

The Announcer

USD 470: Moving from good to *great* through quality education for *all* students!

First year at Ark City was learning experience for superintendent

Dear USD 470 Patrons:

WOW! I'm not sure where the school year went! Here we are in May already.

As your new superintendent, I have been on the job only since July 1. Therefore, I am still learning much about the community, school district as an organization, strengths and areas needing improvement, and people with whom and for whom I work, perhaps the most important of these people – the 3,100 students in USD 470.

What have I learned in my short time in Ark City and USD 470?

There was much to “build upon” in the school district. I found a district that had made a major commitment to laying the foundation for excellence in education by focusing on early childhood programs. I also found a district that had supported the enhancement of school building facilities, making the facilities attractive and functional. The commitment to the use of technology for both administrative and instructional was impressive. School improvement was obviously a focus as three of our elementary schools had decided to participate in a grant-supported, nationally-recognized program to improve student achievement. All other schools were also focusing on improvement.

I also soon discovered that organizations within the Ark City community were supportive of the school district and ready to continue that support at even greater levels than before. I was particularly impressed with the Chamber of Commerce and its efforts to work with the school district toward increasing student achievement. Along with the Chamber and other organizations in the community, we all recognize the importance of a successful and

effective public school system to the economic and “livable” welfare of the entire community.

I found many staff members who wanted to focus on improving student achievement, improving the district's graduation rate, and creating a positive “learning community” in USD 470. We continue to work with and encourage the huge majority of staff members who want to take the Arkansas City School District to the next higher level in everything we do.

I found a group of parents who care very much about the education of their children and who are very willing to work with the schools to make that education even better. The number of hours that parents and others donate to our students and to the schools is amazing. Groups such as the parent-teacher organizations and the booster club perform such an important service for our students, schools, and community.

I have found a GREAT group of students, from preschool to our graduating seniors. Although not all 3,100 students may do “everything right” or as the adults would want them to do every time, they are a super group of students who want to learn, want to have fun, and need the support and guidance from their parents/ guardians, community leaders and citizens, and the educators of the community. Each student deserves the chance to be more than they ever thought they could be!

I found the school district, although working hard at school improvement, probably needed a bit more vision and focus on such efforts. Sometimes it is better to work smarter than harder! In

Information corner

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 of curriculum and instruction

“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community – and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.”
 ~ George Bernard Shaw

Problems or questions?

Most often questions concerning the day-to-day operations of the schools are best answered by the teacher, coach, sponsor, principal or administrator working closest to that area.

It is recommended that problems or concerns first be taken to the teacher, coach or sponsor and second to the principal. If the situation still has not been resolved, it should be taken to the superintendent, and finally, if not resolved, to the board of education.

The central office will be pleased to direct you to the person who can best answer your questions or concerns. Call 441-2000 for such information.

Superintendent's learning experience

Continued from page 1

my opinion, the district needed to be more focused on a compelling vision for higher student achievement at all levels. We particularly needed to work on reading and math, K-12. The new federal No Child Left Behind Act certainly adds an urgency to this vision.

All school districts have literally hundreds of policies and procedures in place to operate the school district on a daily basis. Almost all school districts face the challenge of maintaining these policies in an up-to-date fashion and in a way that makes sense for staff members and patrons. USD 470 is not unlike most school districts; it needs to update its policies and procedures. The board of education and leadership team members are working on this huge task; it will take at least two years.

Upon entering USD 470, I found a budget that was somewhat different from what I had experienced in other school districts. Although I understood the necessity of developing a budget reflecting the unique needs and factors of USD 470, I continue to learn and adjust to a different concept of budgeting. I continue to be particularly concerned about not having a capital outlay fund generating money for maintenance and upkeep of our facilities over the long haul. Having to decide between textbooks for students or keeping up our facilities does not seem to be a good choice. When surveying the 10 school districts larger and smaller than Ark City, we are the ONLY school district that does not have a capital outlay levy being assessed. We also have the lowest total mill rate of these 21 school districts surveyed. However, if the district has problems meeting basic needs, having the lowest mill rate might not always be in the best interest of our schools and community. I continue to learn more about the particular needs of the school district in relationship to its budget. However, I continue to believe that the Kansas legislature must step up to the challenge and support public education throughout the state.

I found a district with no multi-year strategic plan. It is important for USD

470 to have a "road map" showing destinations (goals) and how to get to those destinations (strategies). A strategic planning process would involve many community citizens and staff members. I continue to support an objective, inclusive strategic planning process that involves many members of the community and is reflective of the community's hopes for its schools.

I have also discovered the leaders in USD 470 are strong and willing to work at improving themselves and reaching the next level of governance and leadership. The board of education members and leadership team members (administrators) are very hard working and care very much about students.

I am still learning much about the school district and the community; my wife, Joyce, and I have enjoyed getting settled in our new community.

Our district is well into planning for the 2003-2004 school year. We are excited about the possibilities for success that are ahead for USD 470 and its students. This is the time for the entire Arkansas City community to support and recognize that we can do what's necessary for the continuous improvement of student achievement for all students in USD 470.

This is the time for a solid, positive-thinking, positive-doing board of education, leadership team, teaching staff, support staff, students, parents and community members and leaders as we work together toward the vision of USD 470: Every student learning to higher and higher standards and every student graduating from high school ready to take the next step.

Thank you again for your support of the Ark City schools and its students and staff members.

Have a great month of May and a safe and wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Perry L. Perkins

Superintendent of Schools

P.S. The Central Office, 119 W.

Washington, is open-year-round. Please feel free to contact us at 441-2000 with your questions and comments.

Not too late to enroll for summer school

Letters of enrollment confirmation were mailed out recently to parents whose children enrolled for summer school. If you are a parent of a child who would like to enroll in summer school and have not yet received a letter of confirmation, please contact Aaron Wise at 441-2003.

Although the deadline to enroll for summer school has passed, late enrollments will be accepted until May 25 and should be turned in to the child's current school. Late enrollments are not guaranteed placement. Any enrollments after May 25 will not be accepted until after June 9 at Adams Elementary School, 1201 N. 10th, or the Arkansas City Middle School Sixth Grade Center office, 400 E. Kansas Ave. Enrollments will NOT be accepted on June 9 due to first day "hustle and bustle" at the sites.

Students may enroll at Arkansas City High School, 1200 W. Radio Lane, until May 28. First semester classes will meet from 8-11 a.m., and second semester classes will meet from noon-3 p.m. and will last from June 2-27. Ninety percent attendance is required to receive credit. Each course is 1/2 credit per session. Classes may be cancelled due to insufficient enrollment and tuition will then be refunded.

All classes offered will be for remediation. Courses include English I-IV; algebra I & II; geometry, intro to biology, earth and space science; American history; world history; constitution; and economics. Social science courses may also be taken for advancement. Payment is due at the time of enrollment. Each session is \$45 for remediation and \$60 for advancement.

For more information, call the high school at 441-2010.

Head Start, Presbyterian Manor celebrate Week of the Young Child



Photo by K. Martinez

Lori Moore, Presbyterian Manor's activities director, sings with residents and children from Megan Galliard and Aleta Bruce's Head Start classes during Week of the Young Child. Sue Gregg, activities coordinator, assisted Moore.

April 6-12 was the Week of the Young Child. This week was established in 1971 to help communities celebrate young children and to focus attention on the needs of the youngest members. This year's theme was Children's Opportunities – Our Responsibilities.

To celebrate the Week, the Lincoln Early Childhood Center, which houses Head Start and the

PALS program, invited people to make a difference. Volunteers came in and read to kids. The kids also walked around uptown passing out handprints to community friends.

"Each of us can make a difference in the life of a young child," Cindy Hovey, PALS teacher, said. "Talk with a child. Read to a child. Volunteer at a school or community center. The list is endless."

Feds approve Kansas' education plan

State is eighth in nation to earn ok

The U.S. Department of Education announced that Kansas has met the criteria of the federal No Child Left Behind law, making it the eighth state to earn federal approval.

The idea for schools to base educational decisions on hard data, such as test scores, and then be held accountable for those results is at the heart of the No Child Left Behind law, enacted in January 2002.

The law requires that states test all students in grades three through five in reading and math every year starting in 2005-2006.

Then states must share the results of those tests and identify schools

that aren't making adequate progress. Schools that don't improve two years in a row must let parents transfer their children to another school.

Kansas Education Commissioner Andy Tompkins said the state was already working to improve student achievement, eliminate the achievement gap between races and ensure teacher quality, years before the federal law was passed.

Kansas just had to adapt what it was already doing to the new federal requirements, he said.

Source: The Wichita Eagle. For more information about the No Child Left Behind Act, go to www.nochildleftbehind.gov.

Students raise \$4,117 for Cowley Co. BBBS

More than 70 Arkansas City Middle School students participated in the second annual Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids' Sake event April 6. ACMS had enough teams to get the bowling alley all to themselves and the students raised \$4,117 for BBBS. The top fundraiser (and team captain) Blythe Colquhoun raised \$430.

All the team captains received a sweatshirt and the students who raised at least \$135 earned a T-shirt. Pizza, pop and door prizes were offered to the participants.

"We've not had any other school participation," Debi Clark, director of BBBS of Cowley County, said. "[The middle school students] are so responsible and have a commitment to the purpose and following through. I'm very impressed with these kids."

ACMS team captains were responsible for getting teams together. They were Molly Macintosh, Jesse Hensley, Darick Stalnaker, Taylor Carrithers, Blythe Colquhoun, Hannah Endurud, Brienne Ford, Maribel Ramirez, Leslie Holloway, Becky Fleger, Amanda Young, Colby Goatley, Tear Morris, Jordan Chapman, Paige Parker and Stacia Stover.

All the money raised at the Bowl for Kids' Sake event stays in Cowley County. The money helps BBBS of Cowley County recruit, screen and match volunteers for children in need of a mentor.

For more information about Big Brothers Big Sisters of Cowley County, to request a mentor or to become a volunteer, call BBBS of Cowley County at 620-221-7766 or visit 1321 E. Seventh Ave., Winfield. The Web site for the national BBBS of America is www.bbbs.org.

ACHS students place first at ICC Competition Day

Arkansas City High School placed first at the annual Independence Community College High School Competition Day on March 4. ACHS has received first place every year it has entered the competition since 1989, only missing once due to bad weather. More than 600 students from 23 high schools participated in the academic and fine arts events this year. Forty-four ACHS students contributed to the victory by placing in the top five in the individual events.

The students did particularly well in the five art categories, winning two and them and placing third in another. Amy Parsons was first in Drawing (pencil only); Ryan Belindo won first and Chris

Sullivan third in Drawing (all others except pencil). Amanda Hadicke was the top individual performer, placing first in two contests, Psychology and Office Practice along with a fourth place in Tax Preparation.

Other first-place winners were Geoff Abegg in New Testament History; Jackson Anyasi in CAD Architectural; Valerie Brown in English; Clint Bryant in Mr. Future Business Leader; Jason Burnett in English; Brad

Denton in Web Page Layout and Design; Matt Dykes in Business Communications; Kyle Kendrick in Sports Stories; Jonathan Maslen in French II; Emily Schmeidler in Parliamentary Procedures; James Swanson in Business Law; Audra Tope in Filing; Tara Vanderpool in Feature Stories; Alicia VanGilder in Music History; and Katie Williams in Word Processing.

Placing second were Mary Bagot in Music History; Bethany Bearden in New Testament History; Brian Black in CAD Architectural Rendered; Valeria Brown in Business Law; Blair Bryant in Floral Design; Conner Crumbliss in Spanish II; Brice Harader in Sociology; Jared McGuire in both Haiku and Sports Stories; Jayme Perrett in Parliamentary Procedures; Stephen Shaw in On-site Architectural Drafting; and Eric Ward in CAD (Architectural,

Rendered).

Awarded third place were Ashley Blatchford for Parliamentary Procedures; Connie Bucher in World Geography; Sydney Carrithers in Keyboarding I; Cassie Fry in News Stories; Brice Harader for Informative Speaking; Kyle Kendrick in Column Writing; Britnee Leighton for Lyric Poems; Leslie Prichard in Office Practice; Matt Ramirez in CAD (Machine); Erin Sawyer in Filing; Emily Schmeidler for Ms. Future Business Employee; Stephen Shaw for CAD (Architectural, Working); Eric Ward in On-site CAD Mechanical Drafting; and Katie Williams in French I.

Finishing in fourth were Mary Bagot in Biology; Bethany Bearden in Duet Acting; Ashley Blatchford in Fresh Floral Design; Blair Bryant for Persuasive Speaking; Brad Denton in Computing; Evan Gackstatter in Music Theory; Laurie Galbreath in Duet Acting; Candice McGowan in Sports Stories; Jared McGuire in Long Poems and Editorial Writing; Valerie Spiser in Psychology; Chris Sullivan in On-site Mechanical Drafting; and Kenny Sultz in Business Math.

Placing fifth were Jackson Anyasi in On-site CAD Architectural Drafting; Jarrett Bodkins in Computing; John Irving in Biology; Jared McGuire in Lyric Poems; Erin Sawyer in Office Machines; and Kenny Sultz in Bookkeeping.

Gifted facilitator Susanne Stark has coordinated the local contest entries since 1988. "This is a wonderful opportunity for those students who excel in certain academic areas to show what they can do," she said. "We can be proud of our students and their teachers for these accomplishments."

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Susanne Stark
ACHS gifted facilitator

The Announcer

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Dr. Perry L. Perkins
Superintendent
Kristen Martinez, editor
Director of Public Relations

This newsletter is distributed to the Arkansas City community throughout the school year.

When families stay involved in education, student success rises

From the National Middle School Association, www.nmsa.org

Education doesn't just happen in the classroom; the home is also an important learning environment.

The importance of family involvement was a key message delivered by Former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley. He said, "Thirty years of research shows that when family and community members are directly involved in education, children achieve better grades and higher test scores, have much higher reading comprehension, graduate at higher rates, are more likely to enroll in higher education, and are better behaved."

"Family involvement is especially important in middle level schools," reports Sue Swaim, executive director, National Middle School Association. "It's at this time when young adolescents are establishing habits that will follow them through their lives. Family support and a degree of structure in the home will provide a foundation for success for middle school students."

Swaim recommends actions families can take to support students:

1. **Establish a daily family rou-**

time. This includes providing time, space and materials needed for studying. Young adolescents should be assigned regular household tasks to help develop responsibility. Good health habits are also an important part of the home with the proper balance of rest and sleep, good nutrition and a good breakfast before going to school. Hungry students aren't strong learners.

2. **Model the value of learning and hard work.** Reading at home and engaging in other learning activities demonstrate to students that parents see education as an important part of everyone's life. Some families designate a specific time when everyone reads. Parents can also encourage open discussions with young adolescents on issues of the day or decisions regarding their lives. When parents encourage frank discussions, they demonstrate that they respect their youngster's opinions.

3. **Monitor out-of-school activities.** It's important for youngsters this age to have rules, but those rules should be discussed with the child so that s/he understands why they are in place. Parents should also guide the use of leisure time so that it is constructive. This includes

time with friends, afterschool activities and relaxation time. There's room for all these items, but they should be balanced. It's also important for parents to reward success and apply sanctions in a consistent manner so that young adolescents will understand that hard work is appreciated and there are limits to what they may do.

4. **Encourage your child's overall development and progress in school.** When parents express an interest in their child's schoolwork, it shows that parents value what students are achieving in their education. Encourage your child to explain projects and other work. Attend appropriate school events, and stay in touch with your child's teachers.

5. **Encourage reading, writing and discussing among all family members.** Education should not be seen as an activity in which only the child is involved. Parents can relate everyday experiences to what is happening in the classroom. Families should discuss current events, evaluate TV programming they watch together, and plan family trips together that have educational value. Writing together demonstrates the value of writing.

For more information, visit the National Middle School Association at www.nmsa.org.

Buster teaches kids bus safety



Photo by Megan Galliard/Head Start

March 25, Buster Bus visited the Winfield, Arkansas City and Burden Head Start programs.

Buster is a remote-controlled robotic school bus that teaches kids safe loading and unloading procedures, danger areas around the bus and general safety rules when on the bus. He relates to the kids personally, with fun and exciting antics that hold their attention throughout the educational program.

This is the last issue of The Announcer for the school year. We'll be back in July to bring you everything you look forward to each month. In the meantime, check out the changing look of our Web site www.arkcity.com for new information. If there are items you would like to see on the site, please e-mail your suggestions to the webmaster at kmartinez@arkcity.com.

Vocational classes face funding changes

By Ben Feller, Associated Press
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The Associated Press

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Bobby Lindquist doesn't care much for math, unless it's the geometric beauty of a car's suspension system.

"This is really the only thing that gets me up in the morning and gets me to come to school," Lindquist said as classmates installed a rebuilt minivan strut at the Marshall Academy, a popular career-focused high school program in Fairfax County, Va.

At 18, Lindquist has shown he

has drive: an internship fixing police cruisers, plans to continue his education after high school, real potential to earn a good salary as an automotive technician. But the senior admits he gives minimal effort to his core academics.

"I just pass the classes and get here," he said, referring to his school's advanced car repair lab. "And then I'll do anything."

Across America, almost half of high school students choose vocational programs as a major part of their studies, according to the Department of Education. A quar-

ter of high school students go further and concentrate on a specific job-focused field.

Now, millions of vocational students like Bobby could face major changes in their studies because of a Bush administration plan to remake vocational education.

Bush wants to replace the \$1.2 billion national program with a trimmer \$1 billion version that would require schools to prove student achievement before they receive federal grants. And for the first time, states could shift federal vocational education money to programs that strengthen math and reading for low-income students.

The administration says it wants to ensure that more young people are prepared for college or greater technical training and able to switch careers smoothly.

Bush's plan would raise the stakes for vocational education.

"We can do this much more effectively if we just prepare people adequately so they've got options in life," said Carol D'Amico, Education Department assistant secretary for vocational and adult education.

Details about the Bush plan won't be ready until later this year, when Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Perkins Act, the nation's vocational education law. There probably won't be a mandated curriculum, D'Amico said, but money will likely be tied to how well students score on tests and advance to the post-high school education needed for most jobs.

"I believe that vocational programs provide students with the motivation and means to learn the traditional subjects," Cory Epler, ACHS vo-ag teacher, said.

"Some students finally get math, reading and science concepts from their involvement in vocational pro-

'Hot' plastics program makes way to ACHS

Linda Ball from the National Plastics Center and Museum recently rolled in to ACHS with the Plastic Van to give an interesting program for students. It was a hands-on interactive, educational demonstration with different types of plastic uses, history and composition. Students performed several experiments with different types of plastics or concepts used in the manufacturing of plastics.

"Cowley County has several employers related to the plastics business and we are trying to make a school-to-work connection for kids," Laura Wollard, ACHS science teacher, said. "I want students to think about possible careers and goals and how they are going about the different job opportunities in our county and state.

"I try to get students thinking of their goals and how they are going to achieve them. It is a fun learning experience. It is a great opportunity for our younger students who are just beginning to think of long-term goals," she said.

This is the second year Winfield Consumer Products, 22425 D. St,



Linda Ball from the National Plastics Center and Museum demonstrates a type of plastic that burns completely with no ash, called flash paper.

Courtesy photo

has sponsored the Plastic Van.

"School works for everyone when you have such support from the community," Wollard said. "We really appreciate their involvement."

Wollard said she and fellow science teacher Donna Skiles shared the plastics program with their classes, so they were able to expose a greater number of kids. Skiles' ecology class focuses on recycling and conservation.

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Forensics students qualify for nationals



Micheal Beauchamp, Elizabeth Bagot, Matt Dykes, Ryan Belindo, Kyle Haas, Nick Hammel and Stuart Parman went to the National Qualifying Tournament for forensics. Hammel, a freshman, was observing the team.

Forensics students at Arkansas City High School participated in the National Qualifying Tournament at Derby High School on April 11 and 12. Students who qualified are eligible to compete in the weeklong National Forensics League tournament in Atlanta later this summer.

Elizabeth Bagot placed third in Domestic Extemporaneous and Micheal Beauchamp placed fifth in Foreign Extemporaneous. Other who participated were Matt Dykes, Kyle Haas, Ryan Belindo and Stuart Parman. Jamie Hibbs, ACHS language arts teacher, is the forensics coach.

Dykes will be the only ACHS student competing at nationals in Student Congress in the Senate. He will debate resolutions, pass and fail resolutions and make speeches, just like in the Senate.

Hibbs said Dykes is "thrilled" to be going to nationals. "In our district (south Kansas) there are 14 schools. Only two students [from the district] qualify in this event (Student Congress in the Senate)," she said.

Hibbs said about 1,000 students from the south Kansas district compete for nationals, but only about 20 get to compete in Atlanta.

Thirteen entries from ACHS will compete at state forensics May 3 at Kapaun-Mt. Carmel High School, 8506 E. Central, Wichita.

Students earn awards at state competition

ACHS Skills USA-VICA members Brice Harader, Andrew Bohn, Antoinette Abington, Whitley Stokes and sponsors Deb Hargrove and Julie Lockwood attended the Skills USA State Competition in Wichita, April 2-4.

Harader earned first place in the CPR competition and Bohn earned second place in CPR. Harader also received first place in the extemporaneous speech competition. Abington

and Stokes received participation medals for Food and Beverage competition and Job Interview competition. All four students and both sponsors earned their Stateman's Pin based on general knowledge test about Skills USA-VICA.

Harader will represent Kansas at the National Conference in June. Bohn will represent the Ark City Chapter as a member of the National Courtesy Corp.

School news

Head Start

Head Start is taking applications for the 2003-2004 school year. Head Start is a free program for children ages 3-5. Please call 441-2075 to set up an appointment for enrollment or for more information.

Roosevelt Elementary School

The Roosevelt PTO would like to thank all the people and businesses who supported the school's Bingo and Brats event and made it successful.

A science fair sponsored by the General Electric ELFUN group will take place May 13 for fourth and fifth graders.

The award program will be at 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 21, in the gym for grades 1-5.

Fun Day for grades 1 and 2 is May 22, and for grades 3-5, Fun Day is May 23.

Frances Willard Elementary

FW recently started Math Club, an afterschool group of kids working on math skills with a focus on the state standards. They have fun, learn and snack. A little more than 20 students have attended past sessions and parents also are involved.

Arkansas City High School

ACHS is hosting a free three-day summer tech camp that provides an overview of ACHS career and technical programs from June 2-4, from 8-11:30 a.m. This is for 2003-04 eighth and ninth graders. Each student will rotate through six program-project sessions in various tech areas.

To register, call Julie Lockwood at 441-2010 as soon as possible.

May calendar of events

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 3 | Prom | 19 | Eighth grade day |
| | HS State KSPA Contest | 20 | MS awards night |
| | State Speech & Drama Festival | 22 | Half day of classes |
| | State Speech Championships | | HS finals, morning |
| | SAT Test | 23 | Half day of classes |
| 5 | HS & MS orchestra contest, | | HS finals, morning |
| | HS auditorium, 7 p.m. | | End of second semester |
| 6 | Senior awards night | 26 | Memorial Day |
| | National Teacher Day | 27 | BOE mtg., 7 p.m., ACHS |
| 8 | MS art show, 6 p.m. | 31 | World No Tobacco Day |
| | MS band concert, MS | | |
| | auditorium, 7 p.m. | | |
| 10 | HS FFA banquet | | |
| 11 | Mother's Day | | |
| 12 | BOE mtg., 7 p.m., ACHS | | |
| | HS individual arts show, 6 p.m. | | |
| | HS vocal pops concert, HS | | |
| | auditorium, 7 p.m. | | |
| 13 | HS band concert, HS | | |
| | auditorium, 7 p.m. | | |
| 18 | High school graduation | | |

Also this month:

Reading is Fun Week, 4-10
Teacher Appreciation Week, 4-10
National Preservation Week, 5-11
National Police Week, 18-23

For a calendar of events, updated weekly and including athletic events, check out our Web site at www.arkcity.com.

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grams," he said. "I truly believe if funding for vocational programs is decreased, the drop-out rate would soar. Vocational programs keep many students in school and provide students who are not college bound with career skills.

"There has been a lot of talk about cutting Perkins money lately, and my leadership class wrote letters to Sens. Brownback and Roberts and Rep. Tiahart," Epler said. "I was impressed with the letters as they shared their experiences with agricultural education. To me, those are the type of citizens vocational programs create.

"The bottom-line is preparing all students for success," he said. "Cutting vocational programs leaves out many students who demand preparation for future careers."



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