

Superintendent's

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Bulletin

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Dr. Ballard's Message

Greetings, I hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful fall weather and maybe even found time to attend the fair. My wife Christie and I and the rest of our family went to the fair last week, and what a delight it was. If you want a real fair experience, take two 3-year-olds and a 6-month-old. Of great consolation to me are the corndogs, funnel cakes, and of course, pineapple whip ice cream.



On another personal note, I struggled through the Zoo Run's 5K. My oldest son accompanied me and we enjoyed a beautiful day as did all of the participating TPS students. I even had the opportunity to visit with Cindy Taylor, principal of Lee Elementary, during my run.

Let's read a million words! My good friend Ellen Deucker, director of instructional media and library services, has embarked on an exciting program calling on each of us to read a million words.

This program that has my full support is *Tulsa Reads Millions*. To help achieve this TPS is developing partnerships with a variety of community-based organizations and literacy programs. I am participating in this challenge and just completed *Time to Learn* by Christopher Garbrieli and Warren Goldstein. My wife Christie, a former school librarian and active member of a book club, frequently recommends choice reading material with *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society* recently receiving her stamp of approval. I'll use these pages to keep you updated on my reading progress and I am always looking for literary recommendations.

The Southern Regional Education Board—of which Oklahoma is a part—has issued a list of recommendations to boost reading.

- Define the specific reading skills students need in order to master each key subject.

- Identify the best teaching strategies to help middle grades and high school students develop their reading comprehension skills in each subject.
- Ensure that these strategies are applied statewide in all public schools by including them in professional development for current teachers and in preparation and licensure for new teachers.
- Provide the extra help that struggling readers need, so that all students read at grade level in the middle grades and high school.

Students living in economically-challenged homes sometimes do not have reading materials in the home and typically don't see reading modeled in their surroundings. They arrive with a language deficit and we need to help catch them up and close the gap.

Research shows that economically-challenged children get over 95 percent of their reading material from the school library. We need to facilitate access to reading materials and get them to the library, create classroom reading shelves, etc.

We can tell students to read at home, but many students don't have or don't make the time to do so. If they are going to read, we must provide the time, support and encouragement for them to discover the joy of the written word.

All teachers must become what I'll call here "reading teachers" if we are serious about success for **all** our students. They must provide the instructional and emotional support to close the gap.

Thanks to the hard work of Terri Grissom and Rochelle Klein, TPS received a \$437,740 grant to provide students, teachers, and staff with a safe learning and working environment. The grant will enhance the Community Policing strategies of district police and will help further develop existing relationships between the district and other police agencies serving the Tulsa Community.

TPS will use the grant funding in the following ways:

- Purchase and install building access security systems in 18 school sites. These systems will include doors that automatically lock, card reader



- access devices, and live video feed systems.
- Hire additional administrative staff for the Campus Police headquarters.
- Contract with a crisis management consultant to assist the district and community first responders to organize and implement a system of full-scale emergency exercises with the district's *Readiness and Emergency Management* program.

This week I had my first meeting with our faith-based advisory committee. This is an important collaboration and I look forward to working with this group. They are one of our most supportive partners and provide many active volunteers in our schools.

I also conducted my monthly meeting with area principals. Important topics were H1N1, school discipline, the new Behavior Response Plan and safety and security. I appreciate the building principals who do such a terrific job of ensuring the true work of education happens every day in the buildings.

Magnet Fair Coming Up!

Tulsa Public Schools is gearing up to present a magnet school fair showcasing the stunning array of opportunities available to parents and their children. The fair is Saturday, October 24 at Woodland Hills Mall from 12-4 p.m. and features district personnel and students enrolled in magnets answering questions and demonstrating the unique activities these schools offer.

The following schools offer magnet programs:

Booker T. Washington	Central
Edison	Hale
McLain	Memorial
Webster	Carver
Thoreau	Wilson
Eisenhower	Mayo
Zarrow	

Strategies for Alternately Certified

Alternatives for the Alternately Certified is designed for the alternately-certified teacher in years 0-3 and offers strategies for classroom, discipline and time management and how to support students with special needs. All strategies outlined during the course can be immediately implemented in the classroom. *Alternatives for the Alternately Certified* is Monday, October 26 and Wednesday, October 28 from 5-7 p.m.

at Fulton. Enroll through the DK system. Contact Eileen Simmons at 925-1147 or simmoei@tulsaschools.org with any questions.

Professional Development Site Change

The location for a professional development course for math teachers has been changed. Originally set for Fulton, the TCTM/Tulsa Council of Teachers of Math activity on October 15 will now take place at the northeast campus of Tulsa Community College.

Approved For Distribution

- Crowell Heights Baptist Church – Fall Carnival
- Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa – Tulsa Native Youth
- Oklahoma Kids Wrestling Association – Youth Wrestling
- Red Fork Church of God – Kids Carnival
- Thornton Family YMCA – Youth Sports
- Tulsa Ballet – Auditions
- Tulsa Library Trust – 2010 African-American Heritage High School History Bowl
- Will Rogers UMC – Trunk or Treat
- Youth Services – Youth Court



October 12 and 13, evenings

Parent/Teacher Conferences
Continuing Learning Schools
(no school October 14 for CLC)

October 13, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Elem Core Subject Departmental
Teacher Leader Meeting
Fulton's Cafetorium

October 15

Teacher Professional Day
No School

October 16 and 19

No School

October 16

Health Benefits Option Deadline

October 19, 7 p.m.

Board of Education Meeting
ESC Selmon Room

October 20 and 22, evenings

Parent/Teacher Conferences
Traditional Schools