

West Sioux Falcon Newsletter

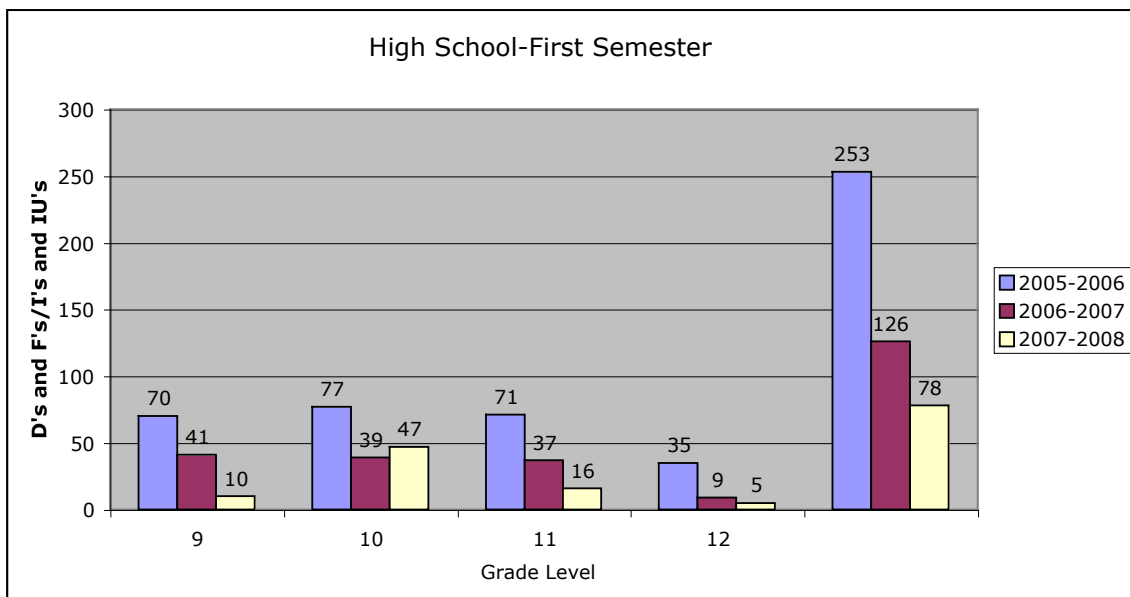
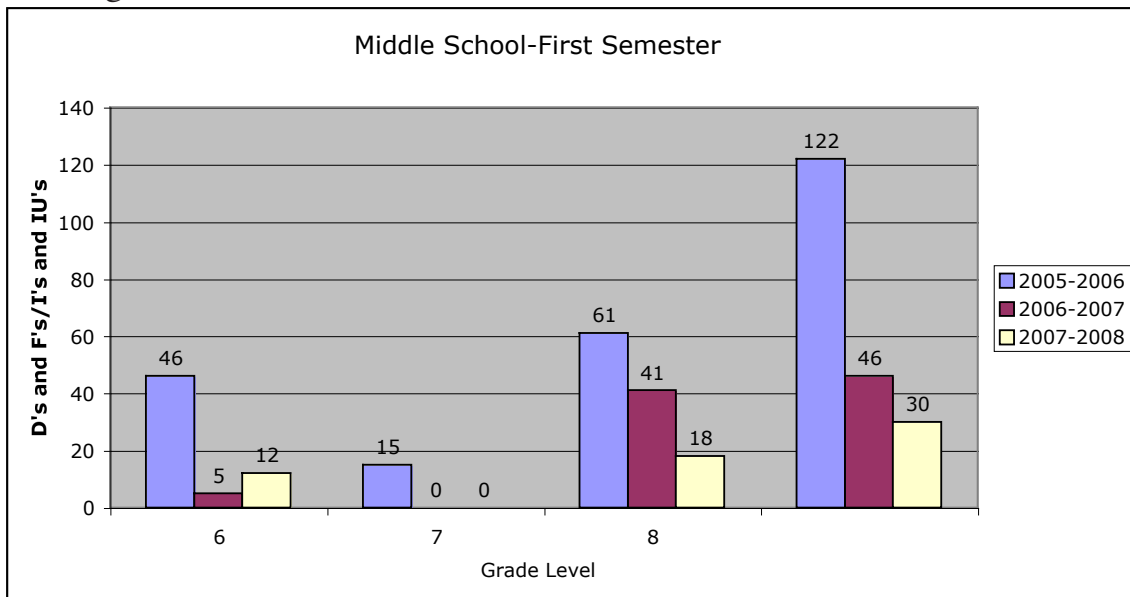
Covering Grades 6-12

School Reform Initiative

Current Progress and What's Coming Next

The A, B, C, Incomplete grading policy and 9th period have been operating for the past two school years and it is time to take a close look at the results of the initiatives.

The middle school reduced the number of grades below a C- by 75% and the high school reduced the number of grades below a C- by 60%. These are first semester comparisons. The second semester comparisons will be available after the summer school grades have been recorded.



Clear Expectations Developed

People are pretty trusting in Northwest Iowa. We leave our cars unlocked on main street, children leave their bikes unattended at a variety of locations, and people work, shop and go about their daily routines without fear. This is possible because we accept and obey the laws. If the number of people that obey the laws in our community would decrease, our quality of life would change. We would start to secure our property more and take measures to protect ourselves.

Most students obey the rules when the expectations for behavior are clear and consistent. An orderly and safe learning environment promotes learning. When there is a lack of agreement about behavioral expectations or when the expectations are inconsistently reinforced, a larger number of students may break the rules. When this is the case, more adult energy is spent on keeping order rather than focusing on teaching and learning.

Changing the behavioral climate in a school creates an environment that is conducive to learning. Improving student behavior in schools creates conditions that make good teaching possible.

A group of 12-15 middle school and high school staff members met weekly during the summer to discuss and

develop consistent expectations for student behavior.

The expectations for behavior will be taught to students at the middle school and high school during the first days of school and reinforced throughout the school year.

Some of the expectations are students will be in the classroom when the bell rings, students will sit on the benches or stand, or sit in the commons or a classroom rather than on the hallway floor, bookbags will be stored in lockers or carried rather than left on the hallway floor. The clarification of expectations will create a more safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning.

The entire 6-12 teaching staff will review and discuss the consistent expectations during the August 22 inservice meeting.

The discussions and process that the staff used during the summer were similar to the discussions and processes used to develop the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) systems at the elementary and middle schools.

West Sioux Elementary Schools successfully implemented PBS two years ago and West Sioux Middle School successfully implemented PBS this past school year.

Professional Development Focus for 2008-2009

The focus of the professional development training for the 6-12 staff for the 2008-2009 school year will be learning about the requirements of the Iowa Core Curriculum in order to align West Sioux's curriculum with the Iowa Core Curriculum by 2012.

On April 25, 2008, the Iowa legislature approved mandating the Iowa Core Curriculum for all students in grades 9-12 by 2012 and grades K-8 by 2014. The Iowa Core Curriculum (also known as Model Core Curriculum) provides local school districts and nonpublic schools a guide to delivering instruction based on consistent, challenging and meaningful content to students.

The curriculum identifies the essential concepts and skill sets for literacy, mathematics, science and social studies, as well as 21st century learning skills (civic literacy, financial literacy, technology literacy, health literacy, and employability skills).

Governor Chet Culver signed the bill into law on May 1, 2008.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Check out the school's website at www.westsioxschools.org for calendar events, lunch menus, your child's grades and the latest school news.
