

School Connections

Fall 2009

Volume 1

Number 1

Superintendent's Message

Dr. Candis R. Donicht



In this issue....

Superintendent's Message	1
The Ducks Love "D"	2
IMAGE...It Is....Well It Isn't Everything	3
Here We Go.....!!!	4
Assessment Update	5
Adequate Yearly Progress	6
Spring 2009 ISAT Charts	7
Jr High Rolls Out New Programming	8
Announcements: Section 504, Child Find, Special Education Records	9

School Connections is now being published electronically by the Moscow School District three times a year to keep parents, faculty, staff and the general public informed of District happenings.

Welcome to the second electronic version of *School Connections* and the 2009-10 school year. Like all public agencies, MSD was required to reduce expenditures for this budget year. A move to "going paperless" is among our goals. That's quite a change when you are in the business of education!

Nevertheless, the school year was launched with 2,340 eager and talented students reporting back to school. Open houses across the District were well attended by enthusiastic parents and guardians. MSD's back-to-school events and traditions fill the District with positive energy beyond belief.

Each year has its distinct challenges and opportunities. This year, H1N1 (swine flu) has caused school officials to work closely with public health professionals. As information is received, it is posted on our Website (see "H1N1" Virus Information). MSD will cooperate with the health department in providing school facilities for vaccinations for students with parental approval when the vaccine becomes available. Vaccinations will be after school hours. In many cases, we anticipate that parents will choose to be present. Vaccinations for those who choose to participate will be free. More information will be coming from MSD and the public health department.

We will also be using our Website this year to post school closures. This is an

experimental year for such postings. Radio and TV media will continue to be our mainstays for communication for reliability purposes. Posting to our Website will require that our staff members have network accessibility at the time of a closure. We're going to give this our best efforts to see what unforeseen problems arise and what solutions we can develop. Look for the new link on our home page in the lower right corner for school closures. For 2009-10, please also remember to double check with our media contacts.

Please also note that our District Calendar is now on our Website. Most activities are posted, however, please also check the Websites of individual schools. One very important event (not on our calendar) will happen on Monday, October 19 at 7 PM in the Moscow High School Auditorium. The Board of Trustees will host a public forum to solicit input on design of the Senior Project, a new high school requirement for the Senior Class of 2013 (this year's ninth graders). You are invited to learn about the Senior Project requirements and offer input and recommendations to the Board and the Committee working on this project.

We look forward to a great year and hope to see you at our events and activities.

The Ducks Love “D”!!

by Laurie Austin, McDonald Elementary Principal

Way back when, in 1984, I was involved with the McDonald School staff and parents in drafting a very important letter to the City of Moscow. This letter



asked the City to begin considering making necessary safety improvements to “D” Street. Happily, in the year 2009, we can report the improvements have been made!!! As this project has come to completion, we are excited to share the many wonderful upgrades that have occurred.

The “D” Street project was funded to the tune of \$700,000. The federal enhancement monies covered the curb, sidewalk, and some of the infrastructure work. The City of Moscow absorbed the additional cost to include an asphalt overlay. This resulted in being close to a 50/50 split in funding between the city and the federal government for the entire project. New curbs, sidewalks, and bike lanes were installed on both sides of the street. All storm drains and water hydrants have been replaced or relocated. Almost 1,500 feet of fiber conduit was laid along with the relocation of all phone lines. In many areas, trees will be

planted in a green area between the street and sidewalk. Now the wider road ensures that buses, cars, pedestrians, and bicycle riders can all safely coexist!

We sincerely thank the parents, students, staff, and community members for the great patience they demonstrated the first few weeks of school. Many days we had only one lane of traffic to get children to and from school. A very special thank you is extended to the numerous McDonald moms who stood at various crosswalks to ensure our children were safe. We’d also like to thank the city engineers, Tyler Palmer, construction workers, and bus drivers who worked closely with us each day.

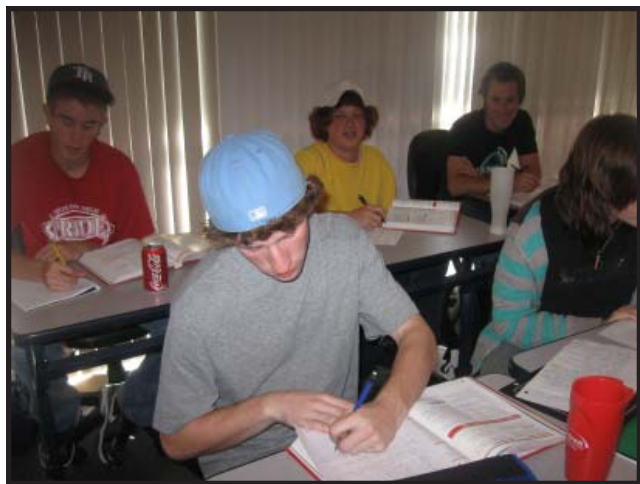
The City of Moscow is certainly blessed to have a project of this magnitude come to fruition. It is reassuring to all of us knowing that our children are now much safer as they navigate the new and improved “D” Street!



IMAGE ... It is ... well it isn't Everything

by Edward C. Norman, Paradise Creek Regional High School Principal

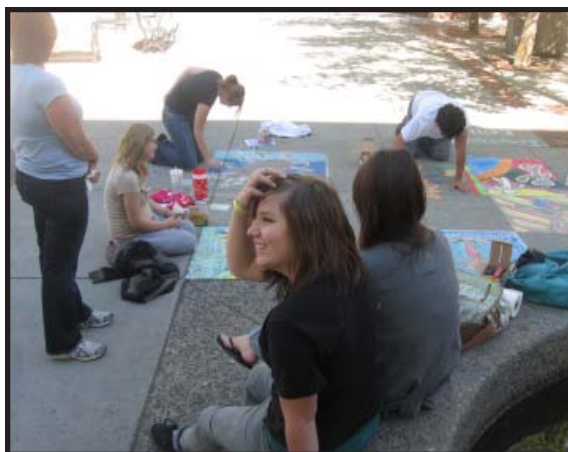
Paradise Creek Regional High School is an alternative means of education for many non-traditional students, but it doesn't mean that the students here care any less about getting a diploma. Our students



are often dealing with extraordinary life circumstances which makes an alternative learning environment a better fit. Our classes are longer – 113 minutes – and we offer three classes per quarter, six per semester. Students appreciate the opportunity to earn credits more quickly than a traditional high school.

The goal of PCR High School this year is to carry on as usual, learn to the BEST of the students' abilities, and to show the community that the image of the school and the students is one which is not very accurate.

This year we welcomed a new secretary/instructional aide, Lisa Smallwood. She brings more than 20 years of math/science tutoring and instruction to our school. Other staff members include Jenni Hightower, counselor; Cyndi Faircloth, full-time teacher (with seven areas of certification!); and Glenn Adams, special education/Response To Intervention coordinator. We are also glad to welcome back, as adjunct speech teacher, Mike Hightower, who served as lead teacher up until 2008.



At PCR this quarter we have an enrollment of 28 students. Eleven of these students are enrolled as full-time students and 17 as part-time students.

Our art class has been busy working toward their final "exam," an art show. The show will be November 3-24 at Wild@Art in the Eastside Marketplace. The class, lead by Cyndi Faircloth, has already had one public art "installation" this year. Students studied Keith Haring and shared chalk art inspired by his work in Friendship Square. Maybe you saw it?



History students are learning about the period from the Middle Ages in Europe to the Renaissance. One focus has especially been the contrast between Europe and China/Asia during this period. For example, a guest speaker, "Ghazi" Ghazanfar, shared history about Islam and its accomplishments. Students also learned about the culture and religion in Pakistan.

English students are reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* and writing about justice and fairness. Speech students are shaking things up by memorizing and performing scenes from *Macbeth*, in addition to more traditional speech lessons.

PCR is a small community of people. Students and staff say it feels like a "family." We invite you to come visit, take a tour of our building, and check out the non-traditional learning process. Our Open House is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10 from 5:30-7PM.

It is a great place to be involved. Please come and visit us, soon!!

Here We Go.....!!!

by Edward C. Norman, Russell Elementary Principal



As the 2009-2010 school year gets under way, the students and staff of Russell Elementary are very excited to start another year of learning. We are building relationships, learning names, and sharing ideas to help Russell Elementary become even more of a fantastic place to learn.

Last spring and into summer, Russell had five teachers finish Master's Degree programs. The

teachers and their degree programs are as follows:

- Jill Diamond - Curriculum and Instruction
- Melissa Mueller - Curriculum and Instruction
- Eric Hudelson - Educational Leadership
- Cindy Samson - Curriculum and Instruction
- Michelle Charles - Educational Leadership

As the Principal of Russell, I am extremely proud that the teachers are furthering their education and showing their students and community that learning is important.

The year has started well with students getting used to being back in hard chairs, being quiet in the halls and focusing on what is before them in all their classes.

As the students have settled into the everyday happenings, we have had a few beneficial activities for them. One activity was an Anti-Bullying Assembly where the speaker, Cary Trivanovich, brought to light the many ways that people are made to

feel uncomfortable. Cary gave specific steps for anyone to follow to protect oneself against harassing behavior. Another of the activities was the Ice Cream Social where parents, students, and the community were invited to come to the cafeteria on the evening of September 24 to enjoy an ice cream cone and socialize with the staff.

An upcoming event is the Student Council elections.

The purpose of the Russell Student Council is to provide students the opportunity to make decisions affecting their school lives, teach leadership, learn proper procedures for conducting meetings, and help develop school pride, thereby improving the school climate. During the week of October 5-9 our sixth grade students, their teachers (principal too), and parent volunteers will be participating in the Science Camp held at the McCall Outdoor Science School (M.O.S.S) in McCall, Idaho. The M.O.S.S. program is operated by the University of Idaho in conjunction with the Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute (PCEI).



I am looking forward to this new year. Please stop by and visit with me and the Russell staff.

Make yours a GREAT day!!!



Ed Norman, Principal

Assessment Update: 2009-2010

by Cindy Bechinski, Ph.D., Curriculum Director

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year!

The Idaho State Board of Education and the State Department have made some changes to the statewide assessment system for this year. Here is an overview:

- The Spring Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) will be administered to grades 3-10. For the past several years, ninth grade has not been tested, but freshmen will be included from this spring forward.
- The state has recently informed districts that students in grade 10 will be able to take the Fall ISAT this year only. Unlike last year, the tenth grade Fall ISAT will NOT be able to count for graduation. Only the Spring ISAT will count for graduation.
- If a student passes one or more of the tests in

Reading, Math, or Language Usage, the student will not need to retest in the spring or in later years.

- The Fall ISAT will continue to be administered to eleventh and twelfth grade students who need to retest.
- Eleventh and twelfth grade students who have not yet passed one or more sections of the ISAT will be able to take the test in the fall and spring.
- Beginning with the class of 2013, the tenth grade Science ISAT will count for graduation. The Science ISAT is only administered in grades 5, 7, and 10.
- If you are home-schooling your child, and would like to have the ISAT administered at Moscow School District, please contact Angie Packard at 892-1124 for schedules and fees.

Important Test Dates

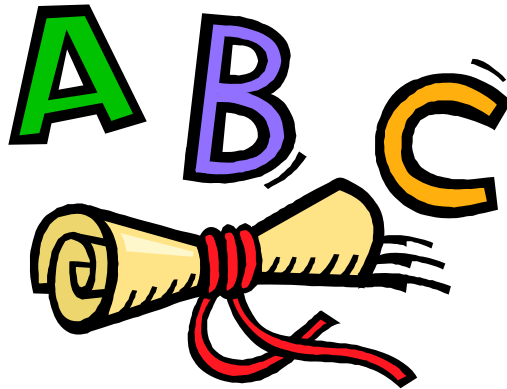
- ISAT fall testing window: September 14 - October 16 (only for tenth graders and retesting eleventh and twelfth graders)
- ISAT spring testing window: April 12 to May 7
- Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI): grades K-3 testing windows: September 2009, January 2010, and April 14 to May 14, 2010
- Direct Writing Assessment (DWA): grades 5, 7, 9 test date: December 1
- Direct Math Assessment (DMA): grades 4, 6, 8 test date: December 2

Average ACT Scores

Graduation Year	English			Math			Reading			Science			Composite		
	MHS	State	Nat'l	MHS	State	Nat'l	MHS	State	Nat'l	MHS	State	Nat'l	MHS	State	Nat'l
2009	23.0	20.9	20.6	23.5	21.3	21.0	24.9	22.3	21.4	23.3	21.4	20.9	23.8	21.6	21.1

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Update for No Child Left Behind

Results for the 2008-2009 School Year



***Every School in the Moscow School District
Reached Adequate Yearly Progress Targets!***

As a District, we are so proud to announce the following performance levels:

Reading: **94%** of our students in grades 3-8 and 10 are proficient or advanced! (State= 88%)

Math: **87%** of our students in grades 3-8 and 10 are proficient or advanced! (State= 82%)

Graduation Rate: **93%** (State data unavailable)

There are 41 targets to reach and Moscow School District reached 40 of these.*

Moscow School District met targets for economically disadvantaged students and all other student subgroups in both reading and math, except in the category of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities did reach the target in reading, but not in math.

*In some categories, there were not enough students for a proficiency level to be reported.

You may review our District and school report cards at www.sde.idaho.gov/reportcard

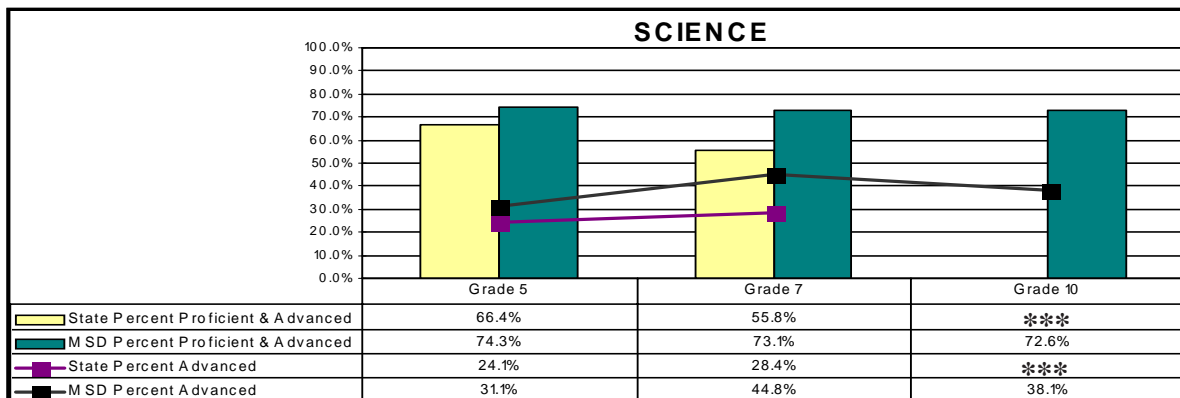
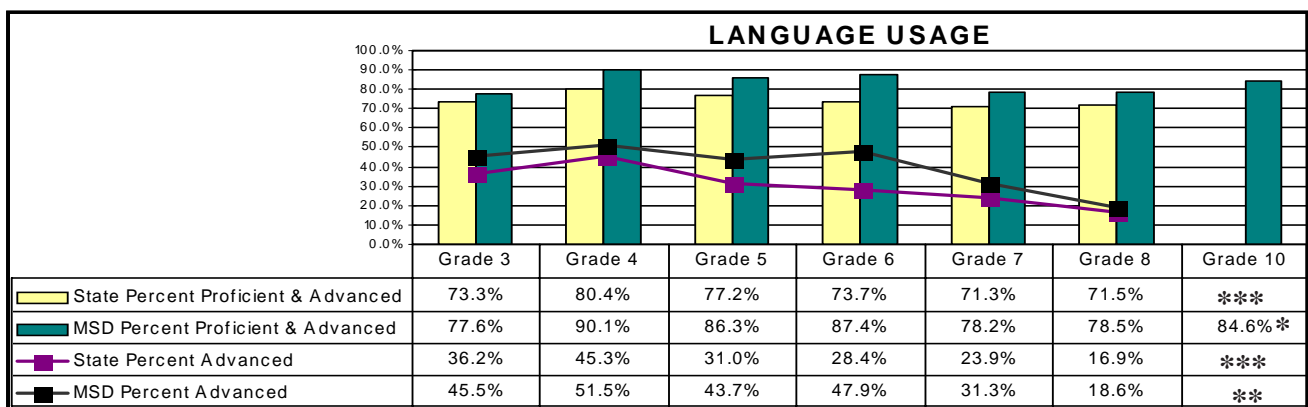
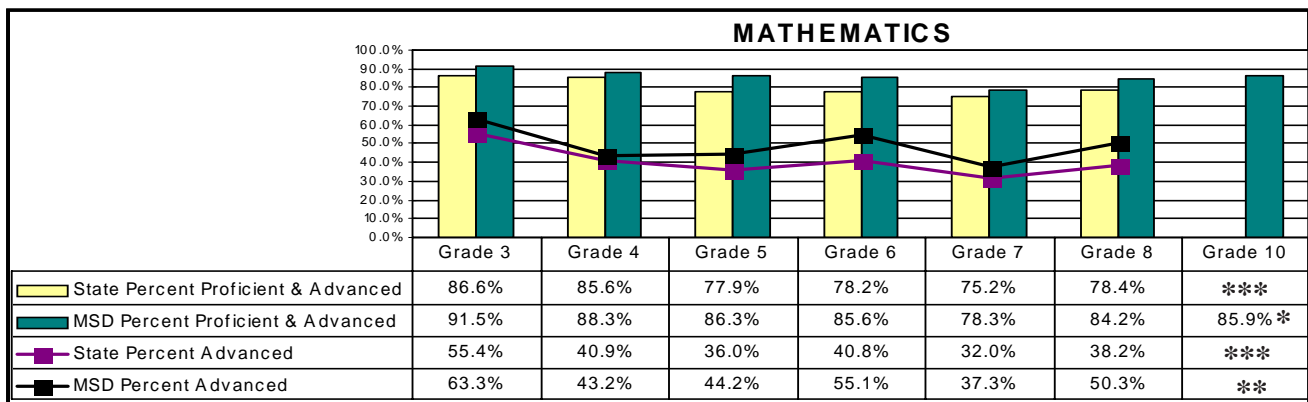
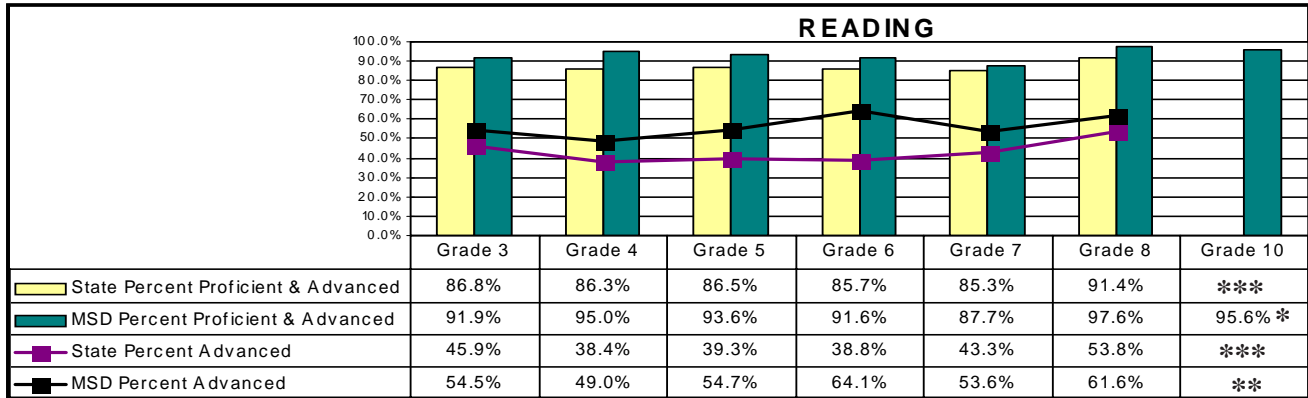
Moscow School District

Spring ISAT 2009: Percent Proficient and Advanced - Grades 3-8 & 10

* Tentative Data

** District data not yet available

***State data not yet available



Junior High Rolls Out New Programming

by Dale Kleinert, Junior High Principal

Moscow Junior High School is off and running with a completely new method of instructional delivery. For



the past two years, a committee of teachers, parents, and administrators have researched, visited other schools, and planned for the kickoff of our new instructional model.

The method of delivery that we've left behind was in place for at least thirty-six years and was in need of a "tune-up."

Our new model provides classes that meet for longer periods of time, and it also gives time once weekly for students to meet with teachers for enrichment or supplemental instruction.

We left a model that provided 49 minute classes five times per week for each subject area. The new model provides 72 minutes three times per week and 50 minutes twice per week. This time schedule allows extra time to explore curricula in greater depth, it provides time for extended labs, and it gives the opportunity for other special events and activities that need more time than 49 minutes.



In the new model, students also have the additional opportunity to meet once weekly with an adult advocate for 70 minutes within in the school day to get help with organizational skills and have a little extra time to catch up or get ahead. During this time, students will also have the opportunity to access other teachers for enrichment and supplemental instruction. We have titled this opportunity "Access" to help students remember that they can now use this time to access teachers and other support staff. Students who have been absent from school can make up work, have additional opportunities to work with other students on group projects, or use their time to research individual projects.



- A** accountability to help you achieve
- C** care about yourself
- C** constructive time is time well-spent
- E** excel at everything you do
- S** study and you will excel
- S** self-discipline is what it takes

Middle level students are beginning their independent years and we believe the programming that is now in place will not only help students be more successful in school, but also in their personal lives.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - Informational Notice

Section 504 is an Act which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

- *Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);*
- *Has a record of such impairment;*
- *Is regarded as having such an impairment.*

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Moscow School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also specifies rights related to educational records. The Act gives the parent or guardian the right to:

- *Inspect and review his/her school age child's educational records;*
- *Make copies of these records;*
- *Receive a list of all individuals having access to those records;*
- *Ask for an explanation of any item in the records;*
- *Ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights;*
- *A hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.*

Please feel free to contact Kevin McDonough, Section 504 Compliance Coordinator, 208-882-1120 if there are questions.

Child Find Announcement

The Moscow School District, in cooperation with parents and nonpublic school agencies, engages in Child Find services throughout the school year. Child Find activities are conducted, (1) to create public awareness of special education programs, (2) to advise the public of the rights of students and (3) to alert community residents of the need for identifying and serving children with disabilities from the age of 3 through the semester in which they turn 21.

These children may have difficulty walking, talking, hearing, or learning or may display behaviors that appear different from other children their age.

If you know of a child who is 3 through 21 years of age who may have individual needs that result from disabilities or developmental delays and who is not enrolled in a school program or you are part of a community agency or civic group that would like more information about educating children with disabilities, please Kevin McDonough, Director of Special Services for the Moscow School District, at 208-882-1120.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Moscow School District #281 hereby notifies students and/or parents of students who attended Moscow School District prior to 2004 that the special education records that have been kept on file are no longer needed to provide educational services. Therefore, in compliance with the local school board approved Special Education Policy Manual, these records may be destroyed after December 15, 2009. Destruction of these records is the best protection against improper and unauthorized disclosure.

Please be aware that these records may be needed in the future for social security benefits or other purposes. If you desire to review your file or those of your dependent child/children or keep the file for your own records, please direct your request to the office of Special Services located at the administration office (650 North Cleveland, Moscow ID 83843) before December 15, 2009. After that time these records may be destroyed.