

August 2011  
September 2011

Daily announcements  
and up to date school  
information can be  
found on the Web!

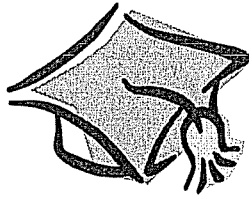
[www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)

West Middle School  
Parent Newsletter

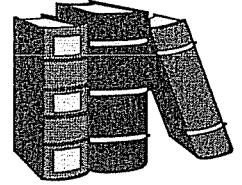
Denny Roehm, Assistant Principal

323-5800

Larry Killips, Principal



Welcome Back  
To WMS!  
2011-2012 School Year



*This newsletter is designed to include information for the month of August and September 2011/2012 school year. Please note the dates on the calendar included in this newsletter. Call our main office at 323-5800 if you have any questions regarding dates, times or program details.*

**New Student Orientation**

**Monday, August 29, 9:00 a.m. in WMS Little Theatre**

All incoming 6th grade students and any 7th/8th grade students new to our District, are welcome to attend this program. Parents are also encouraged to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to squelch some of those "middle school jitters". The program will begin at 9:00 a.m. in our Little Theatre and conclude before 10:30 a.m. 7th and 8th grade families new to the District will be dismissed after a brief presentation in the Little Theatre. 6th grade families should plan on staying for the entire program which will include distribution of lockers and schedules, as well as numerous other details. Music instructors will also be on hand to assist with questions and instrumentation needs. *The WMS annual Open House is tentatively scheduled for September 20 in the evening. Details forthcoming.*

**Tentative First Day of School—Tuesday, September 6, 2011**

**Morning Only - 7:45 - 11:00 a.m.**

*WMS Office Opens Friday, August 22, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.*

*For appointments call: 323-5800*

**Schedules for returning students:** Schedules for returning students will be available on the first day of school. Students should follow directions posted in the main lobby to obtain their schedule. Any concerns should be directed to our guidance office at 323-5863. Please note that deviations from courses selected in the Spring will be difficult if not impossible to accommodate due to our large enrollment.

**Be sure to check the calendar in this issue**

- ◆ Aug. 22 School office opens, 7:30 - 4:00 p.m.
- ◆ Aug. 29 New Student Orientation
- ◆ Sept. 6 Tentative first day of school, 1/2 day
- ◆ Sept. 14 PTSO, 11:30 (bring a lunch) in the Media Center
- ◆ Sept. 15 School pictures
- ◆ Sept. 16 Magazine Sale starts; 6th Grd Party 2:50 - 4:00 p.m.
- ◆ Sept. 20 Tentative Annual Open House

WMS is currently hiring lunchroom/general supervisors. Apply on-line at [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org), and contact Mr. Roehm at [droehm@portageps.org](mailto:droehm@portageps.org)

**Inside this issue:**

Homework Guidelines  
WMS September Calendar  
Athletics  
Parking Lot Guidelines

**Special points of interest:**

- Annual Magazine Sale Fundraiser
- Supplies, Student Dress, Cell Phones
- Newsletter Mailings
- PTSO Membership

## First Half Day and General School Hours

The first day of school is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 6. It will be a half day only. School will begin at 7:43 a.m. and end at 11:00 a.m.. Normal school hours will be from 7:45 a.m. – 2:50 p.m. Our school opens at 7:15 a.m. and closes at 4:00 p.m.. Students should not be in the building prior to 7:15 or after 3:00 unless they are under the direct supervision of staff. Students are always welcome to wait for rides in our main lobby after school as long as they conduct themselves appropriately.

**Student Absences: Please call 323-5800 by 7:45 a.m. if your student will be absent. We will call parents if students are not in school and we have not heard from you!**

## WMS Administrative Adjustments

As part of further cost-reductions, and savings for the district, some administrative adjustments will be in place for the 2011-12 school year. One of those will involve Mr. Killips, who will now be assisting at Central Office as the Supervisor of Secondary Instructional Services in addition to his duties as the Principal at West. This will result in Mr. Killips and Mr. Roehm sharing many of the principal duties at West. In order to help with general supervision and basic disciplinary tasks, Mr. Garvelink will be assisting in the office on a ½ time basis. These moves should not change how business is conducted at West, but may slightly change the staff with whom you may communicate. This issue will be explained at orientations and the first PTSO meeting as well.

## WMS Athletics

The fall sports will start during the first week of school. Announcements will be made in school and information will be posted on the web page with details. **Physicals are required for students to begin practice.** Our Athletic Coordinator, Geoff Helsom, often has an abundance of athletic department news, including practice schedules and game schedules on his web site. After logging in to [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org), just follow the links to either WMS Athletics, or staff—Geoff Helsom, and log on to his e-board for the latest information.

## Pay to Participate

Fees for the 2011/12 school year will be as follows:

*This will be a one-time, annual fee – per student - regardless of the number of extra-curricular activities in which a student participates. More detailed information has been sent in the mail to all 6-12 students and is available on the web site, [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org) under the “Pay to Participate” link. This topic will be covered with more detail once school starts.*

- \$150 per high school participant (\$275 maximum per family if all participants are high school age)
- \$75 per middle school participant (\$125 maximum per family if all participants are middle school age)
- \$275 maximum per family if participants in the family are a combination of high school and middle school age.

## PARENT NEWSLETTER MAILINGS



The West Middle School August/September newsletter is the **only newsletter mailed home.** All other newsletters will be distributed via e-mail. Please make certain your e-mail address on the enrollment form is accurate. Our newsletters will also continue to be posted on our website at the beginning of each month. If you need, or prefer to have a hard copy of the newsletters mailed to you, please notify our office.



# Tidbits...



1. **Student Dress** - Part of our function at WMS is to prepare our students for the world of work and proper dress is part of that preparation. Appropriate school attire is required. Our building is air conditioned and generally very comfortable. However, some students do get chilled and light layered clothing of t-shirts and sweatshirts are helpful. Please do not wear 'spaghetti-strings', tops that reveal the midriff, extremely short skirts or shorts, tank-tops, or clothing that reveals cleavage, sagging pants or hats/scarves to school. **All shirts must have sleeves: if you wear a tank-top, you must have another shirt/sweater... over it that has sleeves. New this year, shorts and skirts must be finger-tip length or longer.** Coats and book-bags cannot be worn to class and should be left in the student's locker. We greatly appreciate your help and cooperation in helping us maintain a strong academic environment for all to succeed. When in doubt of whether or not your child's clothing is acceptable, some jeans and a t-shirt will work just fine.

2. **School Supplies** - Grade level supply lists are posted on our web site ([www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)). All students will get specific information about supplies during the first day or two of school. Generally speaking, students will need a three-ring binder, a combination lock (Master or American locks preferred), paper, pencils, pens and a good calculator. Physical Education clothing should be ready to go by Wednesday, September 7. The PE staff will inform students of specific attire during the first day or two of school. Classroom phones are available for emergencies with permission from staff. Cell phone use is not allowed in school.

3. **Cell Phones** - Students may bring cell phones to school, but they are not to be used in the building until after 3:00 p.m. Each classroom is equipped with a telephone in case of emergency. If you need to get a message to your student, please call the front office at 323-5800. If a student is using a cell phone in school, during school hours, the phone will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be contacted. We appreciate your support in helping us to maintain the integrity of the learning environment at West.



4. **Student Assignment book** - Every West Middle School student will be issued this important item. It should be kept in their binder for daily use. Please ask your child to see it on a regular basis as it is the primary vehicle by which we ask students to record homework assignments, projects and upcoming events. It also contains a tremendous amount of information about expectations and procedures at West Middle. Although we regularly cover the information in this book with students in detail, please take the time to view it on a regular basis to insure the success of your student at West.

5. **Lockers** - Please help your child remember that lockers are school property. The items brought to school should be only educational items along with a few items for personal care. Gym lockers are also available for use and storage of gym clothing. Although our building is tremendously safe and free from vandalism, it is open for public/community use nearly every weekday evening and on the weekends. Consequently, we can not guarantee the security of all 700 of our students' belongings. Proper use of locks, not sharing combinations and bringing only educationally necessary items to school, are all helpful hints toward the avoidance of losing personal belongings. In the unfortunate case of a lost or stolen item, please be certain that your child immediately reports the mishap to a staff member or our front office.

6. **Preparing for the Unexpected** - Now is an excellent time of the year to prepare with your children a contingency plan for unexpected closings of school. For unexpected closings of school, especially during the day, does your child know who to call and where to go? Now is a good time to review these situations before they happen and you get caught off guard.

7. **Magazine Sale Begins** - The annual WMS magazine sale begins September 16. Your continued support of this one fundraiser is responsible for many of our enhancement programs, facility improvements and student field trips. Your child will be bringing home the details of this important event. Cash donations in lieu of magazine purchases are welcome.

8. **Sixth Grade Party** - A get acquainted party for sixth grade students only (parents are welcome; no siblings please) will be held on Friday, September 16 from 2:50 - 4:00 p.m. There will be numerous activities for the students in the gym, media center and pool. Please encourage your sixth grade son or daughter to participate. Admission is free, pizza and beverages will be free, and so is the candy that is passed out during the party! Please pick up your child promptly at 4:00 p.m.

## **2011/2012 West Middle School Homework Guidelines**

Homework is an essential strategy for practicing and reinforcing concepts taught in the classroom. Homework helps the student develop study skills, work habits, and responsibility so the student may become an independent learner. Students should expect homework on a daily basis from any or all of their courses and should average one to two hours of homework per night. Homework time and frequency will vary by student, grade level, and subject matter. Significant deviations in homework time or frequency should be discussed with the classroom teacher. Parents and students are also encouraged to regularly use the Parent Internet Viewer to monitor student progress.

### **Students will have the responsibility of...**

- Using the assignment notebook to record assignments and due dates.
- Making sure homework is handed in on time.
- Making sure the quality of the work meets the standards set by the teacher.
- Making sure the work is clear and legible.
- Bringing necessary materials to class.
- Finding out what assignments were missed while absent from school.
- Asking for additional help when needed.

### **Parents will have the responsibility of...**

- Reinforcing the student's responsibilities as listed above.
- Monitoring the student's assignment notebook, study habits and quality of work.
- Providing an appropriate place for the student to work.
- Providing the time needed to do homework.
- Providing pen/pencils, paper, dictionaries and other necessary materials to complete the homework.
- Contacting the teacher or school for help if problems persist.

### **Teachers will have the responsibility of...**

- Providing clear and concise instructions.
- Providing classroom practice.
- Posting all assignments in the classroom and instructing students to effectively use the assignment notebook.
- Providing sufficient time for the students to complete the homework assignments with reasonable due dates.
- Reviewing assignments and the school calendar of events with team teachers.
- Providing feedback on assignments in a timely fashion.
- Contacting parents for help if the student consistently fails to turn in assignments.

**WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Check out our daily  
announcements  
on the web:  
[www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)

**September 2011**

\*\*For more details on these events please call 323-5800\*\*

Larry Killips, Principal  
Denny Roehm, Assistant Principal

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 No School Labor Day	6 TENTATIVE SCHOOL BEGINS 1/2 Day Dismiss 11:00 am	7  FB Scrimmage@ Vicksburg	8	9	10
11	12	13 VB WMS vs NMS 7th Home 3:30 8th Away 3:30	14 PTSO 11:30-12:30  FB WMS vs NMS 7th/8th Home 3:45	15 Picture Day  VB WMS vs Mattawan 7th Away 3:30 8th Home 3:30	16 Mag Sale Kick-Off  6th Grade Party 2:50-4:00 pm	17
18	19	20 VB WMS vs LindenGrove 7th Away 3:30 8th Home 3:30 XC Home 3:45  OPEN HOUSE TENTATIVE	21  FB WMS vs Central 7th/8th Away 3:45	22 VB WMS vs NMS 7th Away 3:30 8th Home 3:30  XC Away (Milwood) @ Linden Grove 3:45	23	24
25	26	27 VB WMS vs Maple Street 7th Away 3:30 8th Home 3:30  XC Away (Hillside) @Linden Grove 3:45	28 FB WMS vs Milwood 7th/8th Home 3:45	29 VB WMS vs Hillside 7th Away 3:30 8th Home 3:30  XC Home 4:00	30	

Athletic practice and game  
schedules are available on our  
website. Follow the links to  
the Athletics e-board.

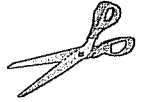
Portage West Middle School  
7145 Moorsbridge Road  
Portage, Michigan 49024



Phone: 269.323.5800  
Fax: 269.323.5890  
Web: [portageps.org](http://portageps.org)

## Student Directory Opt Out

Portage Public Schools occasionally provides student directories to organizations such as Parent Teacher Organizations, colleges and libraries offering special programs to school age children, and political action committees. This information may include the student's name, address, telephone number, email address, date of birth, parent/guardian name(s), honors, activities, and awards, grade level, and dates of attendance. We also provide contact information for those students who may benefit from targeted programs to other educational and community partners offering supplemental educational programming and services. Parents wishing to opt a student out of directory listings should contact the main office in writing to request omission. Please note – exercising this right will exclude this information from all external requests for directory information, including P.T.O.'s. It will not impact the inclusion of information in school publications such as yearbooks, school newspapers, extra-curricular programs,



## STUDENT DIRECTORY ORDER FORM

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

First hour teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Cost is \$3.00 each (checks payable to West Middle School)

Number of directories \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return order form with payment to the school front office by September 23, 2011

# West Middle School PTSO News: *September*

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## Welcome Back!

Summer is quickly drawing to a close and we are looking forward to a great year at West Middle School. You will find this PTSO News page in the monthly school newsletter so be sure to look for it to read the latest news. It's a great way to stay involved with your middle school student!

## First Meeting

Our first Parent Teacher Service Organization (PTSO) meeting will be **Wednesday, September 14, 11:30-12:30** in the Media Center. Please come to hear about plans for the upcoming school year and meet Principal Larry Killips and Assistant Principal Denny Roehm. You can also learn about opportunities to get involved with the PTSO.

## Meeting Dates

Starting in October, the PTSO will generally meet the first Wednesday of each month, 11:30-12:30 in the Media Center. PTSO meetings are scheduled for the following dates: October 5, November 2, December 7 (if needed), January 11, February 8, March 7, April 11 and May 2. **All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend!**

## Joining the PTSO

A PTSO membership form (included in this newsletter) needs to be completed annually at WMS. Because of a bylaws change in May, we no longer require a "dues" payment. However, we request that you consider a donation to help with our expenses (teacher appreciation luncheons and grants for building or teaching needs). ***Donations are the only source of income for PTSO.***

## Volunteers Needed

- The New Student Orientation is **August 29 at 9:00am**. If you are able to help, contact Heidi Hively, [hhively@portageps.org](mailto:hhively@portageps.org)
- Parents are needed to assist with activities at the **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Party on Friday, September 16, 2:50-4:00pm**. This party provides our 6<sup>th</sup> graders an opportunity to get acquainted, play games and eat pizza! Contact Heidi Hively, [hhively@portageps.org](mailto:hhively@portageps.org) to volunteer.
- The annual **Magazine Sale** kicks off on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed to help tally orders beginning the **week of September 19<sup>th</sup>**, first thing in the morning. Please contact Kelley Niven at [dandkniven@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dandkniven@sbcglobal.net) to help.

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## PTSO Officers 2011-2012

<i>President</i>	Jennifer Gatz <a href="mailto:tjgatz@sbcglobal.net">tjgatz@sbcglobal.net</a>
<i>President Elect</i>	Ellen Robare
<i>Secretary</i>	Amy Schaefer
<i>Treasurer</i>	Deanna Rothe

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# West Middle School PTSO

## Membership and Volunteer Form 2011-2012

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The Parent Teacher Service Organization (PTSO) at West Middle School strives to keep parents informed and involved with middle school news and activities. We meet in the WMS Media Center, usually on the first Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am. Feel free to bring your lunch. **All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend.** Working parents can spend a lunch hour getting caught up on the latest news at WMS.

Please complete this form and turn it at the New Student Orientation, any PTSO meeting, Open House, or the Main Office. You can also place this form in an envelope marked "PTSO Membership" and have your student drop it off in the Main Office. We request that you consider a donation to help with our expenses (teacher appreciation luncheons and grants for building or teaching needs). *Please note that donations are our only source of income.*

**Parent Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Numbers** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name(s) and Grade(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation enclosed:**     \$5     \$10     \$15     Other

*Please make checks payable to WMS – PTSO.*

### **Volunteer Opportunities** (Please check those that interest you.)

\_\_\_ **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Party** Chaperone a welcome party for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders from 2:50-4:00pm on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>.

\_\_\_ **All-Student Parties** Chaperone after-school parties for all grades combined held after school during the year. (3-4 parties per year, 2:50-4:00pm at WMS)

\_\_\_ **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Farewell** Help to organize or chaperone a special evening party for all 8<sup>th</sup> graders held in May.

\_\_\_ **Awards Programs** (Beginning in April) Organize student academic and citizenship awards for each grade level. Programs held at PNHS Auditorium in late May or June.

\_\_\_ **Book Fair** (Early Fall) Assist Media Center staff with sale of books.

\_\_\_ **Magazine Sale** (Begins Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>) Assist by tallying orders, organizing paperwork, etc.

\_\_\_ **Membership** One person needed to promote and keep record of PTSO membership.

\_\_\_ **Parent-Teacher Conferences** Help give out information/directions to parents.

\_\_\_ **Staff Appreciation** Provide food/supplies for staff luncheon and other activities.

\_\_\_ **School Pictures** (Fall and Spring) Two people needed for sorting pictures.

\_\_\_ **Vision Screening** (Usually Spring) Two people needed to assist.

\_\_\_ I want to be involved but can't commit to any of the above – call me if you need help.



## *WMS Parking Lot Traffic Guidelines*

- The front of the building is now exclusively used for student pick-up and drop-off. The loop in the back of the building is used exclusively for school bus traffic.
- One way traffic enters from the south driveway and exits out the north driveway.
- All students should be dropped-off or picked-up from the lane adjacent to the sidewalk. Please do not pick-up/drop-off students in the lot or left by-pass lane. Walking through the lot and/or crossing traffic is dangerous and one of the main reasons for reconstruction of the lot.
- When entering the drop-off/pick-up drive, please pull up to the second speed bump or furthest open space. You may use the left lane/bypass lane to carefully pass on the left or to advance to the furthest opening. Drop-off/pick-up your child from the lane adjacent to the sidewalk and then carefully pull-out into the left lane to exit.
- You may drop-off/pick-up your child at any spot adjacent to the sidewalk. Please do not wait to get in front of the main entrance walk to drop-off/pick-up your child as this causes delays. Always pull ahead to the second speed bump or furthest open spot in the drive.
- Drive slowly, carefully and be patient!
- Expect a busy and sometimes confusing first week...so arrive early and maintain your patience.

*This plan was developed in 2005 with input from the WMS Site Based Decision Making Team, PTSO, WMS SET-School Effectiveness Team, and the Moorsbridge Neighborhood Association.*



7145 Moors Bridge Road  
Portage, Michigan 49024

Phone: 269-323-5800  
Fax: 269-323-5890

**Portage Public Schools  
Portage West Middle School  
Parent Newsletter**

We're on the Web! [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
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KALAMAZOO, MI  
PERMIT NO. 36

label

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**Rose Pest Solutions**

Due to Acts 636 and 637 of the Michigan State Department of Agriculture's Pesticide notification of schools, we are required to inform you of your scheduled pest control service days. The following is a list of service dates at West Middle School for the 2011-2012 school year.

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Tuesday, September 13, 2011 | Tuesday, March 13, 2012  |
| Tuesday, October 11, 2011   | Tuesday, April 10, 2012  |
| Tuesday, November 8, 2011   | Tuesday, May 8, 2012     |
| Tuesday, December 13, 2011  | Tuesday, June 12, 2012   |
| Tuesday, January 10, 2012   | Tuesday, July 10, 2012   |
| Tuesday, February 14, 2012  | Tuesday, August 14, 2012 |

If you have any questions, call Cindy Peter, Customer Service Representative, Rose Pest Solutions at 343-5767.

**High School Football Reminder**

Each Friday night in the fall one of the high school teams plays a football game at McCamley Field. Many parents and high school students attend to support their team by watching the game, listening to the band, and/or cheering with the cheerleaders.

During these games it has become fashionable for middle school students to attend with their friends as an important activity in their social life. They are often dropped off at the gate before the game and picked up after the game by their parents, friends, etc. The one missing ingredient for a successful venture is the adult supervision of these middle schoolers. Although the high schools provide "event supervision", they are not in a position to closely monitor your middle school student.

**Therefore, we recommend that middle school students not attend high school activities unless they are personally supervised by an adult at the site.** These events are not the type of environment where middle school students should be left on their own to watch the contest when they have limited interest in the outcome, the crowds are open to the entire public, and the scene is often emotionally charged due of the nature of the event.

**Please, for the safety and well being of your child, examine the practice of your family on these Friday evenings. If your child is attending these types of activities, please make sure they are closely supervised by an adult at all times.**