

Special Education:

SDI--Students are receiving their specially designed instruction and other special education services regardless of whether they are attending onsite or virtually. Those who are attending virtually have had or will have a new page added to their IEP (page I) describing what services will look like while attending virtually. This Page I, which is a newly revised feature of the IEP, guides the IEP team to consider many aspects of special education services and gives a place to document team decisions regarding virtual or hybrid instruction.

ISTAR--All IEPs for students ages 14 and up reflect transition plans--post-secondary plans. Each year this group of IEPs are selected randomly and reviewed for quality and compliance. This year, all IEPs are in compliance and meet all requirements.

Kudos to our special education teachers as they have worked quickly to deliver quality services for those students who are not able to attend school in person this fall!

Welcome to our new special education teachers: Laura Kelly (Northeast); Sarah Phillips, Melanie Schoening, and Jenny Stortenbecker (Middle School)!

SEL:

Our SEL team is working closely with the school counselor team to address social emotional and behavioral health issues as we return to school. Both teams will be extremely valuable as we manage ever-changing variables related to COVID 19 as they focus specifically on teacher self-care and making connections with all students in their buildings. Here is the video that this joint team developed as a welcome back to teachers: [Welcome Back!](#)

The Middle School SEL has partnered with the Middle School Counselor to create a virtual "Zen Room" for students, particularly those who are receiving instruction virtually. The Zen Room includes several key features, such as a music button to access calming music and a link to schedule a 1:1 meeting with the SEL or counselor among others! Within hours of launching, the SEL reported receiving a message from a student thanking them for making the resource available! This is a great example of how these professionals are thinking outside the box to support teachers and students.

Welcome to Marissa Briley, our new SEL at West Elementary!

THRIVE:

Current enrollment--21 students

Lori Burton's September Summary of THRIVE Activities: THRIVE is happy to be back and thrilled to have our new space on the 4th floor with ample room for social distance this year. We currently have 21 students in the program with another 3 open applications being considered. We've welcomed back 3 former drop-outs into the program who were a part of the 2019 and

2020 senior classes. We've assisted several students already this semester in finding employment, others we've helped to receive their drivers permit or licenses in order to secure transportation to/from a job. We've welcomed a new counselor to the program for our twice-weekly group counseling sessions, Katie Lorenzen, who comes to us from UNO where she is finishing up her last year of clinical practicum. We've also implemented a new lifetime fitness credit into our schedule to get kids up in moving in this era of assigned seats and distancing. We spend 25 minutes each day walking the sidewalks of the beautiful campus on the hill. These walks have also lent themselves to some meaningful one on one conversations with students who need some extra support without the stigma of being called away from the classroom for a one on one with a teacher. Lastly, we've implemented the use of a program called CloseGap that is a private way for students to track and report their emotional state and needs. For example a student can let a teacher know when they're feeling down, needing to talk, hungry, tired, anxious or dealing with a concern at home. We've been able to intervene before a behavioral or verbal outburst may have occurred without embarrassing the student by announcing the concern publicly. THRIVE is growing and evolving and we're excited to see how we can meet the needs of students in new ways during the upcoming school year.