



# Eagle Talk

*Pardon our  
Progress*

SAYRE SCHOOLS

August/Sept 2016

**“PROGRESS ALWAYS INVOLVES RISKS. YOU CAN’T  
STEAL SECOND BASE AND KEEP YOUR FOOT ON FIRST.”**

**-FREDERICK B. WILCOX**

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

## Pardon Our Progress...

James Bryant Conant once said, “Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out.” The turtle knows that sticking his neck out makes him vulnerable and exposed—but he also knows that he will never get anywhere without doing so. Of course, there are days that he would rather stay tucked safely away in his shell—ignoring the ever changing world outside that surely lurks with challenges and uncertainties, but he proceeds, nonetheless.

The 2016-2017 school year is packed with potential progress for Sayre Public Schools—and we are willing to “stick our necks” out for it! And while we have no plans of moving at the *pace* of a turtle, we will likewise be *steadfast* and *consistent* in our everyday efforts to achieve our goals.

I am certain that I cannot adequately express the amount of positive momentum that we have moving into this current school

literally and figuratively), we know that Sayre Public Schools will never be the same again—in the best way possible!

**“It’s not about perfect. It’s about effort. And when you bring that effort every single day, that’s where transformation happens. That’s how change occurs.” ~Unknown**

year. We are actively engaged in curriculum mapping, implementation of new English language arts and mathematics standards, changes in state testing requirements, building construction due to the passage of our most recent bond proposal, a 1:1 initiative pilot with Chromebooks, and the beginning stages of our Continuous Strategic Improvement Plan that was introduced in the spring. When the dust settles (both

So, yes, Sayre Schools is “under construction”—in so many wonderful ways. We ask that you *PARDON* our dust, our requests for community and parent input, our quest to update and improve instruction, and our efforts to create a new vision for our school. Please *pardon our progress*, because there are exciting changes in the works!

## Mapping & OAS...

We began our curriculum mapping initiative at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year and successfully mapped PK-12 English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. And while a curriculum map is never completely “finished” and always requires edits and updates, we now face the new challenge of aligning our existing maps with the new Oklahoma Academic Standards (OAS) for ELA and math. This mapping update will also include the addition of our newly adopted reading textbook series for ELA PK-12. We will also move forward with mapping history, science, fine arts and electives this school year!

As mentioned above, last spring the Oklahoma State Department of Education released new standards for ELA and mathematics. Eight overarching standards now guide ELA instruction. We see new standards that now constantly interweave reading and writing skills. Language arts learning will not progress for students in the strictly linear way it may in other content areas—but will be presented in a recursive manner that allows students to revisit concepts again and again as they use language at increasingly sophisticated levels. The new mathematics standards are fundamentally developed around four main content strands as well as Mathematical Actions and Processes which are comprised of skills that give students the ability to problem solve, communicate, and reason about mathematics.

These new standards do not come without changes and challenges. This year we will face the task of filling critical gaps and shifts, new grade level concepts, and changed emphasis in our instruction and curriculum. I know our teachers can and will rise to this challenge!

## 1:1 Pilot...

Every employee here at Sayre knows that if their computer, Internet, phone, e-mail, Smart Board, iPad, Chromebook, printer and a host of other things continue to work on a daily basis—we normally have one person to thank, and that is Mr. Brian Morris, our technology director (insert applause here)!

Brian and the rest of our leadership team have worked so hard to bring Sayre Schools to the forefront in technology. Mr. Morris’ enthusiasm and passion for progression and technology is often the driving force behind our advancements. We are currently piloting a 1:1 Chromebook initiative this year in four classrooms with the hope of moving into full implementation next school year. Our entire faculty now has their own Chromebook along with training that will help them transition successfully in this process. Our students are 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners—so please *pardon our progress* as we learn to become 21<sup>st</sup> Century educators.

## Under Construction...

The passage of the bond last year will provide physical updates to the face of Sayre Schools. Demolition has already begun on certain projects and more will follow this fall and winter. So please *pardon* the equipment, dirt, and inconvenience of our growth. Please *pardon* while we update our buildings, classrooms, and transportation—so that our students and faculty can continue to be proud to be part of Sayre Schools!

## Testing...Testing....

Danny Crabb, our former HS principal, will take over as district test coordinator. Oklahoma as recently issued many changes regarding state exams. End-of-Year Instruction exams (EOIs) have been replaced with a 10<sup>th</sup> grade “suite of assessments” given once a year that will include the following sub-tests: Math, Science, English Language Arts, and Writing. The U.S. History test will be given during the spring of the year the student is enrolled in the course. Grades 3-8 will still see assessments in reading and math as well as writing now being a part of the ELA assessment in grades 3-8. And while Social Studies assessments have been eliminated in grades 5 and 8, there will still be a Science assessment in those grade levels. Lastly, all fine arts assessments have been eliminated.

Even though these changes are in their infancy, Oklahoma seems to be moving away from “high stakes testing.” Although there will still be district benchmarks to provide real-time data for instruction, and there will still be state exams—it feels as though a little weight has been lifted and we can begin to find our way back to what’s really important—which is teachers teaching and students learning. Teachers can enjoy what they do and students can be engaged in what they are learning—discovering how to be critical thinkers and problem solvers, not master test takers. So please, *pardon our progress* as we get back to what really matters.

## CSI....

In case you haven’t heard—Sayre is building a road map! This road map will be in the form of a Continuous Strategic Improvement Plan (CSI). It will help direct our district for the

next several years. As our guides in this process, we are partnering with the Oklahoma State School Board Association and the K20 Center for Educational and Community Renewal at the University of Oklahoma.

We are currently in Phase I (Engage) of this planning process. We have made a community survey available on our district website; we welcome every Sayre citizen to complete the online survey so that your voice will be heard! After gathering and analyzing data, we will attempt to answer the questions: *Who are we? Where are we now? Where do we want to go? (and) How do we plan to get there?* The community survey will remain open for input until August 26. It is available on the Sayre Public Schools website at <http://www.sayre.k12.ok.us>. The planning process will also include community forums. Community forums are scheduled for 6 to 7:30 p.m. September 19 at the middle school/high school library and from 6 to 7:30 p.m. September 20 at the elementary school.

A proposed plan is expected to be presented for school board approval by mid-2017.

## Welcome to the Construction Zone...

So in closing, I would like to welcome you to the construction zone that is the 2016-2017 school year here at Sayre! We ask that you not only *pardon our progress* as we work hard for the future of our students, but we ask for your patience, input, and most of all your help in celebrating this historical time of change for the district. We look forward to the day that the “dust settles”—but for now, we are just enjoying the journey!

## August/September Highlights

- Aug 18: Hydro-Eakly Free Fair  
Livestock Judging Contest  
Aug 19: HSFBS Scrimmage @  
Wheeler, TX 6:00  
Aug 22: MSSB @ Hollis 4:30  
FFA Back-to-School Event  
6:00  
Aug 23: MSSB vs. Canute 4:30  
HSSB vs. Canute 6:00  
Aug 25 & 27: HSSB @ Conf. Tourn  
(@Snyder-TBA)  
Aug 26: HSFBS vs. Hooker 7:00  
Aug 29: MSSB vs. Clinton 4:30  
HSSB vs. Clinton 5:30  
Aug 30: MSSB @ Carnegie 4:30  
HSSB @ Carnegie 5:30  
MSFB vs. Merritt 5:30/7:30  
Sept 1 & 3: MSSB @ Conf. Tourn  
(@Navajo—TBA)  
Sept 1: HSSB vs. Arnett & Hollis  
4:30  
Sept 2: HSFBS @ Mooreland 7:00  
Sept 6: MSSB vs. Cheyenne 4:30  
HSSB vs. Cheyenne 5:30  
MSFB @ Mangum 5:30/7:00  
Sept 8: MSSB @ Cordell 4:30  
HSSB @ Cordell 5:30  
Sept 9: School Board Meeting  
(Central Office @ 12:00pm)  
HSFB @ Booker, TX 7:30



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