

RISE and Shine

WORTH CAMPUS

Belief STATEMENT

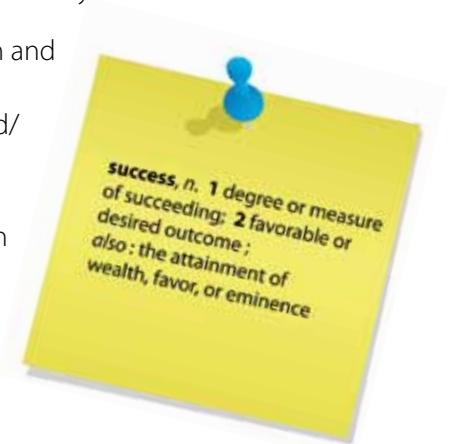
The Regional Institute for Scholastic Excellence, R.I.S.E. is striving to change the perception of a typical alternative school. We provide students who have not been successful in the regular school setting the opportunity to continue their education. There are an array of services, which include comprehensive individual planning and goal setting, academic instruction, vocational services, life and social skill development, individual and family support services and character development. The number one priority at R.I.S.E. is providing our students with a safe environment where we can provide them with the tools necessary to become more successful in school and in life.

The R.I.S.E. Staff Believes...

- Students learn best in a safe, structured and supportive environment.
- Each student can be a successful learner.
- Each student has inherent worth and deserves respect.
- Each student is a unique individual and comes to us with unique talents, needs, and interests.
- Change provides the opportunity to grow as individuals.
- Students, staff, parents and the entire community share the responsibility for quality education.
- Education is worth the investment of time, talent, effort and resources.
- All students are capable of setting and achieving realistic goals.
- All students can successfully complete the R.I.S.E. program.

Program Objectives:

- To help students transition back to the regular school environment, acquire a high school diploma, or transition to further education, training, or employment.
- To decrease drug use, violent acts and/or behaviors associated with suspension and expulsion, to decrease student suspensions and/or expulsions.
- To equip students with skills for successful group interaction, communication, problem solving, conflict resolution, decision making, increase of self-worth, and acceptance of responsibility.
- To acquire the education and skills necessary to return to their home school and/or secure good jobs and become productive members of society in an increasingly competitive economic environment.



"Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life but by the obstacles he has overcome." Booker T. Washington

Crisis Response DRILL

On Friday October 30 the R.I.S.E staff participated in a crisis preparation drill designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the R.I.S.E. emergency plan. The goal of the day's activities was to better prepare staff members so that they can provide guidance to their students in any situation. R.I.S.E. is an Illinois Regional Safe school that provides our students and staff with a secure environment where learning can flourish and is the number one priority.

Over the past two years Principal Todd Whitaker has participated in a Prepared Response program through Bloom Township School District 206 and a grant they received from F.E.M.A. (Federal Emergency Management Agency). The program was designed to help school districts prepare and implement crisis management plans to ensure that students and staff are informed and ready in the case that an emergency happens during the school day.

Staff from both the Worth and Chicago Heights campuses along with invitees from around the area took part in an exercise that simulated an armed intruder on campus. The staff from both schools were shown a presentation and short film which documented what happens in the beginning moments of a crisis. Following the presentation the teachers and instructional assistants from both campuses were split into classrooms and the crisis scenario began. The participants were not told exactly which emergency scenario would be exercised. Once the drill began teachers were informed that they should take control of the situation as if it were a regular school day.

As the exercise progressed a situation involving a masked intruder unfolded. The situation began and a masked gun man was spotted outside of the building trying to gain entry. The intruder attempted to gain entry via the windows but was unsuccessful. Shots were fired from a starter's pistol to show

the staff exactly what gun fire would sound like if an emergency situation took place in a school. With the intruder inside the building the teachers moved into a full lockdown of the school. The situation came to a conclusion with the police and school administration giving the all clear for teachers to lift the lockdown of the classrooms.

Following the drill, the staff and Worth Police representatives offered feedback as to the effectiveness of the drill and the impact it had on them. Many of the teachers from both the Chicago Heights and Worth campuses were very moved with how vivid and real the drill felt. The Worth police department offered their insight on how the crisis plan could be changed to further provide the safest environment possible for both staff and students. This crisis drill is the first of many in our attempt to provide a school where students can feel safe from many of the distractions of our ever changing society.

Reptile HABITAT



Mr. Podgorski and his class have started another fantastic class project and have taken on the task of creating their own wetlands habitat. The goal of the project is to give students hands on experience and allow them the opportunity to observe and learn about how this type of ecosystem develops. The students have taken on the responsibility of taking care of these animals. Through his vast experience with reptiles, Mr. Podgorski's brother, Brandon Podgorski brought the students several different species of reptiles: a snapping turtle, a map turtle, an albino clawed frog, a mystery snail, a house gecko, green anoles, and a ram snails, crawfish, and feed to be put into a 55 gallon tank. The students took a Reptile 101 course and learned exactly what was needed to make the project a success.

The students learning objective is to research the eating habits, structures needed, adaptability of animals, and cohabitation of each species. Even though, most students found that the snapping turtle should not be with others, they decided "Darwinism" and his theory of natural selection were to be the judge. Each class member was given a specific responsibility whether it was watering, feeding, removal, or monitoring activity. Mr. Podgorski has found students are very motivated in attending school because they have a responsibility or are interested in this science subject of a wetland terrarium. In addition to the wetland project the class has just finished studying the rainforest. The class is also cultivating a bromeliad pineapple in school and is planning on making a desert terrarium. A Bromeliad Plant is a flowering plant which makes its home in a very warm and tropical climate. Other family members include Spanish moss and ground plants including pineapple. These plants are able to keep in water in a so called tank via the overlapping leaves.

2009-2010 *Calendar*

Dec. 21	Winter Recess Begins
Jan. 1	Winter Recess Ends
Jan. 4	Classes Resume
Jan. 8	End of 2nd Quarter
Jan. 15	Half-Day Parent/Teacher Conference
Jan. 18	M.L. King Birthday (School Closed)
Feb. 11	Institute Day
Feb. 12	Lincoln's Birthday (School Closed)
March 1	Casimir Pulaski Day (School Closed)
March 19	Institute Day End of 3rd Quarter
March 26	Half-Day Parent/Teacher Conference
April 2	Spring Recess Begins
April 9	Spring Recess Ends
April 12	Classes Resume
May 28	FINAL DAY OF ATTENDANCE End of 4th Quarter
May 31	Memorial Day (School Closed)

R.I.S.E. STUDENTS GET A GLIMPSE OF THE *Real World*

During the 2009-2010 school year the Regional Institute for Scholastic Excellence will get a look into the future with help from the from some prominent members of the business community. The goal of this program is to provide students with a clearer picture of what it takes to become successful in a highly competitive job market. The program has evolved over the past several years from students researching and touring local colleges and universities to help guide them in their post high school plans to now bringing in speakers each month to give the students first hand knowledge of how to be successful in the real world.



The guest speaker series is scheduled to begin with a presentation from Ms. Rochelle Kemp owner of Flavor restaurant in Flossmoor. Flavor provides breakfast, lunch and dinner patrons with one of the most unique dining experiences in the south

suburbs. Ms. Kemp who has owned and operated Flavor for the past seven years will speak to the students about what it takes to achieve a career in the culinary arts and how she has been able to run a successful business in such a tough market.



The second speaker in this series will be Senator Edward Maloney (D) of the Illinois General Assembly. Senator Maloney presides over the 18th district which includes the R.I.S.E. Worth Campus. Senator Maloney who once served as Principal of Brother Rice High School in Chicago received his Bachelors Degree in Political Science from Lewis University and a Masters

Degree in Education from Chicago State University. Senator Maloney will speak to the students about the importance of education and the dedication and drive it takes to run and be elected to public office.

Over the next several months Ms. Kemp, Senator Maloney as well as speakers from several different fields will take part in question and answer sessions giving our students the opportunity to ask questions and hear first hand accounts of what it takes to be successful in corporate America. These presentations are meant to provide our students with the knowledge to prepare and inspire them to reach for the stars and achieve anything that they put their minds to.

THERE'S NO "I" IN TEAM

As the first quarter comes to a close the R.I.S.E. Middle School students are on their way to another successful year. Not only are the students working hard in the classroom, but they are also becoming a team unit in and out of the classroom. Although there are many hurdles for our students yet to accomplish, they are slowly overcoming fears of trust and beginning to work with, rely on, and protect others in their class.

This communication and togetherness does not happen overnight, but takes countless hours of work and patience on the part of the teacher and students. There are still bad days, with loud voices, short tempers and sometimes tears, but if the students are not becoming fast friends, they are learning to admit their mistakes, get along with others, talk about issues and even apologize when wrong. It is always interesting to watch students who have changed their agendas, interact with students who have not yet made changes in their behavior and new students, who are always joining our class. They are really astonished by the misbehaviors of others, forgetting that they once behaved in the same fashion. Without a doubt, social skill lessons and other lessons incorporating social skills is our most valuable tool.

Our academic standards, expectations and achievements are improving every year. Our math class is carefully divided by ability with students getting individual attention when necessary. Many of our students struggle with math, and we make every effort to meet the student's needs.

Writing is the core of the Language Arts curriculum. We have incorporated the grammar needs of the students with the different genres of writing and also use peer evaluation for constructive criticism and improvement. Weekly vocabulary lessons are the student's responsibility. Each week we have a review of the spelling and definitions, once the packets are turned in, to improve the odds of success on their test each Friday. The tests are not easy, but most of the students do well.

Creating interdisciplinary lesson plans by aligning Math with Language Arts and Social Studies enables students to see how curriculum overlaps and the usefulness of learning Math and Language Arts. Also, incorporating interdisciplinary lessons allows the students access to more complicated projects using higher level thinking skills, thus raising our expectations for achievement.

The Middle School teachers and students of R.I.S.E. plan to continue to improve social skill and academic lessons in order to improve the success of our students.

Nancy Salzer



Special Thanks

to Mrs. Salzer and Mr. Podgorski for their contributions



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WORTH CAMPUS

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The mission of the Regional Institute for Scholastic Excellence (R.I.S.E.), as a vehicle of the Safe Schools, is to facilitate a meaningful, worthwhile, and structured education by preparing all students for continued success in school and society. Serving the 66 public school districts in South Cook County, South Cook ISC 4 operates the Safe Schools Program pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/13A of the Illinois School Code.