
THE AMBERLY ADVANTAGE

A School Community Dedicated to Providing a Nurturing and Challenging Learning Environment for All.

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Sleep – How Much Does Your Child Need?

Adapted from an article written by Carin Lamm, MD

Our children have been in school for over a month now so they should be in their normal school sleep routine, right? Maybe not! Take a minute to read how many hours your child should be sleeping and how to help him/her if they are not. With higher academic standards being expected, we want our children to be performing their best in and out of school.

It is important to make sure that your child gets enough sleep and sleeps well. The value of sleep can be measured by your child's smiling face, happy nature and natural energy. A tired child may have developmental and behavioral problems. A child's sleep problems can also cause unnecessary stress for you and other members of your family.

Many parents are unsure of how much their child should sleep. Experts recommend that your child get the following amount of sleep at each stage of growth:

- ◆ **Preschoolers: 11 to 13 hours**
- ◆ **School-aged children: 10 to 11 hours**

According to reports from parents, many American children are not getting enough sleep. Some children sleep different lengths of time, either shorter or longer. But most children do have the ability to sleep through the night. Children who do not sleep well may have a sleep problem. Listed below are signs that your child may be having problems with sleep:

- ◆ You spend too much time "helping" your child fall asleep.
- ◆ Your child wakes up repeatedly during the night.
- ◆ Your child snores very loudly or struggles to breathe during sleep.
- ◆ Your child's behavior, mood or school performance change.
- ◆ Your child, who used to stay dry at night, begins to wet the bed.
- ◆ You lose sleep as a result of your child's bedtime and sleeping problems.

Below are tips to help your child sleep better:

- 1) **Follow a consistent bedtime routine.** Set aside 10 to 30 minutes to get your child ready to go to sleep each night.
- 2) **Establish a relaxing setting at bedtime.**
- 3) **Interact with your child at bedtime.** Don't let the TV, computer or video games take your place.
- 4) **Keep your children from TV programs, movies and video games that are not right for their age.**

At bedtime, do not allow your child to have foods or drinks that contain caffeine. This includes chocolate and soda. Try not to give your child any medicine that has a stimulant at bedtime. This includes cough medicines and decongestants.

A child who gets enough sleep and sleeps well is more likely to be cheerful, productive and available to learn during the day.

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Who Can Student Information Be Shared With?



The confidentiality of student information is of high importance at Amberly Elementary School. All schools across the country are mandated to follow the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Outlined below is a quick review of information parents/guardians should know regarding FERPA rules and regulations.

School districts must give full rights with regard to pupil records to either parent unless there is a court order or other legally binding document relating to custody that specifically revokes these rights.

A parent who does not have physical custody will be assumed to have retained legal custody unless a court order is provided to the school showing that legal custody has been revoked.

A parent with legal custody maintains a right to meet with and discuss student progress with school staff.

A stepparent or grandparent has no legal independent rights to student records unless the stepparent or grandparent is the legal guardian. ***Teachers will not be able to share verbally or in writing student progress information with a stepparent or grandparent unless a release of information is signed annually and placed in the student's records.***

A parent with legal custody may release student records to a stepparent via a release of information form. This allows school staff to have direct contact with the stepparent regarding student progress.

A parent/guardian with legal custody must sign a release of information for any school staff member to complete forms regarding or to discuss student progress with any outside agency. ***Teachers will not be able to share information regarding student progress with tutors, counselors, doctors, etc. unless a release of information is signed annually and placed in the student's records.***

Help Keep Amberly Safe!

The Amberly school grounds have experienced an increasing amount of vandalism over the past few months. This includes damage to playground equipment, screens, the roof, and a fire on a field. The majority of this vandalism has occurred during weekend and evening hours.

We are asking parents/guardians and neighbors to immediately contact the Portage Police if they observe any suspicious activity occurring on the Amberly school grounds. This is especially true of individuals on the school roof – skateboarding and or jumping into the courtyard area, along with inappropriate activities occurring in the Amberly Woods. Again, contact the Portage Police Department at **329-4567** if you witness any suspicious activity on school grounds. Thank you!

Portage Community Center Offers Free Tutoring



The Portage Community Center offers a free tutoring program to students in grades K-12. Students are able to have a one-one-one tutoring session with a volunteer tutor once a week. To enroll, contact Tia for elementary school tutoring or Ruth for middle and high school tutoring at the Portage Community Center, 323-1942, to receive further information. According to PCC, the top three reasons for tutoring are to help students complete homework assignments, improve study skills & test scores, and achieve higher grades.

2008-09 Report Card Send Home Dates

Report cards will be sent home with students on the following dates:

1st Quarter: Friday, November 21st

2nd Quarter: Thursday, February 12th

3rd Quarter: Friday, April 17th

4th Quarter: Mailed out from office on Thursday, June 18th

Volunteers: Background Checks, Badges and Confidentiality

- All regular volunteers working directly with children must have a criminal background check. Forms and letters for this to occur are available from Linda Dunphey in the office. This background check must be done annually for any regular volunteer working directly with children.
- All regular volunteers should also have a “Volunteer Badge” made for them to pick up in the office each time they work in the school. A form is available in the office for volunteers to complete to have the badge made with their name. Please complete this form in the office, if you are a regular volunteer without a name badge.
- **Volunteers are also reminded that information regarding student behavior or progress observed while volunteering in our school is confidential and should not be shared with outside individuals.** Just as you wouldn’t want parents discussing your student’s behaviors or academics with others, they don’t want you discussing theirs.
- Please be assured Amberly teachers are well aware of the needs of the many students in their classrooms. Due to strict confidentiality rules and regulations, teachers are not able to discuss specific interventions that are in place for a child and/or a child’s ability/disability with volunteers.

Volunteers are greatly appreciated and a valuable resource to the Amberly Elementary School Community! Your assistance is greatly appreciated by both students and staff! Thank you for being willing to so generously give of your time!



No Latex Balloons At Amberly

It is estimated that between 8,800 and 53,000 Michigan school children could have or develop latex sensitivity. Allergic reactions to latex can range from mild to life-threatening. Amberly currently has students who are allergic to latex. Because of this and the increased incidence in latex sensitivity, ***NO latex balloons are allowed in the school building.*** Non-latex gloves & Band-Aids are used in our health room.

Birthday Invites & Deliveries

The staff of Amberly Elementary School request that students NOT hand-out party invitations at school. Disappointment students may feel about not being invited to a party, causes a disruption to the educational environment. Invitations to parties should be made outside of the school environment. ***We also request deliveries of flowers or balloons not be made at school.*** These deliveries to students often turn into a distraction to the learning process. Consequently, balloons and flowers will not be delivered to classrooms and will remain in the office until the end of the school day for the student to pick up.

Weapon Free School Zone

All parents/guardians should be fully aware and review district policy 5360, Weapon Free School Zone, listed on page 14 of the Elementary Handbook. The policy states, “the Board shall permanently expel a student from attending school in the District, if the student possesses a weapon in a weapon free school zone or commits arson in a District building or on District grounds.” Weapons include a firearm, gun, revolver, pistol, dagger, stiletto, knife, pocketknife, iron bar or brass knuckles.

Toys, Gameboys & Walkmans

Students are not to bring toys, Game Boys, Walkmans or other electronic devices to school. These can be expensive and the school can not be responsible for items lost. Toys & games brought from home also create controversy in regards to who may touch or play with the item. We have invested in new playground equipment, balls, sidewalk chalk, etc. and indoor recess games for all students to use and share. Except for special “show and tell” times approved by the teacher, students are not to bring toys or electronic devices to school.

APT Fundraiser Thank You!

Thank you to all the families and staff who participated in the Sally Foster Fundraiser. A special thank you to the APT Fundraising Committee and Chairperson Miranda Garside! So many positive opportunities are provided to students due to monies raised from this fundraiser (field trips, camp, assemblies, etc.) **Remember to mark your calendar for Thursday, November 6th, between 1 and 7 p.m. to pick up goods ordered in the Amberly Gym!**

Halloween Parade: October 31st!

On Friday, October 31st, at 9:15 a.m. the annual Halloween Parade will be held on the Amberly School Grounds. Starting with Young Fives and Kindergarten, students will exit the front entry doors, walk along the front sidewalk to the sidewalk along the south parking lot, to the playground area and in the side gym door, then to the classrooms.

For student and spectator safety, the front parking lot will be closed from 9 to 9:45 a.m. on Oct. 31st. If you need to depart prior to 9:45 a.m., please park in the south parking lot.

Families are encouraged to assemble along the parade route and capture photo/video memories as students walk by. To avoid hallway congestion, we ask that families not wait in the main lobby or hallways as classes prepare for and return from the parade. In addition, the very short assembly in the gym following the parade is for **STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY**. Space does not allow families and friends to attend.

Teachers will schedule classroom parties after the parade at a time that is least disruptive to the educational environment. **Students are not to bring any look-alike or toy weapons as part of their costume or dress in a manner depicting or promoting violent themes. No blood, dressing as the opposite sex with anatomical props, or bare midriffs will be allowed.**

If you question the appropriateness of your child's costume, please contact Mary Daoust, Principal, prior to sending your child to school in the costume.



WHAM Ski Club

All Amberly families are invited to join Ski Club. Fourth and Fifth graders may ride the ski club bus to Timber Ridge on Wednesday nights beginning in January. Discounted passes are available to all Amberly families. The passes can be used for discounted rentals any time Timber Ridge is open during the entire season and are a great deal! Use it once and it will have paid for itself. If you are interested in Ski Club, please attend one of the informational meetings being held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 22nd, in the Moorsbridge cafeteria, Thursday, October 23rd, in the Waylee cafeteria, Monday, October 27th, in the Haverhill cafeteria OR Tuesday, October 28th, in the Amberly cafeteria. Bring medical information, emergency numbers and your checkbook. For further information contact Chris Haddock via email at chaddock@portageps.org



October Birthday Celebrations

Students with birthdays during the month of October will enjoy an ice cream sundae cup with Mrs. Daoust on Wednesday, October 29th. Students will have a choice of a vanilla, chocolate or strawberry ice cream sundae cups. There are no nuts in the sundae cups – just ice cream and flavored syrup. ***If your child has food sensitivities to any ingredients that may be found in any of the ice cream cups, please contact the office so a substitute treat can be provided.*** If your family does not celebrate birthdays, please also inform the office and an invitation will not be sent to your child.



Picture Retake Day Wednesday, November 5th

Picture Retakes will occur the morning of Wednesday, Nov. 5th. Students who missed the initial picture day will have photos take on this date. In addition, parents /guardians who are not pleased with the first photos of their child they received, should send the total picture packet back to school with their child on retake day and their child's photo will be retaken. Students who have pictures taken on Retake Day will have their photo in class composites which will be delivered prior to Winter Break.

A Salute to Veterans

Third Grade Concert

November 13th – 7 p.m.



Amberly Third Graders will present a musical salute to all veterans who have served our country on Thursday, November 13th, at 7 p.m. The concert will consist of traditional songs recognizing the great country we live in. We are asking our third grade students to invite a veteran to the concert along with family members and friends. Veterans who attend are encouraged to wear military uniforms. This special patriotic performances will take place in the Amberly gym. *Please mark your calendars for Thursday, November 13th and join us for A Salute to Veterans!*

Helping Your Child Read A Variety of Books

Does your child like a particular book or series of book? Ever think s/he is stuck in a reading or genre rut? Do you wonder if there are other books s/he might enjoy? If so, the following website may come in handy.

<http://bookwizard.scholastic.com/tbw/homePage.do>

has a “Book Alike” section that will assist in selecting books for a child similar to a particular title, and on a specific topic and reading level. This website is a great resource for students and parents alike!

Parent Internet View – PIV



Parent Internet Viewer, also know as PIV, is available for parent/guardians of students in grades four and five. PIV allows parents/guardians to access current student grades and attendance information. Parents of students in 4th and 5th grade should have received access codes via the mail last month. If you have not received an access code for your 4th or 5th grader or have lost the code assigned to you, you can obtain your code by emailing pivsupport@portageps.org or calling 323-5114.

Upcoming No School & Half Days

- **Tuesday, November 4th**
No School Students - Teacher Record Day
- **Tuesday, November 25th**
Half Day School - 11:57 dismissal
 - ❖ *AM Young Fives & Kindergartners attend on November 25th*
- **Wednesday, Thursday & Friday, November 26th, 27th & 28th**
Thanksgiving Break – No School
- *Monday, December 1st – School Resumes*

Conference Sign Up!

Initial parent/guardian sign ups for Fall & Winter Parent-Teacher Conferences occurred during Open House. *If you have not yet signed up for conferences, please call (323-5900) or stop by the Amberly office within the next week to sign up for a time to meet with your child’s teacher.* This school year conferences will be held on:

Fall Conference Dates

Monday, November 24th, 5-8p.m.

Tuesday, November 25th, 1- 4 p.m. & 5-8 p.m.

Winter Conference Dates

Wednesday, February 25th, 5-8 p.m.

Thursday, February 26th, 1-4 & 5-8 p.m.



Holiday Sharing November 10th–14th

Holiday Sharing will occur during the week of November 10th – 14th. This is an annual food drive in which Amberly families are asked to give something back to those in need. Students are asked to bring non-perishable food to their classroom during the week of 11/10-11/14 to be donated to the Portage Community Outreach Center. Thank you for helping those in need!

Media Coverage/Student Images in Publications

From time to time we will invite local media (newspaper and television) in our school to cover events and activities. This is done in an effort to make the public aware of the outstanding learning and positive activities that occur at Amberly. We will also be adding photos of students at work and play to our Amberly website. Please know Portage Public School is very sensitive to pupil privacy and strictly monitors all situations in which any student images are used in publications. In addition, students' images will not be identified on any of the school district websites

Request to Stay Indoors for Recess

We believe that except on rare occasions, if a child is well enough to be in school they are well enough to go outside and enjoy recess. In addition, an adult must always be present to supervise a child staying in for recess, which takes away from staff lunch times and office staff duties. Therefore, a note from a physician stating the child is to remain indoors for recess is required for a child to be individually supervised during recess time. Thank you for understanding and cooperation with this matter.

Delivery of Messages To Students

In an effort to provide the least disruptive learning environment for students and teachers, messages regarding changes in end of the day routines, after school information and/or other communication, will be given to students at 3:30 p.m. each school day. Office staff will not disrupt classes on a case by case basis, but instead will hold messages until 3:30 p.m. and ask for students to come to the office to receive them at the end of the school day. **Parents/guardians are reminded to contact the school office with information that needs to be given to students prior to 3:30 p.m.** *Attempts to exchange information with students after this time can result in confusion, mistakes and possible unsafe situations for all involved – students, teachers, bus drivers and parents.*

We ask that parents/guardians take time to review student after school plans with children prior to departure to school and to avoid calling the school office with reminders or changes in routines unless it is an emergency.

Portage Public Schools Notice of Non-discrimination

Portage Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, marital status or handicap in the admission to, access to, participation in, benefits of, or employment in its programs or activities as provided by district policy and in compliance with Federal and State statutes.

The employees below have been designated to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504/ADA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your school counselor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your school principal |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title IX Coordinator
Vickie Herzberg, Manager, SPHR
8111 S. Westnedge
Portage, Michigan 49009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 504 Coordinator
Laurie Montgomery (269) 323-5012 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment - (269) 323-5152
Vickie Herzberg, Manager SPHR | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Education - (269) 323- 5012
Laurie Montgomery, Director |

Any person may also contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, regarding the District's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX or Section 504/ADA.

