

# Superintendent News

WARRICK COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION  
ADMINISTRATION CENTER

This Edition:

Major changes to State  
Standards and Testing

Administrative Moves

## Preparing for a successful 2014-2015 School Year

## July, 2014

As the calendar turns to July, most people are spending time with family and friends, vacationing, or enjoying local events and activities. Whatever you and your family are doing this summer, I hope you are taking time to relax and enjoy summer. WCSC teachers and administrators are busy reviewing new state standards that are set to be approved for the 2014-2015 school year. Teachers spent four days preparing English Language Arts and Mathematics curriculum maps for grades K-5. Grades 6-12 will complete their curriculum maps later this summer or early fall. These maps ensure our curriculum is aligned with state standards. School officials just recently learned that Indiana students will be required to take the new state assessment tests beginning in 2014-2015. The initial plan was for Indiana students to take the ISTEP+ in 2014-2015 with the new assessment beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. This "surprise" became reality when Indiana was notified by the Department of Education that our No Child Left Behind waiver would not be approved if we did not begin testing the new standards immediately. That is truly unfortunate. That one year would have been very beneficial to teachers and students. It would have allowed educators time to prepare for the new standards and assessment. It would have been reasonable for teachers and administrators to have a full year to create curriculum maps, prepare lesson plans, drill down through the new standards, compare them to our old standards, and most importantly, get an idea of what the new test was going to look like, how it would be structured, and how students are expected to respond to show they have mastered the standards. Make no mistake, the new assessment, which doesn't even yet exist, will be very different from our current ISTEP+ test. I'm also greatly concerned with the reliability and validity of the new test, given the short period of time available to create it. The lack of time means there will be no time to pilot questions before Hoosier students take this high-stakes test. Parents and the public should be concerned as well, not to mention all the millions of tax dollars we will spend creating and developing this new assessment. At some point in time, we have to start asking the question, "Is all this testing really going to improve student learning?" Schools must be held accountable, but in this time of very limited funding, our state leaders are spending a great deal of money on testing.

Several Warrick County administrators have new assignments for the 2014-2015 school year. The assignments were made with the sole goal of improving our schools and corporation. Success can best be accomplished by matching up administrative skill sets with needs in the various buildings. And while not everyone is going to be happy with the re-assignments, the WCSC is committed to continuous improvement, and one way to achieve that goal is to use all of our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible. Our students, schools, and our corporation are achieving at a high level, but unless we push ourselves to be better, we will never reach our full potential. As we prepare for the 2014-2015 school year, know that I am committed to improving our schools and serving our students. I am also very thankful to be teaming with all the dedicated and hard-working teachers, administrators, and support staff professionals that share my vision of being the best. We are also very appreciative of all the caring and involved parents, as well as all the support our local businesses and patrons provide our schools. We are working hard and looking forward to making 2014-2015 the best school year ever in Warrick County.

Brad Schneider, Superintendent