

## **Parent Communications Notes**

### **January 9, 2014**

The Parent Communications group met on Thursday, January 9, 2014. The high school college and career academies were one of the topics for the meeting. Dr. Worthington commented that there are 340 students enrolled this year. The new academies were modeled after the STEM Academy at Kenwood High School. The academies offer students an opportunity to be part of a smaller learning community within the existing school. Regular curriculum becomes integrated in the academy subject areas. The new academies are: Academy of Business and Finance at Clarksville High; Academy of Plant and Animal Systems at Montgomery Central High; Academy of Computer and Game Programming Technology at Northeast High; Academy of Health Science at Northwest High; Academy of Media Arts and Technology at Rossvie High; and Academy of Criminal Justice and Homeland Security at West Creek High. The STEM Academy at Kenwood High School opened in 2010.

Dr. Worthington explained the selection of the areas of study for the academies was determined by student interest inventories and a study of the existing and future job markets for the areas of study. The application and communication processes for the academies were explained. The academies were open for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students this year. Parent informational meetings and distribution of applications for this year's 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking place in February. The STEM Academy has academic requirements in addition to student interest.

Students from each of the academies were present to talk about why they chose an academy and to share their experiences. The students also explained ways their specific subject areas are integrated into regular classwork. Dr. Worthington said the academies provide opportunities to partner with local businesses which provide students with networking opportunities, relevance, and deeper knowledge into the specific academic areas.

CMCSS Chief Technology Officer David Holman spoke about the challenges to the district to be ready for the online PARCC assessment. He stated that CMCSS already has the wireless network. The online assessment will require a computer for every student in the largest grade level at each school.

Results of the annual parent survey were shared. The question of the month for January, "Are schools adequately staffed to meet the system's vision and mission? If not, what are your concerns?" was discussed in small groups and feedback was submitted at the end of the meeting.