



Lambs, Lions and Leprechauns!

Did I get your attention for March? Hopefully, March will come in like a lion and out like a lamb, and you will have the luck of a leprechaun. We at RESA 4 would like to highlight each county we serve. Going in reverse alphabetical order, with this issue we will spotlight Webster County. We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter and see all the good that is happening in our region!

Dave Warvel, Executive Director

School of Education Launches Partnership with Webster County High School

Webster County High School and the Fairmont State University School of Education, Health and Human Performance have launched a groundbreaking partnership to recruit, educate and retain the next generation of classroom professionals. WCHS and FSU signed a partnership agreement to offer dual credit classes, comprehensive professional development, and an articulation agreement for students in the Careers in Education program.

The Careers in Education program is a four-course career and technical education program that gives high school students interested in the education field a chance to experience the profession. Students take courses in human growth and development, educational psychology, curriculum and instruction, and a capstone that involves a ten-week observed and mentored student teaching field experience.

The partnership with Fairmont State allows high school students to take the capstone class as college dual credit. The Careers in Education program instructor, Jonas Knotts, calls the program a unique tool to help train the next generation of classroom professionals.



"The program allows students to explore different grade levels, content areas, even administration, counseling and other education support areas. Students who complete the program really have an advantage when they go to college in teacher education. They've learned about how humans develop and learn, how to create an effective and engaging lesson, and how to manage a classroom. Most importantly, they have a realistic expectation of the education profession," Knotts said.

The partnership is also the first dual credit offering for Fairmont State. Students completing the program at WCHS can earn three hours of FSU credit for EDUC 2200 Introduction to Education that is transferable within the West Virginia higher education system. WCHS students who go on to major in teacher education at FSU can have up to 30 hours of pre-service classroom observations waived. Also, FSU is providing comprehensive professional development, career exploration and counseling and support for WCHS students to complete their electronic teaching portfolios.

FSU School of Education, Health and Human Performance faculty look forward to building the partnership. "We are excited to collaborate with Webster County High School to offer FSU's first dual enrollment course," said Dr. Jaci Webb-Dempsey, Interim Associate Dean of Fairmont State's School of Education, Health and Human Performance. "We are proud to have Mr. Jonas Knotts, an FSU alumnus, teaching the Careers in Education program and look forward to working with his students in the future. Our partnership is mutually beneficial; students have an opportunity to earn three college credits for completing a rigorous academic curriculum and have support developing their electronic teaching portfolios. Webster County has an opportunity to grow its own teachers, as we anticipate those students who go on to pursue a teaching degree will return to teach in their home communities, and Fairmont State has an opportunity to recruit talented students who have completed a program that provides a realistic and rigorous introduction to teaching. It is a win-win partnership."

Webster County Schools personnel are excited to expand WCHS' career and technical education, as well as dual credit offerings. "The Careers in Education program fills an underserved area of career and technical education. Most people who finish a career and technical education program head directly into the workforce, to a certification program or two-year degree program," said Webster County Schools Career and Technical Education Administrator Mike Bonnett. "With this program and partnership, we can now offer career and technical education programs geared toward those students who want to pursue a four-year bachelor's degree or beyond. It's a way to provide more options for success for our students, get some of our best and brightest into the teaching field and help with the teacher shortage in the area.

Students are excited about the opportunities the program and partnership provide as well. "It always seemed that many of the dual credit and AP courses were geared toward the hard sciences and medical fields. This way, in addition to gaining an edge when I start teacher education in college, I can also earn dual credit based specifically in my major area," said Taylor Anderson, WCHS senior and member of the first Careers in Education cohort.

The partnership is also a first for the state of West Virginia. This marks the first time that a four-year institution has teamed up with a high school offering the Careers in Education program to give students the option to earn dual credit and complete academic, career and portfolio support throughout their time in the program. "We are excited to be blazing a new trail with this partnership. Even though we are in a rather rural area, it shows that students are not isolated from the means to help them succeed," said WCHS Principal Stacey Cutlip.

Founded in 1974 and located in Upperglade, Webster County High School is an accredited, public, combined middle and high school. With a student body of nearly 700, WCHS has a rich tradition of academic and athletic excellence. Students have the opportunity to pursue a wide variety of Advanced Placement, dual credit, fine arts, vocational and technical training courses.