

KAMSA NEWS IN 2009-2010

KAMSA Principal/Assistant Principal of the Year

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KAMSA Spring Conference

- May 2-3, 2010
- Washburn Rural Middle School, Topeka
- Great Speakers
- Breakout Sessions
- Award Presentations

The Kansas Association of Middle School Administrators (KAMSA) is proud to announce the Middle School Principal and Assistant Principal of the year awards for the 2009-2010 school year. The KAMSA Principal of the year is **Jerry Meier** of Washburn Rural Middle School, Auburn-Washburn, Topeka, USD 437. **Deb Regier**, Andover Central Middle School, Andover, USD 385, was selected as the KAMSA Assistant Middle School Principal for the 2009-2010 school year. Jerry Meier and Deb Regier will receive their awards at the annual KAMSA spring conference which will be held in Topeka on Monday, May 3, 2010.

KAMSA would also like to recognize five Exemplary principals this school year. They are: **Victoria Adame**, Santa Fe Middle School, USD 373, Newton; **Joe Handlos**, Fort Riley Middle School, Geary County Schools, USD 475; **Tim Hallacy**, Shawnee Heights Middle School, Topeka, USD 450; **Deborah Pfortmiller**, Hocker Grove Middle School, Shawnee

Mission, USD 512; and **Dr. Bill Weber**, Chisholm Trail Junior High School, Olathe, USD 233. These five principals will also be recognized and receive awards at the KAMSA spring conference in May.

The following persons were also nominated for the KAMSA Principal of the Year award and will receive certificates at the May conference. They are: **Steve Fleer**, Spring Hill Middle School, USD 230; **Lisa Gehring**, Damar Junior High School, USD 269; **Lachelle Sigg**, Pioneer Ridge Middle School, Gardner-Edgerton, USD 231; **Bob Horton**, Seaman Middle School, Topeka, USD 345; **Craig Gantenbein**, Bennington Grade School, USD 240, and **Rick Smith**, West Franklin Middle School, Pomona, USD 287.

KAMSA would like to commend all of these administrators for the outstanding effort that they give to their schools and communities.

Congratulations for a job well done.

Avoid Job *Burnout*

Don't forget to check out KAMSA's website:

www.kamsaks.org

As a school principal, you're at risk of coming down with the career blahs if you're not careful. To prevent burnout, take some time each day to figure out what you can do to reenergize your career. Here are some ways--large and small--to give yourself a shot in the arm:

- Take a course that would be fun and helpful to your career.
- Teach a course in your area of expertise.
- Take a half-day class to update computer skills.
- Write a series of 750- to 1000-word articles to publish in company publications, professional journals, local newspapers, or business magazines.
- Take a series of career-focused three-day weekends.
- Take on more challenges. Replace less interesting duties with more interesting tasks.
- Serve as a mentor for young up-and-comers in your field.
- Ask someone you admire--not necessarily in your district--to be a mentor.
- Take advantage of training or management development courses your school district offers.
- Review past performance appraisals with supervisors or colleagues to identify current development areas.
- Invite a successful, interesting person to lunch. Plan at least two lunches monthly.

Submitted by Mike Maurer, Principal, Haysville Middle School

The Importance of Student Involvement

Osage City Middle School's scores have increased and office referrals have decreased over the last 4 years. The increase in scores and the decrease of office referrals are largely credited to student involvement. OCMS has something for everyone!

Students can participate in volleyball, cross country, football, basketball, and track for athletics, that is not uncommon for many schools. We also offer quiz bowl, mental math contest, spelling bee, advanced technology class, introduction to industrial arts, art, band, choir, and Spanish. Again, these opportunities are also included in many other schools. I think the two organizations that set OCMS aside from other schools is Builder's Club and OCMS Student Council.

Builder's Club is a youth club sponsored by the local Kiwanis International Club. The Builder's Club focuses on service projects in school as well as in the community. Students learn the benefits of working together for a common goal. They also learn how much a little service by a lot of people stacks up to make a huge difference to people in need. The only reward they receive many times is the "thank you" at the end of a project. Kids eat up and thrive with the positive attention they receive from the people they are serving. When students spend time serving, they are less likely to do the negative things that tend to cause problems for themselves. The atmosphere at OCMS is one that promotes positive attention towards each other.

OCMS Student Council is student lead and driven. We send our student leaders to the Kansas Youth Leadership Academy, which is provided by the Center for Civic Leadership at Fort Hays State University. They also attend the monthly Greenbush Student Leadership Academy. Both functions teach students valuable lessons on leadership and how to transmit those skills to fellow classmates. When students feel in control, when they feel that people listen, when they feel that adults value their thoughts, they perform at much higher levels. OCMS has about 155 students and they raise about \$8,500 each year to support their own ideas. Students take a vested interest in what happens in the lives of each other at this school. Students are caring about students, students are caring about teachers, and students are caring about their community. The student council sponsor has an acronym "YOGOWYPI"; You Only Get Ot What You Put In. All students know what this means and they believe in it.

Sure we spend time preparing for the state assessments in January and February with test taking skills and reviewing test items. But our most important testing success is contributed to the environment that is created at OCMS. The teachers at OCMS all buy into the importance of creating an environment that is conducive to success. Without the caring staff, without their skills, without their vision, this building would be not much different than most.

Submitted by: Tony Heward, Osage City Middle School Principal

KAMSA Board of Directors 2009-2010

George Leary, President
Principal, Chisholm Middle School, Newton

Bruce Krase, President-Elect
Principal, Remington Middle School

Jill Dickerson, Vice President
Tonganoxie Middle School

John Sanborn, Executive Director
Manhattan
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District 1
Robb Ross
Principal, Colby Middle School

Robert Sattler
Principal, Oakley Middle School

District 2
Jason Johnson
Principal, Meade Elementary School

Michael Hall
Principal, Copeland Junior High School

District 3
Tavis Desormiers
Principal, Trego Grade School - Wakeeney

Greg Koelsch
Principal, Smith Center Jr./Sr. High School

District 4
Mike McDermeit
Principal, Pratt Liberty Middle School

David Reiser
Principal, Great Bend Middle School

District 5
Ron Wilson
Principal, Abilene Middle School

Mary Wright
Principal, Junction City Middle School

District 6
Vance Unrau
Principal, Moundridge Middle School

Kevin Logan
Principal, Lyons Middle School

District 7
Ildo Martins
Principal, Haysville West Middle School

Mark Whitener
Principal, Arkansas City Middle School

District 8
Steve Fleer
Principal, Spring Hill Middle School

Jerry Meier
Principal, Washburn Rural Middle School

District 9
Matt Meek
Principal, Paola Middle School

Tony Heward
Principal, Osage City Middle School

District 10
Randy Heatherly
Principal, Girard Middle School

Brad Miner
Principal, Royster Middle School, Chanute

Doug Baber, Past President
Principal, Andover Central Middle School

Mike Maurer, Past President
Principal, Haysville Middle School

James Krone, Past President
Principal, Atchison Middle School

Dave Novack, Past President
Superintendent, Ingalls USD 477

Karla Denny, KSDE Liaison

Cheryl Semmel, USA Liaison

Ray Tucker, KLFA & University Liaison

THE FOUNDING OF KAMSA

It was the 6th of June,
by the dark of the moon,
in a Kenworth haulin' hogs.

A cab-over Pete,
with a reefer on
and a Jimmy pullin logs.

We had us a
great big Convoy,
moving through the night.

We had us a great big
convoy.
Boy, it was a beautiful
sight.

Well, it was actually more like this:

It was the 3rd of June.
In the bright, hot sun,
103 degrees.

In an orange Datsun pickup,
with no AC.
Only the occasional breeze.

A man on a mission,
and a band of six.
Would make a key decision

They would meet in Salina.
Nowhere else would be "fine-
ah".

The leader was "Hall"
The task was tall.

This band of brothers,
would not piddle.

They had to form a group for
Administrators in the middle.

For none of the others cared.
About the unique concerns,
that we all shared.

The first crew was great.
There really wasn't much
debate.

We were all of one accord.
To get all of the middle guys
and gals on board.

The bar was set at a great
height.
We knew we would have to
fight.

To get a seat at the table.
And get all of the middle
guys in the stable.

At KUSA, we stated our
case.
The breakout room, a
packed place.

The first Board, stood its
ground.
A better bunch, could not
have been found.

That Spring.
The regional directors,
did their thing.

From Six to Seventy Five.
Kamsa Started to thrive.

Now, numbered above 150.
Oh, how nifty.

To think of my dream.
has gained so much steam.

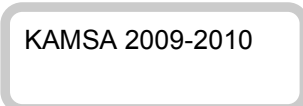
Now, I'm back here in -09
It is just so fine.

KAMSA is alive and well.
It's a great story to tell.

In our constitution,
we have many planks.
And, now, to all of our past
and current members.....
.my eternal thanks.

**Submitted by Michael Hall,
Principal, Copeland Junior
High School**

**Michael Hall was one of the
original members of
KAMSA**



**KAMSA
EXECUTIVE
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The Benefits of Being a Seasoned Administrator

Nineteen years ago I was a brand new administrator full of bright ideas, no gray hair, no dark circles under my eyes and unlimited energy for any project. I now have lots gray, can predict the weather by my joints, and know when it's time to go home for the day. Lots of things have changed in those years and not all of them are bad.

First of all there is the assumption that you know what you are doing. People will ask you for solutions because they know with all of your experience you will be able to come up with a perfect solution. The truth is you may not have a clue but you have asked others for help so many times that you do know who to ask. The networking help from other principals, such as KAMSA , allows you to get advice so you can share it with others and appear that you know what you are doing. Most veterans will tell you they've had very few original ideas and it's appropriate to steal ideas from others.

Physically you may have slowed down a couple of steps and don't hear as well but that is not all bad. Knowing where to be and when is a great advantage over trying to be everywhere all of the time. Kids begin to believe that you have super powers and are ever present when they decide to act up. Little do they know that you have been catching kids in the same spot year after year. The ability to hear clearly and distinctly seems to fade in direct proportion to the number of crowded gyms and halls that you have endured. The advantage is that now I have to really concentrate on what people are telling me and can decide if this is really something important or if I can merely smile and nod my head feigning attentiveness.

Last is the ability to work with students, parents, and teachers. Problem students become less of an irritation and more of a challenge because you have seen "the kid who is never going to make it" become a great student, athlete, parent, and community member. The importance of what you do really strikes home when former students go out of their way to introduce you to their spouse and children or take time to stop by and say hello. Parents become easier to deal with because they are saying and doing the same things they did when you had them as students. All and all getting older is not all bad and hopefully I can write another article in 10 years when I really know what's going on.

Submitted by Robb Ross, Colby Middle School Principal

Friday Night Isn't Just For Football

All of us work hard to encourage students to do their best in class and to apply the information learned in the classroom to their everyday life. For the motivated student who pays attention and is engaged in class, success is easily accomplished. But what do we do with unmotivated students who are at-risk of failing and falling further behind their peers?

Two years ago Paola Middle School implemented a Friday Night School (FNS) program. FNS is required for any student who is currently failing a class at Paola Middle School. It is held the last five weeks of each quarter from 3:05-5:05 pm. Students, who are required to attend, are notified each Wednesday that they are currently failing and need to make arrangements to attend FNS. If a student raises their grade up before FNS they are no longer required to attend. Students who attend FNS may make up missing work that has turned to a zero for half credit. This policy is not negotiable, and the only way for students to get "caught up" for incomplete work is to attend FNS, and turn the work in during this time. Although this is a punitive program, students are given a second chance to bring their grade up. Our philosophy is: if it is important enough to assign as homework, it is important enough to complete, even for half credit. This helps to send the message that homework is not "optional."

The positives to this program are being felt in only a short time. We now have parents and students asking if they can attend FNS because they forgot to turn an assignment in and it turned to a zero. These students are allowed to attend, and because of their attendance they too, get half credit and keep out of danger of failing a class.

Friday Night School is not a new intervention in schools and many of you probably have a similar program. I hope you have as much success with your intervention programs as we have with FNS. If we can help answer any questions that you may have, please contact Paola Middle School at 913-294-8030. We would love to visit with you and discuss our successes.

Submitted by: Matt Meek, Principal, Paola Middle School