

Portage Lake Center



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Mark A. Root, Principal
Pat Baltmanis, Secretary
Chris Dally, Secretary

SCHOOL HOURS 8:43-3:42
YOUNG FIVES & KINDERGARTEN AM 8:43-11:44
YOUNG FIVES & KINDERGARTEN PM 12:40-3:42

MAY 2008

VOLUNTEERS - We would like to thank the many parents who joined us to bring quality education to our students. The staff and students at Lake Center appreciate the time and energy you donate to us.

***** NO SCHOOL – MAY 26 – MEMORIAL DAY *****

HONORS ASSEMBLY – Wednesday, June 11th, at 9:30A.M. will be the Honors Assembly for Grades 4 and 5 where the students will receive any awards they might have earned this year.

SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM-

In order to support reading/math and parent involvement, our Site Base Team is continuing with our enrichment program again this summer.

Planning is underway for our Summer Enrichment Program. This year's theme is CAMPING! Come read, check out books, listen to stories, play math games and more!

Dates are Tuesdays

9-11 a.m. and 6-8 p.m. starting June 24th- July 29th. Look for more information to come home soon! ☺

CHILDREN VISITING SCHOOL – Cousins, friends, etc. who may be visiting your home are welcome to come to school for lunch and noon recess only.

We cannot permit these visitors to spend the entire day at school, as it becomes too much of a disruption for the class.

BUS RIDERS WHO WALK should bring a note to the office. We cannot allow these children to walk home without written permission from you.

ATTENTION PARENTS OF 5TH THROUGH 11TH GRADE BUS RIDERS

Do you want your middle or high school student to ride the school bus next year?

All middle and high school students must register for bus service. Obtaining an accurate

list of students who will actually be riding our buses is very important for us to design efficient, low cost bus routes.

If you would like your middle and/or high school students to ride the bus next year, please sign up early. You may sign up online after May 1 at www.portageps.org or use the pre addressed postcards distributed by the school bus drivers during the last two weeks of school.

As a reminder, middle and senior high school students grades 6-12, may be expected to walk up to 1-½ miles to school or up to 1 mile to a bus stop wherever appropriate walkways and traffic signs are available. Eligible students signing up for transportation will be assigned to bus stops based on their home address.

Students signing up by June 30 will receive a postcard in mid-August with specific transportation information.

Students not replying by June 30 may compromise our ability to provide timely bus service for you in the fall.

For more information, please ask your bus driver or call Transportation at 323-5151.

Thank you in advance for your timely responses.

Don't delay, sign up today. You don't want to miss the bus!

LAKE CENTER BIBLE CHURCH FOOD PANTRY- We continue to have a great working relationship with our good neighbors, the Lake Center Bible Church. Over the years they have shown our Lake Center family support with Kids Hope Mentors, volunteers for PTO activities, meal baskets and presents at holiday time, and backpacks and school supplies. They now have a “short term emergency” food pantry for those in need. If you would benefit from their generosity, please contact the church office 327-1004. If you are able to contribute to their pantry, please contact the office or check out their web site www.lakecenter.org.

REMINDER – HANDICAPPED PARKING – Please be sensitive to the needs of the handicapped when parking for various school events and picking up students. The handicapped parking areas need to be used ONLY by people with handicapped stickers on their cars.

LOST AND FOUND – All unclaimed lost and found items will be given to a charity organization the week after school is out. Please come and see if there is something of value your child may have lost and not claimed. Nothing will be held over until Fall, and we wouldn't want to dispose of something you need. Two lawn chairs were left at the last movie night. We have them in the office.

VOLUNTARY STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM – During this school year the Portage Board of Education made available a voluntary student accident insurance program. Since the District has made this insurance available, an increasing number of parents/guardians have been taking advantage of this inexpensive policy. This fact dictates that as a community service, we will continue to offer this voluntary insurance. The District offers this program because of trends in rising family health and dental insurance costs, increased deductibles, and co-payments. Furthermore, in an attempt to limit the Districts' rising insurance costs, this program provides an alternative for claims due to

accidental injuries that unfortunately occur on our property. This is the case for both during and after school hours.

The plan described in the brochure you'll receive in the fall has been designed to respond to diverse family insurance needs. Coverage provided can help decrease the burden of unexpected medical and dental expenses, including those left unpaid due to family insurance deductibles and co-payments.

Please watch for the enrollment forms at the start of the next school year.

10 Things School Bus Drivers Wish Parents Would Teach Their Children

Realizing that any driver distraction is potentially hazardous to the safety of all passengers and other motorists, this reminder is brought to you by the PPS Transportation Employee Safety Committee

1. No loud talking/screaming on the bus.
2. Stay seated until the bus comes to a full stop.
3. Keep hands to yourself. No horseplay.
4. No eating on the bus.
5. Be on time to your bus stop.
6. Cross in front of the bus.
7. Do not stand or sit in the aisles.
8. Pay attention when loading/unloading the bus.
9. Communicate with the driver.
10. Be responsible. Follow the driver's directions the first time.

NOT A NEW TAX

Countywide Millage Renewal

Means \$3 Million for District

Portage School residents, along with all other citizens throughout the county, will be voting on a 1.5 countywide millage renewal in the May 6 election. Portage Schools receives almost \$3 million a year from this operational millage, which covers instructional program expenses. The millage was originally passed in May 2005.

There is also additional information online from the District's homepage (www.portageps.org), including the following charts:

- PPS Revenue Below Inflation Since Countywide Millage Approval
- State Spending Changes: 2002-03 through 2008-09

This past November, PPS voters approved a bond which is for construction and remodeling, and cannot be used for instructional programs.

Meanwhile, the Board of Education voted unanimously in February to place this renewal before voters. Without the \$3 million provided annually from this millage, students in the District will face cuts in services and programs, such as:

- Cuts in athletic programs, music and theatre programs, textbook purchases and other instructional materials, and busing, resulting in fewer bus stops and more walkers.
- Cuts in teaching staff, media specialists, counselors, and support staff that will reduce up to 40 positions, increase class sizes, and reduce course offerings.
- Cuts in programs that give our students an edge, such as International Baccalaureate and AP fees and support, Education for Employment intern programs, Kalamazoo Area Math & Science Center services, Gifted & Talented (E2) Services, and Reading.

Even with the revenues from this countywide millage, the District has had to make about \$1.3 million in cuts to balance the budget. Since the 2002-03 school year, the District has made \$3.8 million in cuts. Meanwhile, even with a millage renewal, more budget cuts would be likely – and therefore failure of the renewal would result in an even greater shortfall.

Those who need an absentee ballot will find a link on the District's homepage (portageps.org) to print the form, or those without computer access can pick up the form at their clerk's office or at the PPS Administration Building at 8111 S. Westnedge Ave, just south of Centre Avenue.

TO THANK A TEACHER
OR OTHER SCHOOL STAFF MEMBER
EDUCATION WEEK!

May 5 through May 9, 2008

One common experience shared by most people is that of attending school. Another similar recollection from school days frequently centers around one certain teacher or school person, someone who reached out and touched our lives in a way that made the day a little brighter, the homework a little easier, or us a little happier. That person motivated us to learn or simply wiped a tear or held a hand. Nearly everyone remembers at least one teacher who really made a difference in his/her life.

As you think through the past year, is there a teacher, or another staff member, who went out of his or her way to help your child? Did someone really interest your child in learning, help teach responsibility, continue to provide encouragement in the face of frustration? If so, we invite you to write a thank you note to this person on the lines below.

We know that each note will be treasured.

1. Please place the full name of the person you wish to thank on the blank line following "Dear"
2. Place your note in an envelope with the name of the staff member and have your child deliver it to Mr. Root.

Thank you,

Dear _____,
