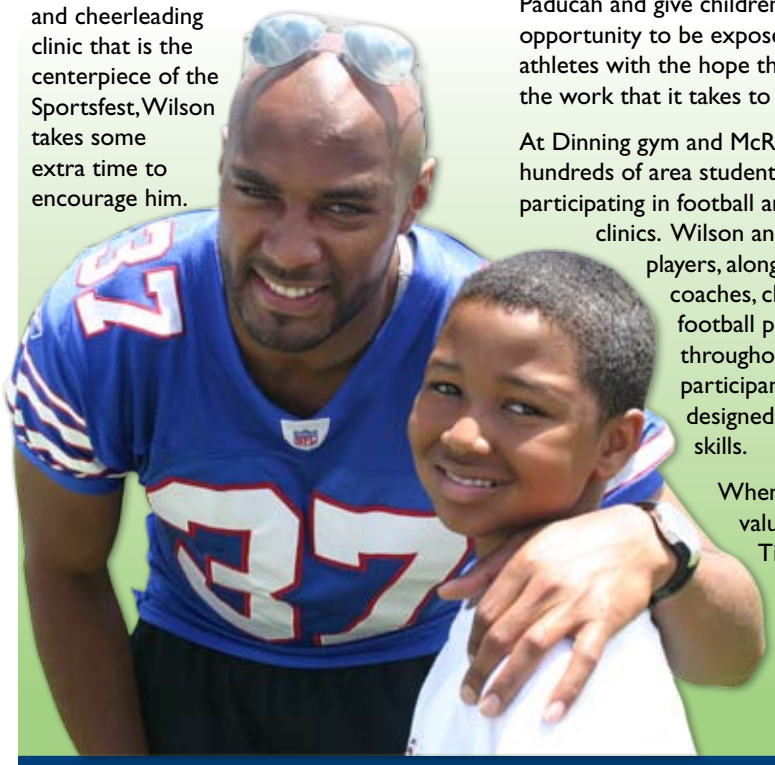
PADUCAH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BLUELINE
FALL 2008
www.paducah.kyschools.us
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, TRADITION AND PRIDE SINCE 1864

WORK ETHIC

George Wilson Sportsfest Teaches Skills and Values

If George Wilson has a middle name, it's probably "hard work". It was his work ethic that has led him from being a football walk-on at the University of Arkansas to finishing his career as the second-leading receiver in school history. It is the same work ethic that elevated him from the practice squad for the NFL's Buffalo Bills to their starting safety in 2007.

Hard work is one of the main reasons George Wilson has achieved what he terms "a dream come true, going from running through these uprights (at McRight field) to playing on Sundays." So when a young man comes to him wanting to quit and go home toward the end of the football and cheerleading clinic that is the centerpiece of the Sportsfest, Wilson takes some extra time to encourage him.



"If you want to go, I understand. But I want you to know that I want you to stay. What matters is what is in your heart," Wilson says as he leans down to look into the boy's face and pat him on the back.

Wilson has made a habit of returning to Paducah and the schools that he attended since his playing days at the University of Arkansas. He visits elementary schools, reading to students, and talking to them about the values of hard work, tenacity, and attention to academics. When he secured a starting position with the Bills, Wilson felt he had finally reached a place where he could bring an event like the Sportsfest to Paducah and give children in the region the opportunity to be exposed to professional athletes with the hope that they would see the work that it takes to get to that level.

At Dinning gym and McRight field, hundreds of area students spent half a day participating in football and cheerleading clinics. Wilson and fellow NFL players, along with PTHS coaches, cheerleaders, and football players, worked throughout the clinic, guiding participants through drills designed to improve their skills.

When asked about the value of the clinic for Tilghman's football program, Head Coach Randy Wyatt was thrilled.

"For someone like George Wilson to take time out of his schedule to give these kids the opportunity to see former athletes and what they have accomplished is a huge benefit to our program…They get to see what PTHS football is all about," Wyatt said.

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

2008 - 2009

August 4	Opening Day/Registration
August 5	Flexible PD Day
August 6	First Full Day of School
August 8	Non-School Day (Emancipation Day)
September 1	Labor Day Holiday
October 3	End of First Quarter
October 6-10	Fall Break
November 3	PD Day (Test Analysis)
November 4	Non-School Day (Election Day)
November 27	Thanksgiving Holiday
November 26-28	Non-School Days
December 19	End of 2nd Qtr/Last day for students
December 22-Jan 2	Winter Break
January 5	Classes Resume
January 19	Non-School Day (Martin Luther King Day)
February 16	Flexible PD Day (Presidents' Day)
March 6	End of Third Quarter
April 3	Flexible PD Day
April 6-10	Spring Break
April 20-May 2	State Test Window
May 19	Non-School Day (Primary Election)
May 22	Last Day for Students
May 26	Closing Day

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Paducah Public Schools' students will return to school Wednesday, August 6, for the first day of classes of the 2008-09 school year.

Registration for most students in grades K-8 will be Monday, August 4. New students at Paducah Tilghman High School students may register any time.

Before students can register, their health records must be in order. All sixth-graders and all new students must present proof of a recent physical examination and immunizations along with birth certificates and proof of residency before they can enroll. At registration, parents of kindergarteners must present a certified birth certificate, physical examination form, eye examination form, immunization record, Social Security card, proof of residency and custody papers, if applicable.

Registration times for individual schools are as follows:

Paducah Tilghman High School
New students may register by contacting the school at 444-5655.

Paducah Middle School
Registration will be Monday, August 4, 4:00 - 6:00 pm.

Morgan Elementary School
Registration will be Monday, August 4, 1:00 - 3:00 pm.

McNabb Elementary School
Registration will be Monday, August 4, 12:30 - 2:30 pm.

Clark Elementary School
Registration will be Monday, August 4, 12:30 - 2:30 pm.

Preschool
A limited number of spaces are still available; when slots are filled, children will go on a wait list. If you have a child who will be 3 or 4 on or before October 1, 2008 and wish to enroll in Head Start/Preschool, please call 444-5780 or 444-5789 immediately to apply.

The starting and ending times for city schools are as follows:

Paducah Tilghman - 7:28 a.m. to 2:20 p.m.
Paducah Middle - 7:28 a.m. to 2:20 p.m.
Clark Elementary - 8 a.m. to 2:55 p.m.
McNabb Elementary - 8 a.m. to 2:55 p.m.
Morgan Elementary - 8 a.m. to 2:55 p.m.

More information can be obtained from the district office at 444-5600 or online at www.paducah.kyschools.us

"It isn't the award or recognition but the journey that matters. The future belongs to those brave enough to make the journey."

With those words, Miriam Muscarella concluded her commencement address in 2007 and graduated from Paducah Tilghman High School, having been accepted at Harvard University. Before arriving at Harvard, however, her path took a serious detour, when she chose to take a "gap year" that led her to Geneva, Switzerland.

A gap year is a period of time taken off by a student between graduation from high school and the freshman year of college to work, study, volunteer, or travel. The concept of the gap year has its origins in the UK, but has become more popular in the United States in recent years. With research showing that students who take a gap year return to campus more focused and motivated, Harvard offers the option to every admitted freshman.

Miriam became interested in the idea of a gap year after attending a prospective freshman weekend at Harvard, and she found out about the opportunity to go to Switzerland after posting an inquiry on a Facebook "Harvard Gap Year" Group. Miriam was later contacted by a student who had worked for a family in Geneva and who recommended that she get in touch. All the subsequent pieces fell into place, and Miriam found herself in Geneva.

In Geneva, she worked with the eight-year-old daughter of a couple, tutoring her in English. Her host mother was a classical guitar composer who performs and writes music; her host father was a financier who managed a mutual funds firm in Geneva.

"I fit in so well with my host family," Miriam said. "It's such an interesting juxtaposition (to see) two very active people with such different professional lives together in the same family."

She had originally signed up to take French from 8:00 to 12:00 each day, but soon found that was not what she wanted. "I didn't go to Europe to take French classes," she said. "I went to Europe to speak French. So I ended that, started French conversation twice a week with my family's grandfather, and started recording a cappella music." She also spent time working with the head of HIV and AIDS programming for the World YWCA, which focuses on women's rights. When asked about the impact that her time in Europe had on her, though, she says that it was not so much what she accomplished as it was what she experienced.

"This focus on experience… (is) something that I'm going to carry with me for the rest of my life"

"I had an epiphany not to just look to the next goal but to savor every moment. Instead of setting a goal to be fluent in French by the end of the year, I told myself to speak French as much as possible. That easygoing mentality allowed me to do things that I wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. In Swiss culture, people are big on experiencing. They are not big on doing things to say that they did it. The Swiss are not going to New York in order to say, 'I went to New York.' They're going to come to New York; they're going to go to plays. They're going to enjoy it. This focus on experience… it's very European, and something that I'm going to carry with me for the rest of my life and not just for this gap year… It's been phenomenal."

"For me to go abroad- a Paducah girl in Geneva- it completely shook up so much of what I thought. A lot of people will look at my year and they can see the places I've traveled and the things that I've done…they see all these end products; but the real definition of my year has been the personal change that's taken place."

So the journey continues, with a stop in Paducah to spend some time working as a summer intern at Heartland CARES, Inc. continuing her HIV/AIDS advocacy before going on to Harvard at the end of the summer. And while the changes she has experienced as a result of her year abroad may not show much externally, that is fine with her, because for Miriam, the journey is the destination.

WORK ETHIC

Football Training at George Wilson's 2008 Sportsfest

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Clark teacher Patty Thompson, one of Wilson's former teachers and family friend, says his willingness to give back to his community is a reflection of who he is.

"He's just that kind of guy," Thompson says as she and his mother, Wanda, work on certificates that will be given to participants in the clinics.

"He wants others to see that here's a young man that wasn't recruited out of high school. He wanted to go to UK, where his brother played, and they didn't look at him. He walked on with an academic scholarship…at Arkansas and got to be the second – leading receiver. He didn't get drafted like he'd hoped and ended up getting on a couple of practice squads and now he's on the Bills. (In) everything I've ever read his coaches have said how hard he works- first one on the field last one off the field. He's a role model for anyone."

When asked about where his willingness to work hard comes from, both Wilson and his mother, Wanda, credit his grandfather's tobacco farm.

"It started from working on my grandfather's tobacco farm," Wilson said. Often I would go from playing (football) on Friday night to working in the fields on Saturday morning, which was pretty tough. My off time from school was spent in the fields…It taught me self-discipline and work ethic…That's where it all got started."

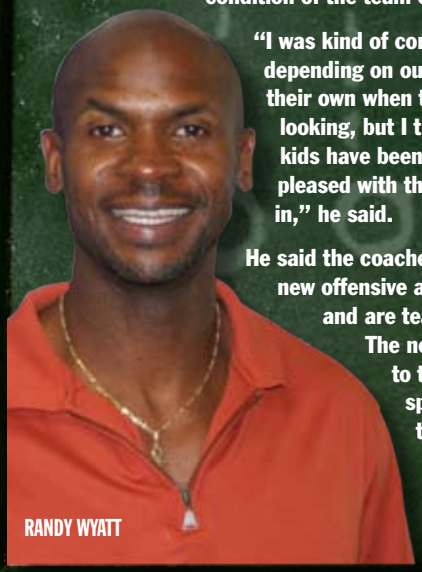
"It meant so much to them that they had worked hard out there and they were going to have something to show for it," added his Mother.

"He's living out his dream in the NFL," Wanda Wilson says as she watches her son on the field. "This (Sportsfest) is his first one but he goes to camps with those other guys on the team. He's just got the flair to relate and talk to the kids and they always want him aboard. He was just inducted into the Tilghman Hall of Fame – the youngest member- so he's just having fun right now."

MAN *in* MOTION

PTHS Coach Randy Wyatt is a man in motion, which is fitting for someone who set school records for the 200 and 400 meter dash during his days on the Tilghman track team. Having created a track dynasty at Tilghman after taking over as Boys' Track Head Coach, he took on the additional challenge of leading the PTHS football team and was announced as head coach last December. With football season looming, Coach Wyatt has been active, working to raise $100,000 dollars to support Tilghman football, helping coordinate the George Wilson Sportsfest, and preparing his team for fall.

Coach Wyatt said he is generally pleased with the physical condition of the team coming off break.



RANDY WYATT

"I was kind of concerned about… depending on our kids to work out on their own when the coaches aren't looking, but I think about 95% of our kids have been doing that, so we're pleased with the condition that they're in," he said.

He said the coaches have introduced some new offensive and defensive schemes and are teaching them to the team. The new schemes intend to take advantage of the speed and athleticism that the team possesses.

"Offensively, in the past we've been used to three yards and a cloud of dust, just running the football a lot. I feel like with the athletes we have on our team, it's best that we spread the field and become more of a spread offense. We intend to put the ball in the air, and take advantage of our athletes."

"Our defense is all about speed. We have a lot of fast guys that can make plays, so one of the main things we want to focus on is speed- we want to be very aggressive on defense."

As the team looks toward the new season, though, it is the intangibles- trust, loyalty, discipline, high expectations and mental toughness- that Coach Wyatt sees as the keys to a successful season. These are the qualities that he and his staff are seeking to instill in the team as football season approaches.

"One of the things we're trying to emphasize is developing a level of trust and loyalty amongst each other. This is our extended family and we've got to be loyal to each other and trust each other. When you do those types of things you are not worried about the individual accolades; you're worried about the overall team victory. Once you establish that then you get rid of the selfishness and things of that nature."

"I'm a firm believer in discipline. I don't care how much talent you have; if you are not disciplined, you won't win. That's the bottom line."

"We've got to put all that together. And knowing their role and doing their role to the best of their ability and accepting their role. If we can get coaches and athletes to buy into those types of things, it will make a big difference. I tell our kids all the time it's the little things that make a big difference. We do the things we need to do so we can do the things we want to do."

"It was without a doubt the most fulfilling musical experience I've ever had."

A Cappella

PTHS Choral Groups Tour Italian Cathedrals

a cappella: [as adj.] in the manner of singing in a chapel; i.e., without instrumental accompaniment

History, art, choral performances, and happening upon Tom Hanks filming the sequel to "The Da Vinci Code" were all part of a ten day tour of Italian cathedrals taken by Prime Rib and Concordia.

For Prime Rib and Concordia, a cappella choral groups at PTHS, the tour of cathedrals was a rare opportunity to experience the art and history of Italy capped by a performance at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City. The tour included stops in Rome, Siena, Florence, Venice and Milan.

Organized by choral director Art DeWeese, these groups spent the school year preparing for the tour, which took place in June. The group of parents and students saw sixteen chapels on a guided tour. Concordia and Prime Rib sang in three of the largest cathedrals in the world.

While touring Duomo di Santo Maria del Fiore, the third largest cathedral in the world and the center of Florence, Italy, the group asked if they could sing, and gave an impromptu performance. It so impressed the friar, Father Alexander, that he called it a "gift from God" sent to him on his birthday and invited the group to return for Mass the next day, and reserved special seating at the main altar for the group.

Students John Warmath and Maxwell Voorhies, members of Prime Rib, agreed that their favorite performance was a full length concert that was given at a basilica in Florence.

"We just did so well," Warmath said.

"It was emotional- everyone was crying," Voorhies said. "We were all singing the best we ever sang. The basilica is made of stone, so the acoustics were incredible. It was without a doubt the most fulfilling musical experience I've ever had."

Art DeWeese also singled out the Florence performance as a highlight.

"Their Thursday night performance was the best performance I have ever had with any performing group," he said.

A performance highlight for parent A. J. Sales, parent of Concordia member Emily Sales, was St. Peter's Basilica.

"To see the children sing in St. Peter's Basilica was wonderful," Sales said. "During the performance there was not a single dry eye for either the parents or the children. The place itself is an awesome experience."

Kim Ford, a parent who accompanied the group was similarly impressed by the tour and performances.

"When we came home and friends would ask 'How was the trip?' goose bumps would immediately appear and tears would well up in our eyes. It was just impossible to describe.

We were inspired and amazed by these young people and their amazing talent. Every night we would swear that the next day could not be better, yet each day was. Wonderful memories were created each and every day."

Besides singing in the basilicas, Prime Rib and Concordia did impromptu street performances. With a hat placed on the ground to solicit donations from passersby, the group averaged about 250 Euros per day, according to Voorhies, "Which we would split for lunch." The boys maintained that they made more money busking than the girls, but "the girls got started later," DeWeese said.

Sales described the tour as "An incredible trip. It was best described by one parent when we were in Rome- which was the beginning of the trip- who said, 'If the trip stopped right now, it would be great.' It was a tremendous emotional experience, but it was also an incredible learning experience to see the artwork of the great masters."

Along with the guided tours, the groups were allowed ample free time to explore on their own.

"You can learn about Rome from a guided tour, but having free time is the way to experience it," Voorhies said. "A friend (of mine) comparing Rome and Paris, said Rome is more the lady. There are amazing things to see, but they are hidden."

It was during their free time that they had what John Warmath described as one of the "fun highlights of the trip" when they happened to see Tom Hanks as he was filming the sequel to the movie "The Da Vinci Code."

Warmath, who was traveling to Europe for the first time, called the tour "An exciting opportunity. I'm glad I got to be a part of it."

"If you're going to wrestle, wrestle a 200-POUNDER"

A conversation with Cecil Ward on raising the bar.

After thirty – five years in coaching, Cecil Ward defines perspective. He has a deep appreciation for the successes he has had through the years. When he began his coaching career at Western Kentucky University as a track and cross country coach, his cross country team was ninth in the nation, and he had eight track athletes who went to the 1980 Olympic trials. At Tilghman, where he has coached since 1982, he has accumulated 15 state championships in football, track, and cross-country. But with all his success, he's learned how to take setbacks in stride, and use them to make his teams better.

So when he reflects on the 2008 track season, he understands why his girls track team finished second to Fort Thomas Highlands after winning seven state class 2A championships in a row, and he also understands what it will take to win the state championship again. "It's a matter of points." he says. "You have to have enough girls on the field to earn enough points to win. We did not have enough girls that had been around long enough to win."

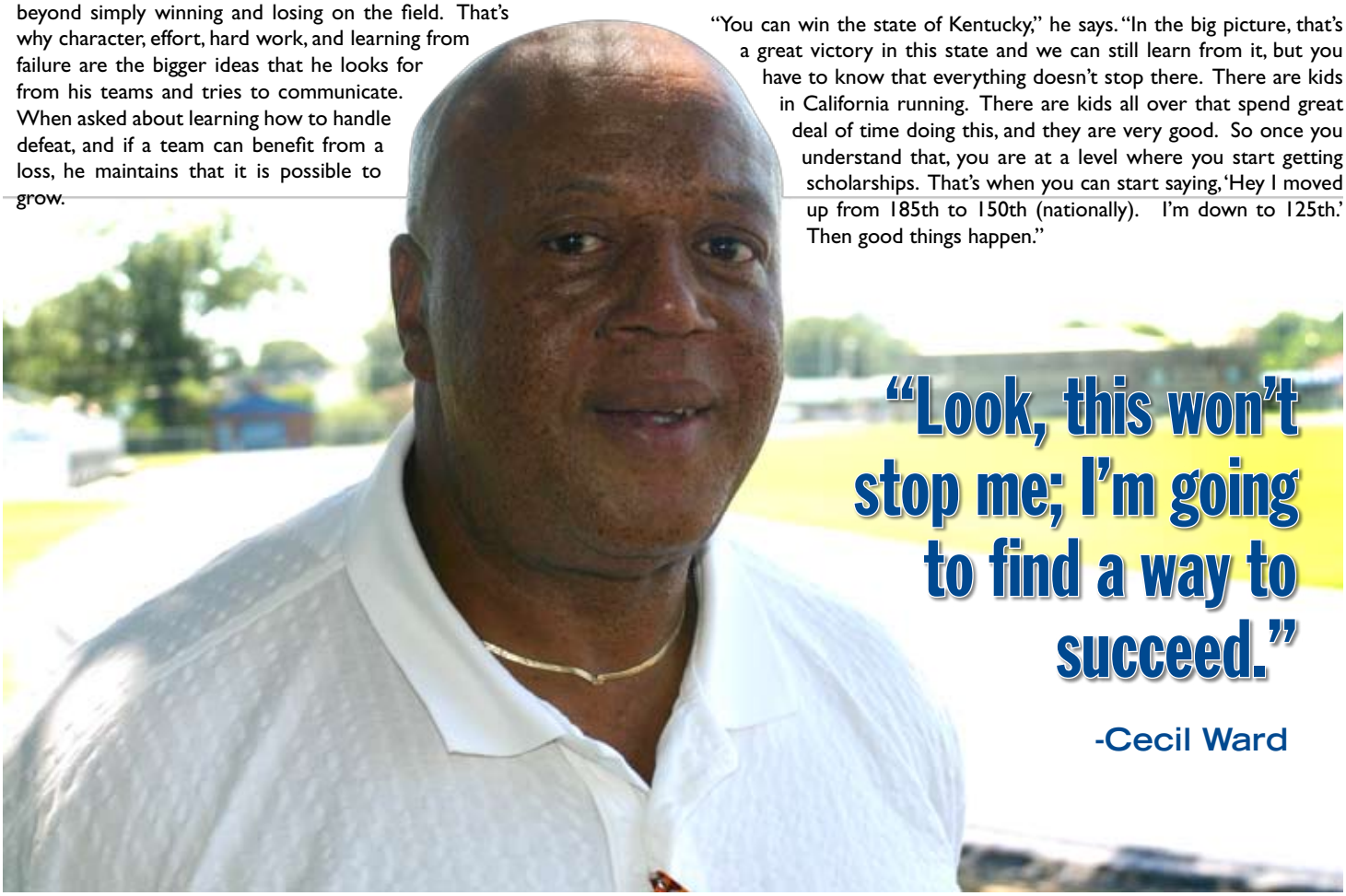
For Coach Ward, though, the big picture is what counts and goes beyond simply winning and losing on the field. That's why character, effort, hard work, and learning from failure are the bigger ideas that he looks for from his teams and tries to communicate. When asked about learning how to handle defeat, and if a team can benefit from a loss, he maintains that it is possible to grow.

"(It is possible to grow) if you learn to accept (the loss), and if you put your best effort in. When you've given everything that you've got to win and someone else is as good as you are and you get beat then there's no reason to feel bad. If you've never lost you've never tested yourself. That's a concept that many people don't understand. They say, 'I'm gonna win!' Well, yeah, you're going to win, but run against good people. If you're going to wrestle, wrestle a 200 pounder, don't wrestle the 115."

"If I'm in business, it's not always going to be 100% that I'm gaining, so you've got to learn how to control those business efforts when everything's going down the pipe. Do I give up, or do I just say, 'Look, this won't stop me; I'm going to find a way to succeed.'? Trying is not a failure- the success comes when you don't let that failure stop you. You go on anyway."

Coach Ward is a believer in having athletes measure themselves against the best competition that they can find. In this way they learn what it takes to win in the long run.

"You can win the state of Kentucky," he says. "In the big picture, that's a great victory in this state and we can still learn from it, but you have to know that everything doesn't stop there. There are kids in California running. There are kids all over that spend great deal of time doing this, and they are very good. So once you understand that, you are at a level where you start getting scholarships. That's when you can start saying, 'Hey I moved up from 185th to 150th (nationally). I'm down to 125th.' Then good things happen."

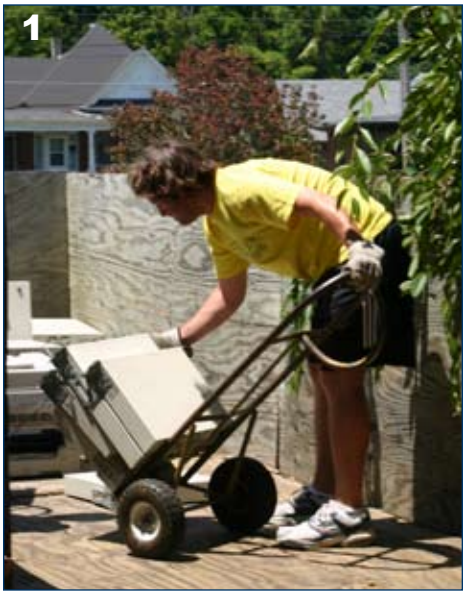


"Look, this won't stop me; I'm going to find a way to succeed."

-Cecil Ward

What we Did this Summer!

While most students are away from school during the summer, activity continues in our district. Here are some of the things we've done this summer, with your help and support.



1. After flooding damaged the Forest Hills building where Choices was located, work began at Cooper-Whiteside to move the alternative school there for the 08-09 school year.

2. Roof work was done at Clark Elementary. Roof work will also be done at PTHS and McNabb this fall.

3. Morgan renovations included carpet, furniture, paint and ventilation work.

4. PTHS track was repainted.

5. McNabb students attended three summer camps in Art, Math and Science sponsored by Kids Company Too Family Resource Center

6. Clark students attended a summer camp at Dudley Court sponsored by Kids Company 1 Family Resource Center.

7. Morgan students attended summer camp and visited the River Heritage Museum during "Camp One-A-Day" sponsored by the Morgan Family Resource Center.

8. Rising sixth graders from Morgan, McNabb and Clark participated in Paducah Middle's Jump Start, a two week summer orientation sponsored by Tornado Family Resource Center.

9. PMS teachers and members of the Chamber of Commerce Business Education Partnership met at Paducah Middle School on July 9 to develop "bell ringers" for the upcoming school year. The project was a part of the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Initiative, which seeks to encourage more students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.

10. Food service staff prepared an average of 470 meals each day for the Parks and Recreation Service.

11. Elementary students participated in Summer Elementary Tennis which provides supervised play and instruction under the direction of PTHS Head Tennis Coach Masimba Ruwo.

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Get S.E.T.

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www.paducah.kyschools.us

Paducah Public Schools
MISSION STATEMENT
Paducah Public Schools will prepare all students to graduate and successfully enter their chosen fields, through a comprehensive educational program characterized by mutual respect, freedom from bias, pursuit of excellence, personalized instruction and a diverse curriculum, in a clean and safe environment.

We believe
- There is a higher order to which the universe is subject.
- Acceptance of inherent uniqueness brings higher self-esteem to the individual and benefits to society.
- There is a direct correlation between work and the development of personal dignity.
- Rules exist to maintain the order required in any successful society.
- Each individual is responsible for seizing or creating opportunities.
- Everyone has an obligation to return something beneficial to the community.
- Society is strengthened by human diversity.
- There is a direct correlation between the level of expectation and the level of achievement.
- Individual behavior is governed by personal values.
- Knowledge is the means to understanding.
- Every individual has inherent worth.
- Excellence is the only acceptable level of performance.
- Every person has unlimited and varying capacity to learn.

Paducah Public Schools
Since 1854
Academic Excellence, Tradition and Pride

Dr. Randy Greene
Superintendent

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