



12th Street Times

February 2012

Dear 12th Street Families,

I hope all of you are well and enjoying our mild winter so far. As we move into the third quarter of the school year we have spent time looking at student growth data and planning for each child's continued success and learning in the weeks ahead. We look forward to seeing you later this month at Conferences to share your child's successes and goals.

Thanks to those of you who have taken time to review the reading materials being considered for adoption in the district in the 2013-14 school year as we implement the Common Core curriculum. If you have questions about this please email or call me. Houghton Mifflin, Journeys materials will be available for preview February 7-10. Contact me if you wish to see the materials and we can arrange a time.

Many of you are asking about whether or not PPS will have full day Kindergarten for 2012-13. The BOE will have this question on their agenda at the end of Feb meeting. We will let you know as soon as we have further information.

Thanks for all the ways you partner with us in being a safe, joyful educational community for every child and family.

Sincerely,

Beth Green, Principal

Managing Food Service Accounts

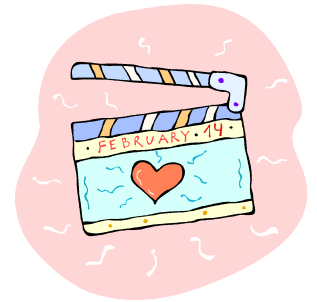
Adding money to your child's food service account has never been easier. With the help of SendMoneytoSchool.com, parents are now able to add money to food service accounts with a credit or debit card. The site also allows parents to view balance and transaction information, transfer funds between sibling accounts, and provides the opportunity to place purchasing restrictions on the accounts. SendMoneytoSchool.com is available to all students in all grade levels. Information on how to create an account can be found on the district website or:

www.sendmoneytoschool.com. **Your child's Student ID number is needed to sign-up.** Student ID numbers are the same numbers parents use to access the PIV.

February 2012

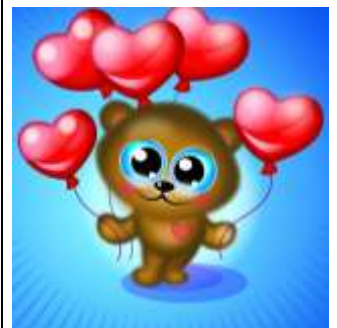
6501 S. 12th St.
Portage, MI 49024

Phone
269-323-6900
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323-6990



Beth Green
Principal

Lynn Daniel
Melanie Sage
Administrative Assistants



Lollipop Sale

Student Council will be selling Heart Shaped Lollipops
February 6-10

Lollipops will be sold all week unless the supply runs out.
Lollipops will be 50 cents each.



Dates to Remember

02/10 Family Movie Night - **Mr. Popper's Penguins**
02/21 & 02/22 Parent/Teacher Conferences
2/15 Third Grade Music Performances 2:45 & 6:30 PM
2/16 Human Growth and Development Meeting for 5th grade parents at the Admin. Building 7-8 PM
02/24 No School, Mid-Winter Break
3/1 Kindergarten Parent Meeting 6:30 PM
3/15 Orff Ensemble Performance 6:30 PM
03/24 Family Carnival
3/29 Half Day, dismissal at 11:57
3/30 No School, Spring Friday
4/2-4/6 Spring Break



Please be sure your child is leaving home with everything he/she may need for the day. Calling into to a classroom to let a student know that they have a lunch or homework in the office disrupts the entire class. Making a back-pack/lunch check part of the morning routine helps promote responsibility.

Kindergarten Registration

If you have a child that turns 5 before December 1st, please call the office at 323-6900 to register for Kindergarten. Our Kindergarten parent meeting will be March 1 at 6:30 PM and screenings will take place March 13, 14 and 15 by appointment. We ask that you register your child in advance of the parent meeting. Screening appointments will be made at the meeting on a first-come, first-served basis.



Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Tuesday, February 21 from 4:30-8:15 and on Wednesday, February 22 from 4:30-8:15. This year you will schedule your own conference online.

You may sign up for conferences during the week of Feb. 6-10.

You will schedule your conference by going to www.schoolbookings.net and entering our school event code: BMXMM. You will then be taken through a 3 step process to enter your **information, child's information and to schedule the conference. We do not encourage you to** schedule back-to-back conferences if you are seeing more than one teacher since your travel time from room to room will cut into the conference time. Only one conference will be held per student. Please be aware of this policy if your child has more than one household.

Only households without internet access or those that have students that see Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Jensen, or Mrs. Pratt were allowed to turn in a conference slips for scheduling. The process will only take a short time and it will be easier for parents, teachers, and office staff. If you are unable to attend a conference during the allotted time frame, please be sure to contact the teacher via phone or email to make other arrangements.

What time does school start?

8:25 First Bell Rings and Doors Open

8:30 2nd Bell Rings and Instructional time begins

8:35 Students arriving after this time are considered Tardy.

Full Day of School: 8:25 a.m. - 3:46 p.m.

Half Day of School: 8:25 a.m. - 11:57 a.m.

Morning Kindergarten and Young Fives: 8:25 a.m. - 11:35 a.m.

Afternoon Kindergarten and Young Fives: 12:35 p.m. - 3:46 p.m.



If you would like 12th Street news updates sent to your inbox, please sign up at our website:

<http://www.portageps.org/schools/elementary/twl/default.aspx>

Portage Public Schools

THE FUTURE LEARNS HERE

12th Street Elementary School

6501 South 12th Street

Portage, Michigan 49024

Phone (269) 323-6900

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Class Placement Procedures

All parents/guardians are very concerned that their child is placed with a caring and competent teacher. It is little wonder parents/guardians often feel strongly about having a voice in the selection of their child's class placement. However, there are many things that need to be considered in order to create successful classrooms. We would like to share the process all our teachers participate in when assigning class placement for the upcoming school year. Hopefully, this will provide you with a better understanding of how complex a balancing act this can be.

Current Teacher Input Regarding Student Placement

All grade level and resource teachers go through their list of current students and provide input on student academic performance, behavior, and special learning characteristics. Teachers identify if a student is academically strong, average or challenged by grade level curriculum. This identification is based on performance scores as well as general impressions. Teachers also identify students who may need special assistance, whether it is remediation or extension of the grade level curriculum. In addition to academic performance, teachers also make note of student behavioral skills, identifying those who are strong leaders with peers, in need of peer support, or challenged by group interactions. Teachers also consider those children who need to be separated.

Balanced Classrooms Make the Best Classrooms

When the initial information gathering tasks have been completed, your child's current grade level team of teachers, resource teachers and the guidance counselor meet with the principal to draft the upcoming year's classes. The objective is to match student learning styles to teacher strengths and areas of talent, while creating classrooms that have a balanced number of students who are strong, self-directed learners, with those who need some support. It is important that students learn to work and socialize in environments of diversity. This not only prepares them for "the real world" but also allows individual talents to shine. As staff work together in developing balanced classrooms, they factor in all student information gathered from the variety of sources. ***Creating balanced classrooms focused on meeting all students' needs is our top priority!***

After the first draft of class lists has been developed, they are shared with the current year's and the previous year's grade level teacher and specialists. This is done to gain even further input regarding student learning style. Upon receiving this additional input, the principal reviews the class lists and all available information regarding student placement. If concerns exist, further input will be sought.

Parent/Guardian Input

Parents/guardians are invited to share in writing, observations regarding their child's learning style and any educational needs that should be considered. Written requests for specific teachers will not be accepted. Passing conversations with teachers will also not be formally considered. A child's current teacher is open to hearing your concerns, however, the teacher cannot guarantee placement, particularly in an informal conversation. ***Parent/Guardian Placement Input Forms are available in the school office. All Parent Guardian Placement Input Forms to be considered for the upcoming school year are due to the school office on hard copy format by Thursday, March 29, 2012. Email and/or faxed forms will not be accepted.***

Girls on the Run Shoe Fittings-Last Chance

You are responsible for getting your daughter sized for her shoes. The deadline is fast approaching. Here are the remaining shoe fitting dates, locations and times.

Saturday, Feb. 4: Gazelle Sports (Downtown) 11:00-4:00pm

Sunday, Feb. 5: Gazelle Sports (Downtown) 12:00-4:00pm

If your child does not get sized for her shoes by Sunday, she will be unable to get a pair of new running shoes.

The program will begin the week of March 12th and end May 24th. Your daughter will learn who is on her team and her coach at the first practice on Monday, March 12th.

12th Street is still looking for coaches. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Stacy Housman-Schmitzer at shousman@portageps.org or Rachel Roberts at rroberts@portageps.org



Lost and Found

Missing anything? Have you checked the Lost and Found bin? You can find the bin in our cafeteria down the hallway the students use to go outside for recess. This bin is overflowing with coats, boots, hats, gloves, snow pants, etc. All items that remain unclaimed will be donated at the end of the school year or sooner if the bin becomes too full.

Late Pick-Ups

12th Street continues to have issues with parents not picking up students from school on time. This has become a chronic problem with several students. School dismisses at 3:46 and all students should be picked up by 3:55 at the very latest. We have no supervision for students left behind after this time. Perhaps getting to school early and parking in one of the parking lots would be an option for those that tend to run late. Make sure your child knows how they are getting home each day to avoid a mix-up. A note from home is required if there are any changes to the daily routine.

Notes from the Office

Transportation Changes

We often receive phone calls about transportation/pick-up changes in the office. We understand that life happens and that changes are sometimes unavoidable, however for the safety of our students we do have some simple procedures to follow. We ask that you try to make all arrangements before school and then simply send in a note with your child if there will be a change in pick-up. If the change occurs after school starts, please call the office and/or e-mail the teacher about the change. We ask that if you are planning to pick-up your student due to change, you arrive 5 minutes early to sign your student out in the office. This way we can verify that the student has been picked up by a family member that is on the student's contact list. **While it may seem inflexible, safety is a real concern and we truly have your child's best interest at heart. We cannot always verify who you are when you call the school and we often worry that we may be putting a child at risk of being picked up by the wrong person. We appreciate your cooperation.**

Count Day is February 8th, 2012

If your child will be absent on Count Day, we will need a signed note letting the office know of the absence.

We are required by the state to obtain an explanation for any absences on this date. Thank you.



Requests to Stay Inside for Recess

We strongly believe that except for on rare occasions, if a child is well enough to be in school, he/she is well enough to go outside for recess. School policy states that the child MUST have a note signed by a doctor in order to stay inside for recess. We do not have any supervision for children to stay inside, so they will be asked to sit in the office with a book to read.

Here are 9 examples of female bullying that you may want to watch for:

1. Taunting
2. Backstabbing
3. Spreading rumors
4. Passing nasty notes
5. Making fun of someone's clothes, appearance, or weight
6. Persuading friends to exclude someone
7. Revealing secrets
8. Saying something rude, followed by "just kidding"
9. Cyber-aggression



Healthy Kids Choose Heart-Healthy Snacks

Nearly one in three children in the United States are overweight or obese, according to the American Heart Association. This can lead to the development of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol – conditions typically associated with adults – in childhood.

February is American Heart Month, which is a good time to take a closer look at what our children are eating and try to make some healthier choices. And healthy snacks are a great place to start.

J. Lia Gaggino, MD, pediatrician with Bronson Rambling Road Pediatrics, says, “It is especially important for children to develop healthy eating habits now as most children will carry those habits with them into adulthood. Children age 4 to 6 need about 1,200 to 1,400 calories per day (boys a bit more than girls); 9 to 13 year olds need 1,600 to 1,800 calories per day, and 14 to 18 year olds need about 1,800 to 2,200 calories per day.”

Offering healthy snacks is a great way to supplement the child’s diet. She continues, “But it’s the right kind of calories that make all the difference in your child’s overall health. Making some small changes to your child’s diet now can add up to a real benefit over time.”

Most children should aim for two to three servings of healthy snacks per day. Of course, be sure to adjust this if your child is highly active in sports or other physical activities. Not sure what is a healthy snack? Dr. Gaggino says, “Think of foods that come in their own skins rather than those that come in crinkly bags.”

Dr. Gaggino recommends the following heart healthy snacks:

For toddlers:

- Fresh fruits cut up into small pieces, such as apples, bananas, peaches or pears

- Cooked veggies cut up into small pieces, such as carrots or green beans, or peas

- Diced cheese, cottage cheese or yogurt

- Dry cereal or creamy peanut butter on bite-size whole-grain crackers

Be sure to watch out for anything that can be a choking hazard. Large chunks of any food as well as nuts, popcorn, hot dogs and grapes are not safe for children age four and under.

For school-age children:

- Fresh fruit, either eaten whole or cut up into a fruit salad; if fruit is starting to get too ripe, use it to whip up a smoothie with low fat milk or yogurt.

- Air popped popcorn

- Homemade muffins made with bananas, apples, blueberries or pumpkin

- String cheese

- Low fat yogurt or pudding

- Low fat granola bars

- Fresh salsa with baked tortilla chips

- A small handful of raisins or dried cherries

- Homemade trail mix with whole grain cereal, dried fruit, nuts or sunflower seeds

- Frozen fruit bar

“If your child is highly active, try combining a healthy carbohydrate with a lean protein. This will benefit children in two ways: their hunger will be satisfied for longer and it will give them the lasting energy needed for a full day of school plus any extra curricular activities,” says Dr. Gaggino.

Some great choices include:

Whole grain cereal and low-fat milk

Pretzels dipped in peanut butter

Baby carrots, celery, cucumbers or bell pepper slices dipped in hummus or low-fat ranch dressing

Sliced apple dipped in peanut butter

Cottage cheese and a pear

Hard boiled egg and an orange

Half of a tortilla spread with low fat cream cheese, a slice of turkey, lettuce and tomato

Other tips:

Keep portion sizes in check. Buy items in portion-controlled packages or ask your child to help divide bulk foods out into smaller portions. He may be more likely to eat the snacks he's helped to prepare.

Stock the fridge and pantry with healthy options. Children will grab what is readily available. If your cupboard is filled with cookies, chips and soda, that is what they will reach for.

Keep a bowl of fresh fruit on the counter or at the kitchen table for easy snacking.

Try to make the snacks look appealing. Offer younger children some cut up veggies and encourage them to create a face on their plate. It doesn't take much more time to do this and your child will be more likely to eat their creation.

Use a small cookie cutter to cut cheese or sandwiches into fun shapes.

Keep a stash of healthy on-the-go snacks at hand for those really hectic days. String cheese, portable yogurt, a banana or a low fat granola bar are quick and can be eaten on the run.

Reserve soda, chips, cookies and other sweets as a once a week treat – not an everyday occurrence.

Start small. Don't try to change everything at once or you and your child will both end up frustrated. Instead, start by packing a healthy snack for your child to eat during the day. Once that is a habit, work on fixing a healthy after-school snack to tide him or her over until dinner.

Dr. Gaggino offers parents one last piece of advice, "Model the behavior you want to see in your children. It's hard to tell your child to eat an apple when you are eating a donut. We've all been there. Instead, try a team approach and get the whole family on board. You'll all feel better while encouraging each other to develop healthy habits for the long-term."

This article is brought to you by Bronson Children's Hospital, southwest Michigan's only children's hospital. For more information about children's health, visit bronsonhealth.com/children.

