

Dear Parents and Community Members:

Cowherd started the 2007-08 year proudly with the theme, “Believe, Achieve, Succeed: We Will”. Our 2007 ISAT scores brought celebration and continued planning. Cowherd made AYP in math overall and in all subgroups! Congratulations to those students who met and exceeded. We continue to plan for increased success in reading and as well as to keep the achievement in math an annual feature.

This is the first year that Cowherd implemented a formal restructuring plan. The grade level academic teams were expanded from six to eight and the teams were redefined. The team leaders began training during the summer which will continue through the school year based on middle school best practices of teaming, emphasizing curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Another component of our restructuring plan is incorporating balanced literacy school-wide by working with a teacher-led task force and providing training for teachers. We are using HOSTS (Help One Student to Succeed) with identified sixth graders who struggle with reading, and we are using HOSTS as a supplement for the seventh grade as a whole. Reading logs are a continued expectation where students are asked to read daily for a total of 150 minutes a week.

Blocking takes place this year with both language arts and language arts lab and math and math lab being blocked together so that students can study reading and math for longer concentrated periods of time. Technology integration with all areas of curriculum provides more interaction with the lessons and prepares students with needed twenty-first century skills.

Cowherd Middle School was one of only four schools to achieve “Fully Implementing” for PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) in the state of Illinois. That translates into having systems to teach and reinforce behavior expectations as well as designing interventions to address student issues at both the secondary and tertiary level.

We are in the process of implementing two new grants, one with North Central College and one with Northern Illinois University. One focuses on females and one focuses on males with the emphasis on elevating math and science success. Students can also attend North Central College Junior Scholars on the NCC campus, the MyTime after-school program and HOSTS after school as a supplemental education service for reading and math.

We encourage parents to join us at the monthly Parent Advisory Council meetings and to share any questions and concerns that they may have.

Joan Glotzbach, MS, MEd
Cowherd Middle School Principal

