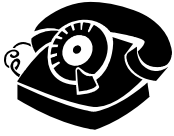


Auburn School District



School Phones

Auburn Elementary.....438-6916
Divernon Elementary.....628-3611
Auburn Middle.....438-6919
Auburn Jr. High.....628-3414
Auburn High School.....438-6817

Parents/Guardians: Please contact the schools listed above to report an absence.

Emergency Plans

School emergency closings could happen at any time of year. District procedures call for an emergency school closing announcement to be given over the School Reach automated phone system.

Unless otherwise directed, children will be sent to their normal afternoon destination. In cases of emergency closings, it is quite difficult for parents to get through to the school.

Do you have a plan for your children in the event of an emergency school closing? **TODAY** is the best time to make plans with your children (and day care provider, neighbor, employer, etc.) on what is expected in the event of an emergency closing. It is also a good idea to inform your child's teacher of your plans.

Family access

Do you want to keep track of how your child is doing in class? Are they completing their homework on time? Do you need to know how much money is in their meal or milk account?

These questions can be answered by signing up for family access on our website. In order to gain access to the family access site, you will need to send an email to our technology director, Dave Scheuermann. He can set you up with the login information and password for your student. His email address is daves@auburn.k12.il.us

District website

The district website address is



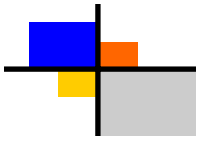
Pay schools

The Auburn district is offering an online payment program for school fees and the school meals program. The access link is on the home page of the district website. Parents can make payments throughout the year. Meal account payments are not immediately viewable in family access. Check out the pay schools link!



Student assistance program

Auburn Junior High at Divernon is continuing the Student Assistance Program that is an important tool to help all students. Beginning last year, the program addressed problems students were having including adjusting to junior high and learning to work with teachers, other students, and administration. A key component is the "GOTCHA" positive reinforcement program designed for all students. Positive behaviors such as helping other students, showing increased effort academically, and setting good examples are rewarded to each class and recognized each Friday. Any parent who would like your child referred to the Student Assistance Program should contact any of your child's teachers or the office at the Divernon campus.

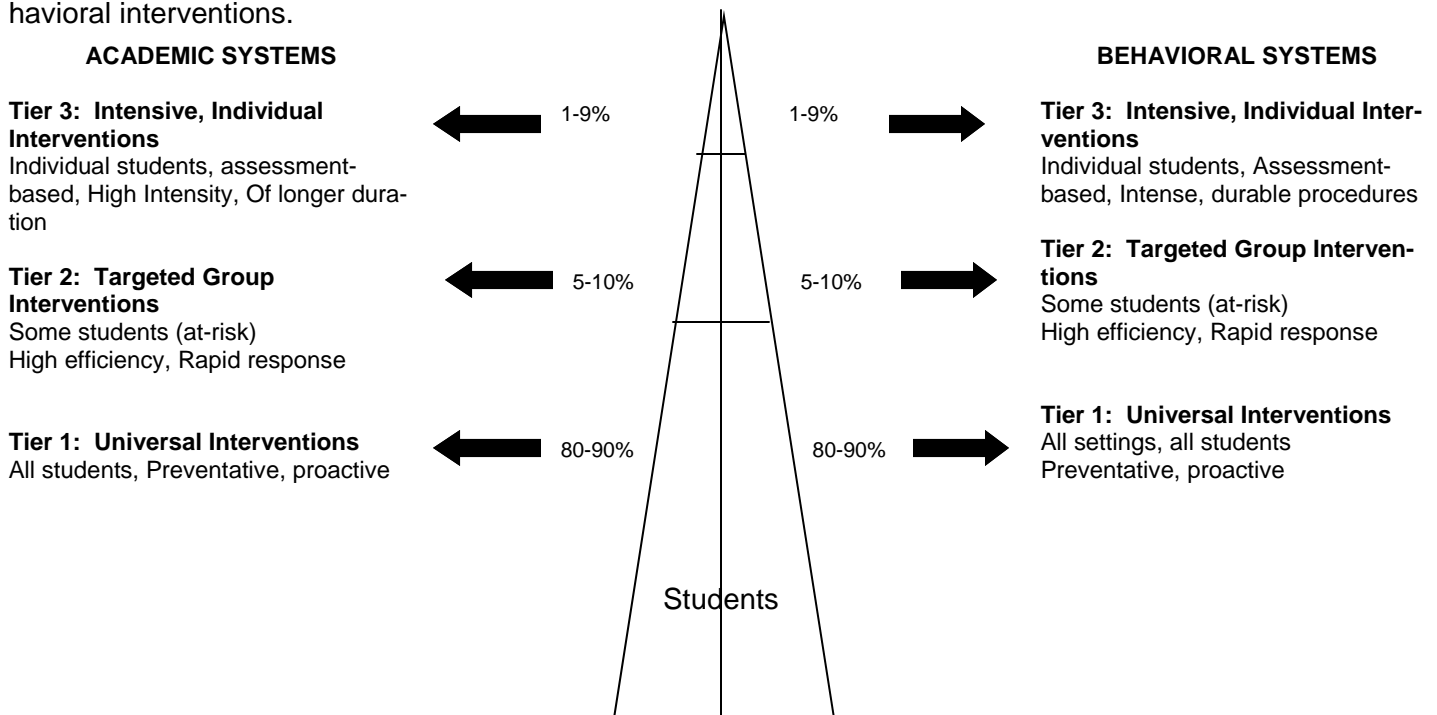


District information

Response to intervention: parent information

Recent amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act and the No Child Left Behind legislation have introduced a model for meeting student needs called Response to Intervention or RtI. The emphasis in RtI is on a high quality core curriculum and instruction for all students, early interventions that are targeted to specific student needs, ongoing student assessment to monitor the progress of students in meeting the goals of the curriculum, and special education placement made on the basis of a student's ability to learn.

RtI uses universal screening and progress monitoring to determine if a student needs additional intervention in order to reach established benchmarks in the curriculum. The universal screening helps to identify those students who need additional assistance in specific areas and the progress monitoring is used to determine if the student is benefiting from the interventions that are put in place for that student. The information from the universal screening is also used to identify strengths of the core curriculum and instruction. RtI is a tiered approach to interventions. The illustration below shows the tiered approach for both academic and behavioral interventions.

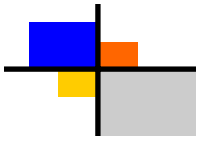


Adapted from *Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation* (Batsche, et al 2005).

Student progress in the tiered interventions is monitored through a process called progress monitoring. Short assessments are administered weekly to guide decisions about how a student is responding to the interventions. Interventions are not a part of the core curriculum. They are in addition to the curriculum. Students who do not respond to the interventions may need more intensive interventions or referral for a special education evaluation.

The District is currently developing a district-wide plan for RtI and each school will also have a school-level plan. During the spring of 2008, all students in grades K-6 were administered the universal screener in the area of reading fluency. The district is currently using the AIMSWeb assessments in reading for both universal screening and progress monitoring and will be expanding our use to other curriculum areas. Students in K-6 will be screened again in September to help determine which students need immediate interventions.

During the last school year, several teachers piloted various interventions with at-risk students and progress monitored those students. We saw some exciting results and are looking forward to this initiative



District information

School emergency closings

School emergency closings can happen at any time of the year. Parents need to make plans for what is expected should an emergency closing occur. Decisions to close or dismiss school early are always a judgment call. However, we do use some general criteria in making such decisions. Emergency closing procedures call for an announcement to be given over School Reach. We also use local radio and television stations. Below are some of the criteria and examples of what would impact a decision to cancel school or dismiss early.

Power outage

If power to any of our district schools is lost, we determine the need to close early by considering the time of day that the power is lost and the projected time that the power company has indicated that the district will be without power. Emergency lights in the district remain lit for only about 2 hours. In addition, we need to consider the ability of the district to serve lunch to students.

Weather forecasts

Weather events and conditions are very unpredictable. We do not cancel school or dismiss school early based solely on a weather forecast. Weather events must be occurring and deteriorating for school to be cancelled or for us to dismiss early.

Extreme heat

Illinois State Board of Education guidelines state that school districts cannot announce in advance (the day prior) that school will be closing after less than 5 clock hours of instruction because of the extreme heat. To announce this in advance will cause the district to use one of its five emergency days instead of counting a shortened day as a full day of attendance. Therefore, any announcements that we will be dismissing school for extreme heat will only occur on the morning of the event. If it is necessary to dismiss before 2:00, the announcement will only be made after the start of the school day.

Snow

Generally speaking, snow is not a primary reason for closing school. As long as roads are not drifting shut, it is possible we would have school even with a siz-

able snowfall (greater than six inches).

Road conditions

Road conditions dictate many of our decisions. Due to the fact the district is widely spread out, we primarily consider the ability of our busses to travel areas where the bulk of our students live.

Cold

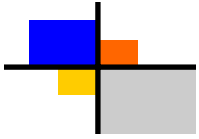
We look at wind chill, air temperature, and road conditions when making a decision relating to cold weather. Since we do live in central Illinois, temperatures below 0° are not uncommon. In most situations, if air temperature is 0° to -10° with little or moderate wind chill, we will likely have school. Air temperature of -20° or below (regardless of wind chill) will probably cause us to cancel school. If temperatures are between -11° to -19° and depending on wind chill, road conditions, and other current weather conditions we may or may not have school.

When are winter weather-related decisions made?

Unless we are in the midst of a blizzard or another winter weather-related event, a decision to cancel school will occur between 6:00 and 9:30 PM the night before school or, in most instances, no later than 6:30 AM the next day. Once school is in session, decisions to dismiss early will occur by 11:30 AM. Of course, in an extreme emergency, we may have to announce early dismissal after that time.



Please remember that the safety of our students will



Auburn high school

The Advisory

Auburn High School is starting the second year of a schedule that includes an Advisory Hour. Many schools have either changed their master schedule to include an Advisory Hour or have considered ways to benefit students by adopting a schedule with a similar concept. There are several benefits to an Advisory schedule.

An Advisory schedule aligns all study halls to a common period in the day. We have chosen to place Advisory during the last period of the day. By doing this, every student has homework that must be completed for the next day and all teachers are able to tutor students that may be struggling in their class. This situation is much more beneficial than the traditional large study hall with a teacher that facilitates behavior rather than actively focusing on individual academic achievement. With an Advisory Hour in place, teachers are obligated to initiate passes to students who may not be achieving at their highest potential. Teachers are not only teaching during the Advisory, but they can now take ownership in guiding students towards greater understanding and fewer failures. Students and teachers are taking responsibility together for the students' successes. Ineligibilities have been down and grades have improved.

An Advisory schedule reduces discipline. Before the Advisory Hour, students were allowed to take multiple study halls. Although this may seem attractive to some, there are no studies that correlate study halls to better grades. Multiple study halls within a schedule simply become wasted seat time for students. Students become bored and restless and very little studying ever takes place. This situation results in more incidences of discipline and opportunity for behavior problems. An Advisory schedule eliminates the opportunity for students to become placed in situations where there are high incidences of discipline and classroom management issues.

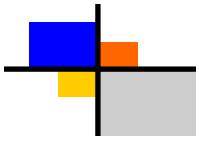
An Advisory schedule gives students a more well-rounded education and raises expectations. In a traditional schedule, students can simply take a study hall if they would rather not enroll in a class that is being offered during a given period of the day. Without study halls offered every period, students are now taking classes, trying new electives, expanding their horizons and raising their own expectations and achievements.

An Advisory schedule gets students involved in student government and school organizations. Prior to the Advisory schedule, organizations would meet after school hours, eliminating participation of those who need to ride a bus home, have a job or are active in athletics or other extra-curricular activities. During Advisory, school organizations and clubs such as National Honor Society, class officers or Student Council can hold meetings. This arrangement encourages student involvement and promotes ownership and pride in the school and student government.

An Advisory schedule also eliminates the battle that takes place every spring between sports and the last hour class. Athletes who participate in spring sports must leave the school early to travel to a game or meet. With an Advisory last hour, no class time has been sacrificed and the academic and athletic priorities have been kept in balance.

Not only have students been able to find academic success through receiving daily opportunities to be tutored by the teacher who assigned their homework, high school students have been able to utilize the benefits of peer tutoring as well. High school students have also become available to assist students in the elementary and middle grades that look at them with admiration. This situation has created an environment where a community of learners is now working for a common goal.

Raising expectations, reducing discipline and providing students with opportunities to gain confidence, pride and higher achievement is our ultimate goal. The Advisory schedule has been a large part of achieving our goal.



middle school

Middle School Highlights

AMS staff and students have hit the ground running for the 2008-2009 school year. Here is a glimpse of some of the exciting opportunities our students and staff are able to participate in.

New Discipline Plan

Students will start off each day on green. If a student chooses to break a rule or expectation they will be asked to change their color accordingly. The colors will be green (excellent), yellow (warning), orange (detention, lunch or after school), red (Principal consequences vary). There will be incentives throughout the year that the students will be able to take part in if they are on green. There will also be a principal's reward for the whole school at the end of each quarter for students who do not receive an office referral for that quarter. Students will be able to earn Gotcha cards for following appropriate school rules, or for going above and beyond these rules and expectations. Staff members will distribute these as they see fit. Students or teachers will fill out and place these cards into the Gotcha Box in the lunchroom for drawings that are held during lunch hours throughout the school year.

Reading Block

This year each grade level will have an uninterrupted block of time devoted to reading and writing activities. The students will be broken down into reading levels for small group instruction. The teachers will design their lessons to help tie in to each student's needs in the classroom. The teachers will also be supported by our new Reading Coach (Debbie Rigg).

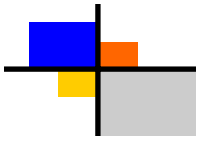
Spanish

Students will have the opportunity once a week to learn a new language. They will be learning the basics this year with the intentions to increase the rigor each year there after. The students have seemed excited during classroom observations and even practice speaking during lunch.

Tutoring

AMS will continue to offer before and after school tutoring for students who need the additional support. We are currently looking at data and trends of our students to get the proper interventions in place to support stu-

Committed to excellence



Elementary schools

Elementary School Initiatives

Our elementary schools will focus on improving reading skills for the 08-09 school year. For the first time ever teachers will have “team” meetings to discuss student progress and share the responsibility for student achievement. Debbie Rigg has been hired as a literacy coach for K-6 teachers and will be an invaluable asset to the teams. Along with the new literacy coach, the principal, grade level teachers, resource teacher, Title I teachers, and the RTI coordinator are present. It is great to have so much experience and knowledge to pull from and share with each other. The school schedule has been set to allow not only time for tracking data and sharing interventions, but also for each student to receive around two hours of uninterrupted reading instruction. During that time students will receive grade level reading material through whole class instruction and individualized reading instruction at their current reading level in a small group. In addition to reading instruction, students will work on phonemic awareness, work with and analyze words and work families, study poetry, fine tune reading strategies, work on fluency, and do what all great readers do- practice, practice, practice.

In an effort to support every learner, our Title I teachers will be working in the classroom along with the teacher to lower group numbers and support reluctant readers. Students who require additional assistance will be worked with in the Title I rooms in an even smaller group. Our goal is to intervene early and have every student reading on grade level when they leave the elementary school. It is a big goal that we truly believe we can accomplish working together. Volunteers will also be utilized to be “study buddies” who will work with students one on one. If you are interested in volunteering, please call the elementary school and we will schedule an appointment to review the process. (Auburn—438-6916 or Divernon—628-3611)

**Educating everyone -
Takes everyone**

Elementary discipline program

The elementary schools implemented a new school-wide behavior system last school year called PBIS. This stands for Positive Behavior Incentive System. The policy focuses on three main areas - respect, responsibility, and safety. The program is aimed at teaching positive character traits and focusing less on negative behavior. One of the best benefits of this program is that all areas -- classroom, hallways, cafeteria, etc. -- follow the same three policies. Students do not have to remember different rules for different areas. A universal sign helps to get students' attention. When any staff member holds up the “high five” sign, students respond quickly. The “high five” stands for, “eyes watching, ears listening, hands quiet, feet still, and lips closed.”

Rewards are given by classroom teachers and/or the principal to students who maintain positive behavior on a particular day. These are called “Out of the Blue” days. These are unscheduled events and can happen at any given time, thus called “Out of the Blue” days. Once each quarter, the principal will reward the entire elementary school with “Big Blue” days. “Big Blue” days will be celebrated by all students who have not been referred to the principal's office or have not had five teacher notes for the entire quarter. This will also be an unscheduled event and will be a grand celebration. Last year our highest percentage of participant for a “Big Blue” day was 97%. Our goal is to reach 100%. Most schools who participate are in the 80% range. We have dedicated staff and students who put their best foot forward daily to make this happen.

Last year was the pilot year for the new discipline policy and the surveys to teachers, parents, and students showed overwhelming success. We continue to evaluate the program and encourage parent feedback on how the program is working for their student. Everyone is enjoying the “Out of the Blue” days and the students are eagerly awaiting the first “Big Blue” day. Students are taking pride and ownership of the new program and parents are monitoring their children's daily calendars at home. Together we truly do make a difference, thank you parents for supporting us.