

The Twelfth St. Times

12th Street Elementary
6501 South 12th Street
Portage, MI 49024

Principal: Mr. Ron Jones
Phone: 269-323-6900
Fax: 269-323-6990



March 2010

From Our Principal:



DEAR PARENTS AND STUDENTS:

Spring Friday is March 26th.
Spring Vacation will be March 29th
through April 2nd. Students return to
school on April 5th. Have a nice Spring
Break with your family.

TARDINESS – is a serious problem. School starts at **8:35 a.m.** It is very important that all students arrive at school on time. Announcements pertaining to all students are given promptly at 8:55 a.m. A great deal of preliminary instruction for the entire day is given at the very beginning of each school day. The tone is set for learning in the classroom. Students need to be in their classrooms, with coats off and ready to learn by 8:35 a.m.

According to Portage Public Schools Board Policy #5113:

“Students are expected to arrive at school and follow their full assigned class schedules promptly. At the elementary level, a student who needs to leave early must be signed out in the main office by parent/guardian.

Excessive tardiness may result in a disciplinary referral to the school administration.

If chronic attendance problems persist, the building administrator will

contact the county attendance officer and/or juvenile authorities for further assistance.”

Students need to learn at an early age that punctuality and dependability are important assets to carry with them throughout their lives.

EARLY SIGN-OUTS: Going hand-in-hand with tardiness is the problem of parents who persistently sign their students out early. We realize this is an occasional necessity, for appointments and last minute emergencies. However, students are to be in school until 3:47 p.m. and they need to know that just as mom and dad wouldn't leave work several times a week before the end of their workday, students must also stay “at work” for “their full shift”.

LAST MINUTE MESSAGES - Please try to make all your arrangements for pick up and after-school plans in the morning **before** your children leave for school. The office is calling into classrooms in the late afternoon too often. These too frequent interruptions make it very difficult to teach.

With increased pressure on our teachers and students to achieve high academic standards, we must be very protective of our instructional hours and make sure they are as productive as possible.

Ron Jones
12th Street Elementary Principal

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PARENT MEETING

All parents of students eligible to enroll in kindergarten in August 2010 are invited to attend a parent meeting to discuss our pre-kindergarten screening process, and to schedule their individual testing appointments. This meeting will be held in the 12th Street Cafeteria on **Wednesday, March 18, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.** This meeting is for parents only, please.

Please call the 12th Street Elementary at 323-6900 to register your child for kindergarten.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

There are times when our staff members *must* make referrals to Protective Services. School staff members are *required by law* to make referrals to Protective Services if they suspect child abuse or neglect. Failure to report these acts is a misdemeanor and may result in civil liability.

Child abuse means any harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare, failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care. This includes students who are left unsupervised before and after school.

CHILDREN PLAY OUTSIDE DAILY

We consult a wind-chill chart and children DO go out for 28 minutes each day whenever the temperature is at 0 degrees or above. Please help your child to dress appropriately. An extra pair of socks that "live" here at school also come in handy when feet get wet, also a dry pair of pants are nice. With the proper clothing, most children

enjoy the time to play with friends and run around.

"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.

Safety Issue

We must remind parents that our turnaround out front, is a "NO PARKING ZONE". It is what the name implies: "A TURNAROUND". We can not have vehicles parking there, especially at the end of the school day because there isn't enough room to fit the busses in. Thank you for your help. **All parents need to be careful when driving around the school, especially when you are on your cell phone or being distracted by other things.**



MARCH IS READING MONTH WHAT TO DO WHEN A READER MAKES A MISTAKE:

Consider a 5-second WAIT time in all instances first!

1. If the mistake makes sense, don't do a thing!
2. If the mistake does not make sense, wait until the end of the sentence and see if the reader fixes it.

3. At the end of the sentence, say, “Try that again.”
4. Say, “You said...(repeat what the reader read). Does that make sense?”
5. At the end of the sentence, say, “Did what you read look right and sound right?”
6. Tell the correct response.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A READER GETS STUCK:

Consider a 5-second WAIT time in all instances first!

1. Wait and see if the reader can work it out.
2. Say, “Read it again and start that tricky word.”
3. Say, “Look at the picture.”
4. Say, “Think what would make sense.”
5. Say, “Do you know a word that looks like that?”
6. Tell the word.

Keep this close to you at all times! Read these first. Respond to the student second!

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ATTENTION PARENTS:

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LET THE SCHOOL OFFICE KNOW WHENEVER YOU CHANGE JOBS OR GET A NEW HOME TELEPHONE OR CELL PHONE NUMBER. WE NEED THIS INFORMATION IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES. WITH THE FLU SEASON AMONG US...WE NEED TO GET AHOLD OF PARENTS WHEN CHILDREN HAVE A FEVER OR ARE SICK. A DISCONNECTED PHONE OR A CELL PHONE THAT DOESN'T EXCEPT INCOMING CALLS IS NO HELP TO US AND VERY FRUSTRATING. PLEASE KEEP US UP TO DATE. THANK YOU!



GREEN DAY AT 12TH STREET!



To Help us Celebrate St. Patrick's Day at 12th Street, our Student Council has proclaimed Monday, March 17th, as "GREEN DAY" for the "Wearin' of the Green."

VERBAL ABUSE—SLURS & NAME CALLING

It is far easier for teachers, parents, and playground supervisors to spot physical harassment than it is for them to notice something that can be just as damaging – slurs and name-calling. In reality, the phrase “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me” has little merit. Words truly can hit as hard as a fist, and unkind labels can follow children throughout their school years.

Don't allow labels in your home. Forbidding your children to use curse words is important, but it isn't enough. You also need to make sure they're not using ethnic, racial, religious, or sexual orientation slurs. Explain that using labels like these is insensitive and prevents them from seeing the person as an individual.

Talk about the cruelty some words convey. The phrase “That's so gay” has become a common slur among young children, although many don't understand the cruelty that is behind these words. Help children understand the pain that slurs and name-calling can cause.

Explain that being “different” isn't justification for being harassed. Although children have always picked on peers who didn't seem to fit in, today the abuse has become bolder and, in some cases, led to deadly beatings. Other children, long-term targets of bullies, have turned to violence – or even suicide – in a form of sick revenge. It is simply not acceptable for families or schools to allow the harassment of children for any reason at all.

Talk with them about false impressions. A girl who would rather play sports than play with dolls is not boyish or a lesbian; she's just a girl who would rather play sports. The same is true for boys who may not enjoy rough-and-tumble activities. Calling children names like “gay boy” or “queer,” just because they choose to follow their own interests, is an ignorant choice and cannot be allowed.

Pay close attention to how your children-and their friends-are behaving toward others and talk with them about how it would feel if they were the targets of name-calling.

READING NEWS:

Make bedtime stories more fun! Bedtime stories are too important to skip. But if your child's nightly routine is getting stale, try these tips for perking it back up:

- **Grab a flashlight.** Instead of using her bedside lamp, try reading by flashlight. Not only is it fun, its dimness may nudge her to sleep more quickly.
- **Mix things up.** If you read the same beloved story night after night, surprise your child by inventing a new ending.
- **Let her artwork inspire you.** Gather a few of her recent drawings, and use them to illustrate a made-up story. She'll be thrilled that she helped "write" a book.

Source: "Smart Solutions," Parenting, April 2004, The Parenting Group, 1-800-635-2665, www.parenting.com.

FAMILY VACATIONS

Vacations are some of the most memorable times of a child's life. Vacations other than those scheduled in the school calendar may present a problem since many of the educational experiences in classrooms today cannot be duplicated at home. Cooperative learning, group discussions, simulations, hands-on science, and Chicago Math are some of the instructional experiences that children cannot repeat at home or on an extra vacation. We don't want any child to miss these valuable learning activities so please help us by making your vacation plans coincide with school breaks.



NEED MONEY?

Would you like some extra money for Spring Break? Maybe Portage Schools can help. We are looking for noontime Cafeteria and Playground Supervisors who can work approximately three hours a day at our elementary schools. For details about these permanent and substitute positions, just call Human Resources at 323-5174.

The Curious Kids Program – Child Care and Preschool

REGISTER SOON!

CHILD CARE - Curious Kids offers child care for various ages at several sites throughout the district. We provide meals and snacks, fun activities and a safe and welcoming environment! Flexible payment plans and family discounts! Please contact us at 323-6780 for more information!

CK @ Milham – Care for children ages 6 weeks through 14 years. Transportation via PPS buses to and from Amberly, Haverhill, Lake Center, Central, and 12th Street Elementaries.

Curious Kids offers care for children in Young 5's through 5th grade at our satellite sites, located at Woodland and Moorsbridge Elementaries!

New!!! Angling Road Elementary will host a Curious Kids site for the 2010/2011 school year!

PRESCHOOL – 3 and 4 year old Preschool classes are available at our Milham site. Certified teachers teach a ½ day class to students. Please call Sue Haroldson at 323-6764 for more information! Families registering by April 1st receive \$20.00 off their registration fee!