



LAKE CENTER ELEMENTARY
"LEARNING CREATES SUCCESS"

PARTNERS IN LEARNING
NEWSLETTER

10011 Portage Road, Portage, MI 49002-7249
Telephone: (269) 323-6300
Fax: (269) 323-6390

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

FEBRUARY 2008

In this issue you will find:

- Conference Dates
- School Closing Dates
- Enrolling kindergarten students for fall
- Portage Public Schools Placement Information
- Preschool Open House
- Science Night

VALENTINE'S DAY PARTIES – Valentine's Day parties will be held on Thursday, February 14th. The classroom teacher will provide specific information.

LAKE CENTER CONFERENCE DAYS –
Tuesday, February 26 – 1:00-4:00 and 5:00-8:00
Wednesday, February 27 – 5:00-8:00

FOR YOUR CALENDAR – Monday, February 25th there will be no school for students, this is Mid-Winter Break. Tuesday, February 26th will be a ½ day of school for the students. No school for PM Young Fives and Kindergarten students. March 28th will be a records day, no school for students. There will be a ½ day of school on April 4th. The PM Young Five and Kindergarten students will attend school in the AM, no school for AM Young Fives and Kindergarten students. Spring Break is April 7th – April 11th. School resumes on April 14th.

REMINDER FOR KINDERGARTEN AND YOUNG FIVES PARENTS - On half days, kindergarten students are dropped off at the regular bus stop and not at their homes.

Please discuss this with your student before the next half-day so that they will know what is expected of them.

KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS FOR FALL 2008– We have begun to collect names of prospective kindergarten students for the fall. If you have a child, or know of a neighbor's child, who will be five years old by December 1, 2008, would you please forward the information to school or call 323-6300. We need the child's name, parents' names, date of birth, telephone number, address and day care information.

***** Portage Public Schools encourage parents to have their children enrolled for kindergarten in the spring prior to their first year of school. We then try hard to create balanced class sizes for all students. This year in order to help us accomplish this goal, we will be implementing a sister school concept. As students enroll they will be placed in a school where the numbers can best accommodate additional students. Transportation will be provided if the district places a child at a sister school. Contact your home school for enrollment information.*

SCIENCE NIGHT - Lake Center's Site Based Team along with Jeff Poliak, a Lake Center parent and Pfizer employee are sponsoring a SCIENCE NIGHT on Wednesday, February 20th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. This is a family event. All science related projects and demonstrations will be held in our gymnasium. Cookies and juice will also be available in the cafeteria. Please bring a plate of cookies to share. If you are willing to help out or volunteer in any way please contact the school office at 323-6300.

UPDATED ENROLLMENT INFORMATION – Please be sure to keep us informed of any changes in your student's status, telephone numbers, address, emergency telephone numbers, etc. They are all very important. It is extremely helpful if we have the correct information, especially in case of an emergency. Call us at 323-6300 to inform us of any changes.

SAFETY REMINDER – We are requesting that parents use the South Parking lot area when picking up or dropping off students at school between 8:30 and 8:45 A.M. and 3:00 and 3:45 P.M. We have seven buses that come into the area in front of the school. There is not enough room for cars and buses and this can be dangerous for our students. Your help and continued cooperation is greatly appreciated.

“WHY IS THE BUS LATE?” - As weather and road conditions challenge us at this time of year, our bus drivers are instructed to think **safety before schedule**. Therefore, some of our routes may be delayed in picking up and/or dropping off students. We will continue on routes and service all accessible bus stops. Please continue to have your students wait at their bus stops. For up to the minute information about your student's bus, call the transportation office at 323-5151. We are here until the last regularly scheduled student is delivered home safely every school day. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding during inclement road and weather conditions.

COLD WEATHER – Thank you for continuing to send us students who can go outside at noon dressed warmly.

STUDENT ILLNESS – As winter weather continues, so does the “cold and flu season.” With such a large concentration of people in one area, the “bugs” can often spread very quickly.

For the health and well-being of all concerned (students and staff), please keep children who are ill at home where they can rest comfortably and recover without spreading the cold or flu to others. With your help, we can anticipate a healthier and more productive learning climate.

When returning to school from an illness, a child may remain inside for recess one day with a note from parents. Any longer requests to stay inside MUST be accompanied by a doctor’s request or they will not be honored. We have limited facilities and supervision at recess time and must ask your cooperation with this policy. You may sign your child out and take them home for lunch during a recuperation period.

VACATIONS AND STUDENT WORK MAKE-UP – Teachers are frequently asked to provide work for a child who is going on vacation. This request sometimes is made before leaving, with the parental intent that the child complete the work before vacation. This can and usually does place an unfair burden on the classroom teacher. Obviously, we don’t like to see students miss school, but we realize special circumstances dictate the timing of such family vacations. It is not fair, however, to expect the teacher to do his or her planning weeks in advance for the convenience of these isolated cases since detailed plans are normally prepared a week ahead and respond to the current pace of learning in each subject. Please be open to suggestions from your child’s teacher regarding appropriate vacation learning activities.

CURIOUS KIDS PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE PLANNED - Curious Kids 3 & 4 year old Preschool is holding its Open House on Monday, February 11 from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Families are welcome to visit our classrooms, meet the teachers, and register for Fall of 2008. Those families who register by April 1 will receive \$20 off their first month's tuition. Please join us on February 11 at the Portage Community Education Center, 1010 West Milham.

PARENTS PLEASE HELP – Please read what is written on your child’s shirts and sweatshirts. Some things are not appropriate for school. If your child comes to school in something that is not appropriate we will give them a different shirt to wear. If we do not have anything that will fit, then you will be called to bring a change of clothes to school. We ask your help and understanding in this matter.

WINTER WEATHER – Winter weather is upon us and “snow days” are always a possibility if the weather becomes severe. When Portage Schools cancels or delays the start of school, the announcement will be made in time for 6 a.m. news casts on local television and radio stations. Parents may also check the district web site portageps.org (click on “Parents & Visitors”) for a link to postings at the WWMT-TV Channel 3 website. The District also has a hotline (323-6800) that is updated on snow days, and Portage Cable Access, Channel 20, also posts school closing information.

GOTR COACHES NEEDED - Coaches are needed to lead a team of our third through fifth graders during Girls on the Run (GOTR) March through May. GOTR is a national program that offers a life-changing curriculum. The program combines self-esteem enhancing, uplifting workouts with training for a 5k run/walk celebration event and is in its third year of existence in the greater Kalamazoo area.

Greater Kalamazoo GOTR provides comprehensive training for coaches who will lead the girls in lessons that are intended to reduce the incidences of low self-esteem and depression, negative body image that sometimes results in serious eating disorders, high risk behaviors such as smoking, underage drinking, use of illegal drugs and early onset of sexual experiences, and violent crimes. Each lesson is accompanied by a running activity and work out designed to enhance the girls' overall physical health as well.

This after school program will be offered to 15 girls two afternoons per week for 10 weeks beginning the week of March 19, 2007. Coaches must be available to attend training on either Saturday, March 3; Friday, March 9; or on Saturday, March 10, 2007. Additionally, coaches must also become first-aid and CPR certified.

GKGOTR is a collaboration of many area businesses, agencies, organizations and individuals who are committed to the health and well being of our area's children. Donations, sponsorships, participant fees and in-kind contributions from several sources make it possible to continue to bring this program to Kalamazoo.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can be a part of Girls on the Run, please visit www.girlsontherunkazoo.org, or contact Jennifer Kitchen, Lake Center Physical Education Instructor and liaison for GOTR, at jkitchen@portageps.org. Kalamazoo Communities In Schools serves as the fiduciary for GOTR.

PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Procedures for Placement and Transfer of Elementary Students

The Board and administration of Portage Public Schools believe that elementary-age students should be assigned to a school based on the location of their permanent residence (i.e. where the child regularly resides and spends the night under the supervision of a parent or legal guardian). The Board of Education approves attendance boundaries after considering recommendations made by the District's administration. The District strives to provide a consistent set of high quality programs and services at each school site so that every student's academic needs can be appropriately addressed, under normal circumstances, at any elementary school within the District's boundaries.

1. Attendance at an assigned school will be considered automatic unless the legal parent or guardian requests, in writing, that the District consider one (or more) special circumstance(s) that likely would impact the student's educational experience. The decision to allow a transfer to another District school site will be the responsibility of the Coordinator of Instructional Services. That decision will be based on a review of information provided by the parent or legal guardian and any other pertinent information that may be reasonably and legally obtained by the Coordinator concerning the student's needs.

2. A request for another building must be made for the full school year and will remain in effect unless changed by the parent through a written document or unless it becomes necessary to reduce numbers in a building to accommodate neighborhood enrollment.
3. Approved moves may be revoked if attendance or behavior issues are apparent, and it is determined by school personnel that returning to the home school would best serve the needs of the child.
4. Assignment to a particular classroom is the responsibility of the building principal.
5. Special Education programs and services for students with disabilities are regulated by legislation. Administrative rules determine maximum class size in these programs.

The request for an elementary school other than the school assigned by the attendance area must be made by February 29, 2008. Parents will be notified as to the status of their request by March 31, 2008. Written requests will be considered after February 29, 2008, only with a valid extenuating circumstance. District residents will receive priority for placement before Non-Resident 501C Schools of Choice applications are accepted in 2008.

Transportation

Transportation will not be provided except for students who also attend the Curious Kids program.

Questions may be directed to the Coordinator of Instructional Services (323-5148).