

REED-CUSTER HIGH SCHOOL

State Report Card Narrative

Reed-Custer High School would like to highlight several accomplishments in key "target areas" during this past school year. The accomplishments described below will continue to make a positive impact on student achievement and the academic climate at Reed-Custer High School during the 2004-2005 school year.

Target Area - Instruction.

The national legislation of "No Child Left Behind" has determined the instructional path for our teachers when addressing the needs of our students at Reed-Custer High School. High stake testing is the new "norm" in our state and country, so the target goal of "instruction" for our teachers is assist ALL of our students in preparing for success with the high stake testing.

To better prepare ALL of our students for the high stake testing, the staff at Reed-Custer High School, with the approval of our Board of Education, instituted the COMET CHALLENGE for this school year.

The Comet Challenge directly impacts the junior class, as that is the class every year [the junior class] that takes the high stake tests, ACT and Prairie State Exams. The Comet Challenge enrolls all of our juniors for four terms of English. Terms 1 and 2, follow the normal junior English curriculum. Term 3 preps the juniors for the high stake tests. The students will work with English instructors, math and science instructors [when the need arises], and also be able to interact with computer driven programs that will help review the necessary skills/content knowledge that the students will need to be successful with the high stake testing. During Term 4, the English teachers continue to prep the students until the high stake testing takes place at the end of April. The teachers will also follow the 12th grade regular English curriculum. This content/curriculum allows the students to prepare for the COMPASS tests that the students will take, if they plan on attending a junior college after graduation.

It is often difficult for students to attend high stake testing review sessions, as the review sessions often conflict with work, co-curricular activities, and normal school work. The Comet Challenge, allows for ALL the students to be able to get assistance and help during the regular school day. No child will be left behind.

The Comet Challenge indirectly impacts all the instruction of the high school staff, no matter the grade level, freshmen - seniors. We continue to work on the concept of "mastery" teaching [vs] "content" teaching. All of our instructors cover the necessary content in their subject matter as outlined by the district curriculums. This is known as covering the "content" or content teaching. "Mastery" teaching is covering the content as always, and adding yet another dimension to the instruction. That added dimension is drilling and practicing the fundamental concepts of a particular academic discipline time and time again during a student's four years in high school so that the students remember the basic or fundamental skills "forever!"

We will continue to monitor our student's progress each year on the ACT Test, Prairie State Test, and our own District Assessments; and adjust to whatever appears to be a weakness in the student's academic growth patterns. Quality instruction is the key to student success, as it establishes the basic academic foundation for our students to have the best education we can provide!!

Target Area - Student Safety.

Without question, one of the most challenging issues that face schools today is that of school safety. During this current school year we will continue to monitor student activities with our security camera system. Our security system now covers the entire high school and areas inside the field house. We are hoping to expand the security cameras to view the parking lots this year, too.

We also continue to employ a school resource officer who routinely checks the building throughout the day, and also helps to patrol our school parking lots.

I know that everyone continues to be extremely sensitive to the issue of "school safety," and I believe

that we continue to work very hard to create as safe an environment as possible for our students while they attend Reed-Custer High School.

Target Area - Home Communication.

As in the past, we will continue to send grade in progress reports home to parents during each academic term, and we will hold four parent/teacher conferences [one per term]. Our high school newsletter, Cometales, will continue to provide timely information to parents. P.A.L. (our parent advisory link) will again meet this year after every parent/teacher conference to discuss academic issues. All parents are encouraged to attend the P.A.L. meetings.

Our guidance department will continue to send home their "Bits and Pieces" informational items, as well as additional mailings for special events. (i.e. College Fair)

Parents are reminded to use the many features provided to them with our telephone system: a Comet News Line, a Homework Hot Line, a Student's Absence Line, and a Transportation Hot Line to keep parents abreast of all the assignments/events/activities at Reed-Custer High School.