

Assistant Superintendent Report

June 10, 2025

High Ability Program

Our high ability program has undergone some changes these past few years. We have refined our identification process to more closely align with best practices outlined by the Indiana Association for the Gifted. This ensures that the students we are identifying are truly gifted and talented, which means we are providing the most appropriate education to all of our students.

As part of our broad-based planning committee, we evaluate our program annually by the following categories: multifaceted identification, differentiated curriculum and instruction, guidance and counseling, professional development, broad-based planning committee, and program evaluation. With our multifaceted identified aligned with best practices, we have shifted our attention to differentiated curriculum and instruction.

This summer, we are using some of our high ability program grant funds to provide some of our teachers time to create a more aligned and differentiated curriculum for our high ability students. We want to ensure that high ability students (and high achieving students in general) have learning opportunities that will challenge them appropriately and lead to a more engaging learning experience. As this differentiated curriculum becomes more defined, these resources will be added to each grade level's scope and sequence that staff and families will have access to review and see specifically what both our general and differentiated curriculum have to offer TCSC students.

Safety

We have a few updates in regards to safety across TCSC. Firstly, School Resource Officer Dave Maddox has stepped away from the school safety specialist role. Officer Maddox has been, and will continue to be, an excellent resource for our district. His work updating our safety plan from the top-down has been invaluable. His attention to detail and his support of our building principals has been outstanding.

After numerous conversations with Officer Maddox throughout the year, we both agreed that stepping back into an advisory role and putting a building administrator back into the role of school safety specialist made good sense. This move is not due to anything Office Maddox failed to do. It is a move to give the school administration more accountability for the safety procedures executed throughout the year. The additional paperwork, grant writing, and supervisory role of the position did not quite fit with his role as school resource officer. With that said, THS Assistant Principal Tom Lyday will assume the responsibilities of our school safety specialist. Mr. Lyday has experience in this role and all the necessary certifications. Officer Maddox will continue to work closely with Mr. Lyday during this transition and throughout each school year.

In addition to this change in roles, our district safety team (made up of our assistant principals, Officer Maddox, and myself) participated in a training through the "I Love You Guys" foundation. This training served as a reinforcement of our Standard Response Protocols (SRP) training as well as a walkthrough of the reunification process. The reunification process is conducted when a crisis has occurred on campus that

makes it unsafe or impractical to dismiss students from school grounds with emergency vehicles or hazardous conditions (such as the aftermath of a tornado, earthquake, biohazard, etc.).

TCSC has not conducted a reunification drill in several years, and (thanks to the encouragement of our THS Mayor's Youth Leadership Council) we are reviewing our reunification procedures. We plan to conduct drills both with staff during a professional development day this fall and with students later in the school year. This is a massive undertaking, but one that deserves attention. Reunifications take place during emergency situations, so providing clarity and setting clear expectations is important when maintaining the safe return of our students to their families in an emergency.

Professional Development Opportunities

While the summer months are now upon us, some of our staff are taking full advantage of their downtime to grow professionally through various PD opportunities. Below is a list of some of those along with who attended and the outcomes of the experience for staff and students:

- Summer Math Summit - Diane Mast and Missy Henry (TMS - Math)
 - When students are actively involved, they are more likely to remember information, work well with their classmates, and enhance their critical thinking abilities, which can be applied to real-world scenarios. It is our goal to increase critical thinking abilities across Tipton Middle School students, and hope this PD will give us tools to do just that.
- Gen Con: Trade Day - Logan Tina (THS - Art)
 - Gen Con Trade Day is a program for educators, professors, librarians, health professionals, developmental therapists, and retailers. It is designed to provide professional development with hands-on training, research sharing, B2B, and network opportunities, through a day of seminars, demonstrations, and events.
 - Trade Day is split between several focuses, retailers, educators and librarians, and health professionals. The retailer's focus is on business, marketing, and building community. The educators and librarian focus is on how to gamify your classroom/library, gaming strategies in curriculum, and building community. Health professionals, on how games can be used as therapeutic tools.
- High Ability Bootcamp - Jessica Hendricks (TES - 5th Grade)
 - Training for high ability teachers, this bootcamp provides two full days of "Basic Training" where teachers learn about Indiana requirements, identification and grouping practices, characteristics and social/emotional needs, differentiating curriculum and instruction, critical and creative thinking strategies, and strategies for problem solving.

IUK Resident Teacher Program

Last month, Dr. Glaze and I had the pleasure of interviewing about a dozen resident student candidates from IUK. The purpose of these interviews is to pair a candidate and school district for the resident teacher program. This program is essentially a full year of student teaching experience for the IUK student, except unlike typical student teaching experiences, these students are paid through a joint grant. Resident Teachers spend the first semester primarily observing and supporting the supervising teacher about 3 days each week. During the second semester, the resident teacher takes over the class full time 5-days each week under the guidance of a certified teacher with at least 5 years experience.

In my report last month, I shared that Dr. Glaze and I interviewed and ultimately requested that a former THS graduate, Nick Hughes, be our resident teacher. We are happy to report that our request was granted. Nick will work with Tanner Scott in the middle school during fall semester and then with Phil Morgan in the high school during spring semester. Mr. Scott and Mr. Morgan are both excited to mentor Nick.

In addition to Nick Hughes, IUK also reached out about placing a second resident teacher, Casidy Bartel, with us. Casidy was one of our top choices as well through the interview process last April. Casidy will be placed with one of our Kindergarten teachers, Jenna Smith for the entire school year. This was a late placement by IUK, but Jenna was ecstatic to be offered the opportunity to mentor Casidy. We are fortunate and thrilled to have additional support at both our secondary and elementary levels for next year. Overall, this has been a successful program for us and we are looking forward to maintaining this pipeline of young, talented educators.

Monthly Shout Outs

This month's shout out goes Dan Benefiel, Eric Johnson, and Mark Webster. There are so many people to choose from at the end of the school year, so I wanted to highlight these three gentlemen who work behind the scenes to keep our facilities functioning smoothly. Dan Benefiel has been instrumental in not only addressing staff's maintenance needs inside the building (Dan is a regular recipient of radio calls during the day), but he has also been instrumental with the roofing project. He knows more about our roofs than anyone else and his collaboration with RL Turner and the bidding process has been critical to keeping the project moving along.

Eric Johnson and Mark Webster have been outstanding in keeping our campus grounds beautiful and competition fields lined and dry for ball games. When Dr. Glaze and I drove a UHAUL to and from Columbus, Ohio last month, Eric and Mark were there to help us unload a rather full truck. These gentlemen truly work behind the scenes to take care of all the things that are easily taken for granted. I can't thank them enough for the tireless work they do for us day in and day out.