

Inside PPS

JANUARY 2012

PORTAGE CENTRAL PERFORMING ARTS

The PHANTOM of the OPERA



FEBRUARY 3
THRU
FEBRUARY 12

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Portage Public Schools

THE FUTURE LEARNS HERE

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- *State Champions*
- *Pink Game*
- *Get Connected*

Board of Education Decides Against Pending Superintendent Search

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MLK Day is Jan. 16th.
Click Below to find out more about Martin Luther King Jr.



THE KING CENTER

“The District is in good hands”
President Bo Snyder

At its quarterly retreat this week, the Board of Education decided against launching a superintendent search at this time.

If the trustees had wanted a new superintendent in place by July, a search would have to begin this month. The Board's decision

Monday night means that interim Superintendent Ric Perry will remain in place through the 2012-2013 school-year. The vote followed an update by Dr. Perry to trustees on District goals for the year.

According to Board President Bo Snyder, the Board will conduct a formal evaluation of Dr. Perry at its March retreat and can decide further details at that time, such as how Dr. Perry's contract for the upcoming year would read, defining his title (interim or permanent), and length of the contract.

“The District is in good hands,” said President Snyder. “The Board has a lot of confidence in Dr. Perry, and keeping him in place is a conservative approach as trustees decide on long-term options.”

Dr. Perry served as the District's assistant superintendent for Instruction prior to being appointed interim superintendent last July with a contract for that position through June 2012.

“It is a privilege to lead this District,” said Dr. Perry, “as we focus our resources and talent toward the continuous improvement of student achievement.”

Ric Perry, Ed.D. Interim Superintendent, Portage Public Schools

- Interim Superintendent of Portage Schools in July 2011
- Serving as assistant superintendent for Instruction.
- Served as Portage Schools Director of Secondary Education, and Principal of Portage Central High School.
- Assistant principal and then principal of Vicksburg High School.
- Assistant principal at Delton-Kellogg
- Taught at Benton Harbor, Parchment Schools, Pheasant Ridge Center
- Coached basketball for Kalamazoo Valley, Parchment Schools, and K-College.
- President of the Association of International Baccalaureate Schools of Michigan
- Member of the Portage Rotary Club.
- BA and Masters from WMU
- Doctorate from EMU
- He and his wife Kim have twin sons, who are seniors this year at Portage Central High School. Kim is owner and director of clinical statistics at Innovative Analytics.



News & Links

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ON THE COVER

The Portage Central High School debuts Phantom Of The Opera in February 2012.(see more on page 4)

•Inside PPS is published monthly and it is edited by Communications Specialist Traver McLaughlin: (269)323-5166 or tmclaughlin@portageps.org.

Snow Day Announcements

In the event that the District must cancel school due to weather, there are several ways for parents and the community to stay informed.

Prior to 6 a.m., the announcement will be on the School Closing Hotline (323-6800), sent out via Twitter and Facebook, posted on the District's homepage (www.portageps.org), through electronic communications such as the District's "News & Links" subscription list and the individual school e-mail lists that parents subscribe to, and also through the news media.

Sign up for this free service at:

www.portageps.org/sign-up/forms/sign-up_form_district.aspx

Kindergarten Enrollment 2012-2013

It's not too soon to contact your elementary school if you have a child beginning kindergarten in the fall.

Not sure which school your child will attend? Check out our District Street Guide at: http://www.portageps.org/departments/transportation/routes/streetguide_20112012.pdf

8th Annual Portage Lacrosse Pizza Fest Fundraiser

The 8th Annual **Portage Lacrosse Pizza Fest** Fundraiser is Saturday, February 25th, 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Portage Central Middle School gym. All the pizza you can eat from approximately ten Portage/Kalamazoo-area pizzerias. Vote for your favorite regular crust, deep-dish, specialty and 'kid's choice' pizzas. Proceeds benefit the Portage Central High School Men's and Women's Lacrosse Teams, Portage Northern High School Men's and Women's Lacrosse Teams, and the Portage Middle School Girls' Lacrosse teams. Tickets available from team members or at the door. \$8.00 ; 5 and under are free.

Find Portage Public Schools on Twitter!
 @PortageSchools
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Save-the-Date: Jan. 28th For Annual PAF Fundraiser

The Portage Athletic Foundation's Annual Steppin' Out at the State fundraising event is set for Jan. 28, beginning at 7:30 p.m., at the State Theatre downtown Kalamazoo.

Ticket information www.portageps.org/community/organizations/athleticfoundation.aspx



High School Exam Schedules Online

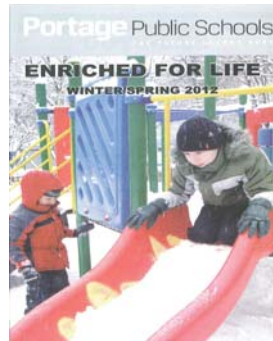
Portage Northern Exam Schedule

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/high/nhs/>

Portage Central Exam Schedule

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/high/chs/>

Enriched for Life Winter/ Spring Catalog



The 40-page Winter/Spring catalog for the **Enriched for Life** classes is now available, and has been mailed to all homes in the District. You can also find it online at www.ppscom-med.org or call 323-6700.



**Portage
Education
Foundation**

PUTTING EXCELLENCE FIRST

PEF Scholarships Available

The deadline for Portage Education Foundation scholarships is Feb. 17.

The scholarships are for graduating seniors and range from \$500 to \$4,000. Read more at: www.portageeducationfoundation.org/scholarships.php or call the Foundation at 323-5167.

Tired of the getting flyers in the bottom of a backpack a month late? Check out the new flyer page! It's your virtual backpack **CLICK HERE**

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA AT PORTAGE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL FEB. 3-12

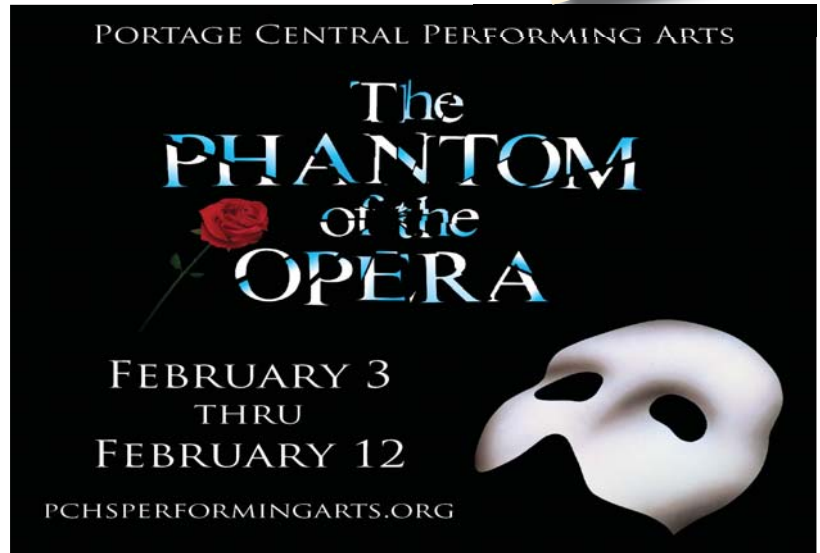
About 8 years ago, when attending the regional premiere of LES MISRABLES at Portage Central High School, an audience member (having heard PCHS director/producer Kathy Mulay was retiring), told Mrs. Mulay, "You can't retire until you do PHANTOM OF THE OPERA." Knowing how long it would probably be until those rights were released, she responded with, "I don't think I'll be around that long."

Well...she's still around and tackling that "monster" of a production called PHANTOM with a crashing chandelier, candles that appear out of the fog, a floating boat, a life size elephant, a phantom who haunts all parts of the theatre, and a score that is challenging another incredible cast which has emerged out of last year's

underclassmen. "Each year, as the seniors leave, I feel a bit of panic as I think about the next year. But somehow or another, new students in training rise to the occasion," says Mulay.

When she heard that PHANTOM OF THE OPERA was being released to colleges and high schools only, she jumped at the chance to secure the rights. The unaltered script/score will be presented in its entirety on Feb. 3, 4, 10, 11 @ 8 PM and Feb. 5 and 12 @ 3 PM in the new Portage Central High School. A great production to present in the opening year of a new high school.

Last season Mulay discovered a kindred spirit across the state when she presented HAIRSPRAY. Greg Cleveland of Walled Lake Western had produced HAIRSPRAY in November, and seeing the production, Mulay approached Cleveland about buying his set. This was the first time Mulay had not had her own set designed and built. It was a great arrangement, and she was able to sell the set to another high school producing the show later in the spring. Cleveland and Mulay began to discuss coordinating productions for the future when PHANTOM OF THE OPERA was newly released. The idea was hatched to co-produce the show. Only this time, instead of Mulay purchasing the completed set, PC production designer Tom Shuster and the WLW technical director Doug Bevier began a plan for sharing the lion of the labor and building parts of the set in both locations. When finished, the PC portion was shipped over to WLW for production in November. On December



Unloading of elephant prop for Portage Central's PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Continued on Page 5

Portage Students Receive Academy Nominations

Portage Central's Alexandra Desotelle and Ryan Knapp along with Portage Northern's Chloe Hurst were three of 13 area students to be nominated to military academies by U.S. Rep. Fred Upton, R-St. Joseph for the 2012-2013 academic year.

Nominees have excelled both academically and athletically at their respective schools and have gone through an extensive selection process

The selection process included an interview with Upton's Academy Advisory Board, which is comprised of local community leaders. Upon approval by the board, the students' names were then passed on to Upton, who then officially nominated them to military academies.

All applicants to military academies must be nominated by a member of Congress, the president or the vice president. The individual academies will make the final decisions on appointments.



*Alexandra Desotelle,
Central High School
The United States
Military Academy*



*Chloe Hurst
Northern High School
The United States
Air Force Academy*



*Ryan Knapp
Central High School
The United States
Air Force Academy*

Continued from Page 4

(Phantom)

12th, the three semi-truck loads of scenery arrived at PC for the February production.

The enormous set will be adapted to the PC space to adjust for the magnificent replication of the Broadway production. The design for the show was done by Aaron Tacy, a student in Technical Design at the University of Michigan. Aaron had the opportunity, through his professor at U of M, to meet last spring with the Broadway production stage manager (a former U of M grad). He was able to observe first hand all of the tricks and intricate trade secrets of the professional production.

Did Mulay have students in mind when picking the show? No, finding students to play the roles was the next step. Playing the role of Christine, is sophomore Natalie Duncan. "You will not believe the voice this young woman has!" boosts Mulay. "I had no idea I had a student who could sing like that." The role of the Phantom went to senior, Eric Larson. "The phantom's real name is Erik...isn't that strange?" says Mulay. Mulay & staff couldn't decide who should be cast as the romantic Raoul, so seniors Garrett Gagnon and Grant Walters will be sharing the role. Juniors Sarah Perry and Richard Phillips will play the opera divas Carlotta and Piangi.

Cindy Hunter is the musical director and Denene Mulay Koch has been coaching all the leads on their vocals. Melissa Sparks is choreographer and is thrilled to have several new advanced ballet dancers in cast this year.

"Rehearsals have been going great and we are extremely excited to bring this magnificent musical to our community in celebration of it's 25th Anniversary," says Mulay. Tickets are \$17.00 for adults and \$14.00 for students.



One of Three Semi Trucks full of sets delivered to Portage Central

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“ONE COMMUNITY - ONE TEAM”

Woman’s Basketball Annual “Pink Game” to Support Hope Lodge

On January 20th, blue and gold and brown and orange will mix together to create pink when Portage Central and Portage Northern come together for Women’s Basketball annual “Pink Game”.

“Two rival schools, coming together for a unified cause such as cancer, is a strong statement about the commitment we all have to community” says Dr. Amber Darey-Thomas, Portage Central Women’s Basketball Booster and event organizer who diagnoses Cancer on a weekly basis. She is hopeful this year’s donations will surpass last year’s \$4,000 given to The American Cancer Society.

This year’s donation will be going directly to “American Cancer Society Hope Lodge”. It offers lodging and transportation to and from Grand Rapids cancer treatment centers free of charge. Located in downtown Grand Rapids, this is the first Hope Lodge in Michigan and the society’s 25th in the country.

Darey-Thomas stated each Portage middle school has supported this event right from the beginning this year. “PCMS helped organize pink games this year for the boys basketball games between PCMS, PWMS and PNMS. They made banners and helped get the word out about cancer and Hope Lodge. Each school also represented some form of pink game wear.”

Representatives of Hope Lodge will be present at the game to give information and discuss the mission of the Hope Lodge and the American Cancer Society.

Community High Panthers Take 4th Straight State Title

Community High School’s volleyball team won the Michigan Alternative Athletic Association (MAAA) State Volleyball Tournament, held at Portage Central High School on Dec. 10.

“I am very proud of both my girls and boys teams this year,” said Kathy Ha, Community High faculty member who has coached the team for 11 seasons. “They put in the work and the hours, and never gave up. The lessons they learned on the court will serve them well in life.”

MAAA offers both an open division for males and females, and an all-female division. Both titles were won by Community High School. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Panthers have been the MAAA Open Division State Champions. The MAAA provides athletic opportunities for alternative and home schooled students throughout the state, and consists of more than 65 schools.

Front row (from the left), Ferlonda Banks, Desiree McClintock, Jessica Williams, Jessica Dozeman, Tia Comar, Olivia Brunt, and Samantha Shively. Back row (from the left), Coach Kathy Ha, Troy Kannegeiter, Matt McPhillips, Antonio Aguilar, Eli Sanscrainte, Autry Mitchell, Kyle Roberson, Duane Blackport, and Kandys Rolark.

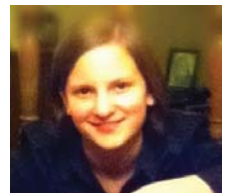


Six Students Selected for All-State Band

Six middle school and high school musicians were selected for the All-State band and orchestra by the Michigan School Band & Orchestra Association. 2,000 students from across the state auditioned for about 375 spots in the All-State ensembles. The MSBOA All-State bands and orchestras will perform as part of the Michigan Music Conference at Grand Rapids’ DeVos Hall on Saturday, Jan. 21

Front row (from the left) are Drew Schaefer, West Middle School, Alicia Williams, Central High School, and Robert Kaliati, Northern High School. In the back row (from the left) are Maisie Snyder, North Middle School, and Grant Niven, West Middle School.

(Right) Hanna Rumora, Central High School.



District Earns 'Academic State Champion' Status

"That is exactly how academics need to be thought of, and not just athletics."

Portage Schools has been named an "Academic State Champion" by The Center for Michigan.

The Center for Michigan based the rankings for the 2010-2011 school-year on information in a database created to set out school academic performance on eight measures, as judged against a district's peers of community type and socioeconomic status. The academic measures used in judging, all drawn from official state figures were: college readiness (based on results of ACT exams), graduation rates, 4th grade reading, math, and writing, and 8th grade reading, math, and science.

"We are very happy to receive this recognition," said interim Superintendent Ric Perry.

"The Center for Michigan is to be commended for framing this recognition as state champions. That is exactly how academics need to be thought of, and not just athletics."

Phil Power, president of the Ann Arbor-based Center, praised the efforts by faculty, staff, and students for "this outstanding performance." The Center's 2011-2016 work falls into three main categories: engage, inform, and achieve.

Read more about The Center for Michigan at: <http://www.thecenterformichigan.net> and you can subscribe to their free online publication, Bridge Magazine, at: <http://bridgemi.com/>.



Fox 17 Honors PCHS Teacher

Portage Central French teacher Sara Heil was honored by Fox 17 news as their Teacher of the Week. Madame Heil was nominated by a former student and selected to receive the award by the West Michigan news organization. Fox 17's Jon Shaner came to Portage Central to interview Madame Heil for a piece that was aired on Fox 17 Morning Show.

Happening in the High Schools

Links to Portage Central and Portage Northern Newspapers



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**Northern Light
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For Alumni and Friends of Portage Public Schools
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Hear "The Lori Moore Show" interview from 590 WKZO about The Portage Connection from Monday, January 9th

ON AIR

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In case you missed it: December 21st, 2011

Thanks to ECCU who presented Portage Northern with a \$500 contribution to the school!

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Keeping The District informed 140 characters or less

Daily tweets for everything Portage Public Schools

Followers are always the #firsttoknow the latest happenings @PortageSchools

Get daily news by clicking the logo to the left

The Future Learns Here

Portage Public Schools is dedicated to being a beacon of progress for community outreach. Our goal is to keep moving forward within the needs of the information age. "The Future Learns Here" is not just about the students, its about those who lead them into the future. We are bringing a new direction to how our community gets its information. You can now check out what Portage Public Schools is all about online at **PortagePS.org**. Sign up for news alerts, follow us on **Twitter** and **Facebook**, click the links within **"Inside PPS"**, keep in the loop with our award-winning Alumni e-Magazine **"The Portage Connection"**, and there is more on the horizon. We are interactive, informative, and innovative in how we connect with our community. You will notice some changes through how we distribute and communicate our messages, your feedback is appreciated on how we can better serve you. Please contact Traver McLaughlin, Communication Specialist, tmclaughlin@portageps.org

"Progress is the activity of today and the assurance of tomorrow" -Ralph Waldo Emerson

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