

December 2011
January 2012

WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL

Focusing on Student Learning

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

www.portageps.org

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

Snow Day Notification

When the school district closes or is delayed for a snow day, we not only notify the news media before 6 a.m., but we have the information available online and by phone as well. Visit our web site at www.portageps.org and click on the "Parents & Visitors" box. On the next page you will find the "School Closing Alerts". The links will take you to the Channel 3 and Channel 8 web sites which posts school closings. We have found this process to be faster than waiting until a school official can reach the district administration building to post it ourselves. Also, you can call the school district's "School Closing Hotline" at 323-6800. This message is updated at the same time we notify the news media of our closing. Please do not call your child's school for closing information. As a final note, remember that all afternoon and evening activities are automatically cancelled when classes are cancelled for a snow day.

Help Support West Middle with your Holiday Shopping!

Special thanks to the many of you who have designated Portage West Middle to receive contributions based on your purchases at Meijer, Target, and Hardings. We still need more families to sign up. Parents, friends and relatives can sign up with the phone numbers or websites listed below! We also participate in Box Tops for Education and Rapid Refill. Drop off boxes are in the front office.

Meijer Community Rewards (#725168) www.meijer.com/rewards or 1-800-962-7011

Target "Take Charge of Education" www.target.com or 1-800-316-6142

Hardings eScrip (#11072) www.escrip.com/hardings

Be sure to check the calendars in this issue!

Holiday Concerts - Dec. 12, 13, 15, 20 & 22

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ◆ December 26 - January 6 | Winter Break |
| ◆ Monday, January 9 | School Resumes |
| ◆ Tuesday, January 10 | First Ski Club Night |
| ◆ Wednesday, January 11 | PTSO 11:30 |
| ◆ Friday, January 27 | No School; Records Day |

West Middle School Parent Newsletter

Denny Roehm, Assistant Principal

323-5800

Larry Killips, Principal

Inside this issue

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Academic Eligibility



1. **Academic Eligibility and Attendance** – Students must maintain passing grades in order to stay eligible for athletics and extra-curricular activities such as musicals, athletics, ski club, etc. Any student who receives two “E’s” during the course of a marking period, or an “E” in the same class two weeks in a row, will be unable to compete or participate in a performance, activity or contest for a minimum of one week. Our WMS eligibility report comes out each Friday and the period of exclusion runs from Monday through Sunday of the following week. Teachers and/or coaches will notify the students and parents when failing grades occur. Please call Mr. Roehm if you have any questions at 323-5800. *Also, please be aware that students must be in school for a full day in order to participate in extra curricular activities.*
 2. **Ski Club** - Our Ski Club will be at Timber Ridge Ski Area this season and will take place each Tuesday, beginning January 10. Club sign-up has already been completed. In case mother nature decides not to cooperate, we will **attempt** to inform students of cancellations on Monday. These will also be posted on our website. Nearly 300 students and 150 adults are participating in this year’s program. Think snow!
 3. **Drivers Beware!** - As the darkness of the winter months descends upon us, please be reminded to be extra cautious of the many students who walk to school in the morning. Special attention is needed along Moorsbridge and at the intersections of Hickory Point, Cypress and Rothbury on Romence. Congested traffic during the morning can often increase our impatience, the results of which could be devastating in a school neighborhood.
 4. **Make-up work** – As the cold and flu season begins, missing school can occur and sometimes cause worry and anxiety in your child. If your child is absent a day or two, they can simply wait until they return to get the missing work. You may also check the Homework Hotline eBoard linked to our website. If the absence is anticipated to be *longer than three days*, please call our office and we’ll have the teachers put together a packet of work for the student. The work is generally available for pick-up 24 hours after the request has been made. Students are generally given time to turn in their missing work equal to the time missed. Some of our teachers have provided e-mail correspondence as a means to keep you informed as well. E-mail addresses are listed on our website.
 5. **December Music Concert Schedule** - Be sure to check the calendar for the music schedule. Any special arrival times for the concert will be sent home with the students as the concert approaches. These are fantastic opportunities to witness the tremendous growth and quality performances of our West Middle Music students.
 6. **Portage Athletic Foundation (PAF)** - A big thanks to the PAF for the incredible donation to WMS. The WMS Athletic Department and coaching staff would like to thank the PAF for their continued support of West athletics. Parents are encouraged to visit the PAF link at the Portage Public School website to see what this great organization is all about. Thanks 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 \$600,000) to the sports programs at both high schools. To provide funding for these projects PAF holds an annual golf outing in August. The annual dance will be January 28, 2012 at the State Theatre. 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.
7. **Kalamazoo RESA Education for Employment & Education for the Arts** - Open House for parents and students is scheduled for February 8, 2012, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (snow make-up day February 9). This is a great opportunity for parents and students to learn more about EFE and EFA programs. For more information contact: Education for Employment 250-9300 and/or Education for the Arts 250-9244.

West Middle Receives National Recognition

– (One of only 40 Middle Schools in US/Canada)-

Recently, West Middle School was notified by Solution Tree that it would be added to the www.allthingsplc.info website as a model school for Professional Learning Communities. Solution Tree has been a national and international leader for over 20 years in regard to professional development, strategies, tools, research and educational leadership relative to Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and its positive impact on student learning.

West Middle is one of approximately 40 middle schools on the "Evidence of Effectiveness" list which represents all of Canada and the U.S. It is one of only 200 schools – from all levels (Elem, MS, HS) – to make this list...and one of four in the State of Michigan. Schools included on this list have demonstrated - over a period of at least three years – evidence of employing the foundational elements of PLC's. In addition to implementing these foundations, the school must also show improved student achievement throughout the school during the same time frame. The data related to this honor is reviewed by a select group of educational researchers and finally by Richard and Rebecca DuFour – leading researchers, authors and practitioners in the design, delivery and evaluation of PLC's in schools throughout North America.

Recent statewide recognition of West Middle by the Michigan Department of Education's "Top to Bottom" list as well as "Schools Who Beat the Odds" are further indicators and validation for the work done by the staff of WMS in regard to PLC's.

***Congratulations!!* to the staff of West Middle for their ongoing efforts to improve student learning...and special thanks to the parents as well as Portage Public Schools for supporting these efforts!**

West Middle School PTSO News: *December & January*

Meeting Dates

The West Middle School Parent Teacher Service Organization (PTSO) generally meets the first Wednesday of each month, 11:30-12:30 in the Media Center. PTSO meetings are scheduled for the following dates: January 11, February 8, March 7, April 11 and May 2. **All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend!** It's a great way to be involved and stay informed about the happenings at West.

November Meeting Notes

Jessica Winstanley, Technology Integration Specialist, demonstrated the Technology Enhanced Classroom which is scheduled to be installed in middle school classrooms during summer of 2012. The motion to allocate \$75 for teacher goodie bags was discussed and passed. Mr. Roehm thanked WMS volunteers, announced Zach Thompson as the school musical director, discussed the ACT Explore test taken by 8th graders and talked about the Gatekeepers program from Gryphon Place that will be taught during 7th grade PE. Complete minutes of this meeting can be found on the WMS home page under the PTSO section.

January Meeting Agenda Items

- Guest speaker Courtney Huff, KRESA Literacy Specialist, will discuss Common Core State Standards
- PTSO Officer and Representative Reports
- Principal's Report

Joining the PTSO

It's easy to join! Just fill out a 2011-2012 PTSO Membership Form which you'll find in the Main Office, at PTSO meetings and online. *Please note that donations are the only source of income for PTSO.*

PTSO Officers 2012-2013

In January, we will begin recruiting for PTSO Officer positions for next school year. The positions that we will elect in May are President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer.

Please consider volunteering your time to help the PTSO run smoothly. If you are interested or would like more information, contact Jennifer Gatz.

Curriculum Instruction Council (CIC)

A proposal regarding changes to the 6th-12th grade science curriculum was released on November 30. A vote is scheduled for December 21. Our CIC Representative, Brian Abbott, will collect parent input on the proposal and may hold informational meetings. For more details, contact Brian at abbottb@me.com.

Many Thanks to...

Heather Beering, Kris Butler, Debbie Coll, and Tricia Lutz for organizing goodie bags for teachers during parent-teacher conferences in November.

All parents who donated items for the teacher goodie bags.

Susan Singer for organizing volunteers for the November All-School Party.

Mrs. Hively, Mrs. Gray, the Student Leaders and parent volunteers who helped make the All-School Party a success!

Dates to Remember

Dec 7	No PTSO Meeting
Dec 26	Winter Break Begins
Jan 9	School Resumes
Jan 11	PTSO Meeting, 11:30am
Jan 27	No School
Feb 8	PTSO Meeting, 11:30am

PTSO Officers 2011-2012

<i>President</i>	Jennifer Gatz tjgatz@sbcglobal.net
<i>President Elect</i>	Ellen Robare
<i>Secretary</i>	Amy Schaefer
<i>Treasurer</i>	Deanna Rothe

WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL

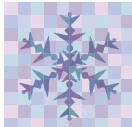

Portage West Middle School
7145 Moorsbridge Road
Portage, Michigan 49024

December 2011

Phone: 269.323.5800
Fax: 269.323.5890
Web: portageps.org

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 BBB v Milwood 7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30	2	3
4	5	6 BBB v Mattawan 7 H 3:30/8 A 3:30	7	8 BBB v CMS 7 H 3:30-8 A 3:30	9	10
11	12 6th/7th Grade Orchestra Holiday Concert—7PM/LT	13 8th Grd Holiday Music Concert 7PM @ NHS	14	15 7th Grade Band w/Jazz Ensemble Holiday Concert 7PM/LT	16	17
18	19	20 6th Grade Band w/Jazz Ensemble Holiday Concert 7PM/Gym 6th Grade Choir Holiday Concert 7PM/LT	21	22 7th Grade Choir Holiday Concert 7PM/LT	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 
Winter Recess Dec. 26th through Jan. 6th Return Monday, January 9th						

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7145 Moorsbridge Road
Portage, Michigan 49024

January 2012

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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	6	7	
Winter Recess Dec. 26th through Jan. 6th Return Monday, January 9th							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	<u>School Resumes</u>	Ski Club	PTSO 11:30 Media Center				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
		Ski Club GBB v NMS 7 H 3:30/8 A 3:30		GBB v Mattawan 7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
		Ski Club GBB v Linden Grove 7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30	WR@CMS w/ Vicksburg & Schoolcraft 4:30PM	GBB v NMS 7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30	NO SCHOOL End 1st Semester	WR Tournament @Comstock 9:00AM	
29	30	31					
	WR v Comstock, Maple St. & Linden Grove 4:00PM	Ski Club GBB v Maple St. 7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30	Athletic practice and game schedules are available on our website. Follow the links to the Athletics e-board.			