



Dassel-Cokato Middle School

October 2008 Newsletter

www.dc.k12.mn.us/mschool

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From the Principal's Desk:



School is well under way, and we are off to a very good start this year. The 5th grade students have already taken an exciting and informative field trip to the Nye Park Nature Center, and the 7th grade class is visiting the Prairie Woods Environmental Center on Friday, September 26. Field trips are an excellent means for our students to experience learning opportunities in a variety of settings and to practice being responsible for their behavior when not in school and away from their parents. Thank you for supporting these events and for occasionally volunteering to chaperone them, as well. Please remember that if the cost of a field trip creates a financial hardship for you, we have funds available to help defray those costs. To request financial assistance, please contact Sandy Jones at extension 1606.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We will, once again, hold parent-teacher conferences in October and March this year. To accommodate some parent requests, we are switching our student-led conferences to March, and will offer our arena-style conferences where you can visit with all your child's teachers on October 9 & 14, from 4:00 to 8:00. I will send you more details about the conference formats immediately prior to those dates. Please make every attempt to attend conferences, as that is the best way for your child's teachers to communicate with you regarding school behavior and academic performance.

Evenings with the Principal

Once each trimester I would like to meet with parents for an evening to talk about middle school issues and ideas. There will be no set format or agenda, this will simply be an opportunity for you to share with me and other parents any suggestions or concerns you may have, and to learn more about what is happening in our school. The meetings will take place in the media center at 7:00 and will be held on November 3, February 23, and April 27.



Upcoming Events:

- 10/3 Homecoming and Picture Day
- 10/9 First FLY mentorship breakfast
- 10/9 & 10/14 Parent/Teacher conferences
- 10/15 6th Grade field trip to Ft. Snelling
- 10/16 & 17 Education Minnesota Convention, No School
- 10/20 Staff Development Day, No Students
- 10/24 FLY field trip
- 10/30 Picture Retakes





Picture Day



Friday, October 3



Please be watching for the picture envelope that will be sent home with your child Friday, Sept. 26th or Monday, Sept. 29th.



5th Grade Science News

On Tuesday, September 6th the fifth grade students traveled to Ney Park near Maple Lake. Students had the opportunity to participate in ten nature-related stations. Those stations included: fisheries, mushrooms, DNR forestry, butterflies, Pheasants Forever, surveying, orienteering, soils, mosquitoes & ticks, and the always popular 4-H/Dog obedience. The weather was excellent and the students learned a great deal and represented D-C Middle School wonderfully!

6th Grade Science and Health News

Science - We began the year by doing a hands-on Oobleck investigation. Students practiced the scientific method by experimenting with this mysterious substance. After discovering the many ways Oobleck may be used, students created an Oobleck product and tried to market it

We are currently studying cells and simple organisms. Students will be using microscopes to observe simple organisms found in pond water. Along with cells and simple organisms, students will be constructing and observing their own aquarium-terrarium ecosystems. They will monitor plant growth and animal populations in these mini-ecosystems to learn more about food chains and life cycles.

Health - The next health unit is called "Growth and Development". Students will analyze the parts, functions, and relationships among body systems. They will also study the changes that accompany adolescence and the importance of developing healthful habits. As a part of this study, we will be taking a day to talk about the maturation process.



Crash Lounge 
Opening October 13th

Permission Forms will be coming soon!

Charger Cafe

October 13-17 is National School Lunch Week!

Check out our website at www.voteforschoollunch.org and vote for your favorite meal character. You can vote as many times as you want. It is a fun web site to visit, and the winner will be announced later.

We are seeing a nice turn out for breakfast every morning now. It is always nice to see new faces, and, of course, we appreciate the ones that come every day. If students are eating two breakfasts, they need to be sure to let their parents know. As always, remember that recipients of free or reduced lunches get a free breakfast.

Have a safe and fun Halloween! Gals in the Charger Café.



From the 8th grade team -

Math

In sixth grade math we are in the process of finishing up chapter 1. In chapter 1 the students explored with ordering and comparing whole numbers, estimating, exponents, order of operations, mental math, and working on computation problems.



The next unit the students get to investigate is our algebra unit (Chapter 2). In this chapter the students are introduced to fundamental algebraic concepts such as variables and algebraic expressions. The students are learning how to solve algebraic equations by using inverse operations and to solve word problems by writing algebraic equations.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child, please feel free to contact us. All of us here are interested in your child and want to be sure that this year's mathematics experiences are enjoyable and promote a firm understanding of mathematics. Thanks for all the support you give your child with homework and the basic facts.



**There is no such thing
in anyone's life
as an unimportant day.**

-Alexander Woollcott

As 8th graders take more responsibility for their learning it is important for them to understand how they learn best. Here are some tips to help your child establish a suitable learning environment at home.

Students sometimes believe that learning is something beyond their control. "I'm just not good at math," they'll say. Developing a personal learning plan will help them see the link between what they do and what they learn.

Have students brainstorm. How do they learn best? Here are some questions to answer:

- **When do I study best?** Is it easiest for me to do homework right after school or do I need a break before I start studying?
- **How quiet** does my study space need to be?
- **How do I learn best?** Am I a visual learner? Do I learn best by listening? Do I learn by doing?
- **What rewards** can I give myself when I have finished a tough task? (And am I really going to get back to studying if I start watching TV?)

Based on the answers to these questions, have students develop their personal learning plans:

- **When** will they schedule homework?
- **Where** will they study?
- **How long** will they work before taking a break?

Source: Gavin Reid, *Motivating Learners in the Classroom: Ideas and Strategies*, ISBN: 9781-4129-3097-0 (Paul Chapman Publishing, a Sage Publications Company, www.paulchapmanpublishing.co.uk).





News From:

PTA
everychild.onevoice



The mission of the Dassel-Cokato PTA is to foster communication between schools and families as well as supporting children in their work of learning. The Dassel-Cokato PTA hopes to create a collaborative effort with the schools, community, and parents/guardians to ensure a quality, well-rounded education for the children in the D-C area.

Start the year off right by becoming a Dassel-Cokato PTA member! The PTA is a group of community members that works to contribute to the schools and the families of children that attend the school.

Being a member of the PTA **WILL** allow you to Be connected and informed about school through PTA involvement & Advocacy

Contribute to fundraising opportunities for the school

Influence decisions that affect your child's learning

Become more informed about topics that affect our children and their schools (ex: becoming a media-wise parent, childhood obesity, wellness initiatives within the school)

Receive personal copies of school board minutes and agendas

Meet other great community members

- Being a member of the PTA **DOES NOT** mean
- You do not have to attend every meeting
- You will not be forced to volunteer many hours
- You will not have to be on a committee unless you choose to.

Upcoming Meeting:

Note - Our regular meetings take place in the high school media center on the first Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:00.

**Thursday, October 2, 6:30-8:00,
Community Room by PAC
Meet the School Board Candidates.**

Come and meet the school board candidates and have an opportunity to ask questions.

Fund Development Committee meeting - anyone is welcome to attend the Fund Development committee meetings which are held on the third Friday of each month at 7:30 am at the Grounds. We have a meeting scheduled October 17.

If you have any question about the upcoming meetings or would like to simply talk to someone about PTA, please contact our Membership Committee Chair, Tonia Olsen at 275-3275. You may also write or email at:

Dassel-Cokato PTA
P. O. Box 632
Dassel, MN 55325
chargerpta@yahoo.com



Charger Kids Club

MEA Break

Do you need something to do over MEA break? Join us at Charger Kids Club! We will be having lots of fun and we don't want you to miss out!

Highlights include: Cosmic bowling at Litchfield Bowling Center (Bowling under the black lights), pajama day and pizza party, messy recipe day and so much more!

Dates: Oct. 16, 17 & 20

Time: 6:00 am—6:00 pm

Location: Cokato Elementary

Fee: \$25.00 a day (includes, breakfast, snacks, pizza party and field trip)

Call Jennifer Todnem, Charger Kids Club Site Supervisor at 286-4100 ext. 1334

