

October 2011

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# West Middle School Parent Newsletter

Denny Roehm, Assistant Principal

323-5800

Larry Killips, Principal

## WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL Focusing on Student Learning

*This newsletter is designed to include information for the month of October in the 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.*

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

This fall's parent-teacher conferences will take place on November 16 (5:00-8:45 pm) and November 17 (2:00-4:00 pm & 5:00-8:15pm). Detailed information will be sent to parents.

### 2011-2012 MEAP

The state schedule for administering this year's test is listed below. Attendance on the test dates below is critical as "make-up days" have been greatly reduced. Please try and avoid any appointments on these days. In addition, adequate rest prior to each day is important as some of the testing sessions will be quite lengthy.

#### 2011-2012 MEAP Test Schedule

Tuesday, October 11	Reading all grades
Wednesday, October 12	Reading all grades
Thursday, October 13	Writing 7th grade
Tuesday, October 18	Math all grades
Wednesday, October 19	Writing 7th grade
	Science 8th grade
	Social Studies 6th grade

### Website

Communications between home and school can be more challenging as students become older and schedules become more complicated. We at WMS are regularly updating our web-site to provide you with calendar information, schedules, urgent notes, daily announcements and efficient means to contact staff. Please take a moment to visit our site at [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org) and view the numerous items now available. All school information that is sent home is posted on the site and can be seen days before it is received in the mail, including this newsletter!

### Parent Internet Viewer

Also, the Parent Internet Viewer is now up and running. This fantastic tool allows parents and students to check on the academic status of any class in real time. Please contact our technology department by e-mail at [pivsupport@portageps.org](mailto:pivsupport@portageps.org) with any questions or concerns. There is a PDF of the user manual at the following link <https://piv.portageps.org/pivinfo/PIVUserManual.pdf> and have placed that link on the PIV home page.

#### Be sure to check the calendar in this issue!

- ◆ October 5 PTSO 11:30
- ◆ October 14 All School Party 2:50-4:30
- ◆ October 20 Picture Retakes

**MEAP TESTING OCTOBER 11, 12, 13, 18 & 19**



# Tidbits...



1. **Support Portage WMS when you shop** - WMS participates in Meijer Community Rewards (WMS code 725168, Harding's eScrip (WMS code 11072), Target Take Charge of Education (WMS code 63021), Box Tops for Education, and Rapid Refill. Special thanks for the many of you who designate Portage West Middle School to receive these contributions.
2. **Magazine Sale** - Thank you to all the parents who helped organize and tally the magazine sale orders! WMS would also like to thank *Jimmy Johns* for donating free subs! Thank you parents for all your contributions towards this year's fundraiser. The funds raised are used for a variety of school programs, activities and equipment. Last year the funds provided for classroom equipment, computer enhancements, student leader activities, 8th grade farewell, activity scholarships, honors/awards program, music programs, classroom and student recognition programs, and much more!
3. **Preparing for the Unexpected** – Now is an excellent time of the year to prepare your children with 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. In case of school closings, especially when due to weather, please tune in to local radio and television stations. Please do not call the school as we do not have the support personnel to handle the volume of inquiries. Emergency closings are also posted on the home page of the Portage Public Schools website at [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org) or call the School Closing Hotline 323-6800.
5. **Parking Lot Reminders** – In order to help with congestion, please be certain to **pull forward past the crosswalk to the furthest speed bump before dropping off your child.** Another helpful strategy to increase efficiency is to use the bypass lane to access open drop points beyond the crosswalk. Please do not drop off students in the parking lot and have them walk through the lot to the front door. The morning darkness makes such a practice dangerous for your child.
6. **All School Party** – Our first “All-School Party” will be on Friday, October 14 from 2:50 – 4:30 p.m. Dancing, bingo, sports, games, computers, snacks and fun will all be part of this social event for our students. Admission is \$3.00.
7. **Extra-Curricular and Academic Eligibility** – Students must maintain passing grades in order to stay eligible for athletics and extra-curricular activities such as musicals, ski club, etc. Any student who is failing two or more classes will be excluded from participating in a performance, activity or contest for a minimum of one week. However, participation in practice sessions will be allowed. Our WMS eligibility report comes out each Friday at 8:00 a.m. 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. Additional interventions will occur for those students who continue to demonstrate failing grades. **Students are also required to be in school all day** (appointments are allowed) in order to participate in extra-curricular activities.
8. **Ski Club** - Sign up information will be sent home with 6th grade students only. Seventh and Eighth grade students will be reminded that forms are available in the office. Forms will be available on our website.
9. **Halloween Activities** – Activities are limited to those conducted by the classroom teacher. However, students are reminded **not** to wear costumes to school as this is an activity more appropriate for the elementary level.
10. **Community Master Plan Meetings** - The community is invited to attend a series of public forums about master planning for the school district facilities. All three sessions will be held at West Middle School from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The first meeting will be October 4, focusing on middle school facilities; a second session will be October 12, on outdoor athletic facilities; and a third session will be held November 9, serving as a wrap-up discussion about the District's facilities master planning.

# WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL

Portage West Middle School  
7145 Moorsbridge Road  
Portage, Michigan 49024

Phone: 269.323.5800  
Fax: 269.323.5890  
Web: portageps.org

## October 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 VB -@CMS (A-Team Tournament) 9AM
2	3	4 Tennis Club 3-4PM  VB vs CMS (7 A 3:30/ 8 H 3:30)  XC@WMS vs Central, Milwood & Hillside 3:45PM	Count Day 5 PTSO 11:30  Football@WMS vs Mattawan 3:45PM  Michigan Cyber Safety (Parent Presentation) 7PM	6 Tennis Club 3-4PM  VB vs Milwood (7 A 3:30/8 H 3:30)	7	8 XC Portage Invi- tational @ WMS 9AM
9	Columbus Day 10	11 Tennis Club 3-4PM  VB vs Mattawan (7 H 3:30/8 A 3:30)	12 Football@Maple St.- 3:45PM  XC@KVCC / Kal-Port- Mattawan League Jamboree 3:45PM	13 Tennis Club Staff/Student Tournament 3:15-4:00PM  VB vs CMS (7 H 3:30/8 A 3:30)	14 All School Party 2:50-4:30PM	15 VB -@CMS (B-Team Tournament) 9AM
<b>MEAP Testing Oct. 11, 12, 13, 18 &amp; 19</b>						
16	17	18 VB -Kal-Port- Mattawan Tourna- ment (A Teams ) - TBD	19 Football@Hillside 3:45PM	20 Picture Retakes  VB -Kal-Port- Mattawan Tourna- ment (B Teams ) - TBD	21	22
23	24 Red Ribbon Week	25	26	27 7th/8th Fall Choir Concert LT 7:00PM	28	29
30	Halloween 31		<b>Parent-Teacher Conferences</b> <i>Wednesday, November 16 (5:00pm - 8:45pm)</i> <i>Thursday, November 17 (2:00-4:00pm) &amp; (5:00-8:15pm)</i>			

# West Middle School PTSO News: *October*

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## 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: 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!** It's a great way to meet fellow parents and stay informed about the happenings at West.

## September Meeting Notes

We had a great turnout for our first PTSO meeting. Thanks to all who attended! Our guest speaker was Kelly Lerdahl who reported on the success of the Summer Reading Program. Mr. Killips discussed school news, initiatives for this school year and gave updates on staffing and administration restructuring. Mr. Roehm reported on the Michigan Cyber Safety Initiative on October 5, Open House and the PIV. Complete minutes of this meeting can be found on the WMS home web page under the PTSO section.

## October Meeting Agenda Items

- Guest speaker Marcy VanWinkle, Student Assistance Coordinator, will talk about interventions for struggling students.
- Continued discussion on additional PTSO funding for the Summer Reading Program.
- Portage Education Foundation's media center matching grant program.

## Joining the PTSO

Don't forget to fill out a 2011-2012 PTSO Membership Form, available in

the Main Office, at PTSO meetings and online. These need to be completed annually so we can update our membership list. ***Donations are the only source of income for PTSO.***

## All School Party: October 14

The first All-School Party of the year is coming up on Friday, October 14, 2:50 – 4:30pm. Parent volunteers are needed to help with games and to help in the prize/food room. You will be contacted if you signed up to help on the PTSO Membership Form. If you would like to help at this party but have not completed a membership form, contact Susan Singer at [soozoo@comcast.net](mailto:soozoo@comcast.net).

## Many Thanks to...

**Amanda Ziemkowski** for coordinating volunteers for the book fair this year.  
**Kelley Niven** for chairing Magazine Sale and organizing volunteers to help tally orders.

## Dates to Remember

Oct 5    PTSO Meeting, 11:30  
Oct 14   All-School Party  
Nov 2    PTSO Meeting, 11:30  
Nov 11   All-School Party

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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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**Portage West Middle School**  
portageps.org

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Principal  
**Denny Roehm**  
Assistant Principal

**7145 Moorsbridge Road**  
**Portage, Michigan 49024**  
**Phone: 269-323-5800**  
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October 2011

Dear Parents of West Middle School Students:

On Tuesday, October 11, 2011, West Middle School will begin the 2011-2012 Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Scheduled testing will conclude on October 19, 2011. In order to maximize test efficiency and minimize conflicting events, we ask that you avoid appointments scheduled during testing times. This will ensure that your student has the best possible testing situation that we can offer.

You can help your child do his/her best on the tests by:

- ◆ Scheduling appointments at times other than testing times.
- ◆ Making sure your child gets plenty of rest and good nutrition during the testing period.
- ◆ Emphasizing the importance of the test results to your child.

**Because MEAP testing includes all students in grades 6-8, we will be implementing a modified MEAP schedule during the five scheduled days of testing. Testing will take place on the mornings of October 11, 12, 13, 18, and 19. All make up testing will take place on days immediately following the scheduled tests. Core and encore class schedules may be modified on those days to ensure equitable distribution of class time.**

All students should come to school prepared for testing with several No. 2 pencils. Students will be allowed to use calculators on some of the math tests and should bring calculators to the scheduled math sessions. Students are not allowed to use reference books or calculators on any other tests.

Your son/daughter may want to bring a water bottle to school on testing days. Please only send bottles that are able to seal (no cans, juice boxes, etc.).

Thank you for your help in making sure that your child will be in school on MEAP test days. If you have any questions about the MEAP testing program, please contact Amy Gray at 323-5876.

Sincerely,

Larry Killips  
Principal

Amy Gray  
School Counselor

**Portage West Middle School**  
portageps.org

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Principal  
**Denny Roehm**  
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October 2011

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Each fall Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, requests that academically talented students make application to programs offered through their Center for Talent Development. Specifically, they are promoting the Midwest Academic Talent Search. As your child's parent or guardian, you know best whether a program of this nature would be beneficial. Should you desire that your child be considered for this program or for the Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP), the following information should be helpful to you.

For information and registration materials, please visit The Center for Talent Development website ([www.ctd.northwestern.edu](http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu)). When applying on line, you will have to reference West Middle School's **MATS ID**. Our number is **8202625**. As a part of this process, your child must take either the ACT or the SAT to determine eligibility to participate in the Midwest Academic Talent Search program. The program consists of various conferences, seminars, and workshops available throughout the year at Northwestern University in Illinois.

In addition to registering for the CTD, you may also be interested in learning more about the ATYP. ATYP offers an opportunity for students to take advanced classes in English (writing), math, and computer science while in middle school. In order to qualify for ATYP, students must take the SAT. When registering for the test, you will have your child's scores sent directly to ATYP (their code is 1944). Students who qualify for ATYP this winter would be eligible to enroll in the program next fall.

Please note that the deadline for registering online for the Midwest Academic Talent Search is December 19, 2011 (for January SAT or February ACT). Should you have any questions about the Talent Search after having read the materials, please do not hesitate to contact me at 323-5876 or by email at [agray@portageps.org](mailto:agray@portageps.org). You can learn more about ATYP by attending one of their information sessions. Visit their website at <http://www.wmich.edu/honors/atyp> or by call their office at 387-3230 for dates and locations.

Sincerely,

Amy Gray  
School Counselor