

## Yoplait Grant Provides Fitness Opportunities by Mr. Tim Webster, Principal Reed City Middle School

There are many ways to get into good physical shape. Some are quite boring and some are so much fun that you forget how much work you are doing. Because of a grant we received from General Mills, our middle school students have the opportunity to experience the fun way. They are using a large variety of new equipment coupled with a newly designed program to get themselves physically fit.

Incorporating about \$7,000 of new equipment made possible through a General Mills/Yoplait grant, Mr. Bill Zolman, our Physical Education teacher, has recently redesigned the middle school physical education program.

Our students now have fitness stations on Mondays and Wednesdays. All students have designed their own fitness plans and rotate every two minutes through a variety of workout stations. The fitness days are a real workout with emphasis on getting in better physical shape. Students also learn about target heart rate and are able to monitor and document their own rates.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students also do two-minute stations but these stations enhance physical growth through sports. As you can see on the list below, there are many fun sports games like golf with foam balls, badminton, soccer balls, and more.

On Fridays, students play organized games and do physical testing. Most of the testing equipment is high tech and also new.

It is obvious that we would not be able to provide a program with such a variety of stations, where some are very physical and others are fitness through recreational fun, without the purchase of this equipment. Much of the new equipment is listed below.

- Heart rate monitors and books on our hearts and how to use heart rate monitors.
- Dumbbells and materials on how to use them.
- Speed and agility ladders and materials that help show how to use them.
- Fitness bands.
- Soccer balls.
- Volleyballs.
- Flag football equipment.
- Softball equipment, gloves for students.
- Medicine balls.
- Badminton equipment.
- A two person sit and reach.
- Standing long jump mat.
- Test for vertical jump.
- Test that tests for hand strength.
- Nets and goals that can be used in many different activities and sports.
- Golf clubs, foam golf balls, and mats.

Mr. Zolman has seen an increase in our students' foot speed, strength and endurance. For the first time since Mr. Zolman has done PE, all but a few students ran the mile in 12 minutes or less. Also, 98% of the students got involved and improved their mile times, most by more than two minutes.

He feels that the best thing about the new equipment is that the students have told him that they actually notice a difference in how they feel. They see the importance of having a fitness program, and they see that the community, Yoplait and the school care about their well being.

Our students are learning the benefit and joys of being physically fit through exposure to games, sports, exercise equipment, and fitness plans. It is our hope that they will continue these habits long after class ends and that physical fitness activities become life long habits.