

~COYOTE CORNER~

What Lies Ahead for Norman Elementary?

by David Vander Goot, Assistant Principal
G. T. Norman Elementary School

Hello everyone. My name is David Vander Goot, and I am the new assistant principal at G. T. Norman Elementary School. So far, I have totally enjoyed working with a great staff, great families and great students. All of you who live in Reed City and have children attending RCAPS have much to be proud of as this is a great community.

So what lies ahead for GT Norman? As a school, we are working on some really exciting educational options. First up is the real possibility of offering our K-5 students physical education every day. There is so much talk and information out there that today's children are out of shape and bordering on obesity. Our goal is to provide the exercise and instruction in healthy living styles to influence students for life. Part of this plan centers on the use of EPEC physical education curriculum that has a lifelong physical fitness theme. We are also bringing back the popular GT Norman walking club at lunch recess for all 3rd through 5th graders. Our goal is to eventually add grades K-2. Walking is one of the best and easiest forms of physical fitness and takes very little expense for the program to work.

Second is the possibility of providing a study of foreign language for all students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade with the ultimate goal to move the study of foreign language to the middle school, grades 6-8. Why a foreign language you ask? Well, the state of Michigan has upped its high school requirements to include a minimum of two credits in foreign language. However, the state has also said that districts can add foreign language in the elementary school and show or demonstrate that students can pass an assessment to give them one credit of foreign language by ninth grade. It is also a proven fact that younger students will absorb a foreign language much better than older students and, thus, this will benefit all students in all academic subjects in school.

But, no new ideas are easy. There are questions and concerns. What language do we use? Where and how will both everyday PE and foreign language fit into an already crowded daily academic schedule? How much will it cost the district in an educationally tight budget? How many times a week do we teach a foreign language? We have much work to do, but we are committed to providing the best educational programs for all students. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us at GT Norman. We would be glad to talk with you about these new and exciting programs for the coming school year. Until the next time...David Vander Goot

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