



The Cougar “Paws”

The Journey Begins Here!

bainbridgej@kfalls.k12.or.us

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Principal's Pipeline

Welcome back and Happy New Year! We are delighted to see all of our students as they return to Conger. As we begin “again” in 2016, I have information for you regarding upcoming events and learning opportunities for your children.

The **Ross Ragland Youth StARTS** program will begin on January 18th for a second session of drama and movement in all classrooms. This program has been a wonderful addition to our instructional program!

It is not too late for 4th and 5th grade boys who are interested in participating in our **Conger After-School Basketball Program** to sign up and join the fun. Scott Mason, KU's Athletic Director, has worked with the Conger After-School Program to provide an integrated activity, with focus on fun, fitness and skills. Please call the school if you have any questions.

Our Conger PTO invites you to join the fun and fellowship as Conger parents plan for fun events throughout the year. Please save the date for **the PTO Winter Wonderland Carnival, scheduled for the evening of January 21st**. This event promises to be an evening of family fun and activity. Please watch for more information and consider attending our next PTO meeting on January 5th at 6:00 p.m. here at Conger.

Here at Conger, we welcome all approved parent volunteers to assist us in providing students with enriching learning opportunities. **Please contact Shannon Forbes, Conger Parent Involvement Coordinator, if you are interested in volunteering.** You can reach her here at Conger by phone. We welcome all assistance but are in particular need in the following areas: breakfast and lunch hand washing, parent membership on the Conger Leadership Teams, listening to students read, and assisting at recess with soccer games.

Spotlight on Learning

At Conger you will see the acronym **WICOR** displayed throughout the building. Last month I shared the meaning of the W (writing to learn) in WICOR. **The I in WICOR stands for “Inquiry.”** At Conger we want all students to be aware of not only what they are thinking but **HOW** they are thinking. We want students to learn by asking questions and seeking the answers to those questions. In our classrooms students are using critical thinking strategies. It is important that students ask questions about information that they do not understand. This helps them to think about what they already know and determine what they need to know to gain a greater level of understanding. Examples of questions (inquiries) that we encourage students to ask begin with: “How can...,” “What do you mean by...,” “Why does...,” or “I don't see the connection between...,” and so on. As students become confident learners their questions become deeper and more insightful. We teach them that questions can be simple or complex:

Level One questions focus on gathering and recalling information.

Level Two questions focus on making sense of gathered information.

Level Three questions focus on applying and evaluating information.

As parents, you can assist your children in deepening their inquiry skills by helping them reflect on the world around them. For example, when reading a story, your child might reflect on the story of the Three Little Pigs with these questions:

Level 1: In the story, of what were the pigs' houses made?

Level 2: Which house was the best, strongest, warmest and why?

Level 3: If all of the pigs' houses had been made of brick, how might the story have been different?

When considering snack options at the grocery store:
Level 1: What two snacks would you like to choose from?

Level 2: Of those snacks, which is the most nutritious, tastiest, filling and why?

Level 3: If you were a mommy or a daddy, which snacks would you give to your children?

Have fun!