



Michigan Merit Exam
Information

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for details.

MUSTANG MINUTES

February 2012

The official monthly publication of Portage Central High School

Portage Central High School • 8135 S. Westnedge Ave. • Portage, MI • 49002
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minute
by
minute

Coming March 13 – “Taking the Fear Out of Parenting”

Jim Tuman, an internationally known sociologist and educator, will present to parents at 7:00 p.m. in the PCHS auditorium. Jim’s approach encompasses all factions that affect a young person’s life: their friends, their families, their teachers and educators, and the community at large.

Half Day coming up on Thursday March 29th.

The afternoon of March 29th is Records Day at CHS. As a result, students will be having a half day with the following schedule. Buses will be running for the 11:00 dismissal time.

1st Period 7:45-8:30

2nd Period 8:35-9:20

3rd Period 9:25-10:10

4th Period 10:15-11:00

Welcome, future Mustangs!

Portage Central High School will host Eighth Grade Parents’ Night on Wednesday, February 8, from 6:30 – 8:15 p.m. All parents of current 8th graders are invited to attend this informational event in preparation for high-school class scheduling for 2011-12.

Here is the schedule:

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Welcome & Core-Area Presentations

All parents, department chairs and administrators will meet in the auditorium to discuss high school expectations and required classes. After this session, all participants have the option to continue to the open sessions.

7:30 - 8:15 p.m.

Open Sessions

Elective departments will have tables and booths set up in the Mustang Commons for parents to visit.

Students will also be invited to another orientation activity in late August; we will notify you later of the exact date. They will have an opportunity to meet with key staff members, talk with student representatives, and to take a complete tour the new Portage Central High School.

We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to participate in planning for your son or daughter. And we look forward to seeing you at the Eighth-Grade Parents’ Night Program on Wednesday, February 8th at 6:30 p.m.

News from the library media center

Library book check-out from the start of the school year to mid-December generally averages 1,430 books. This year we have seen a tremendous increase to 2,949 check-outs! Although we take great pride in recommending books our students will enjoy, there is no doubt a good portion of this increased circulation can be attributed to the 10-minute required reading initiative that was implemented in seminar classes. Many English teachers are also bringing their classes to the library for students to check-out books of their choice in the areas of fiction, nonfiction, or biography. Getting students to read is a huge step in improving their ability to read and motivation to do so. Reading truly is a cornerstone of education. We are extremely excited to see the increased circulation and hope you will encourage your kids to keep reading! - PCHS Library staff





14th Annual High School Choral Festival - A "Master Class for Choirs"

Come and hear how beautiful choral music is created during the Kalamazoo Bach Festival Society's 14th annual High School Choral Festival on Wednesday and Thursday, February 8 and 9, in Kalamazoo College's Light Fine Arts Building. Clinician Dr. Jerry Blackstone, Director of Choral Activities, Professor and Chair of Conducting, University of Michigan School of Music, will coach eleven school choirs from across southwest Michigan.

On Wednesday, February 8, the Battle Creek Lakeview, Charlotte, Grand Haven, Kalamazoo Central, Mattawan, and Vicksburg high school choirs will take part in the Festival at the Light Fine Arts Building on the Kalamazoo College campus. Choirs participating on Thursday, February 9, are from Marshall, Portage Central, Portage Northern, Schoolcraft, and Three Rivers high schools.



The Festival runs from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, and 9:10 to 1:30 on Thursday. Blackstone will prepare and conduct all students in a performance of "Skip to My Lou," a traditional American folk song arranged by Paul Busselberg, from 12:20 to 1:20 p.m. each day with all choirs singing together.

Clinician Jerry Blackstone is Director of Choirs and Chair of the Conducting Department at the University of Michigan School of Music where he conducts the Chamber Choir, teaches conducting at the graduate level, and administers a choral program of eleven choirs. In February 2006, he received two GRAMMY® Awards ("Best Choral Performance" and "Best Classical Album") as chorumaster for the critically acclaimed Naxos recording of William Bolcom's monumental *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. In addition to Professor Blackstone's choral conducting work at the University, he has led operatic productions with the University of Michigan Opera Theatre, including productions of Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*. For his significant contributions to choral music in Michigan, he received the 2006 Maynard Klein Lifetime Achievement Award from the ACDA-Michigan chapter. Professor Blackstone is considered one of the country's leading conducting teachers, and his students have received first-place awards and been finalists in both the graduate and undergraduate divisions of the American Choral Directors Association biennial National Choral Conducting Awards competition.

The High School Choral Festival in February is open to the public. For further information regarding any of the Bach Festival's educational outreach events or concerts, visit their web site at kalamazoobachfestival.org.

PEF Scholarships Available - application deadline Feb. 17

Mustang graduating seniors have some special scholarships restricted just for them, and may also apply for other Portage Education Foundation scholarships available to both Central and Northern students. The deadline for all PEF scholarship applications is Feb. 17. Applications are available in the Counseling Office or online at: <http://www.portageeducationfoundation.org/scholarships.php>.

Specifically for Central students are the \$1,000 Nelmes Scholarship for history, \$1,000 Bousfield Scholarship for musical theatre or theatre, and the \$500 Hodgin Endowed Scholarship.

PEF scholarships available for both Central and Northern graduating seniors include the Vlieg Scholarship, the Board of Education Scholarship, the Hammond Endowed Scholarship, and the Draayer Scholarship:

The \$2,500 Joyce A. Vlieg Endowed Scholarship, being offered for the first time this year, is for someone who plans to pursue a degree in elementary education with a preference for special education. The \$500 Board of Education Endowed Scholarship is for someone planning to study education, public policy or a related field such as public administration. The \$500 Scott Hammond Education-for-Employment Scholarship is for someone participating in EFE with plans to pursue a technology-related field of study. The \$500 Ken Draayer Scholarship is for someone participating in the EFE auto-tech program and plans to pursue an auto-tech career.

Scholarships are paid out directly to the college during the summer. Call the Foundation with questions at 323-5167.

Information about the Michigan Merit Exam

The Michigan Department of Education requires all current juniors to take the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) on March 6 - 8. Portage Central High School is actively preparing for the administration of this important exam. The three days of testing include the complete ACT Plus Writing test on Day 1, the ACT WorkKeys test (Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information and Locating Information) on Day 2, and the Michigan Mathematics, Science and Social Studies tests on Day 3. Students must complete all parts of the MME as part of the graduation requirement of the Portage Board of Education. All tests will be administered in small classroom settings beginning at 7:45 a.m. These room numbers will be posted in

all English 11 classrooms and also throughout the school. Please see a detailed schedule below:

Day 1 – Tuesday, March 6 (ACT Plus Writing)

Only juniors report to school on this day. Juniors must ride regularly scheduled buses or provide their own transportation.

7:45 a.m. Testing begins
12:30 p.m. Approximately when testing will end.

Juniors are dismissed home and must provide their own transportation or report to the cafeteria.

Day 2 – Wednesday, March 7 (ACT WorkKeys)

Juniors report for the morning tests at 7:45 a.m. and all other students start school at 11:00 a.m. Schedule for remaining day of

classes for all students grades 9-12, after testing:

11:00--11:27	1st hour
11:32—12:58	5th hour
1:03--1:54	3rd hour
1:59--2:50	4th hour

Day 3 – Thursday, March 8 (Michigan Components)

Juniors report for the morning tests at 7:45 a.m. and all other students start school at 10:30 a.m.

Schedule for remaining day of classes for all students grades 9 – 12, after testing:

10:30--11:27	2nd hour
11:32—12:58	5th hour
1:03--1:54	6th hour
1:59--2:50	7th hour

Parents, please watch your mail in the coming days for information regarding this important exam.

Being clear in how we carry out detentions

Hopefully your son or daughter never picks up a detention or 2:50/after-school detention during his or her career here. But just in case, here are some expectations:

- Morning detentions start promptly at 7:15 a.m. in room
- Detentions must be served in the morning, neither at lunch nor after school. The only exception is if your son or daughter has an off-campus class first hour, in which case the student may serve the detention during his or her lunch period.
- If a student misses a detention, he or she must serve a 2:50/after-school detention
- 2:50/after-school detention start at 2:50 in room 3102, and they end at 4:50 p.m.
- If a student does not attend a scheduled 2:50/after-school detention, he or she will be suspended out of school for one day
- If a student wants to reschedule a 2:50/after-school detention, he or she can serve a lunch detention and then can reschedule the 2:50/after-school detention for up to two days.

Questions? Call Eric Alburtus at 323-5255. Thanks!

PCHS American Sign Language

The PCHS American Sign Language class hosted an activity program for our Woodland Elementary students in the Hearing Impaired Program. The ASL students held a pizza lunch then designed arts and crafts and game stations for the little ones to rotate through. The students had to utilize their signing skills they've been learning 1st semester to give directions and socialize with their new "buddies". A good time was had by all along with the added bonus of new friendships. The little ones were amazed to see so many high school students able to communicate with them in the language of sign!



Kelly Mott and Madie Burke with Kadeidra Epps, Mykl Makela, and Lexi Lane (piggyback).

Portage Public Schools
Portage Central High School
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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.

Flyers are now posted on a new flyer web page. The site includes information for middle school and high school students, as well as general information for parents.

Individuals with questions about the new system may call the Community Relations Office at 323-5167. Check out the new electronic flyers webpage at www.portageps.org/departments/communications/flyers.aspx



Mustang Minutes is a monthly publication of Portage Central High School that is distributed to parents and faculty members. If you have information you think should be considered for *Mustang Minutes*, please call 323-5165. You may also email information to Greg Hill at ghill@portageps.org. The deadline for the March issue of *Mustang Minutes* is February 20.

