



# Achieve

HARDEMAN COUNTY SCHOOLS

VOL. 9, NO. 1, FALL 2010

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The mission of the Hardeman County Schools is to prepare each child for the future by developing skills, nurturing talents, molding characters, and inspiring dreams.*



## Hardeman County Board of Education

P.O. Box 112  
10815 Old Hwy. 64 West  
Bolivar, TN 38008  
Phone: 731-658-2510  
Fax: 731-658-2061

## SCHOOLS

Bolivar Central High  
731-658-3151

Bolivar Elementary  
731-658-3981

Bolivar Middle  
731-658-3656

Grand Junction Elem.  
731-764-2841

Hornsby Elementary  
731-658-5707

Middleton Elementary  
731-376-0160

Middleton High  
731-376-8391

Toone Elementary  
731-658-5606

Whiteville Elementary  
731-254-8013

## A message from the HCS Director of Schools

*By Dr. Donald L. Hopper*

This is going to be an interesting and challenging school year for us. In many ways, we are looking forward to the road ahead. The Race to the Top funding that Hardeman County Schools is receiving will allow us to purchase much-needed technology equipment that we would otherwise not be able to buy so soon. We are excited about that, and so are our teachers.

Tennessee has named its new law, passed in a special session of the legislature in January, the Tennessee First to the Top. In March, Tennessee and Delaware were the first two states selected to receive federal Race to the Top funding. This money will allow Tennessee to implement school reform plans over the next four years that we will be receiving the money.

The Tennessee General Assembly is reforming education in four areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college or in the workforce
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals how to improve instruction
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed the most
- Turning around low performing schools

Recently I addressed the subject of differentiated instruction. This is a very important area of teaching. The data we collect on individual students will allow our teachers and administrators to see where a student stands academically in a subject, especially that student's reading level. We already have our H.E.A.R.T. program that has proven to increase the reading level of our students who are in the program.

Our parents should be able to go online soon to see how their child performed on this spring's TCAP that was given to students in grades 3-8. The annual Report Card will not be available to the public until later this fall.

State educators are preparing parents for a very strong possibility that their child may not do as

well due to raising the bar on our standardized tests in order to improve education in Tennessee.

According to a recent article in the Tennessean, information from the Tennessee Department of Education indicates that students who have been scoring advanced or proficient on the TCAP may fall below what they normally score.

The new TCAP, or Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, will have four categories for student scoring instead of the previous three. The four categories are: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. Before the test was reworked, the three categories were: advanced, proficient, and below proficient. Subject areas undergoing changes include: math, language arts, and science. No changes have been made in social studies.

Parents are being warned that it could look very bad this year, and that Tennessee students might lag behind for the next couple of years before bounding back.

We in education in Hardeman County want you to be aware of what is ahead of us. We are preparing ourselves to meet these new benchmarks, because we want to improve education for your children. I am quoting Gov. Phil Bredesen here, but that is because I strongly believe in what he says: "In America and Tennessee, we have an obligation to improve our role in the global economy and create high-quality jobs for the future."

Please take time to visit the Tennessee Department of Education at: <http://state.tn.us/education>. You can find a link to Tennessee First to the Top on the home page of the Hardeman County Schools' website: [www.hardemancountyschools.org](http://www.hardemancountyschools.org).



**Dr. Donald L. Hopper**


**'Preparing for the Future, One Child at a Time'**

## Our new look!

It was time for a change to our district website, and this year we made the big leap to a new look. Our web pages are basically the same, but we did a redesign to the head on each page. "We are featuring student photos that give our pages a warmer, more student-friendly look," said Anne Ingle, website content manager. "On the home page, look at the picture of the student with the American flag in the background. Before your eyes, you will see a fade-in slideshow featuring other student photos.

"We have added some more information, but you should be able to find everything you used before in basically the same place. The Achieve newsletter is now found only on the website, and we hope that will give us an opportunity to expand the newsletter to include more than four pages. We hope you like the redesign and that you will use the website more often," added Mrs. Ingle.





# Hardeman County Schools

*"Preparing for the Future, One Child at a Time"*

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**Welcome!**


Welcome to the Hardeman County Schools' website. We hope you find everything you need to know about Hardeman County schools, its employees and our most important product, our children. We strive to be the best we can when it comes to educating your children. Our website is designed to help you find out what is going on in the school district as well as each one of our schools.

Our motto, "Preparing for the Future, One Child at a Time," is the backbone for the mission of the Hardeman County Schools. We do everything we can to keep up with today's technology so our children will be prepared for the future when they graduate from high school. We are proud of the students who graduate from our high schools and go on to achieve and contribute something to society. We strive to keep up with the latest in educational tools so our children have what they need to prepare them for the future.


We appreciate your visit to our website, and we hope that you will take advantage of the many services our site provides.


**September is National School Success Month**  
Parents: Support and encourage your children so they will succeed in school!


The Tennessee Department of Health has new immunization requirements for children attending schools. [Click here to view or download the Department of Health's immunization rule notification for parents:](#)  
[New Immunization Rule Notification to Parents](#)




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## School supplies donated

Greg Rivers (right), program director and deejay for Rock 92.3 in Jackson, recently presented Dr. Donald L. Hopper (left), director of Hardeman County Schools, with a box of school supplies. 'Stuff the Bus' was a campaign to fill a yellow school bus with school supplies for students in Jackson and the surrounding area including Hardeman County. The box was filled with paper, notebooks, pencils, and backpacks for Hardeman County students. Froggy 104 and TJ Network helped Rock 92.3 with the campaign, and sponsors were Sam's Club, Taco Bell, Youth Villages, and Jackson Storm Window and Door Co., LLC.

**"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."**  
—Maya Angelou



**Hornsby Elementary School** has begun the year with new additions to the staff and faculty. We welcome Mrs. Amanda Baird, kindergarten; Mrs. Rachel Ross, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades science and social studies; Mrs. Leah Nuckolls, guidance; and Mrs. Ruthie Baker, library. The annual Harvest Festival will be Oct.

23rd. Festivities will include games, jumpers, cake walk, country store, and the auction. Alex Coleman from WREG, News Channel 3, Memphis, visited Hornsby Elementary School to do a story of Sydni Aylor, which aired on Sept. 21st. Congratulations to Ruthie Baker, librarian at HES, and Dr. Dorrie Powell, librarian at Bolivar Central High School, for winning a \$500,000 grant for all of the school libraries in Hardeman County.

**Middleton Elementary School** is working hard to keep its students, staff, and community involved in our TOP project — Project Technology, Project Outback, and Project Pride. Our students will participate in a Wildlife Show on Sept. 30th, and we are looking forward to the upcoming Red Ribbon Week during the month of October. Our Harvest Festival will be Saturday, Nov. 13th this year. We will have many games and activities from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Then we will continue the fun with an auction beginning at 5:30 p.m. We hope to have lots and lots of support from the Middleton community, as well as the surrounding area!

**Bolivar Central High School** is excited about hosting the upcoming ACT Strategy Session sponsored by GEAR UP from 9 a.m.-noon Oct. 2. This will provide juniors and seniors from both Bolivar Central and Middleton high schools the opportunity to participate in intensive preparation in the subject area/areas of their choice. College App Week is quickly approaching. Oct. 25-29 will be a time when all students are given the opportunity to apply to colleges they are interested in attending next fall. Tennessee College App Week is sponsored by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and CollegeforTN.org and is designed to build excitement around the college application process and provide every high school senior the opportunity to apply, with a focus placed on first-generation students and students who may not otherwise apply to college. After School Tutoring is available in the Bolivar Central High School library from 3:15-4:15 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Certified teachers are present to assist with all 9-12 academic subjects.

**Toone Elementary School** would like to welcome Michelle Howell, instructional facilitator; Tisa Strickland, Pre-K; and Megan Crouch, third grade. We have started the year off with lots of excitement. Box Tops for Education Week was a great success. The students brought five box tops each day to participate in activities. Mrs. Shelly Butler hosted the annual Scholastic Book Fair the first week in September. The event was a great success. During this time we also welcomed our grandparents. The students honored their grandparents during a luncheon on Sept. 9th and 10th. As a token of our appreciation for attending, grandparents were awarded with a TES key-chain. The TES PTO will sponsor Computers for Education. Students will be completing booklets. For each booklet re-

turned, the school will receive 50 cents. Our annual Harvest Festival will be Oct. 1st. This year we will host a chili supper, silent auction, cake walk, inflatables, and many more activities for the children.

**Grand Junction Elementary School** is off to a great start. The school had its Open House on Aug. 23rd. Several parents attended, and we would like to thank them for their support. Ashley Atkins was selected as the school reporter. GJES will be taking Christmas pictures on Sept. 30 beginning at 8 a.m. Also, we will be participating in Tennessee Child Health Week, Oct. 4-10. The theme is "Healthy Youth, Healthy Future." On Oct. 8th, Principal Linda Buggs will be walking with teachers, staff, and students as a part of Tennessee Child Health Week. GJES is looking forward to a fantastic year.

**Bolivar Elementary School** is happy to welcome a new assistant principal, Mr. Shobeck Dethrow, a former 4th grade teacher. Mr. James Rutherford and Ms. Cameshia Ford join the faculty as our new instructional facilitators. Mrs. Paige Sain has joined as a 4th grade teacher, and Mrs. Rebecca Hammons as a pre-school assistant. Congratulations to our Fur, Fin and Feather art contest winners: Dakota Duke, 1st grade, honorable mention; Jaden King, 2nd grade, third place; and Lashadia



The BES PTO had a fundraiser, Mascot Madness. Each class named its mascot, and students and parents used creative means to raise funds for their class mascot. Over \$7,200 was raised for BES.



BES honored its grandparents Sept. 9-17. Grandparents were invited to have lunch with their grandchildren, listen to the children sing, have a story read by the teacher, and visit the book fair.

For more school news, please turn to Page 4

## Spotlight on Excellence: Whiteville Elementary School

Continued from Page 3

By September, Whiteville Elementary School had given the Star Reading and Star Math tests. Students were anxious to see how well they had done on the Star Reading test, because it would set their Accelerated Reading (AR) level to start the new school year. With the testing behind us, everyone was ready to start taking the AR tests. This year, WES is taking the AR tests online in real time. This gives WES students the opportunity to have more than 600,000 AR tests available to them. We are anticipating having the students read more books and take more AR tests which will help them with their reading and test taking skills, said Rachel Weir, library media specialist

What a great turnout of parents and guardians for the first Parent-Teacher Conference of the school year. Teachers were available from 8-11 a.m. and again from 3-6 p.m. This was a different time set than we used before, and the parents and guardians seem to like it. If anyone did not get a chance to visit with their child's teacher or teachers, you may call or come by the school to set up an appointment with the teacher or teachers.

After the Parent-Teacher Conference, WES celebrated Grandparents Day, or should we say — days. WES had three days for grandparents' recognitions. Sept 10th was for the pre-kindergartners and kindergartners' grandparents and WES' Foster Grandparents Day. Grandparents whose grandchildren were in first through eighth grades were recognized Sept. 14th and 15th. The grandchildren were given the opportunity to purchase a gift for their grandparents. The school offered ribbons that said "A Grandparent's Love is a Gift" and other sayings, a balloon and Coke, or an appreciation picture frame for their



**Grandparents Day was a happy day for Whiteville Elementary School students and their grandparents.**

grandparent. Everyone had a great time, and the food was wonderful. Thanks to Mr. Andrea Douglas and his cafeteria staff.

The first meeting of the Parent Teacher Involvement Team (PTI team) was Sept. 16th. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grad-

ers presented a program honoring the achievements and contributions of Hispanic Americans. Students sang a song in Spanish and English. They also had a "Who Am I?" contest where the audience could guess famous Hispanics. The person or persons who answered correctly were given a chance to spin the wheel for a prize. Some of the prizes were free half gallons of the "world famous" WES stew, a free ticket to the WES Stew Dinner, and free tickets to the annual WES Fall Harvest



**WES 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students sang a song in Spanish and English during the first meeting of the PTI team.**

Festival. During the PTI team meeting, there were several students recognized for improved behavior and/or improved grades. These students were chosen from each homeroom and by other staff members. They are the Student of the Month and are given a small token or free ice cream. Students try very hard to show kindness, citizenship, and improvement in all areas of their school life so they may be chosen as the next Student of the Month.

Tier II Math and the 21st Century Extend School Day Program started Sept. 20th and will end in April. The Extend School Day Program is Monday through Thursday of each week. There are several students who attend the Extend School Day Program where they receive help in reading and math. They also receive library, computer time, music class, physical activity, and help with homework. The students start the Extend School Day with a healthy snack. Participating students enjoy the Extend School Day Program.

**National Red Ribbon  
Week  
is Oct. 23-31, 2010**



## Block scheduling has its pluses, administrators say

Last year, Hardeman County's two high schools decided to go to block scheduling. There was one very plausible reason that kept administrators talking about the move, and that was the Tennessee Diploma Project, which would gradually add more credit requirements for graduation. The addition of more diverse courses, which has resulted in a "Program of Study" concentration of at least three courses in the same field being made available for all students, is also a requirement of the TDP. It's much like choosing a major and a minor on the university level.

One of the very first benefits teachers and administrators noticed was that, with only three class changes a day, students were spending less time in the hallways, and that resulted in a much better flow of traffic between classes, less trips to lockers, and less disruptions and disciplinary issues between classes. Classroom disciplinary problems seem to be fewer with block scheduling since students have fewer but longer classes.

Naturally it took some adjusting after having the traditional five or six classes per day for one full school year to four classes per semester. And instead of 45- or 50-minute classes, students are in one class for 90 minutes. Teachers had some concerns about keeping students busy and focused for that length of time, but according to Dr. Bruce Lewis, guidance counselor at Bolivar Central High School, teachers are now able to accomplish more, including, but not limited to, more concentrated study, more effective instruction, more opportunities for differentiated instruction, more opportunities for student learning at different levels, and more laboratory time for science classes and vocational/technical classes.

Block scheduling has been advantageous because students can take four Semester One classes and four different Semester Two classes. This allows for a variety of courses based upon student and parent requests, and it adds more sections of popular courses.

The new scheduling also allows the high schools to add more sections of Inclusion classes where a regular education teacher and a special education teacher, jointly and in collaboration, teach a mixed class of special education students and regular education students, who may or may not have struggled in the past with similar courses, Dr. Lewis added.

A key element of the TDP is a fourth year of math for all high school students, and block scheduling allows this to happen without having to take two math courses in one semester.

Should a student not pass a course in Semester One of a school year, that student can immediately repeat a required course in Semester Two. This saves time and often the expense of summer school and increases the likelihood of that student graduating on time and graduating with his or her peers. Block scheduling also gives students the opportunity to earn eight credits per school year compared to only six credits previously offered.

"We felt from the very beginning that block scheduling was



**BCHS biology teacher William McBroom says Odyssey, a software program that enhances classroom learning, works well with block scheduling.**



**Middleton High School English teacher Brenda Hall 's 11th grade students rapidly repeat after her words that alliterate.**

the answer to a lot of scheduling problems our students often have," said Fred Kessler II, principal at BCBS. "Of course, it took a while for everyone to get used to the new system, but it's working well for us."

Jeff Barnes, principal at Middleton High School, agreed that block scheduling is working well at his school. "We definitely have fewer incidences of the traditional hallway problems between classes with fewer class changes. Both the students and the teachers seem to have adjusted well to block scheduling, and the students are beginning to see the advantages of having different classes each semester. It adds some variety to their school year," Mr. Barnes said. He added that block scheduling also helps smooth the seam between traditional courses and career/technical classes which, more often than not, are longer anyway. "It's working well," he added.

**For the latest information on Hardeman County Schools, go to: [www.hardemancountyschools.org](http://www.hardemancountyschools.org)**

*Achieve* is published quarterly during the school year by the Hardeman County Schools' Communications Department. Inquiries may be directed to Anne Ingle, coordinator of Communications & Public Relations, P.O. Box 112, Bolivar, TN 38008, telephone: 731-658-2510, ext. 146; e-mail: [inglea@k12tn.net](mailto:inglea@k12tn.net). We are on the web at: [www.hardemancountyschools.org](http://www.hardemancountyschools.org)