



Central Issues

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Central Middle School

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Character Counts Kickoff Day!



Central Middle School will once again be using the Character Counts Program to help students develop positive values and make good decisions. Our Kick Off Day was Thursday, September 24th. Students dressed up in the Pillar colors to give the hallways a festive look. Teachers discussed which Pillars are the most important to their individual subject matters in every class. We are looking forward to an active year of character education at all three grade levels.

Library News

The Library Media Center has been busy meeting with each language arts class for orientation. Nearly 90 students participated in our Summer Reading program and enjoyed ice cream sundaes and prize drawings Friday, Sept. 25. Top readers included Zak Awad, Aubrey Hemstreet, Alex Hufford, Savannah Polega, Vance Siebers, Angel Caranna, Brittany and Caitlin Muraoka, Shelby Stewart, Jon West and Brianna Pillars.

Book Groups at each grade level are still forming and will meet October 7th for the first time.



Web sites for learning and fun -- for kids and parents together..

This week's Site to See:

Fall Fever

<http://games.funschool.com/game.php?g=1060&category=0&level=7>

Just for fun -- earn points as you catch falling leaves. (All grades)

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Dunlop's Clipboard

FALL SPORTS

Fall sports are in underway at CMS. Our Cross Country, Football and Volleyball teams are all off to an impressive start. Boy's basketball tryouts will begin October 26th. Girl's basketball tryouts and wrestling practice will begin January 4th. Just a reminder to parents that in order to participate in athletics at CMS a student must have a current physical on file in the athletic office. **Current physicals must have been performed on or after April 15, 2009.**

Featured Front Office Facts...



Student Absences - Parents are asked to call the school office at 323-5600 as soon as they know a child is going to be absent or late for school. Parents may leave a voice mail message if the office is not open.

Early Dismissals - Although we would prefer that you do not take your student out of school for an appointment, we know that they are inevitable. To

make this process easy for everyone & reduce disruption in the classroom, please follow this procedure. On the morning of his/her appointment, have your child come to the front office with a note from you indicating time to be dismissed as well as the reason. The office staff will give your child an Early Dismissal form to show to their teacher. Your student will leave the classroom at the designated time, drop off the Early Dismissal form in the office and meet you outside. Students return to the front office following the appointment for an Admit to Class slip. Students will not be dismissed with a phone call. The office must have a signature of the adult who is responsible for the student on file.

Procedure for Changing Busses - Portage Public Schools is concerned about the safety and security of all students. Therefore, any changes to the scheduled bus stop for a student can only be made with WRITTEN authorization from the parent advance. Telephone requests cannot be honored!

Homework Requests - All homework requests are done through the Front Office (323-5661) We obtain assignments for students who have been absent from school for three consecutive days. Teachers are given 24 hours to respond to all requests. Students who have missed school for less than three days may contact one of their "study buddies" for updates on class activities/ assignments!

Deliveries - We can make deliveries and/or send messages to students during 2nd and 6th hours only. We would appreciate it if you would minimize making requests for other times, as we would have to call into the classroom and disrupt teacher instruction. Further please be advised that we do not deliver instruments that are dropped off for a student. A note will be sent to the student to pick it up in the front office.

EXTERMINATOR TREATMENTS

Our school building will be receiving routine exterminator treatments one day a month throughout the school year on the following dates:

September 28	March 22
October 26	April 26
November 23	May 24
December 28	June 28
January 25	July 26
February 22	August 23



We are informing you about these pest control service dates per the Michigan State Department of Agriculture's pesticide notification of schools program (Public Act 636 and 637).

PTO News

We have a very active Parent-Teacher Organization and strongly encourage your involvement. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The 2009-2010 officers include: President Susan Fulling; Vice President Debbie Malloy; Secretary Dana Pope; Treasurer Kimberly Cornue. Our next meeting is October 27 in the Media Center at 6:30. pm.

Please save your General Mills box tops for the PTO. We will be collecting them Oct. 6th, 7th & 8th in the morning before school. Students receive prizes and candy for turning them in. Please have them trimmed neatly or they will not be accepted. You may shop online through the box top website to earn more money for CMS.

Meijer offers cash back to our school through their "Community Rewards" program. When you shop at Meijer you will receive reward points for CMS. If you don't have a community rewards card stop by the front office to pick up an application or apply online at Meijer.com/rewards.

MOMS IN TOUCH

"Moms In Touch" is a group of moms who meet for one hour during the week to pray for their children, their schools, their teachers and administrators. We meet every other Wednesday beginning September 16, from 9:00—10:00 am at the home of Joni Mills, 8330 Valleywood Lane. We'd love to meet and get to know you and share time in prayer with you this year! Meeting dates for fall are: 9/16, 9/30, 10/14, 11/11, 12/2, 12/16.

For more information please call Joni Mills at 321-0727 or email her at djmills87@sbcglobal.net

Community After School Programs

For Middle School Age Students

Programs are free of charge

Portage Chapel Hill United Methodist Church (PCHUM) "Safe Place"

PCHUM Youth House (next to Chapel Hill at 2209 Romence Rd.), 327-6643

Monday afternoons from 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM.

The newly renovated Youth House at Portage Chapel Hill UMC offers space and adult mentoring for homework, games, fun and friendship for up to 10 middle school students.

Enter to the aroma of fresh baked cookies, a warm smile and start the week with a jump on your homework. Finish the afternoon hanging with your friends, and playing games.

Please contact Jorge Costales with any questions at chumyc@aol.com with any questions.

Portage Community Center (PCC)

325 E. Centre - corner of E. Centre and Currier Drive, 323-1942, portagecommunitycenter.org

Mondays - Thursdays 3pm to 6pm; Fridays 3 pm to 5 pm

Join us after school for ping pong, pool, foosball, Wii, board games, arts & crafts, monthly field trips and more. Quiet time is also available for homework. Additional programs will be available offered by visiting staff of Prevention Works and the Boys & Girls Club. For more information contact either of our Youth Development staff, Ruth Helmick or Tia Harden.

YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo - Portage Branch

2900 W. Centre, 324-9622, kzooymca.org

Wednesdays from 3:30 pm to 5 pm

Enjoy activities at the YMCA each Wednesday after school. Our doors are open for you to try basketball, soccer, volleyball, aerobics, swimming, wally-ball, racquetball, and much more! Join in the fun and head to the Y this Fall.

Open Door

First Reformed Church of Portage

7905 S. Westnedge, 327-3694, freportage.org

Portage Free Methodist

1715 West Centre Avenue, 327-5312, portagefreemethodist.com

Prairie Edge CRC

9316 Oakland Drive, 327-1570, pecrc.org

Thursdays from 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm - the location will rotate monthly between the three churches.

The October location will be the First Reformed Church of Portage.

Our primary goal with The Open Door is to provide a safe, fun environment for kids to come after school. We've designed the time to be laid back and free with sports equipment available, appropriate video games, board and card games, and much more! We also provide a quiet space for youth to study or think. Within this atmosphere, we have trained adult supervision and we desire quality, positive role model relationships to develop from that.

Portage Schools Offers Advice for Families on the H1N1 Flu

Portage Schools wants students to be vigilant with hand-washing, asks parents to keep sick children at home, and will monitor the health status of both students and staff as the District works to minimize the impact of the pending H1N1 flu virus.

Meanwhile, the District will be sending information home to its families and has parent information online at www.portageps.org.

Health officials are not advising that schools close when some students at a particular building may come down with the virus. The District will closely monitor the status of students and staff who are absent due to the flu.

When reporting student absences to their school offices, parents will be asked if the student has flu symptoms. For students who arrive at school with flu symptoms, the school office will call their parents to pick them up.

“We want to do everything we can to take precautionary measures at school and help our families do likewise at home,” said Superintendent Marsha Wells.

Portage Schools has been an active participant on Kalamazoo County’s pandemic planning team and involved with Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency’s emergency management training. Portage Schools has been monitoring the H1N1 flu threat throughout the summer and continues to coordinate with area health agencies, Kalamazoo RESA, and other school districts.

Symptoms

According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), flu viruses are thought to spread from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes to someone’s mouth or nose. Flu viruses can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else’s mouth or nose) before washing their hands.

Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue, says the CDC. Some people also experience diarrhea and vomiting. The CDC encourages those with severe illness or who are at risk for complications to seek medical care.

The CDC offers advice for parents on prevention and on caring for sick child at home at www.cdc.gov/h1n1/parents. Highlights include:

- Frequent hand-washing with soap and water for 20 seconds (long enough to sing “Happy Birthday” twice).
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and throw the tissue away immediately.

Stay at least 6 feet away from people who are sick.

- Those who are sick should stay home from school and work for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone.

The District will continue to update its website with helpful links for parents at www.portageps.org.

Counselors Corner

Camp Courage

- one day retreat for children 6 – 14 who have experienced a death of a loved one or friend
- Saturday, 24 October 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. [lunch provided]
- Branch County 4-H Fairgrounds in Coldwater
- \$10 registration fee [scholarships available]
- pre-register with Karin or Barbara [517] 279.5420

Camp Courage provides an opportunity for children to meet others their age who are also grieving. Through various activities [arts, crafts, music, games, storytelling], sharing and learning from others “in their shoes”; children learn to understand their feelings and strengthen coping skills. Fliers and permission forms are available in the CMS Counseling Office.

PPS Sponsored Seasonal Flu Shots

Tuesday, October 13 3:30—7:30 pm

Central Middle School Cafeteria

Tuesday, October 20 3:30—7:30 pm

West Middle School Cafeteria

Wednesday, October 21 3:30—7:30 pm

North Middle School Cafeteria

Cost is \$19 per shot (Age 6 months—3 years
\$14.50)

Please note that these clinics are for the **seasonal flu** only. The Health & Community Services department strongly encourages all Kalamazoo county residents to get a flu shot. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Citizenship In Action at PCMS

Citizenship In Action (CIA) is a variety of after school community service opportunities for CMS students throughout the school year. Chaperoned by teachers and working with organizations like Kalamazoo Animal Rescue, the Salvation Army and the Portage Senior Center, students will have the chance to volunteer in their community. This is not a club. Students are free to sign up for any project they are interested in. Students will be selected on a first-come-first-serve basis for each project. Typical activities last between one and two hours and begin immediately after school.

Our first activity this year will be to give away lemonade in the Celery Flats to runners, walkers and riders. CIA will be involved in a few activities each month throughout the school year including planting flowers, raking leaves, and writing letters. Last year over 100 students were able to participate in at least one activity and many completed around 10 hours of community service. Keep an eye out for the purple shirts of CIA to see Citizenship In Action.

A Look Ahead...

Oct. 8-9	Leadership Camp
Oct. 13-22	MEAP testing
Oct. 13	Flu Clinic 3-8 pm (CMS)
Oct. 14	Picture Retakes
Oct. 20	Flu Clinic 3-8 pm (WMS)
Oct. 20	Choir Concert 7:00 (NHS)
Oct. 21	Flu Clinic 3-8 pm (NMS)
Oct. 24	7th & 8th Grade String Clinic at WMS
Oct. 27	PTO Meeting 6:30 Media Center
Oct. 27	8th Grade Orchestra Concert NHS 7:00
Nov. 6	No School
Nov. 17	PTO meeting Media Center 6:30
Nov. 18	P/T Conferences 5:30 - 8:30
Nov. 19	P/T Conferences 5:30 - 8:30
Nov. 25	No School
Dec. 2	7th & 8th Grade Band Concert NHS 7:00
Dec. 3	6th Grade Band Concert NHS 7:00
Dec. 9	8th Grade Orchestra Concert NHS 7:00
Dec. 14	6th & 7th Grade Orchestra Concert 7:00 CMS Cafe
Dec. 16	Choir Concert NHS 7:00
Dec. 21	Winter Recess
Jan. 4	School Resumes

Portage Public Schools

**Central Middle School
8305 S. Westnedge Ave
Portage, MI 49002**

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PERMIT NO. 36

**Central Middle School will
develop healthy, successful,
positive, people!**

PARENT INTERNET VIEWER

The Parent Internet Viewer (PIV) was open and ready for student/parent use beginning Friday, September 11th, at noon. Letters were sent to all parents with their student access ID's and pin codes. Please note – pin codes are new this year.

If you have a PIV question or support issue, please email pivsup-port@portageps.org.

We are on the Web!
[http://
www.portageps.org/
schools/middle/cms/
Default.htm](http://www.portageps.org/schools/middle/cms/Default.htm)

PORTAGE ATHLETIC FOUNDATION (PAF)

The Portage Athletic Foundation began in 1981 with a group of interested citizens that would help to secure additional funding for the Portage Public Schools athletic programs. Since that time PAF has made significant contributions (over \$550,000) to the sports programs at both high schools. Throughout the years PAF has assisted in paying for the cost of athletic trainers, provided funds for senior awards, purchased scoreboards, paid for training room renovations, contributed funds for equipment serving multiple sports and years, and purchased "Gators" for the athletic trainers at both high schools. To provide funding for these projects PAF holds an annual golf outing in August and a dance party in February. In 2010 the dance will be February 13 at the State Theatre; the golf outing is planned for Monday, August 9 at the Moors in Portage. If you are interested in supporting PAF and sponsoring or attending these events, visit the Portage Schools website and the PAF link for further details.

A new feature on the district's web page allows students remote access to most school applications and programs, as well as their personal U drives. This enables them to work on class assignments more easily at home. Directions for access are available on the PPS web page by choosing "Students and Alumni" and then clicking on "Web Access" -- <http://www.portageps.org/students/default.aspx>.

FALL PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, FROM 5:30-8:30 P.M AND THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, FROM 5:30-8:30 P.M. SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADERS WILL FOLLOW A "DROP-IN" FORMAT.