



12th Street Times

Friday, January 13, 2012

Dear 12th Street Families,

Happy New Year! It has been a great week welcoming your children back to school and seeing many of you. You've probably noticed we are hitting the ground running this month. Your students will be busy with mid-year benchmark testing over the next couple of weeks. This school-wide screening will be followed by a day and half of grade level data meetings. This allows us to plan for instruction with every child at their learning level targeting challenges and strengths with the instruction they need to grow and learn at their highest level. If you have questions about the process contact me or your child's teacher.

As we return to school we revisit all of our routines and expectations. Remember our P.A.W.S. guidelines and check-in with your student about that review. Speaking of how we build team and community at 12th Street, we are still celebrating the amazing I Spy All School Activity that took place on December 21st. Staff on our MiBLSi team worked long and hard behind the scenes to make this event happen. The students did a fantastic job of being caring, safe and joyful as they worked together in multi-age teams finding picture clues throughout the building. The success of the event was a tangible reflection of the unified community we have grown to be at 12th Street. I am grateful and proud of the students and staff who create and build this positive culture everyday!

Many of you have probably seen the new legislation in Michigan addressing bullying. This is a critical issue for all of us to be aware of and proactive in addressing. All of you who have had conversations with me about this issue know that I view this as an area to follow up on immediately and clearly, getting all players in the conversation - students, teachers, supervisors, parents. One of the most important areas for educating children that is backed up by research again and again is teaching children who are witnesses to bullying how to respond appropriately. At 12th Street we make several suggestions including: get a grown up to help, be courageous and tell your friend to stop and that we don't treat people that way; share with your teacher, your parent, your principal and above all never join in teasing or any unkindness. Children who feel empowered to keep themselves safe and advocate for others are developing independence and leadership skills that will serve them throughout their lifetimes.

Thanks to all of you who shared holiday greetings and gifts during December. It continues to be a rich, joyful adventure serving as the principal of 12th Street Elementary. I wish you health and joy in 2012. As always, contact me anytime you have a question or concern.

Sincerely,

Beth Green, principal
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January 2012

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Beth Green
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New Reading Series Being Considered

Currently, a district committee is working on selecting a new reading series for our elementary students. We are considering two options: Houghton Mifflin, Journeys or Scott-Foresman, Reading Street. Materials for each program will be in our building for one week to allow staff and parents to review and give feedback on the programs. The materials will be housed in our upstairs conference room and will have to be reviewed at school. Mrs. Green will be here before, after and during school to allow time for parents to review the materials, see the schedule below:

Scott-Foresman, Reading Street: Monday, Jan. 30, 7:30a.m.-9:30a.m.; Tuesday, Jan. 31, 4:30-7:00p.m.

Houghton-Mifflin, Journeys: Tuesday, Feb. 7, 7:30-8:30a.m. and 4:30-7:00p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 8, 7:30-8:30a.m.

If you would like to review the programs and your schedule does not match these options, please contact the office to make an appointment with the Principal.

Dates to Remember

01/27 No School, Records Day
2/21-2/22 Conferences
02/24 No School, Mid-Winter Break
3/1 Kindergarten Parent Meeting 6:30 PM
3/29 Half Day of School (PM Kindergarten reports in the AM)
3/30 No School (Spring Friday)
04/2-04/6 No School, Spring Break



PE Reminder

Reminder to parents: With winter and snow here, please remember that hiking boots and winter boots are not permitted as "gym" shoes for physical education. This is a safety issue for all students. Students may leave a pair of sneakers in their locker for gym time if they wish. Thanks for helping your child to be able to participate in physical education.

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.

The best way to receive this newsletter and other important updates from 12th Street Elementary is by signing up to be on our email list. Many parents already receive periodic updates from the classroom via email. 12th Street Elementary is striving to be less dependent on paper in the future. We encourage all families to sign up for our email list on our website:

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

Once you have submitted your email address, you should receive a confirmation letter in your inbox. If you do not receive this confirmation email, it is possible that it was delivered to your "Spam" box. You will need to follow the directions in this email to confirm your email



Yearbook News!

The art contest for the yearbook has begun! All artwork must be on 8 1/2 x 11" plain paper and turned in by January 27th in the office. Your child's art work could be the next cover of our yearbook...how cool is that?

Yearbooks are still available to order. They are \$14 each and we offer 2 lines of personalization for \$2 and icons for \$1 each to be printed on the cover. New order forms will be coming home soon. You may also order online at schoolannual.com. All orders are due by March 2, 2012 and the books will be delivered in May.

Look for Yearbook Ad order forms to come home soon. We sell them first come, first served until our spaces are filled. We create personalized messages for your student...don't miss out...keep your eyes open



Any questions? Contact Amy Caranci at acdc5593@sbcglobal.net.

We still have a large number of students that are not picked up in a timely manner after school has dismissed for the day. Our bell rings at 3:46. We expect all children to be well on their way home before 4:00. We do not have supervision available for students that are left after this time.



We are finally experiencing our usual Michigan winter weather. Students should be wearing coats, snow pants, boots, hats, and gloves while on the playground for recess. We will be going outside for recess every day as long as the wind chill is above zero. Students benefit from the fresh air and a break from the classroom.

Portage Schools Begins Using Electronic Flyers

With the start of the new-year, Portage Schools has begun its electronic flyer program, as announced back in October. The District is trying to be more efficient in how it distributes community organization information to students, says community relations manager Tom Vance.

Instead of being sent home with elementary, flyers are now posted on a new flyer web page. Meanwhile, a link to that site and basic information about the event is being promoted in school newsletters, websites, and in District social media and electronic communications. The site also includes information for middle school and high school students.

Current postings from community groups include announcements about boy's lacrosse registration for 5th grade students and middle school students and winter classes at the Civic Theatre for all grades.

The site also includes information from the District and its schools, including postings from the Portage Central High School Cheer Clinic, the Community Education Center's Mad Science program, and the Kalamazoo Area Math & Science Center's Fun Math program. Organizations with questions about the new system may call the Community Relations Office at 323-5167.

Earth Club Field Trip Announcement

Pick up permission slips at the Earth Club meeting (Tuesdays after school in the Activity Room) or in the 12th Street Elementary office.

- January 11, 2012, 3:45 - 5:00 - Visit to **Meijer** - See how retail stores do their part to "**Recycle**"
 - January 25, 2012, 3:45 - 5:00 - Visit to **Salvation Army** - See how the Salvation Army takes "**Reuse**" seriously and helps people in need at the same time
 - February 8, 2012, 3:45 - 5:00 - Visit **Consumer Energy** - See how easy it is to "**Reduce**" our consumption of energy
- February 22, 2012, 3:45 - 5:00 - Visit **Western Michigan University Alternative and Renewable Energy Research Lab** - Learn about forms of **sustainable energy**

Here is what we've been up to: Earth Club has been meeting every Tuesday since the start of school.

We had a great harvest from the garden and at our first meeting we feasted on tomatoes, potatoes, cantaloupe and corn. We made a salad with the lettuce, peppers and herbs and a little Ranch Dressing. The kids enjoyed eating vegetables more than they ever have.

Over the last couple of months, we have been working to better understand practical ways to recycle, reuse and reduce. We made paper last month and now we are working to create a couple displays and some posters promoting Recycle, Reuse and Reduce. The displays promote the club, invite kids to join and let them know about four events we have planned starting in January. (See above Field Trip List)

We are also looking into a project for the school. We are looking for a faculty member to participate in program development and help expand our reach into the classroom.

We would also like to have two parent volunteers to help with the after school activities. If you are interested please give Jill Howell a call at [248-408-7502](tel:248-408-7502) or email her at howelljv@gmail.com

Looking forward to this spring, we will till the garden and work on building some raised beds and preparing the soil for an even bigger harvest in the Summer. If you have extra wood laying around you would like to donate for the raised beds or can assist with providing compost, please contact Jill.