
THE AMBERLY ADVANTAGE

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

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No More Homework Battles
Dr. Charles Fay of the Love & Logic Institute

Battles over reading, writing, and arithmetic too often drive a wedge between parents and their kids. Many times these ongoing conflicts give youngsters a distaste for learning and send parents to bed as are we doing wrong with

The following tips are dedicated to creating happier homes, where children are free to fall in love with learning and parents no longer dread homework hassles:

Tip #1: Each evening, set aside a time for family learning.

This is a time for your children to do their homework and for you to model the value of learning by enjoying a book. The best way to create a love of learning in your kids is to show them how much you enjoy it.

Tip #2: Avoid battles by offering choices.

Research shows children are more likely to do their homework if they are given many small choices. For example:

- *Would you rather do your homework right now or at the kitchen table?*
- *Are you going to do your homework in your room or at the kitchen table?*
- *Are you going to do all your homework right now, or are you going to do half now and the rest after dinner?*

Tip #3: Help only when your child really wants it.

There is nothing that creates more homework battles than when help is not wanted. Try asking:

- *Would you like some ideas on that, or would you like me to leave you alone?*

Your child's desire for a healthy sign of independence and responsibility.

Tip #4: Spend most of your time noticing what they do well.

DO NOT focus on what your child does wrong! Allow your child to get help in those areas from their teachers. Successful parents spend ninety-nine percent of their energy noticing what their kids do well. They say things like:

- *Show me the very best letter you made today. You really worked hard on that!*
- *Look at that math problem. You got it right!*

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Tip #5: J g n r " q p n { " c u " n q p i " c u " k v ø u " g p l q { c d n g " h q

Too frequently, homework help turns into a homework battle. Smart parents back out of the helper role as soon as they sense conflict brewing. Try hugging your child and saying:

I love you too much to help if it means we are going to argue. I know this is really hard. Good luck.

Tip #6: Help only as long as your child is doing most of the work.

Say the following to yourself over and over again: *V j k u " k u " o { " e j k n f ø u " j q*

There is nothing more destructive than stealing the struggle of learning by doing too much for your child. Each time they achieve something difficult on their own, their self-esteem soars and they are better prepared for the real world.

Give these Love and Logic® tips a try, and join thousands of parents who now have much happier, more responsible kids! More great Love and Logic articles tips can be found at::

<http://www.loveandlogic.com/articles.html>



Board of Education Places BSSF Renewal On May Ballot

The Portage Public Schools Board of Education adopted a resolution in February to place a renewal of the .5 millage rate for our Building Site Sinking Fund (BSSF) before voters on May 4. The average cost to taxpayers will be \$38 a year (based on a \$150,000 home). This renewal is for a period of five years, for school year 2010/2011 through 2014/2015.

The BSSF has been renewed consistently since 1966, with receipts from this levy going into a separate fund for such things as making necessary repairs and improvements to school buildings, structures, and parking areas. Since many of our facilities are nearly 50 years old, numerous facility repairs like roofs, mechanical systems, flooring, and asphalt have been funded with this millage.

From 1966 through 1998 the District levied 1.0 mill in this fund, and from 1998 to now, the District levied .5 mill of BSSF, while the other .5 was transferred to debt millage with voter approval. In 2001 voters approved an increase of 1.0 mill through 2005 for the construction of two multipurpose facilities at the high schools and for major renovations to the high school auditoriums. Read the ballot language online:

<http://www.portageps.org/departments/finance/BSSFlanguage22Feb10.pdf>



Please mark your calendar to vote on
May 4th!



2010-11 Kindergarten Registration



Children who will be five on or before December 1, 2010, are eligible for kindergarten during the 2010-11 school year. We would appreciate your assistance in estimating the number of kindergarten students who will attend Amberly next school year. If you have a child who will be eligible to enroll in kindergarten during the 2010-2011 school year, please contact our school office at 323-5900 to register him/her. Current Young Five students need not register. If you have a neighbor who has a child who will be five prior to December 1, 2010, please encourage them to contact the Amberly office.

On March 23rd from 6:30 - 6:30 p.m. a Kindergarten Screening Information Meeting will be held for parents/guardians of students eligible for enrollment in kindergarten during the 2010-11 school year.

Further information regarding this meeting will be sent to parents/guardians who have contacted the Amberly Elementary Office and registered their child.

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Non-Student Days in March & April



There are a number of non-student days planned for the month of March and April due a records day and Spring Break. Please mark your calendar and plan for supervision of your child for the following dates:

Friday, March 26th : No School óSpring Friday

Monday, March 29th ó Friday April 2nd : Spring Break

Monday, April 5th: School Resumes

Friday, April 16th óNo School Students óRecords Day

Wonderful Father-Daughter Hoe Down!

Thank you to all APT volunteers and the positive male role models of young ladies at Amberly who attended the Father-Daughter Western Hoedown on Friday, February 19th. *A special thank-you to Kathy Mizikar & Tina Jordan, Father-Daughter Dance Chairpersons, for all their time, work and dedication they gave to make the event a success! Pictures from the dance are available on the Amberly Website at:*

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/elementary/amb/pictures/PictureGroupViewer.aspx?id=00000522>

If you would like to save or send a favorite picture, simply right click on the picture and choose the appropriate option.



Tremendous Talent, Wonderful Wiz, Awesome Achievement Expo!

Thank you to all the volunteers and students who made Thursday, March 4th a night to remember at Amberly Elementary School. Special thank- y o u ' s t o –Director of the Wizard of Oz, Bobby and Amanda Dekoekkoek –Directors of the Talent Show, and Diane Hamlin & Heather Beering –Coordinators of Achievement Expo! *Pictures from the dance are available on the Amberly Website at:*

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/elementary/amb/pictures/PictureGroupViewer.aspx?id=00000536>

If you would like to save or send a favorite picture, simply right click on the picture and choose the appropriate option.



Amberly Tiger Trek:

Collect Pledges & Get Ready to Walk On April 23rd!

The Amberly Tiger Trek will occur on Friday, April 23rd! This event is being sponsored by APT and is a non-catalog fundraiser that supports healthy living, exercise, and active student involvement. Starting on April 5th, Amberly families will be asked to collect pledges from family and friends to sponsor their student in walking or running laps on a 1/8 mile course behind the school. Pledges can be a flat dollar amount or a per lap amount. After the Tiger Trek on April 23rd, families will have approximately 2 weeks to collect pledges.

We are currently seeking parent/guardian volunteers to assist with and cheer on students as they participate in this event. **Please see the bright orange volunteer request sheet sent home in Friday Folders.** Students will walk/run on Friday, April 23rd in grade level teams as scheduled below:

9:20 - 10:00 a.m.: First Grade
10:10- 10:40 a.m.: AM Young Fives and Kindergarten
10:50 - 11:30: Fifth Grade
11:40 - 12:20: Fourth Grade
12:30 - 1:10: Second Grade
1:20- 2:00: Third Grade
2:10-2:40: PM Young Fives and Kindergarten



March & April Birthday Celebrations

Students with birthdays during the month of March will enjoy an ice cream sundae cup with Mrs. Daoust on Monday, March 22nd and students with April birthdays will celebrate on Tuesday, April 27th. 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.

« Music, Music »

Music!



First graders will be performing for family and friends on Thursday, April 15th at 2 p.m. in the Amberly Gym! The first grade show is always a musical, heart-warming treat for all. ***Please mark your calendar and plan on seeing our talented first grade students perform.***

Secretaries
Day
April 21st!

Two main reasons Amberly is such a great place to learn and grow are our OUTSTANDING SECRETARIES, Michele Frey and Linda Dunphey. These two ladies are constantly serving the needs of students, teachers, and parents/guardians and always do so in a pleasant and positive manner. ***Please be sure to stop by or send a note of thanks to Michele and Linda on Secretaries Day, Wednesday, April 21st!***

Lost & Found
Clean Out ì
During Spring
Break

We will be doing “spring cleaning” during the week of Spring Break (March 26th - April 2nd). Lost and Found is located on the coat rack next to the Multipurpose Room. ***If your child has lost an item, please remind them to check for it in this area.*** Lost and Found is cleaned out monthly with items donated to a local charity.

Volunteers Needed For Recess Mileage Club!

With the warm weather hopefully staying with us, Recess Mileage Club will resume. Mileage Club provides students with a productive, healthy activity to participate in during recess. We are in need of parent/guardian volunteers to assist with supervision and logging student miles during recess times. . If you are able to volunteer during a recess time, please contact Marcia Elliott at melliott@portageps.org or via phone at 323-5975.



Recess Times are:

- Grade 2: 10:50-11:20
- Grade 3: 11:20 –11:50
- Grade 1: 11:50 –12:20
- Grade 4: 12:20 –12:50
- Grade 5: 12:50 –1:20



Spring Pictures Thursday, April 22

Spring Pictures will be taken on Thursday, April 22nd. Information and order forms will be sent home with students in Friday Folders after Spring Break. There will be a number of different picture backgrounds to choose from. Please be sure to mark which background you would like on the order form. ***Only students who have an order form with payment will have their pictures taken.***

Student Absences: Parents Responsibilities



Parents/guardians must contact the school office if their child is absent from school.

The office is the official recorder of student attendance and must be the contact, not the classroom teacher.

Classroom teachers will be notified of student absences and if parents/guardians would like homework for their child, this can be requested through office staff.

Amberly Elementary also has an attendance line. Parents/guardians may call in a student's absence recorded message. ***To access the attendance line dial 323-5996. Callers will be asked to n g c x g " { q w t " e j k n f ø u date of, and reason for absence. Please do not call teachers with student attendance information óit is essential the office be contacted to document student attendance information.***

Parents may also email notification of a child's absence email: ldunphey@portageps.org and include the following information in your correspondence: child teacher, date of and reason for absence.

Shoe Collection Ends March 23rd!

The Soles for Souls shoe collection will conclude for this year on Tuesday, March 23rd. Mike Northuis, organizer of this service, will be getting the shoes ready for shipment to Haiti and Uganda.

Thank you to everyone who has donated shoes for this cause! Over 9,000 pairs of shoes have been collected this school year. This could not have been accomplished without your support!! Thank you!

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.

No Toys, Gameboys & iPods At School

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 teacher, students are not to bring toys or electronic devices to school.***





Bus Responsibilities for Parents/Guardians

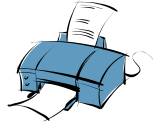
- < Support safe riding practices and reasonable discipline practices.
- < Model, teach and hold children accountable for appropriate behavior.
- < Make certain children arrive at the bus stop on time and be responsible behavior until the bus arrives.
Parents/guardians are responsible for their students going to, from and at the bus stop.
- < Provide alternative transportation for their children if oversized objects must be transported to or from riding privileges are suspended for a cause.
- < Have a family emergency plan if the student arrives home early or if parents/guardians are not present at the time of arrival.



Box Tops For Education

Amberly Elementary School participates in collecting Boxtops for Education. If you have been collecting boxtops, you can deliver them to the school office. These boxtops assist the school in earning funds for needed equipment and supplies. Boxtops for Education can be found on General Mills, Betty Crocker, Hamburger Helper and many other boxed food products.

Cartridges for Kids



Amberly also participates in Cartridges for Kids. This company provides funds to schools for empty inkjet, laser, fax and copier cartridges and used cell phones. Please bring your empty cartridges to the office so we can use them for this fundraiser. We have had a great response from parents/guardians who have brought in empty cartridges from their place of business. THANK YOU!!

† Money At School †

Elementary aged students should never have more than a dollar or two in loose bills/change at school. All items in the School Store cost \$1 or less. ~~Please do not send or allow your child to bring more than \$1 or \$2 to school for the School Store.~~

Free Preschool Through The PREP Program!

The PREP Program is a state-funded preschool program designed for children who will be four (4) years old by December 1, 2010, or turning five (5) after December 1, 2010. Qualifying children must reside in the Portage Public School District and meet grant guidelines to determine eligibility. PREP preschool is free to eligible children and families.

Applications for the 2009-10 school year can be obtained at Woodland Elementary School or by contacting Georgia Boyle or Heather Schillaci at 323-6614..

Note: The program & placement of children in the program is contingent upon the availability of funds provided by the Michigan Department of Education.

