



DASSEL-COKATO MIDDLE SCHOOL

MARCH 2009 NEWSLETTER

Www.dc.k12.mn.us/mschool

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From the Principal's Desk:

Last week I attended a school safety conference sponsored by the Minnesota School Safety Center. One of the sessions I attended was about Internet safety for students, and some of the information I heard was quite disturbing. Since I was a school media specialist for many years, stories about kids using the Internet inappropriately were not entirely new to me. However, our presenter for this session was Karina Berzins, a member of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and her first words to us were "No matter what you have heard about Internet safety for kids in the past, conditions have gotten much worse in the past year." Ms Berzins is the training and education coordinator for the bureau's department of Internet Crimes Against Children. One of the first statistics she shared with us was that 1 out of 25 teenage Internet users in Minnesota has been aggressively solicited by an online predator. That means that when I walk into a class of thirty 8th grade students, potentially one of them has received messages from an adult with bad intentions. That concerns me, and I hope concerns you. According to Ms. Berzins most problems begin with students using social networking sites like *MySpace*, *Friendster* or *Xanga*. Kids will often receive messages on these sites not only from their friends, but also from strangers who present themselves as the same age and who simply express an interest in communicating. Predators are usually patient and build trust with kids over time. They are also often skilled at getting kids to keep their communication private, especially from parents. Of course, the danger comes when face-to-face meetings are suggested, and in some cases, consummated. Ms. Berzins' main suggestion for parents was to keep all home computer use in public view, not allowing kids to have computers in their bedrooms. She also suggested that parents frequently sit down at

the computer with their kids and have them show which sites they frequent. Finally, she gave us an excellent web site to use that is specifically designed to give kids and adults current information about Internet safety (www.netsmartz.org). We intend to invite Ms Brezins to come to our school later this year to present her information to our 7th and 8th grade students and parents. Please remember that all Internet use in the middle school is closely monitored and strictly filtered, with all social networking sites completely blocked from student access.

Spring Break

On a lighter note, spring break is just around the corner! I hope you and your child(ren) have an opportunity to spend some fun and relaxing time together. This might also be a good time to discuss your child's grades from 2nd trimester, which ends on March 5, and to set some goals for 3rd trimester classes. When parents reinforce the importance of learning, it can make a big difference in student performance at school. We truly appreciate your support!

Up-Coming Events



- March 6 No students/Staff Development
- March 9 1st Group Leaves LLCC Trip
- March 11 2nd Group Leaves LLCC Trip
- March 23 - 27 Spring Break

**Student of the Month
January 2009**



5th Grade

Taylor
Morgan
Thomas
Joshua

6th Grade

Kailee
Gabrielle
Vince
Dean

7th Grade

Jocelyn
Liana
Garrett
Levi

8th Grade

Katelyn
Katie
Marlo
Tarren

News From the Kitchen.....



March is here already. It does not seem possible, does it? We want to encourage all of our student's to be eating healthy foods. That starts with a good breakfast. We offer breakfast every morning starting at 7:15. Encourage your kids to start their day the right way. Their grades will improve with a healthy breakfast everyday. Remember, if your kids receive free or reduced lunch. They are entitled to a free breakfast. We also will provide bag lunches for field trips.

If you would like to make some extra money, we have a job for you. We are in need of subs here in food service. If you are interested, please contact Noni Smith in the District Office ext. 1013.

6th Grade News

Math

We are in the process of finishing our "Data About Us" Investigations. Our next journey will be chapter 7 (Geometry). In this chapter we will learn some of the fundamentals of plane geometry. This will include learning how to describe various figures in geometric terms, measure angles, and solve problems involving measurement of angles and lines. Unit 7 also involves learning about polygon relationships. This geometry unit can be applied to careers of aviation, navigation, design, and many others.

We will also learn how to measure an angle using a protractor. We then will get to solve everyday problems by looking at the angle relationships. 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.



**January Reading
Counts Winners
Announced**

Each month the media center sponsors a contest to encourage students to read and participate in our Reading Counts program. The January contest was "Win a Week." When the month was complete, the week of January 12th was randomly selected. The following students earned the most points in their grade during that week and were awarded a certificate and a \$10 bill.

5th Grade: Marcus (63 pnts)

6th Grade: Jack (73 pnts)

7th Grade: Samantha (109 pnts)

8th Grade: Joelle (178 pnts)

7th & 8th grade MCA II Reading

Sometimes people cannot see any further than what appears on the surface. Read the following poem to learn how the speaker feels about looking beyond the obvious.

Hidden Wonders

by Denise Stallcup

Sometimes, I forget
That the stars are always shining,
Even on bright, cloudless days.
They don't only come out at night.
Beyond the blinding sunlight,
They are always burning,
Signaling to one another
With their light
Even when I can't see them.

Sometimes, we forget
That under our feet
Is an unseen universe.
A world of roots seeking
Underground rivers.
A kingdom of sightless creatures
burrowing in the darkness.
Rocks that shift and melt
And slowly re-form,
Taking their own time,
eons,
ages,
An eternity.

Sometimes, you forget
That what you see
Is not all that I am.
You know I like mathematics,
But did you know
I can juggle three balls at once?
You see me walk to school,
But you don't know
I dream of flying to the stars.

Beneath the surface

There is a world of mystery,
Within me and you.
Look closely.

Reveal something about yourself
That I can't see.
Dig deep.
Uncover what you haven't yet
discovered in me.

1. What is the main idea of the first two verses?
 - A. Things in nature often go unnoticed
 - B. Rocks and stars change very slowly.
 - C. Many different elements are found in nature.The stars often cannot be seen.
2. Which lines show the desire of people to know more?
 - A. "Signaling to one another / With their light / Even when I can't see them."
 - B. "That under our feet / Is an unseen universe."
 - C. "Sometimes, you forget / That what you see / Is not all that I am.""Uncover what you haven't yet/ discovered in me."

Question #3 is called a "constructed response." The answer to these questions need to be specific and focused on the question asked. A Student's score can range from 4 – 3 – 2 – 1.

One possible theme of this is "look beyond the obvious." Using information from the poem, give **four** examples of how the poem relates to the theme.



Show your work! Explain how you arrived at your answer! Justify each step of your solution! Students in Dassel-Cokato Middle School math classes are becoming very familiar with statements such as these. In about two months, the MCA II tests will require our students to demonstrate their understanding of grade-level content as well as their ability to explain or show their work on questions referred to as constructed response questions.

As a school, we would like to see our students increase the number of points earned on constructed response questions. Each constructed response problem consists of several parts and is worth a possible four points. While constructed response questions may require a bit more effort and thought, we encourage students to make every effort to earn all four of the points.

Below are two examples of constructed response questions (7th and 8th grade level). Give them a try!

1. Ben is building a wooden box. The base of the box is 2 feet wide and 4 feet long.

A. What is the area of the base? Show or explain all of your work. Include units in your answer.

B. Ben wants the volume of the box to be 32 cubic feet. How high should he make the sides of the box? Show or explain all of your work.

It takes Ben 3 hours and 45 minutes to build 1 box. At the same rate, how long would it take him to build 3 boxes? Show or explain all of your work.

2. The Eaton family rented a car for a weekend trip. The rate to rent the car was \$30 per day plus \$0.25 for each mile driven.

A. What is the cost of renting a car for 4 days and driving a total of 200 miles? Show or explain how you got your answer.

B. Write an expression to show the cost of renting a car for d days and driving m miles.

Show two different solutions that allow the Eatons to rent the car and not spend more than \$150. For both solutions, explain the number of days they rent the car and the number of miles they drive.



Spring Swimming Lessons Start Soon!

Red Cross Swimming Lessons start the week of March 7. Some sections are already full but there are still many openings. Please call Community Education at 320-286-4120 for course availability and to register by phone. To register online visit: www.dc.k12.mn.us and click on Community Education. At the time of this printing, the following classes are still available. (All classes are \$33, unless noted; scholarships are available.)

Tuesday Evening Lessons: March 10-April 28 (no class March 24)

Level A/B (parent and child class)

Private Lessons (Fee: \$71)

Saturday Lessons: March 7-April 25 (no class March 21 or April 11)

Little Swimmers (ages 4-5) and Levels 1-6

Charger Kids Club – Join us TODAY!!

Charger Kids Club is a school age childcare and enrichment program, designed to meet the year-round needs of working parents of students in grades K-6. The goal of our program is to provide a FUN, safe, recreational, and enriching program.

2008-2009 School Year Fees	First Child	Second Child
Registration Fee (June 08-May 09)	\$25 Family	\$25 Family
Before School		
Daily	\$ 5.00	\$ 4.50
Full Time child (5 days a week)	\$22.00	\$19.50
After School		
Daily	\$ 8.00	\$ 7.50
Full Time Child (5 days a week)	\$ 36.00	\$32.50
After School until 4:30 PM	\$ 5.00	\$ 4.50
Non-School days		
Full Day	\$25.00	\$23.00
Half Day (5 hrs or less)	\$20.00	\$18.00
Drop In Rate	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.00
Before School		
Drop In Rate After School	\$10.00	\$10.00

Contact Info: Jennifer Todnem
320-286-4100 ext. 1334
Jennifer.todnem@dc.k12.mn.us

Upcoming Non-school Days:

March 6th

March 13th (Elementary only)

March 22-27

Hours: 6:00 AM—6:00 PM

Fee: \$25 First Child

\$24 Second Child

Hours

Before school: Monday-Friday—6:00-8:00 AM

After-school: Monday-Friday—3:00-6:00 PM

Non- school days: 6:00 AM—6:00 PM

Location

Cokato Elementary– Cafeteria (Small Gym)

Dassel and Middle school students welcome.

Transportation is available before and after school, to and from Cokato Elementary.