

Amberly Elementary School Newsletter

PAWSOME EXPECTATIONS: *RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, SAFE, CARING*

November 2011

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Principal's News - Amberly is Pawsome!



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ No School - Nov. 4th
- ◆ Picture Re-take Day - Nov. 11th
- ◆ Report Cards Go Home - Nov. 14
- ◆ Conferences - Nov. 16 & 17
- ◆ Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 23-25

Amberly Elementary has a renewed focus on teaching and rewarding positive behaviors. At Amberly Elementary School we expect our students to consistently be Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring throughout the school environment.

Students have been taught what each of these expectations look like (and don't look like) in multiple environments throughout our school. These include the hallway, cafeteria, playground, restrooms, entering & exiting the building and at Book Checkout.

Examples of these expectation include: **Hallway Behavior** - **Respectful** is a "0" voice and walking; **Responsible** is a single file line, trek on the right and face forward, **Safe** is hands, feet and other objects to self, keep the pace and wait patiently and **Caring** includes maintaining personal space and smile and wave if you pass a staff member.

An area that may transfer to your home are the expectations for the **Restroom**. These include: **Respectful** - voice level 2, maintain privacy and leave the bathroom as you found it; **Responsible** - go, flush, wash & leave, Soap - "one squirt gets the dirt", Paper Towels - "one, two is all you do" and trash in the can; **Safe** - keep feet on the floor, keep water and soap in the sink, and wash

hands; **Caring** - maintain personal space, use appropriate language and report problems to adults.

As staff throughout Amberly observe students independently displaying Pawsome Behavior, they may earn an orange ticket to be put in their classroom "Amberly Tiger Pawsome Behavior" jar for a reward drawing held weekly on Monday mornings. **Please congratulate your child for earning orange tickets and also expect them to display the Pawsome Behaviors of Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Caring at home.**

In addition to promoting Pawsome Behaviors, we are keeping detailed data on where, when, why, and who is not displaying behavioral expectations in hopes of improving and refining our expectations and supporting students towards more productive behavioral choices.

There is an abundance of research that proves improved behavior leads to improved learning and increased student self-concept as a learner. Our ultimate goal in implementing a school-wide system of Positive Behavior Supports is increased student achievement!

How loud is your roar?

0-Voice off-when teacher is teaching, work time, hallway

1-Whisper-only one person needs to hear you, whisper reading



2-Partner-partner work, small group work, cafeteria

3-Presentation-when everyone in the classroom needs to hear you

4-Outside-playground

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.***



Students get paw stamps on their passport for each area they learn about Pawsome Expectations

Volunteers: Background Checks, Badges & 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 School on Friday, November 4th, 23rd, 24th, or 25th!

There will be no school for students on Friday, November 4th due to Teacher Professional Development and Records Day. In addition students will not have school on Wednesday, Thursday & Friday, November 23rd, 24th, or 25th due to Thanksgiving Break.

Community Sharing Food Drive - November 7th - 11th!

The Amberly Community Sharing Food Drive will be taking place during the week of NOVEMBER 7TH thru NOVEMBER 11TH of this year. During that week we are asking Amberly students to bring in canned goods or money donations to school to help less fortunate families in Portage. The donations will be taken to the Portage Community Center where they will be distributed to families in need. Look for fliers in your Friday Folders in the coming weeks which will give you more information on the types of food that are needed.

If you would like to volunteer your time to help count, sort, and deliver the food to the Portage Community Center on Friday, November 11th please contact Becky Bach at #323-3871 or at thebachfamily@charter.net. Thanks for your help!



Picture Retake Day - November 11th!

Picture Retakes will occur the morning Friday, Nov. 11th. Students who missed the initial picture day will have photos taken 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.***



First Quarter Report Cards Come Home November 14th!

Be sure to ask your child to see his/her report card on Monday, November 14th. It will be very important that you review this report of progress prior to conferences on November 16th and 17th. ***If you have not scheduled a conference with your child's teacher yet, please do so ASAP by calling our school office at 323-5900!***



Have You Signed Up for Conferences?

If you did not sign up for a conference, please stop by or call the Amberly office (323-5900) to do so ASAP. Conference times fill up quickly!

2011-12 School Year Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on:

November 16 & 17 from 5 to 9 p.m. (Fall Conferences) and

February 21 & 22 from 5 to 9 p.m. (Winter Conferences)

Please Note: Two Household Families and Conferencing Living in a two-household family (shared custody) presents its own share of challenges and learning experiences for students (transporting items from one house to the other, informing both parents of events, etc.). Divorced parents who share legal custody of a child have a right to be kept informed of their child's progress and involved in their education, including conferencing with teachers. To insure both parents hear the same information and to serve as positive role models of cooperation for their children, the staff of Amberly Elementary will conference with parents who share legal custody TOGETHER. Only in extreme situations, as determined by Principal Daoust, will separate conferences be held for two-household families. Please note: Joint legal custody is assumed unless the school is provided with a court order restricting legal custody of a parent(s).

Nov. 17 - 2:15 p.m. Dismissal - No p.m. Young Fives or Kindergarten

To allow for extra parent-teacher conference time, students will be dismissed at 2:15 p.m. on Thursday, November 17th. Please be sure to have supervision arranged for your child on this early dismissal date. *In addition there will be no afternoon Young Fives or Kindergarten held on November 17th.*

APTA Movie Night - Friday, November 18th!

Movie Night at Amberly is Friday, Nov. 18th. Showing that evening will be the newly released Disney Pixar movie *Cars 2*. Doors will open at 6 p.m. for student check-in, *Cars 2* will begin at 6:20 p.m. in the gym and students should be picked up by 8:30 p.m. **This event is for current Amberly students only.** Admittance also requires a completed admittance slip and parent sign in and sign out of students. A \$5 donation per student is requested. Please see the flyer that came home if Friday Folders for further information.



No School November 23, 24, 25 - Thanksgiving Break!

There will be no school from Wednesday, November 23rd through Friday, November 25th due to Thanksgiving Break. Have a great Thanksgiving Break. *We are very thankful for all of our parents/guardians who regularly support student learning and volunteer at our school! YOU make Amberly great!*



Medication Distribution at School - Authorization Required

Whenever possible, we encourage parents/ guardians to administer medication to children at home. Please check with your child's physician if prescribed medication can be given outside the school day, thereby eliminating the bringing of medication to school. Written consent and instruction from a licensed practitioner and a parent/guardian is required for any type of medication (prescribed and over-the-counter) to be administered at school. Authorization/Consent must be given on a Portage Public Schools Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form.

All medication must be brought to school in the original container with the child's name, drug and dosage, time and quantity to be given and physician's name and duration of treatment on the container's label. **Under no circumstances will a student be given medication or allowed to take medication without written consent from a licensed practitioner and parent/guardian.** Medication Authorization/Consent forms are available at the school office or on the Amberly website:

http://www.portageps.org/schools/elementary/amb/information/forms/Medication_Prescriber.pdf

Money at School - Little Should Be Brought

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 send any lunch money in a sealed envelope marked "lunch money" and with the student's name printed on it. Please do not send or allow your child to bring more than \$1 or \$2 to school for the School Store.**



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 and Drug 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.

In addition we are a drug free school zone – this included cigarettes, other tobacco substances and alcohol. No smoking, chewing of tobacco or consumption of alcohol is to be done on school grounds.



*Amberly students are Respectful,
Responsible, Safe & Caring.*

Toys, Gameboys, iPods and Cell Phones - Not At Elementary School

Students are not to bring cell phones, toys, Game Boys, iPods or other electronic devices to school. These can be expensive and the school cannot 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.

Media Coverage and 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. Should you wish to not have your child's picture published in any way (paper, website, television), please notify the school office.

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.