

Terminal Park Elementary  
 1101 D St SE  
 Auburn, WA 98002



# THE EXPRESS

## Goals and a Plan, Cement and Some Sand

I know this is one of the strangest titles for a newsletter article, but with the start of the school year, the gains in achievement, and the overall condition of the American economy, it is very fitting. Bear with me as I make the connections.

If you were at open house on the 29<sup>th</sup> or looked at the reports that came out with the release of the WASL scores in August, you know about the improvements that Terminal Park students and staff have made. The scores are up across the board in all areas, in all grades. The improvements range from 2.9% to 19.9%. This is no small matter. Talk to students who have taken the WASL and they will tell you that it is a difficult test. As I have talked to other principals in our meetings and through email, they have inquired as to how we have made such positive gains.

The methods we have employed are simple, but far reaching. It is said that, "Goals are written in cement while plans are written in sand." What it comes down to is setting our sights on the outcome we desire. For Terminal Park, our desired outcome was increased student achievement in all areas of the state testing. There was nothing that was going to change our goals. They were written in cement. How we got to our goals came out in our plan. As a staff we developed strategies that would support our goals. The most important thing with our plans, however, was constant re-evaluation of what we were seeing as a result. If the strategy we employed did not garner the outcomes we wanted, we changed the strategy. Our plan is written in sand.

Last year, the district underwent a very comprehensive study of the condition of education in the Auburn School District. They looked at the changing demands of the current work force, the achievement data from multiple sources, the needs of the students, and the responsibility the district has as financial stewards of tax dollars. The result of this self-study resulted in the district's development of a

three year strategic improvement plan. The plan identifies the needs of the different areas, the goals that address the needs, and a plan to make the goals attainable. The district has adopted the cement and sand philosophy in the approach to the plan. We will not waiver from our goals, but we will make any changes necessary to get there. (the complete strategic plan is available at <http://www.auburn.wednet.edu/Superintendent/200912StratPlanSummary.pdf>)

How can we apply this to our everyday lives? I think the best way is to look at the state of the economy and our personal finances, and use a cement and sand approach. Set the goals that you have for your family. It might be getting completely out of debt in a certain number of years. It might be paying off a car in less time than the loan indicates. Maybe it is finding a way to pay the rent next month. Whatever your desired result is, write it in cement. Do not waiver from it. Unfortunately, writing the goal is the easy part. Writing the plan is where the rubber meets the road.

Developing strategies to get to where you want to go is the hardest part. You need to be flexible enough to make necessary changes along the path to your goal. Because your strategies are written in sand, it will be easy to make some changes. At the same time, external forces will work against your plans at times. The wind will blow, and your plans will be changed. The tide will come in, and your plans will be changed. Be resolute! Do not waiver from your goals. Rewrite your plans. They may be better than the original. The most important thing is that you keep writing. Move forward! Stay strong! Keep moving toward your goals.

Happy Writing-

Tim Carstens,  
Principal

# October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			Sept 30 AIDS Education 6:00 PM Administration Office 5 grade Parents	1:30 Recognition Assembly	6:30 PTA Family Movie Night "Race To Witch Mountain"	
4	Health Screening	5	7	Individual Pictures	8	9
11	MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATER/PRACTICES AND PERFORMANCES					
12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	5:00 PM McDonald's Take-over Takeover	22	23
25	26	5th Graders to BITZZ TOWN	27	28	29	30
					31	Cookie Dough Arrives Next week

## Family Access

To make it easier for families to be involved in their child's education, the Auburn School District provides a web-based tool to view student information anytime by using Family Access. Class schedules, attendance and other student information can be viewed using Family Access.

Last school year, a letter was generated to each Auburn School District family with their Login and Password information. If you have misplaced this letter, forgotten your passwords or are new to the district, please contact the school office **in person** to receive this information. Because of the sensitive nature of passwords, we will only give you the information in person after checking your ID.

Login names are typically the first five letters of your last name, the first three of your first name and a three-digit number. If either your last name

or first name is fewer than the specified number of characters, enter a space for each missing letter.

(Example for John Smith)  
Login: SMITH, JOH000  
Password: PASSWORD

After logging in to the school website family access, you will have the ability to add your email address. The district is preparing to implement "School Messenger which will give the district the ability to notify parents by phone and email important information pertaining to you and your student. School Messenger will start with the middle and high schools, followed by elementary schools.

We hope you find this communication tool useful in participating in your child's education.

## Health Information for Parents of 5th Graders

As required by RCW 28A.230.070 students grades 5 through 12 in the Auburn School district will continue to receive state-mandated Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) prevention education. Prior to students receiving the state-mandated education, we are required to conduct at least one presentation during the weekend and evening hours for the parents and guardians of our students.

For the 2009-2010 school year, the Department of Student Learning has established the two informational presentation dates:

**Wednesday, September 30, 6:00-7:00 PM**  
**And**  
**Saturday, October 3, from 9:00-10:00 AM**

Both informational presentations will be held at the James P. Fugate Administration Building, Board Room.

(4)...at least one month before teaching AIDS prevention education in any classroom, conduct at

*least one presentation during weekend and evening hours for the parents and guardians of students concerning the curricula and materials that will be used for such education. The parents and guardians shall be notified by the school district of the presentations and that the curricula and materials are available for inspection. No student may be required to participate in AIDS prevention education if the student's parent or guardian, having attended one of the district presentations, objects in writing to the participation.*

As a result of reviewing the curriculum, parents and guardians requesting their student to be exempt from the HIV/AIDS education lesson will do so directly to our office in writing. Exemption will only be for those students whose parents have viewed the curriculum at one of the aforementioned meetings.. For more information, please call us at 931-4978.

## Library News ~ Beverly Baker, Librarian

### Welcome to Terminal Park's Library!

Our library has numerous picture books (also referred to as "Everybody books"), fiction chapter books, non-fiction books and magazines from which to choose. We also have a lot of Accelerated Reader books for students to borrow. A.R. books have a blue sticker on the spine. Each book is marked with the reading level and point level. Lessons on book handling, parts of the book, story grammar, Dewey decimal system, researching, intelligent web usage, book genres, making a book bag, using the computer catalog, choosing good literature, and other library skills will be taught throughout the year.

Parents may sign up for a Terminal Park library card and check out some of the wonderful parenting material in the parent/teacher resource library section or any of our other books to read to themselves or to their kids. It is important for your children to see you read for your own enjoyment and reading aloud to your kids makes bedtime more fun.

### Destiny: Online Catalog

<http://destiny.auburn.wednet.edu/common/welcome.jsp?site=312>

### Terminal Park's Checkout Policy

Please make sure the books are returned on time so that other children can read them. There are no book fines for late books but lost or destroyed books must either be paid for or replaced. If a book is lost or destroyed, please come talk to Mrs. Baker without worry, we can work it out.

Patrons	Number of books to check-out	Due Back
Kindergarten	1	One week (7 days)
First Grade	1	One week (7 days)
Second Grade	1	One week (7 days)
Third Grade	2	One week (7 days)
Fourth Grade	2	One week (7 days)
Fifth Grade	2	One week (7 days)

## Reading Corner—John Harlor

### Read-Aloud Time

Time spent reading aloud is critical to helping kids become better readers. It's also fun! Are you making the most of your read-aloud time? Answer *yes* or *no* to each of the questions below to find out:

\_\_\_ 1. Do you have a regular read-aloud time with your child that lasts at least 20 minutes each day?

\_\_\_ 2. Do you make read-aloud time fun for your whole family by taking turns picking books you want to read together?

\_\_\_ 3. Do you sometimes stop to talk about what you've just read or make predictions about what's about to happen?

\_\_\_ 4. Do you let your child take a turn reading again the next day?

\_\_\_ 5. Do you stop reading at an exciting place so you won't forget to read again the next day?

### How well are you doing?

Each *yes* answer means you're making the most of the time you spend reading aloud. For each *no* answer, try that idea in the quiz.

**Reminder: Picture Day is October 8th**

Please call the school office if your student is going to be absent: 253 931 4978