

June 2009

Our mission is to create a learning community that prepares all students to be productive, responsible, and successful.

Striving for Improvement

Okaw Valley CUSD #302 has committed to participate in the *Targeting Achievement Through Governance* (TAG) program offered by the Illinois Association of School Boards.

The program assists school boards in districts with schools that have been identified by the Illinois State Board of Education as not making adequate yearly progress under the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act and state law.

Our decision to participate in the TAG program is a positive move for our district. The information and support that we will receive through this program will allow us to maximize our school board's leadership role. It also should set us on a course to improve student achievement in our district.

TAG helps boards assess their governance role, learn a new process for assessing and developing board policy, and provides information about the Board's role in approving School and District Improvement Plans, which is required by federal and state law. Training and assistance will be provided at a series of regional and in-district workshops.

All services to eligible districts will be provided at no cost through the Illinois Association of School Board's grant from the Illinois State Board of Education. The monetary value of the services available to the district is more than \$9600 and represents about 30 hours of work above what board members would spend with usual board activities.

School Improvement and Strategic Planning

It's hard to believe that another school year has come to an end. I would like to personally thank the parents, community, staff, and students for the wonderful support that is given to our school district. As many of you know, our school district recently began the strategic planning process and established several goals and objectives to be accomplished in the next three years. Below are some of the initiatives that were completed this year.

- The expansion of the service learning program. Our service learning program has continued to develop and the amount of student involvement has increased significantly. This program will continue to be expanded in the future with a plan to involve all grade levels in service initiatives.
- Keyboarding instruction will begin at the 4th and 5th grade levels. This will give the students the needed skills as they begin to use more technology in their classes.

- Bass fishing was added as an extracurricular activity at the high school this year and we will offer competitive cheerleading beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.
- Through the website, newspapers, newsletters, and various other methods, we have attempted to increase the communication to the community. Beginning next school year, we will begin e-mailing links to newsletters and important information about the school. If you would like to receive information from the school via e-mail, please provide your e-mail address at registration in August.
- Air conditioning was installed in all of the classrooms at each building.
- The OVMS and OVHS gym floors were repainted and refinished and the walls were repainted. This summer, various areas in all of the buildings will be painted.
- The district crisis plan was revised with the assistance of local and state police, local fire and ambulance, Red Cross, ESDA, and the health departments.
- Throughout the year, our teachers received professional development in a variety of areas.
- This summer, we are beginning a phase-in process for smartboards that will result in a smartboard installed in every core class in each building in three years.
- Wireless internet is present in all buildings for use by students and teachers.

The progress that has been made this year could not have occurred without the input and support of the community. Although we have taken strides towards meeting our goals, there is still work to be done. This summer, we will be reconvening the community focus group that steered the development of the strategic plan to solicit additional community input and guidance on needed areas for improvement.

Important Upcoming Dates for May:

June 3rd-Report Card Day

June 15th-Summer School Begins

“The beautiful thing about learning is nobody can take it away from you.”

-B.B. King