

**West Elementary BOE Report from Principal Amy Flinn and West Items for the Good
January 8, 2025**

Enrollment:

Third Grade: 125 (No change)

Fourth Grade – 126 One new student in January

Fifth Grade – 101 – One new student in January

Total - 352

West Elementary BOE Report from Mrs. Flinn:

January 3 Professional Development:

The West Elementary Team had a highly productive day of professional development on **Friday, January 3**. We started with a K-5 ELA Committee meeting and completed the following:

- We are recommending to the DLT that we adopt DLI (Daily Language Instruction) at the 3-5 level to replace the grammar and spelling component in CKLA. We hope to get materials ordered quickly upon approval so that we can begin DLI instruction SECOND SEMESTER. We will need to talk in BLT about how we plan to grade these items and if we want to bring back a separate Spelling grade on our grade card at West. We will not compromise the fidelity of CKLA with the exception of replacing the grammar and spelling component which we have found to be lacking in terms of rigor, quality, and standards alignment.
- Each grade level team needs to be using the following two documents to determine what standards are taught and to what level in **CKLA STARTING IMMEDIATELY**. Go to Amplify; CKLA and access the Teacher Planner. Here, you will find the ***Standards Alignment Chart*** and the ***Standards Checklist*** that you will use in tandem to demonstrate the Standards taught and the extent they are taught at the end of each week (you will do this during Early Release PLC Teaming time). You'll be able to get through all of the units taught second semester and will pick back up in the fall to do the same for first semester.
- Please be sure to track this, as I do want a copy of these documents for each grade level at the end of the year and at the end of first semester for 2025. ELA reps for your grade level can answer any questions - Jenn Blume, Sara Greene, Molly Townsend.

The remainder of the day was spent working in PLC Teams and as a building PLC. Our Building PLC meeting was very full and productive, but we were unable to finish all of our tasks, so we will be moving everything unfinished to our **February 5** faculty meeting. To see our complete agenda, click the link here:

[WES PD January3 2025](#)

The agenda for **February 5** with the items we did not finish on January 3 includes the following:

- ***Inclusion Activity - Bring heads and hearts into the room!***
- ***BSEL Intervention Protocol and Decision-Making for WES***
 - Emily Ruby reviewed the WES BSEL Intervention Protocol with our staff on January 3. We will do a quick follow-up on this.
 - Clarify questions.
- ***WES ABC Data Graphs - Amy Flinn***

- This is our data for first semester for Attendance, Behavior (ODRs), and the Screener (SAEBRS).
- **Tier 1 Interventions - Jenn Blume, Emily Ruby, Stacey Hirt**
 - Review Tier 1 BSEL Interventions.
 - Identify Tier 1 interventions/strategies teachers are using and provide support on strategies that should be tried first.
- **Identify Tier 2 & Tier 3 Interventions/strategies and what makes them Tier 2 & Tier 3. Robin Butler, Penny Graber, Mikaela Zerbe, Amanda Remmert**
 - Progress Monitoring - For Second Semester, Teachers will get more familiar with starting interventions and the BSEL team will work on developing a systematic way of progress monitoring and communicating with teachers and interventionists. PM will not start until next school year.
- **Student Support Team - Robin Butler/Mikaela Zerbe**
 - We will review how/when to submit a request to the Student Support Team.
- **Intervention Log - Introduce/Review/Update - Robin Butler, Penny Graber, Mikaela Zerbe, Amanda Remmert**
 - Understand how/why the Intervention Log was created.
 - Update as needed.
- **School Goals to Support Strategic Plan - Student Success**
 - Kagan - Student Engagement
 - Each PLC Team Provide feedback on Kagan Structures used and intentional planning for Kagan Structures
 - Increasing OTRs (including Kagan)
 - Each PLC Team Provide feedback on OTRs used and intentional planning for OTRs
 - Positive Culture - Each PLC Team provide feedback on strategies we have implemented this year to improve the culture in our school:
 - Positive to Corrective Feedback - 3:1 Minimum
 - Student Recognition Assemblies/TV Recognition/Blog Recognition
 - Morning Routines

Kagan Coaching for West Staff:

We continue to provide Kagan Coaching for our West Staff. We will have opportunities on **Thursday, January 23** in the PM and **Monday, March 3** in the AM. All staff going through Kagan 5-Day Training this year will be coached. For second semester, Mrs. Townsend will provide coaching for teachers that will implement a Kagan Structure in their classrooms. These coaching sessions generally last about 15 minutes.

**Items for the Good for West Elementary
1-8-2025**

- ***WHS Lady Raider Basketball Team and Chick-Fil-A Provide “High Five Friday”***

We appreciate our very own Lady Raider Basketball Team for coming to do “High Five Friday” for our students and staff on a bitterly cold morning on **Friday, December 13**. Thank you to Coach Mac and the Lady Raiders for supporting our school!



Our students were delighted to be greeted by staff from Chick-Fil-A on **Friday, December 6**! The employees handed out wrapped chocolate chip cookies to every student that walked through the door. It was a great way to start the day! Thank you to the Chick-Fil-A staff for helping us start off the weekend right, and thank you to the Hartwich family for providing a tray of mini chicken/biscuit sandwiches for the staff!



- ***Third Graders Attend "Nutcracker" Performance at TPAC***

Third Grade students took a field trip **December 18** to The Topeka Performing Arts Center to watch one of our very own, Lily Kennelly, perform as a cast member in the Kansas Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker". This was an amazing experience and performance! Students and staff were able to attend for free.

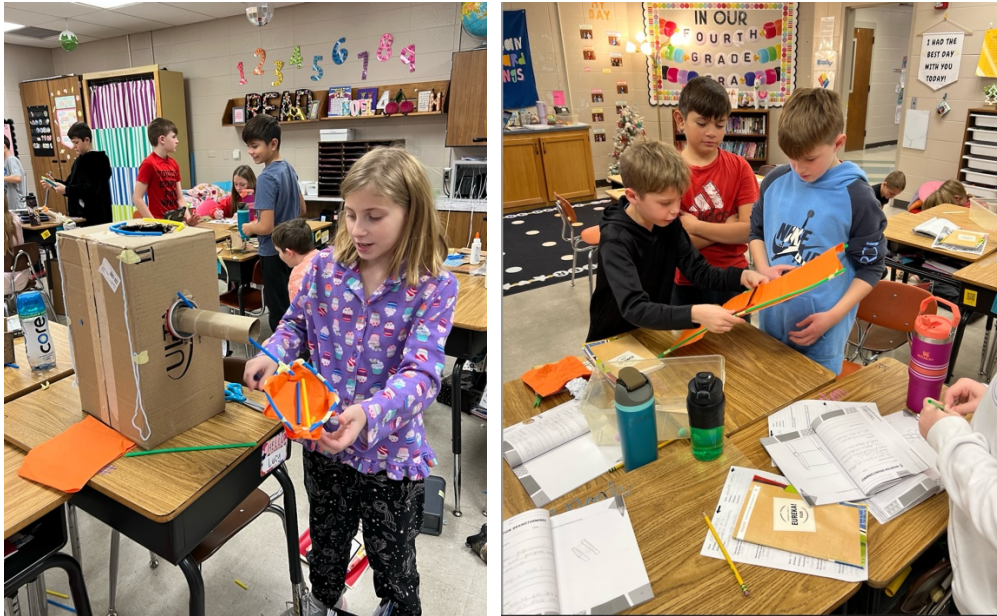


- ***Third Graders Study Light and Sound in CKLA Unit 6***

Third Grade students wrapped up their Light and Sound Unit in CKLA. In Unit 6, students learned about the properties of light and sound, how light and sound travel in waves, and how light and sound can be manipulated by various instruments, such as magnifying glasses, microscopes, and telescopes. Students completed a variety of hands-on activities that allowed them to examine light in the classroom. Throughout this unit, Third Graders have had multiple opportunities to focus on reading, fluency, accuracy, comprehension, spelling, grammar, and morphology. Third Grade students have also had multiple opportunities to write in a variety of ways and for different purposes.

- **Fourth Graders Become “Inventors” in CKLA Unit:**

In our fourth CKLA unit, we learned all about groundbreaking inventors and inventions. Students worked on their collaboration skills to build inventions with their teammates. They also had the opportunity to build an independent invention as their final project. This entire unit allowed students to work on their creativity, teamwork, and presentation skills.



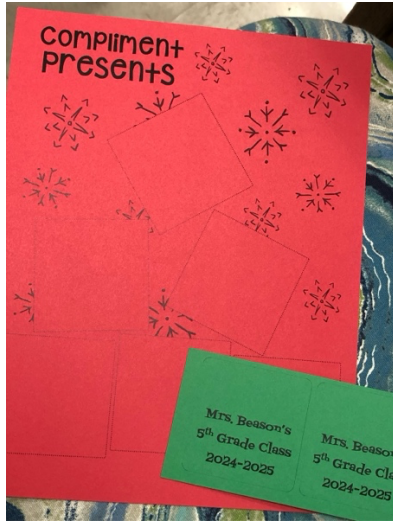
- **Fourth Grade Classroom Gift of the Day:**

In each Fourth Grade classroom, students practiced gift giving by bringing a homemade, or minimally priced gift, to give to their classmates. Each morning in December we sat in a circle on the carpet and one or two gifts were given out. This was also a way for each student to show appreciation for their peers and the things they have been given. The students looked forward to this routine each day. It was a very positive and class building experience!



- **Fifth Grade Gives "Compliment Gifts"**

Fifth Grade students gifted each other in December with anonymous "Compliment Gifts". Students drew names of several classmates and worked to write anonymous, encouraging compliments and observations about those peers. With classroom teachers' help, these compliments were collected and given to each student and given out during holiday parties. This Fifth Grade tradition remains a powerful lesson in really noticing the gifts and qualities of people around us.



- **West Elementary Winter Data Dive**

As we delve into the academic performance of our students this winter, we have a lot to celebrate!

Reading Performance:

Each grade level showed a significant increase of fluent readers.

West Elementary School - 2024-2025									
FastBridge Data - CBMReading - English									
Percentage of Fluent Readers									
CBMR 2024-2025	Fall Tier 1	Winter Tier 1	Spring Tier 1	Fall Tier 2	Winter Tier 2	Spring Tier 2	Fall Tier 3	Winter Tier 3	Spring Tier 3
3 rd Grade	59%	69%		30%	21%		11%	10%	
4 th Grade	69%	74%		20%	18%		11%	8%	
5 th Grade	63%	68%		24%	23%		13%	9%	

In addition to oral reading rate, we also saw a very positive trend in readers who read accurately.

West Elementary School Percentage of <u>Accurate Readers</u> CBMReading - English			
2024-2025	Fall	Winter	Spring
3rd Grade	83.8%	90%	
4th Grade	91.3%	94%	
5th Grade	93%	94%	

Using FastBridge aReading assessment data to measure broad reading skills, we are pleased with the number of students currently meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. Although there are still areas to improve, we are seeing a percentile decrease in our Tier 3 students overall. This is extremely encouraging.

West Elementary School - 2024-2025 FastBridge Data - aReading Percentage of <u>Broad Reading Skills (Comprehension)</u>									
aReading 2024- 2025	Fall Tier 1	Winter Tier 1	Spring Tier 1	Fall Tier 2	Winter Tier 2	Spring Tier 2	Fall Tier 3	Winter Tier 3	Spring Tier 3
3 rd Grade	72%	73%		19%	19%		9%	8%	
4 th Grade	79%	76%		13%	18%		8%	6%	
5 th Grade	71%	73%		20%	20%		9%	7%	

Math Performance:

Turning to our math data, we are very pleased with the number of students currently meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. The Tier 1 percentages, along with the decrease in Tier 2 and Tier 3, are very promising.

West Elementary School - 2024-2025 FastBridge Data - aMath Percentage of Broad Math Skills									
aMath 2024- 2025	Fall Tier 1	Winter Tier 1	Spring Tier 1	Fall Tier 2	Winter Tier 2	Spring Tier 2	Fall Tier 3	Winter Tier 3	Spring Tier 3
3 rd Grade	81%	89%		13%	7%		6%	4%	
4 th Grade	83%	85%		11%	10%		6%	5%	
5 th Grade	71%	70%		24%	25%		5%	5%	

- ***K-5 ELA Curriculum Work on January 3***

The K-5 ELA Committee met on **Friday, January 3** and had a productive meeting.

We are recommending to the DLT that we adopt DLI (Daily Language Instruction) at the 3-5 level to replace the grammar and spelling component in CKLA. We hope to get materials ordered quickly upon approval so that we can begin DLI instruction SECOND SEMESTER. We will need to talk in BLT about how we plan to grade these items and if we want to bring back a separate Spelling grade on our grade card at West.

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- ***Instructional Coaching with Dr. Allyson Lyman of Greenbush***

Dr. Lyman will be back to provide instructional coaching to select staff at Central and West for second semester. She will alternate buildings and sessions each day. The dates she'll be here are as follows:

- **January 30**
- **February 3**
- **February 19**
- **March 24**
- **April 10**
- **April 22**
- **April 30**

This year, I selected four teachers for Dr. Lyman to “coach”. These are all second year teachers at West. We felt that it would be most beneficial for these teachers to receive this support in their second year of teaching in our district. This includes Mason Meinhardt, Stephanie Linn, Cheryl Price, and Brianna Rowe. All four teachers have expressed that this instructional coaching has been very beneficial to them and their students.

- ***Partnering with K-State for Future Teachers***

We will again be partnering with K-State to host Early Field Experience students and Block B students (literacy block). This is a great opportunity to support future teachers, provide additional human resources to our students/staff, and recruit future teachers for our district. We hosted numerous EFE students in the fall and they did a wonderful job!

- ***West Spelling Bee 2025***

Gemma Hovind presented to our school Spelling Bee finalists on **Tuesday, December 10** at 8:15am in the library on “tips and tricks” for success in a school, county, and state bee! She did this last year and did a wonderful job once again. This event is so helpful to our Spelling Bee Finalists!



The School Spelling Bee will be on **Tuesday, January 14** at 1:10pm in the gym. We hope to Zoom this for classes that want to watch. We have 32 students in the Bee this year!

Our finalists for the West Spelling Bee are as follows:

Nolan Aldridge, Samuel Beaubien, Camden Bellinder, Tynlee Biesenthal, Charlie Casterline, Kevlynn Coates, Turner Cole, Jada Collins, Arielle Dagenais, Joseph Fry, Madison Heddon, Emerson Hopkins, Adalyn Hudson, Michael Jacenko, James Katt, Hadley King, Brantley Koster, Charlotte Kreider, Jax Kugler, Caleb Lancaster, William Lutter, Elizabeth Miksch, Josephine Murphy, Alyceya Pugh, Lincoln Ralston, June Redman, Amelia Risser, Lucas Rowe, Destin Schultz, Foster Smith, Wrigley Utley, Madison Walsh, and Anika Warner.

Parents and guardians of finalists are welcome to join us, if you are able. Please note that no part of the Spelling Bee is permitted to be recorded. We will be Zooming the Spelling Bee for our classrooms ONLY so that other students and staff may watch the Bee from the comfort of their classrooms. The Bee will NOT be recorded for future viewing.

We will take two winners to the County Bee on **Saturday, February 1** at the Columbian Theatre.

- ***KMEA Elementary Honor Choir February 1: Info Only***

Congratulations to these students for being selected to participate in the KMEA North Central Elementary Honor Choir: Regan Baum, Ayla Gunderson, Ashlynn Hermes, Hadley King, Ellie Massie, Lizzy Miksch, Makayla Molz, Rylan Rhoads, Lucas Rowe, Destin Schultz, Victoria Smith, and Anika Warner. Thank you to Wamego Middle School Choir Director, Elizabeth Walker, for evaluating the auditions and choosing our participants.

On **Saturday, February 1**, these students will travel to Manhattan High School and work with a clinician to prepare five songs for an afternoon concert. At 12:00pm, the choir will perform in concert with around 140 Fifth and Sixth Grade students from the North Central part of the state. Thank you to Mrs. Hermes for providing this opportunity to our students!

- ***West Collects for Wamego Christmas Bureau***

Our school supported the Wamego Christmas Bureau this winter by collecting for our community. Student Council partnered with Cub Scout Pack 92 to organize the event. We had a challenge between grade levels with the winning classes earning a popcorn party and having Mrs. Flinn read a Christmas book to their classes. Winning classes were Mrs. Blume, Miss Halseth, and Mrs. Price's classrooms. We collected a total of 3063 items for donation. These items included nonperishable food items, personal care items, paper products, and cleaning supplies.



- ***West Elementary Winter Extravaganza on December 19***

Our students and staff enjoyed our annual Winter Extravaganza on **Thursday December 19** to kick off Winter Break. Each team performed a "skit" for our student body. Students also enjoyed singing Christmas carols to finish the event before returning to their classrooms for classroom winter parties. Thank you to Mrs. Hermes for organizing the event and thank you to Corey Reeves for assisting with music and sound.

- **West PTO Updates**

- We will begin the PTO Read-A-Thon on **Wednesday, January 29** and end it on **Wednesday, February 12**. We will have our Prizes Assembly on **Thursday, February 13** at 2:30pm. Students will earn a raffle ticket for the prizes for every 20 minutes read. We encourage them to get their family and adult friends to sponsor them as part of the fundraiser, but our focus is on the minutes read for prize tickets! Last year, we raised over \$11,000 for our school with this fundraiser! Please promote it with our students!
- PTO will be providing treats every Monday the month of January as a “Welcome to 2025” gift to staff. They also provided \$50 gift cards to Amazon for all certified staff as Christmas gifts.
- Our next Site Council meeting will be **Tuesday, January 28** at 6:00pm.

- **Site Council Updates**

The Central/West Site Council will meet on **Tuesday, January 28** to hear more about our building goals and how they support the USD 320 Strategic Plan. We will also hear from Scott Meitler on the work the Early Learning committee is doing to provide preschool to all students in USD 320.

- **Kyle Pace from Apple Education to Present to West Staff January 24**

Kyle Pace with Apple Education will be meeting with our staff on **Friday, January 24** during Early Release PLC time from 2:30-3:30pm. Kyle has presented to our staff before, and it was very beneficial. This time will be even more beneficial due to having our new iPads in hand. There are so many useful tools that our students and staff can and should be using on our new iPads!

- **Specialized Team News for December 2024**

Art News from Mrs. Havice:

During December, the students worked on finalizing their vase designs and completing the vase for their artwork based on the work of Yayoi Kusama. We continued learning how to handle challenges with materials, mistakes, and how to pivot when plans need to be altered, all of which are very important life skills. The students worked with a variety of markers, scissors, and positive and negative space with their vase designs.

When we return from winter break, the students will be focusing on their flowers, leaves, and stems in addition to colorful dot stickers as we work towards completing our projects.

Counselor News from Mrs. Butler:

During the month of December, all students finished Unit 2: Emotion Management during our Second Step lessons. During counseling lessons, the students all learned how the brain works when we have strong emotions. Understanding how the brain works helps us understand how calming strategies can help.

We finished up our time in December completing our first mission in Xello. We will be using the information learned as we prepare for our career project that will be completed next semester.

Second Step Unit 3 will begin when we return from break. Student lessons will focus on the importance of engaging in kind acts and empathy.

Explore News from Mrs. Hatfield and Mrs. Spearie:

Students learned about the Spelling Bee in Explore this month. Using the Word Club app on their iPads, students had fun exploring the *Words of the Champions*. The app is adaptable to different study and

quiz styles for both spelling and vocabulary. Students then went on to take a written spelling test in their classroom. The top 10% of spellers will move to the next level of competition at our school-wide spelling bee on January 7, 2025!

Library News from Mrs. Hatfield:

In December, we embraced our growth mindset theme of the month, “We love a challenge!” Students participated in a variety of challenges throughout the month including a *Locked in The Library* digital escape room where students used their background knowledge as context for new learning, identified the author’s purpose for creating a text and discussed ideas with others in their group, while listening well and changing their ideas when appropriate to unlock the library door successfully!

Music News from Mrs. Hermesch:

Third Grade classes have been rehearsing their concert music, “Swamped”. Their performance will be February 11, 2025.

Fourth Grade is ready to go with their concert “I Need a Vacation!” The snow days have resulted in our need to find a new concert date. Groups will perform as follows:

- 6:00 pm Miss Logan, Mrs. McIntosh and Mrs. Vanderpool’s classes
- 7:00 pm Mrs. Greene, Miss Halseth and Mrs. Ruby’s classes

Fifth Grade classes went Christmas Caroling at our area nursing homes. They performed at Good Samaritan Society and Vintage Park. They have also begun working on their choir music for the second semester.



Physical Education News from Mrs. Ontjes:

In December, we kicked off our activities with a fun and engaging balloon unit, which was one of my favorites. We began by introducing various challenges to keep the balloon in the air. At first, the challenges were simple, using just our hands. As the students got the hang of it, we increased the difficulty with challenges like using only their heads, feet, or a combination of both.

After completing the challenges I provided, students partnered up and created their own balloon challenges. Some students were so excited about their ideas that they even presented their challenges to the class, allowing everyone to try something new and fun!

Next, we shifted to holiday-themed fitness stations. The stations included activities like building Christmas trees using stacking cups, creating hula hoop snowmen with hula huts, and playing 'Santa' basketball instead of 'Horse' for a fun holiday twist. These activities got everyone into the holiday spirit and were a big hit with the students!

The week before break, we focused on badminton. We started by working on passing the birdie back and forth, practicing our rallies, and improving our control. Once the students were comfortable with their rackets and keeping their eyes on the birdie, we held a fun tournament.

Overall, December was full of creativity, teamwork, and holiday cheer! It was a wonderful way to end the year and prepare for the upcoming break.

Technology News from Mrs. Spearie:

In December, all students participated in the code.org Hour of Code activities focused on [Music Lab: Jam Session](#). Students learned how to use code blocks to play a variety of instruments and remix some of their favorite songs. They used control blocks such as “play together,” “play sequential,” and “repeat” to layer sounds while using function blocks to organize their songs into verses and choruses. They also explored using AI drum kits to generate drumlines to their songs. Everyone enjoyed sharing their musical creations with their classmates in the last few minutes of class!

In the final week before winter break, they reinforced their coding skills through additional coding games like [Dance Party](#), [Pirate Plunder](#), and [Mario's Secret Adventure](#).