

Central Connection

Central Elementary School

Susan Roberts, Principal
November 2008



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Portage, MI 49002
(269) 323-6100

"Learning and Growing with Commitment and Peace"

CHANGING WEATHER CONDITIONS

At this time of the year, temperatures fluctuate rapidly during the day. Please be sure your child comes to school dressed for any type of weather that may occur. We do take a half-hour recess each day barring rain or severe cold, all children are expected to go out for that recess.



CONFERENCES

Conferences will be held the evening of November 24th and 25th, and the afternoon of November 25th. Schedules will be sent home soon. We look forward to seeing you to share the exciting news of your children's progress!

Students will have a half day of school on Tuesday, November 25th, with morning Kindergarteners attending. Wednesday, November 26th through Friday November 28th there is no school for students for Thanksgiving break.

GENTLY USED SWEAT PANTS NEEDED



From time to time we have students that are in need of a change of pants. If you have gently used, clean sweat pants that you would like to donate, please send them in to the office. All sizes are needed. We appreciate your help

SNOW DAY NOTIFICATION

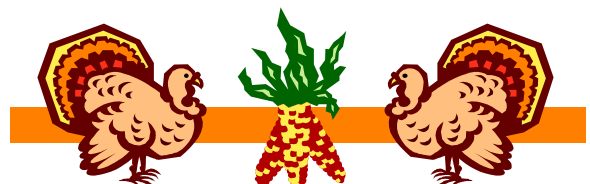


When Portage Schools cancels or delays the start of school, the announcement will be made in time to make the 6 a.m. news on local television and radio stations. Parents may also call our "School Closing Hotline" at 323-6800 or check the District web site at www.portageps.org and click on the "Parents & Visitors" link for the WWMT-TV Channel 3 school closing announcements (you will see the link on the upper right, under the weather forecast). Portage Cable Access Channel 20 also carries school closing notices.

JUST A REMINDER...

Please remind your students that no toys are to be brought to school. There are many items that are appropriate at home but may not be appropriate for school. These include CD players, hand held games, electronic devices, collectable cards, and radios, etc. Please remind students that gum is not allowed in school.

Also no scooters, skateboards, or roller blade shoes (Heely's) are allowed. These items are best kept at home, where children can be closely supervised while playing. We appreciate your help in reminding our students of these rules.



END OF THE DAY PICK-UP

Just a reminder . . . school dismisses at 3:42. If you are picking up your child please be at the school at 3:42. Many students are left waiting a very long time at the end of the day. This is a safety issue for our students as there is not supervision after school ends.

Also, **unless we have a note** from a parent or guardian, students will be sent to their “usual” after school place. **Please plan ahead and send any change in writing.** We are receiving many phone calls late in the day to get messages to students. To avoid any possible confusion please send all requests for transportation changes in a written note. Thank you for your assistance!

SHARING OF STUDENT INFORMATION

The confidentiality of student information is of high importance in the Portage Public Schools. All schools across our country are bound to follow the guidelines set out in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Outlined below are a few areas parents/guardians should know regarding this educational law.

- ❖ *School districts must give full rights with regard to pupil records to either parent, unless there is a court order or other legally binding document relating to divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights.*
- ❖ *A parent who does not have physical custody will be assumed to have retained legal custody unless a court order is provided to the school showing that legal custody has been revoked.*
- ❖ *A parent with legal custody maintains a right to meet with and discuss student progress with school staff.*
- ❖ *A stepparent or grandparent has no legal independent right to student records, UNLESS the stepparent is the legal guardian. Teachers will not be able to share verbally or in writing student progress information with step or grandparents unless a release of information is signed annually and placed in the student's record. A parent with legal custody may release student records to a stepparent annually by signing a release of information form. This allows contact directly with the stepparent regarding student progress.*

MEDIA CENTER NEWS

We're into our third month of school and only a few “Overdue” notices have been sent home. Good job! We can continue these responsible habits by reminding children to return their books on or before library days.



The **Scholastic Book Fair Safari** is rolling into town November 19-25 and will be open during school hours and conferences. The Book Fair offers hundreds of quality books, suitable for every interest and reading level. Patrons can add to classroom libraries through the *Classroom Wish List Program* while the proceeds go to purchase valuable books and materials for the library and school.

This year the Student Council is sponsoring **One-For-Books** (Scholastic); a way to make loose change and one dollar, purchase more books for the school and classrooms, plus distribute books to children in needy communities across the country. We're excited about this opportunity to spread literacy within our own CEL community and outward, also. Look for a letter soon explaining more about **One-For-Books!**

Did you know the Media Center still has a Book Swap Cart? It's available to students who want to swap a “gently used” book from home for another one. It's a one-for-one trade so come on in but please, no more than five books at a time. Thank you!

FUNDRAISER

We would like to thank our PTO for doing such a great job on the Fundraiser for Central Elementary this year. We would like to also thank all of you for purchasing products. Without you, we would not have been so successful. Thank you all for caring and supporting Central.



STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

The CEL Student Council is busy planning events and promoting school spirit. We thought we'd pass on some events and dates so you can put them on your calendar.

The Student Council Spirit Days and dates are:

Support Your Sports Day	November 24
Celebrate the "Hollydays"	December 19
Go Comets! Day	January 30
WACKY Hair Day	February 20
Read-In Day	March 20
Stuffed Animal Day	April 24
Sunglasses Day	May 29

The remaining popcorn days are November 7 & 21, December 5, January 9 & 30, February 13, March 6 & 20, April 24 and May 8 & 22. (These dates are subject to change due to illness or other unforeseen emergencies.) Remember that popcorn is .50 cents a bag and is ordered on **Thursday**.

Our first *Movie Extravaganza* is November 18 with WALL*E (Disney) from 3:50-5:50 in the CEL gym. More details to follow.

The Student Council is sponsoring a Food Drive from November 10-December 12. We are inviting parents and students to donate a gift of non-perishable food items. With the tough economic times and layoffs in our community, we plan to lend a helping hand to families in our CEL community (more information about this will be sent out later!)

The Student Council is again marching in the Holiday Parade on November 8 in downtown Kalamazoo. Come watch the parade and cheer us on!

We wish everyone a healthy and happy holiday season.

Central Elementary is a place where children are safe and successful!

HARTLINE FUND

The Hartline fund is a fund set up for students in need. It helps to fund things such as glasses, coats, shoes etc. for our students whose family cannot otherwise afford them. The students bring in any spare pennies which are then rolled and deposited into the Hartline Fund. If you have some spare change, please send it in to your child's teacher. We appreciate your generosity.



SITE-BASED INFORMATION

The mission of the Site-Based Decision Making Team is to support goals of Central Elementary by working in the best interest of shareholders (parents, students and teachers). Your input is very important to us.

The team has now begun to look for ways to welcome our new families for next year, due to redistricting. If you have ideas as to how the Site-Based Team could help Central Elementary please email Karen Bankston or Kristin Hanson. Soon there will be a Drop Box in the lobby where parents can submit comments. More information will be coming soon!

HELP WANTED

If you have 3 hours a day to work in a school, we have a job for you! Portage Public Schools has openings for cafeteria and playground supervisors. If you are interested or have questions, please contact:

Portage Public Schools Human Resource Department at 323-5174.

