

Woodland



Newsletter

NCA Accredited

March 2009

1401 Woodland, Portage, MI 49024
(269) 323-6600
Sue O'Donnell, Principal
sodonnell@portageps.org

The staff and parents at Woodland school work cooperatively to develop the whole child in an atmosphere of respect and dignity



PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Happy March! I'm so glad it's finally here, maybe with a bit of warm weather to follow.

At the end of this month, we will be three-quarters of the way through the school year. The third quarter is one of growth for students. It seems everything starts to click and we can really see maturity begin in the students as they move their way to the next grade level. Even so, it is an antsy time for the students, since the days are dreary, the weather is unpredictable, and they cannot spend much time outside. Lately, we have been dealing with many impulsive and aggressive behaviors, teasing, and lack of respect. We are working as a staff to consistently reinforce our school and classroom rules and we ask that you discuss these issues with your child(ren). It is very important that we work as a team and your child is aware that you also support the behavioral expectations we have at school.

Thank you for attending Parent-Teacher conferences. As always, we had a wonderful turnout! It's so important that your child(ren) see that we are working together as a team so success at school is achieved!

Welcome to all of the new families who will be attending Woodland next year. We hope you enjoy our newsletter and will consider participation in the upcoming PTO events.

Thank you for all you continue to do to support Woodland!

Sue O'Donnell

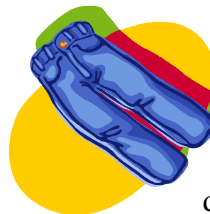


KINDERGARTEN PARENT INFORMATION MEETING

A meeting for all parents of incoming kindergarten students will be held on Thursday, March 19, at 6:30 PM., in the Activity Room. At this meeting you will learn about the kindergarten screening process, as well as schedule your child's screening date. Also, information about Young 5's and Kindergarten programs will be given. If your child will be five years on or before December 1, 2004, please call the office at 323-6600 to register for kindergarten if you have not done so.

RECORDS DAY

A records day is scheduled for Friday, March 27. There is no school for students that day.



NEEDED - EXTRA CLOTHES

We are in need of clothes for the students to change into in case of accidents or getting muddy on the playground. If you are willing to donate any outgrown pieces of clothing, please send in or drop off items to the office. We especially need underwear, socks and pants/sweats.

REQUESTS TO STAY INDOORS FOR RECESS

We believe that except on rare occasions, if a child is well enough to be in school, he is well enough to go outside and enjoy recess. We do not have extra staff to supervise children staying inside. We do understand that extenuating circumstances sometime require your child to stay in; we will need a physician's note stating the reason your child must stay inside and for how long.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Most parents/guardians are very concerned that their child is placed with a caring and competent teacher. It is little wonder parents/guardians often feel strongly about having a voice in the selection of their child's class placement. However, there are many things that need to be considered in order to create successful classrooms. I would like to share the process the staff of Woodland follows when assigning class placement for the upcoming school year. Hopefully, this will provide you with a better understanding of how complex a balancing act this can be.

1. Parents provide input on their child via the Parent Input Form.
2. Teachers provide input on student academic performance, behavior, and special learning characteristics.
3. Teachers develop class lists using their input and the information from the Parent Input Form.
4. Lists are reviewed by classroom teachers, special area teachers, resource room teachers, counselor, and principal.
5. Lists are finalized by principal.
6. In this transition year, principals will share information and insights on students who are changing schools.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INPUT

Via the Parent Input Form, parents/guardians are invited to share in writing observations regarding their child's learning style and any educational needs that should be considered. *Written requests for specific teachers will not be accepted.* Parent Input Forms will be sent home **Monday, March 2**. They are also available in the school office and on the Woodland Elementary School website. All Parent Input Forms to be considered for the upcoming school year are due to the school office on hard copy paper format by **Monday, March 9, 2009**. Email and/or faxed forms will not be accepted.

I hope that by sharing this process, you will understand parent/guardian input is one of the many sources used to make informed decisions regarding class placement. Please trust the Woodland staff's interest in your children and our knowledge of each other. Woodland

Elementary School strives to create vibrant, excellent classrooms that serve the needs of all children.

All efforts will be made to notify families of their child's placement by the end of the school year.

The Portage Public Schools and all public schools throughout the country have a legal and ethical requirement to provide students with balanced classrooms based on gender, race, ethnic & language groups, and academic achievement. I hope that by sharing this process, you will understand parent/guardian input is one of the many sources used to make informed decisions regarding class placement. Please trust the Woodland staff's interest in your children and our knowledge of each other. Woodland Elementary School strives to create vibrant, excellent classrooms that serve the needs of all children.

STUDENT SAFETY: A CONVERSATION ABOUT DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Parents: Do you have a concern about possible substance abuse use by your children or one of their friends? Are you interesting in knowing what some of the latest trends are? Would you like information on where to go for help and what the Portage Public School system is doing to help students? Then please join us for a parent meeting at Central Middle School in the media center at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, March 11.

Assistant principal Denny Roehm (WMS) and Portage Police Detective Matt Wolfe will present some of the concerns regarding drugs and alcohol, what you can do at home and how to get more help if you know someone in trouble.

CALLING ALL STACKERS!

We will be having a cupstacking club! It will meet in the activity room on Wednesday, March 18, March 25, and April 1 from 3:45 to 4:30 and is open to all students in grades 1-5. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of cupstacking activities. In order to participate, students will need to bring a note to Mr. Getsinger indicating that they have permission to stay and who will be taking the child home. If you have any questions, please email me at mgetsinger@portageps.org or call me at 323-6630.

FREE PRESCHOOL

The PREP Program is a state-funded preschool program designed for children who will be four (4) years old by December 1, 2009, or turning five (5) after December 1, 2009. The child must reside in the Portage Public School district, and meet grant guidelines which determine eligibility of a child. The program is free to eligible children and their families. An Open House will take place on Thursday, March 19 from 6-8pm and Friday March 20, from 10am-2pm in Room 116 of the Curious Kids Building located at 1010 W. Milham.

The program and placement of families in the program is contingent upon the availability of funds provided by the Michigan Department of Education.

GIRL SCOUTING FOR BUSY GIRLS!

Have you ever hesitated to sign up for Girl Scouting because of time crunches? Between homework, sports, school and religious activities, you and maybe even your parents can feel overwhelmed at the thought of adding another activity to your schedule. The good news is, you don't have to miss out on Girl Scouting if you aren't part of a troop! You can sign up for one or more of the following options:

Juliette program – You can work independently to earn Girl Scout recognitions and participate in product sales, camp as well as local and Council-sponsored Girl Scout events and activities.

Limited-time programs – You can choose to attend a three to six week program with a specific focus, such as self-esteem or diversity.

Special events – Participate in a day or evening of activities – including Service Unit or Council-sponsored events – that give you the chance to expend your skills in particular areas or learn more about something you're interested in. Visit www.gshom.org for more information.

Camp – You can sign up for a day, a weekend or a week of camp! There is something for everyone at camp. From Troop Adventure Camps to Day Camps, they provide the opportunity for you to live and learn in the out-of-doors. You'll build self-confidence, self-esteem, friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

For more information or a camp guide, call the Kalamazoo Regional Center at 1-800-788-4919.

PTO NEWS

Welcome new families to Woodland Elementary! We are looking forward to having you visit our school and hopefully come to some of our spring events. We want you and your children to feel part of our school. After spring break Woodland PTO will be hosting a gathering for those parents who are interested in learning more about our school, our school clubs as well as PTO. We welcome your input and enthusiasm as it all benefits our children. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions or comments. Joni Shore 324-6273 or jshore1@msn.com

Here are some upcoming great things for the kids and some wonderful opportunities for us to make money for our kids and our school.

Saturday, March 14th is Woodland Carnival. This is a huge undertaking and we need many many many volunteers for this. You will see a packet coming home soon. Please consider helping that day. The kids absolutely love the carnival and we want it to be a huge success. Contact for carnival is Nancy Mein btsnickers@sbcglobal.net or Kelly Lurges at klurges@kalamazoogazette.com.

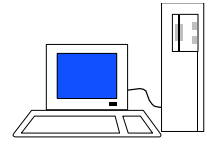
We have two Texas Holdem' tournaments coming up in March. Contact Russ Mitchell if you are interested in helping with that **HUGE** money maker!! Contact Russ at z7128@charter.net.

Would you like to be a batboy or batgirl for the Kalamazoo Kings? You must be 10 years old and have some understanding of baseball. Kalamazoo Kings has designated Sunday, May 24th as Woodland Elementary Day. Purchase tickets for \$5 each (\$2.50 is donated to Woodland). For every ticket purchased you can enter your name in the hat to be a batboy or batgirl. Four names will be drawn at the carnival on March 14th. Details for purchase will be coming home soon.

Note: The ticket does not need to be used at the May 24th game. You can use the ticket during any home game.



Media Center News



Volume XV Number 8

March 1, 2009

Overdue Books - The Media Center is still having a problem with overdue books. You can help your child develop the responsibility to return books on time by having a special place for them at home. Encourage your student to return the books each week. We currently have over 300 overdue books. Please help.



The Media Center had a great response to the **Readers of the Roundtable** challenge. There is still time for your student to finish their bookmark and turn it in. The students also panned for gold and did very well on this exercise in the Media Center or they did a letter search for the author of a given letter. Ask your child about his efforts.

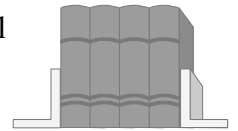
Fourth graders were learning about electricity and the Media Center led a mystery circuit activity in each classroom. Ask you fourth grader how this activity went for him.

Fifth graders had a chance to use some of the items from colonial times in the Media Center. Some of these items were a ball and cup, string and disk(wizzer), and rings and rod.



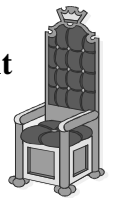
Castle Builders – We have asked the students to help decorate the Library Media Center and make a castle to display there. If your child would like to share his artistic talents with our Woodland family, he can draw a picture or build a castle. There is still room for display.

Read Across America – Monday March 2, teachers and students will share books and tell about their favorite stories. This event is sponsored by public school teachers and public libraries all across America. It is also the 106th birthday of Dr. Seuss. Ask your child for an update when he comes home. I will share Dr. Seuss stories in the Media Center this week.



Chess Club has started and we have nearly 30 participants from second grade through fifth grade. We will meet for three weeks in March and two weeks in April. April will be tournament month.

The **castle** has been up for eight weeks and a steady stream of readers have been coming down for **silent reading**. The teachers have been sending **two students** at a time from the classroom, as time permits, to read on the second floor of the castle. All students, first through fifth grade, are invited to the castle for silent reading. The castle is up while we focus on fairy tales and folktales during the winter months.



March is Mystery Month and the Media Center will be focusing on mystery stories. We will also highlight mystery authors. Fourth and fifth grade students are busy solving a mystery in the Media Center. It is the Pete the Pirate Treasure Hunt. The first clue is on Pete's hook that was found when cleaning and a treasure chest! Ask your 4th or 5th grader to tell you about the clues found so far.

Remember to recycle cell phones and computer printer cartridges here at Woodland. Thank you!

Woodland Elementary

1401 Woodland Ave. • Portage, MI 49024 • 269.323.6600



March 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Woodland Elementary School! We are very excited to have you joining our school community for the upcoming 2009-10 school year. To assist your family with the transition to your new school, we will be sending you our school newsletter, and inviting you to participate in a number of events that will be occurring throughout the remainder of this school year. We also encourage you to visit our school webpage at <http://www.portageps.org/schools/elementary/wod/default.htm> for further information regarding our school community.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's class placement at Woodland Elementary for the 2009-10 school year, please do not hesitate to contact us at 323-6600.

The Woodland staff invites you to be active participants in your child's education. We know when parents/guardians and school staff work closely together, students achievement increases. The PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) is the parent group that organizes and supports many of our school events and initiatives. We encourage you to attend our PTO meetings for the rest of this school year and to become actively involved in PTO during the 2009-10 school year. Our PTO meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm in our activity room. Questions about PTO involvement may be directed to Joni Shore.

Please be assured the staff of Woodland Elementary School will provide your child with an environment that is welcoming, safe and encourages continual academic, social and personal growth. I look forward to meeting and working with you to provide your child educational excellence. I am confident you will find your move to Woodland Elementary School to be full of success, growth and positive learning experiences.

Sincerely,

Sue O'Donnell
Principal

Please note: *If you feel you have received this letter in error and are not aware of plans for your child to attend Woodland Elementary School for the 2009-10 school year, please contact Sarah Baker, Instructional Services Coordinator, at 323-5140.*