for their willingness to partner with the school system and for making these additional funds available.

State Report Cards came out on Friday, Nov. 2. All of our schools received high marks for their performance on TCAP and most met all AYP requirements. However, Wilson Central failed to meet its benchmark for

graduation rate and West Wilson Middle School and Mt. Juliet Middle School both failed to meet subgroup. The report card may be



2007 Mini Grant winners

viewed online at

[www.tennessee.gov](http://www.tennessee.gov).

Mae Beavers visited Carroll-Oakland to explore ways to improve the exit lane located at the south end of the school. A TDOT representative was on hand to survey the site and stated that he wanted the engineers

to develop a plan to improve the exit.

Wilson County Schools is working with Gladeville Baptist Church for an exit to their parking lot which will separate the bus traffic from the car traffic. The church has agreed to allow our buses to exit through the church parking lot if we will build the driveway.

The Wilson County Road Commission has completed an additional gravel parking area at Rutland Elementary on the newly acquired property to the east of the existing school. The project was completed on Nov. 8.

The Wilson County School System assumed full operational control of the Transportation Department on Nov. 2. The transition from First Student has gone smoothly with all transportation being retained.

Have a great week.



## Make giving thanks at Thanksgiving a tradition

Thanksgiving is an ideal time to gather with family and friends. Unfortunately, giving thanks often gets lost between the planning, cooking and socializing.

- ◆ Before the meal begins, go around the table and ask everyone to say what they are thankful for—whether it's good health or passing a big exam.
- ◆ Place everyone's name in a bowl and make sure each person selects a name before dinner. Do not reveal names. Tell participants they will be asked to divulge at the end of the meal the name of the person and why they are thankful to know him or her.
- ◆ While gathered around the dinner table, allow each person to reflect on a situation from the past year and how a family member or friend provided support or encouragement.
- ◆ Start a Thanksgiving scrapbook with family and friends. Go through pictures, school papers and awards, and trip mementos of the past year. Place agreed-upon items in a book along with everyone's thoughts and comments.



## Annual Wilson County Textbook Fair!

This year's textbook faire will be held on November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Ag Center from 3-6PM.

This year's adoption is for K – 12 Social Studies books. All teachers and administrators are invited.

See the books, materials and software available and talk with other teachers as well as with the knowledgeable textbook representatives about the new Social Studies series. Refreshments will be served. Prizes will be given!



## Aspiring Administrators In Training



Principal Mel Brown addresses the participants on the average day of a building principal.



2007-08 Aspiring Principal enrollees of the Wilson County School System

With the continuing growth, the anticipated retirements in the near future, and the expanding responsibilities of principals/ assistant principals, the Wilson County School System has this year launched a program designed for those interested in pursuing an administrative position in our system if they have their administrative endorsement or are enrolled in a program leading to the endorsement. According to Program Coordinator Pat Climer, "The Aspiring Administrators Program offers participants the opportunity for practical, hands-on administrative professional development and provides opportunities and support in the development of new administrators and preparation for transi-

tion into leadership roles."

The curriculum focus is on leadership, school climate, communication, organization and time management, legal issues, working with the media, establishing priorities, and group dynamics. Participants will gain better insight into the significance of the district's mission and will become better prepared for the interview process.

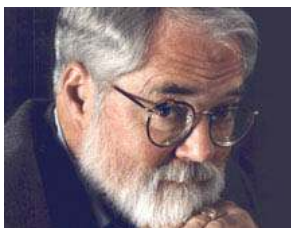
Current administrators are involved in sessions. Thus far, Director of Schools Mike Davis, Principals Mel Brown and Yvonne Kittrell, and Assistant Principal Adam Bannach have met with the 20 program participants to discuss various topics.

The class will meet a total of nine times from 4 to 6 p.m. Participants use a variety

of resources with the primary text being Todd Whitaker's book What Great Principals Do Differently.

The following are enrolled in the program: David Akins (WWM), Bertie Alligood (WWM), Charles Bozman (LHS), Scott Brewer (WHS), Bobby Brown (LHS), Darien Brown (LHS), Tiffany Brown (WAW), Wendi Cathy (GES), Shannon Coble (WCHS), Julie Cunningham (WWM), Patricia Graham (WES), Barbara Hallums (LHS), Julie Harrison (Central Office), Judy Hahn (MJE), Christine Miller (WES), Nick Nance (SCE), Mary Singleton (C/O), Randi Staggs (WCHS), Michelle Watson (RES), and Jeremy Willis (MJM).—Pat Climer

*"... Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you."*—Robert Fulghum



## Teachers as Role Models

As educators implement programs to help children enhance their self-esteem, the first lesson might be to assess their own level of positive self-esteem.

Check the following list of self-esteem builders and see if they apply to you, the professional, who is teaching.

- **KEEP YOUR SELF-TALK AFFIRMATIVE.** A negative attitude shows through all other techniques teachers use to help a student.
- **ACCEPT ALL COMPLIMENTS WITH "THANK YOU."**
- **VOLUNTEER YOUR OWN NAME FIRST WHEN INITIATING PHONE CALLS AND**

**MEETING NEW PEOPLE.** A friendly self-introduction says to new faces that you like yourself, you like them.

- **DRESS AND LOOK YOUR BEST AT ALL TIMES.** Your appearance is a reflection of your mood and your attitude.
- **DEVELOP THE HABIT OF SITTING UP FRONT IN SEMINARS AND MEETINGS.** A front row seat puts you in the best position to be observed as an interested and involved staff member.
- **WALK MORE ERECT IN A RELAXED BUT FASTER PACE—** winners do.

- **ACCEPT AND ENJOY YOURSELF RIGHT NOW.** It usually is apparent to everyone around you if you are good company for yourself.
- **SET YOUR INTERNAL STANDARDS.** Do not compare yourself with others.
- **KEEP A SELF-DEVELOPMENT PLAN ON-GOING AT ALL TIMES.** Put down on paper the goals you have to change and improve.—Dallas Association of Counselors



## Spotlight This Month: W. A. WRIGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Jill Giles  
Principal

### W. A. WRIGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Address: 5017 Market Place, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee 37122

Principal: Jill Giles

Assistant Principal: Ann Reese

Number of teachers: 33

Number of students: 703

Grade levels: Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade

Mascot: Knight

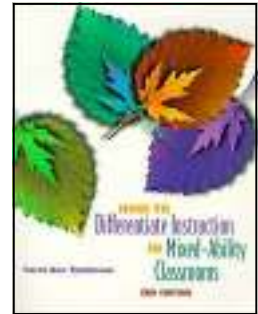
School colors: Burgundy and gray

W. A. Wright Elementary is a Pre-K to Fifth grade school located in the fast growing suburb of Mt. Juliet. Named in memory of W. A. Wright III, a Wilson County School Superintendent, the school opened to students in the fall of 1991. The K-5 school opened with 11 primary classrooms, 19 intermediate classrooms, 4 special education classrooms, and support rooms that consisted of a media center, gymnasium, cafetorium, computer lab, music center, and stage. In 1998, the county added 4 primary classrooms, an art room, and a large commons area for whole grade-level meetings.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Our mission at W. A. Wright Elementary School is to participate as a partner in the education of each student by providing an academically rich, safe, and nurturing environment in which all children can reach their fullest potential.



## The Teacher's Bookshelf



**How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms** by [Carol Ann Tomlinson](#), [Susan Demirsky Allan](#)

One of our most popular books ever—NOW UPDATED! Three new chapters, extended examples, and field-tested strategies help teachers succeed in today's increasingly diverse classrooms. Learn proven ideas for how to match instructional approaches to the readiness, interests, and talents of all students: learning centers, hands-on activities, contracts, and investigative projects. Plus, read about new ways of structuring lessons to provide "scaffolds" for the lesson content, the procedures used in learning, and the products of learning.

This book had a lot of information about the theories behind differentiation, but not enough ideas on how to APPLY it in the classroom. It would have been nice if there had been more easy-to-refer to lists to help you transfer the knowledge to your classroom, everything was in paragraphs, making it much harder to synthesize.



Just a regular day at W. A. Wright Elementary School



# Pre-Kindergarten: The Early Years Are Learning Years

The legislation for the Voluntary Pre-K in Tennessee Act of 2005 was passed by both the House and the Senate in May of 2005. This law provides for the use of \$25 million in excess lottery dollars to establish quality pre-kindergarten classrooms through a competitive grant process. The Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee initiative is to provide for Tennessee's four-year-old children, with the first priority to those four-year-olds who are at-risk, an opportunity to develop school readiness skills (pre-academic and social skills) in an environment that fosters the love and joy of learning and promotes success in kindergarten and throughout the child's life.

Currently, 934 classrooms statewide serve over 17,000 4-year olds enrolled in a Pre-K classroom that is funded by the State of Tennessee. The number of classrooms has grown from 148 in 2004 serving only 3,000 children.

Tennessee has been recognized by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) for the past 2 years as one of only 6 states with the highest quality Pre-K program standards.



Wilson County Schools applied and received funding to open 4 Pre-K classrooms in 2006. These classrooms are lo-

cated at Carroll-Oakland, Gladeville, W.A.Wright, and Watertown Elementary. 6 additional classrooms have been added for the 2007-2008 school year to include Rutland (2 classes), South-



side (located @ Prospect, Inc.), Stoner Creek, Tuckers Crossroads and a 2<sup>nd</sup> class at Watertown Elementary. This brings our classroom total to 10 with the capacity to serve 200 students

A Pre-K Advisory committee consisting of educators, parents, community and business leaders help to direct and promote the idea of Pre-K in Wilson County.

Wilson County Schools and Head Start work collaboratively to serve the children and families in our community. By using a collaborative approach, we are able to access the best services and resources of each agency to serve our 4 year olds and their families.

## The Early Years Are Learning Years.

The human brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other subsequent period.(1)

The first five years of life are a time of enormous social-emotional, physical and cognitive growth. These early years provide a window of opportunity to "set either a sturdy or fragile stage for what follows."(2)

A child's ability to be attentive, focused and fol-

low directions emerges in the early years. Structured early learning fosters these abilities for later success in school and life. (3)

## Quality Pre-K Education

### Prepares Children For Success In School.

Children who participate in high-quality early childhood education develop better language skills, score higher in school-readiness tests and have better social skills and fewer behavioral problems once they enter school.(4)

Children with high-quality early learning experiences are 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade.(5)

Children from low-income families who participate in high-quality early childhood education programs show the most benefits - they repeat fewer grades and learn at higher levels.(6)

A child who enters school reading below grade level has only a one in eight chance of catching up.(7)

Kindergarten teachers in Georgia, the first state with voluntary, universal pre-k for four-year olds, report that children who participated in pre-k were better prepared for kindergarten, especially in the areas of pre-reading, pre-math and social skills.(8)

### Early Education Will Pay Off.

Adults who participated in high-quality early

childhood education programs during their preschool years are more likely to be literate and enrolled in post-secondary education and are less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare or arrested for criminal activity.(9)

The Chicago Child-Parent Center's evaluation of 989 children from low-income Chicago families found that for every dollar invested in high-quality preschool programs, \$7.14 (in 1998 dollars) was returned to society in increased earnings for participants and reduced costs to society for remedial education and crime. (10)

## WHAT DO CHILDREN DO IN PRE-KINDERGARTEN?

When you walk into pre-k classroom, you will see children involved in active, hands-on learning that engages the young child and fosters in him the love of learning.

A quality pre-k classroom enhances the child's curiosity and desire to learn through participation in diverse, large and small group activities. Children experience the delight and excitement of books through interactive story time and in the quiet of the library center as well.

They discover the wonder of our world through exploration at the science center. They learn to count and order their world as they assemble puzzles, build with blocks, and acquire other manipulative skills. The art and writing centers offer children the joy of creative self-expression. In the dramatic play area, children can "try on" different roles, such as fire fighter, parent, doctor or dentist. Through interactions with teachers and peers, they develop social skills and a sense of self-worth. In this quality pre-kindergarten setting, the child will develop the necessary skills for success in school.

High quality pre-k classrooms offer a variety of activities to develop a child's thinking, language, physical and social-emotional skills. Each child has a daily opportunity to develop these skills through activities that promote: social/emotional, language, and physical development as well as skills in early literacy, math, science, social studies, and creative arts.—Denise McMillan



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Newsletter in conjunction with  
The New Teacher Support Program  
Terry Edwards, Program Coordinator



WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
WWW.WCSCHOOLS.COM

## ...we nod our heads for "yes" and shake it for "no"?

The best explanation for this comes from Charles Darwin, who related these gestures to a baby's nursing habits. The forward head motion, or nod, is supposedly a breast-seeking pattern while shaking the head from side to side is a breast-rejecting motion. That is, in the first instance, the baby is saying "yes" and in the second it is saying "no". This is confirmed by the fact that a baby born deaf and blind will nod for "yes" and shake its head for "no".

## For a Laugh: The History of Teaching Math

### Teaching Math In 1950

\*\*\*\*\* A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is 4/5 of the price. What is his profit?

### Teaching Math In 1960

\*\*\*\*\* A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is 4/5 of the price, or \$80. What is his profit?

### Teaching Math In 1970

\*\*\*\*\* A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is \$80. Did he make a profit?

### Teaching Math In 1980

\*\*\*\*\* A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is \$80 and his profit is \$20. Your assignment: Underline the number 20.

### Teaching Math In 1990

\*\*\*\*\* By cutting down beautiful forest trees, the logger makes \$20. What do you think of this way of making a living? Topic for class participation after answering the question: How did the forest birds and squirrels feel as the logger cut down the trees. (There are no wrong answers.)

### Teaching Math In 2005

\*\*\*\*\* El hachero vende un camion carga por \$100. La cuesta de production es.....

