



LAKE CENTER ELEMENTARY
"LEARNING CREATES SUCCESS"

**PARTNERS IN LEARNING
NEWSLETTER**

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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

APRIL 2008

IN THIS ISSUE YOU WILL FIND:

- Kindergarten information
- Summer Enrichment Program
- Middle/High School Bus Information
- Millage Information

PARKING SAFETY REMINDER – Please use the south parking lot when picking up or dropping off students between the hours of 8:30-9:00 A.M., 11:15-11:45 A.M., 12:30-1:00 P.M., and 3:00-3:42 P.M. The circular drive is used by the buses at these times. Our parking lot is very small, so make sure you are extra careful. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to wait in the parking lot to be picked up. Please come into the office and sign your child out if you are picking him/her up from school.

KINDERGARTEN 2008-09 – One more reminder that we are trying to contact all parents who will be sending their children to Kindergarten at Lake Center in the Fall. Please help us by telling your friends and neighbors to call the school to request forms. Morning or afternoon placement will be determined after we have the full enrollment and divide them into bus routes with equal numbers. A letter indicating a tentative assignment will be sent home in June.

Registration materials for school year 2008-09 have been mailed. If your child starts school in the Fall and you have not received this material, please call our office (323-6300). We will need a copy of the birth certificate, proof of residency, proof of immunizations, and completed enrollment and transportation forms. Having these papers in before summer simplifies your enrollment in the Fall.

***** 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.*

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! ☺

SPRING CLEANING – With the increased cost of school materials, particularly books, we have to make our school dollars stretch. As you clean closets, drawers, etc., please keep an eye open for books marked LAKE CENTER SCHOOL. Found items can be returned to school anytime.

CALLING SCHOOL WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ILL - Thank you so much for calling to let us know when your child will be absent. It eliminates our calling you at home or work.

PERMISSION SLIPS – If you live outside of our walking area, please make sure that there is a signed permission slip in the office if your child is planning on walking or riding a bike to school.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL FOR TORNADO WATCH OR WARNING – In the event of a tornado watch or warning announcement by the U.S. Weather Bureau, students will be kept in school until the regular time for dismissal or until such time, in the judgement of the Superintendent of Schools, students can be safely dismissed. We do have periodic disaster drills in our school so that we are prepared should such an emergency arise. It is advisable and recommended that you discuss with your children where they should report if an early dismissal is deemed appropriate and you are not at home. Your continued cooperation is certainly appreciated and most necessary in case such an emergency should arise.

TORNADO EMERGENCY INFORMATION FOR THE PARENTS – Your school has made plans to safeguard your children during a tornado. Here is how you can help:
During a Tornado Watch – A Tornado Watch means that a tornado may develop in your area. NO tornado exists yet, but the weather conditions favor tornado development.

During a Tornado Watch, please:

1. Do/Don't send your child to school. Use YOUR judgment
2. Do/Don't pick students up from school. Use YOUR judgment.
3. School buses will/will not run, depending on weather conditions. Decision will be made by Superintendent

4. Please DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL during a Tornado Watch. Lines need to be open for emergency communications

During a Tornado Warning – A Tornado Warning means that a tornado has been sighted in your area. Your child will be taken to the best available shelter. During a Tornado Warning, please:

1. Do NOT try to pick your child up from school until the Warning has been lifted. You should take shelter immediately.
2. DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL Lines need to be open for emergency communications.

TARDINESS/EARLY SIGN-OUTS – School starts at 8:43 a.m. It is very important that all students arrive at school on time. Going hand-in-hand with tardiness is the problem of students frequently being picked up early. Of course, there is an occasional necessity for appointments and last minute emergencies, but as much as possible, students need to be in school until 3:42 p.m. Students need to learn at an early age that punctuality and dependability are important assets to carry with them throughout their lives.

CALLING ALL GUEST TAGS – Our guest tags are disappearing. If you've been a working parent at school, please take a moment to check to see if you have any guest tags at home.

HONOR AND REMEMBER - Mrs. Evans is doing a bulletin board by the office in May entitled *Honor and Remember*. It is for our Lake Center family to send in pictures of family members or friends who are currently or have been in the U.S. Military Service. It will be a photo collage mounted on a giant American Flag.

If your family has a photo/photos to post, make a 5x7 copy and label it with your child's name, teacher and that soldier's relationship to your child. Mrs. Evans will not be responsible for any original photos so please send in only black and white or color Xerox copies.

We are proud of all Lake Center family who serve in the military to keep us safe and free.

If you can read this, thank a teacher.

If you can read this in English, thank a soldier.

ART NEWS

The annual Young Artists of Kalamazoo County Exhibit is now on display at the Kalamazoo Institute of Art. The exhibit will run thru April 20.

The following students have art work on display:

Kindergarten: Alan Mejea-Guerra, Noah Schuring, Griffin Lantz

First: Anna Stratton, Brandon Bradeen, Annie Malek, Olivia Seelman, Sydney Andres

Second: Connor McCally, Ryan Crawford, Katelyn Scanlon, Spencer Brandt, Emmerson Douglas, April Secondi, Teanne Davis

Third: Taylor Grabowski, James Carlson, Emily Stoner, Jessie Isaacs, Baily Gardner, Jaiden Reed, Madison McAllitser

Fourth: Maggie Faust, Zach Marr,Carolynn Fries, Heerali Patel, Courtney Hunter, Amanda Boelman, Alyssa Ruble, Leah Alburtus, Savannah Huitema

Fifth: Jai-ling Tsao, Brooke Wester, Brevin Banton, Rachel Dey, Megan McNabb, Troy Allen, Cole Doolittle, MacKenzie Housler, Alyssa Meinema, Breanne Lemmer, Jessie Bourbeau, Amanda Cronk, Alex Haas, Amanda Shinevare

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!

PPS Residents To Vote on Millage Renewal on May 6

Residents of Portage Schools, 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 expenses (as opposed to the November bond that voters approved, which is only for construction and remodeling). The countywide operational millage was originally passed in May 2005.

At its February 18 meeting, the Board of Education discussed the tough position it will be in without the millage renewal and voted unanimously to place the renewal on the ballot. Without the \$3 million annually that this millage provides, the District would face hard choices, such as:

- Cuts in teaching staff that would:
 - reduce up to 40 teaching positions
 - increase class sizes to 30+ students per class in elementary schools
 - reduce course offerings for high school students

- Cuts in media specialists, counselors and other support staff
- Cuts in programs that give our students an edge:
 - International Baccalaureate diploma program and AP courses
 - Education for Employment intern programs
 - Kalamazoo Area Math & Science Center courses
 - Gifted & Talented Services
 - Reading Support Services
- Cuts in:
 - athletic programs
 - music and theatre programs
 - textbook purchases and other instructional materials
 - busing, resulting in fewer bus stops and more walkers

According to Board President Shirley Johnson, even with the revenues from this countywide millage for the past three years, the District has had to make about \$1.3 million in cuts to balance the budget.

She explained at the February 18 meeting that even with the countywide millage being renewed, more budget cuts would be likely – and therefore failure of the renewal would result in an even greater shortfall. Since the 2002-03 school year, the District has made \$3.8 million in cuts.

Two Board of Education Seats Also on the Ballot

District residents also have two Board of Education seats to fill on May 6. Trustee, and past Board president, Tom Eddy is retiring from the Board, while current Board Vice President Jennifer Whistler is seeking re-election. The other candidates for the board are Rusty Rathburn, Joanne Wilson and Kurt Kuppler.