

DASSEL-COKATO MIDDLE SCHOOL APRIL 2010 NEWSLETTER

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From the Principal's Desk:

MCA's

The 2010 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAII's) are scheduled to be given to our students on the dates listed below. Again this year, we have engaged in a variety of efforts to raise the scores our students achieve on these state-wide standardized tests of reading, math and science ability. We also request your assistance in two areas. First, please discuss these tests with your child and try to motivate her or him to perform on them at the highest possible level. Because the tests do not impact their school grades, some students do not put forth their best effort when taking them. We do, however, use the results of these tests to determine course content and individualized instruction, which makes it critical that the scores represent students' best efforts. Additionally, test scores can be used as part of the process for placing students in particular classes both here and in the high school. Since the scores are used to compare our school to other schools in the state, we also hope to instill in our students a sense of pride in showing that Dassel-Cokato Middle School students are some of the smartest in the state! A second area where we need your assistance is simply ensuring that your child attends school on the dates listed below, and that he or she shows up well-fed and rested on the test days. A good night's sleep, a good breakfast, and some parental encouragement can have a significant impact on test performance.

With all of our preparation and some encouragement from you, we are confident that our students can, once again, produce very admirable test results.

| | | <u>Reading</u> | <u>Math</u> | <u>Science</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 4/12-4/16: MCA testing | 5 th grade | April 12 & 13 | April 21 & 22 | May 4 |
| | 6 th grade | April 14 & 15 | April 19 & 20 | |
| 4/19-4/23: MCA testing | 7 th grade | April 21 & 22 | April 27 | |
| | 8 th grade | April 28 | April 26 | May 5 |

Clothing Reminder!

At this time of year as temperatures go up, sometimes we see a few necklines go down and the length of shorts go up. Please help us by making certain that your child comes to school dressed appropriately for this setting. An easy "rule of thumb" is that no student should have enough skin showing to create a distraction for other students, and during the middle school years, kids are distracted easily! If students do come to school in clothes that are inappropriate, we usually supply a T-shirt or a pair of sweatpants for the remainder of the day.

Upcoming Events:

4/8: *Mentor/*

Mentee breakfast

4/9: **8th** *grade Science Museum field trip*

5th *grade Health*

Fair

4/15: **5th** *grade*

author visit

4/12-4/16: MCA

testing

4/19-4/23: MCA

testing

4/26-4/30: MCA

testing

4/30: **5th** *grade*

Arbor Day Activities all afternoon

Long Lake Conservation Camp (LLCC)

Thank you to the parents who served as chaperones for the 6th grade field trips to LLCC in March. Our weather during the trips this year was unusually warm; yet, the kids still had plenty of snow for all their activities. This is a great opportunity for students to learn about nature while also learning to be responsible for themselves for three days without any family members to take care of them. 5th grade students and parents have a wonderful adventure awaiting them next year!

Middle School Students Volunteer at Feed My Children

On February 22nd, eighteen middle school students went to Feed My Starving Children in Chanhassen at part of our Activity Day celebration. Jill Kittock, 7th grade communications teacher, coordinated this opportunity for our students. Activity Day is a full day celebration during which students can take part in a wide variety of fun and exciting activities. These activities hopefully provide an incentive for students to behave well and earn good grades during the second trimester. Students had the opportunity to sign up for skiing, skating, fishing, bowling, swimming, open gym and other activities. A group of 18 students volunteered to use their celebration day to serve others by going to Feed My Starving Children in Chanhassen and packing food. Our students packed 13,176 meals that will be used to feed 36 children for an entire year. We believe it speaks volumes as to the caring and compassionate character of our students that we had more students volunteer to join this activity than we had spots available. We would also like to acknowledge Mike Lhotka who volunteered his time to be our bus driver. Mr. Lhotka also helped to pack boxes in the warehouse at Feed My Starving Children. The following is a list of students and staff who volunteered their time that day. Students: Samantha Baatz, Libby Bender, Morgan Berg, Gabby Funk, MacKenzie Gustafson, Naomi Hendrickson, James Howell, Tim Johnson, Donovan Kinnunen, Alex Kittock, Sara Koivukangas, Mercedes Lemke, Amber Long, Brenna Olsen, Hannah Salfer, Ashley Stahl, Amy Weiss, Erica Weiss. Staff: Jill Kittock, (teacher) Pam Beckermann (teacher) Patsy Amundson (para-educator) Kelly Gustafson (parent volunteer) and Mike Lhotka (bus driver).



5th grade:

1st: Nathan Weckwerth (2,325 points)

2nd: Laif Hendrickson (1,671 points)

3rd: Tyler Tolkkinen (965 points)

6th grade:

1st: Christina Busche (963 points)

2nd: Abrielle Anderson (750 points)

3rd: Dylan Grack (744 points)

7th grade:

1st: Gretta Pokornowski (1,682 points)

2nd: Erin Aho (1,444 points)

3rd: Jordan Haapala (1,315 points)

Honorable Mention: Ned Koivisto (1,187 points)

Honorable Mention: Corey Siltala (1,043 points)

8th grade:

1st: Korra-Shay Richards (1,054 points)

2nd: Nathan Yurek (984 points)

3rd: Samantha Baatz (909 points)

From the Media Center:

At the end of each trimester, the media center sponsors a Reading Counts drawing for various prizes such as electronics, crafts, games, books, etc. Students collect and recycle BoxTops, milk tops, printer cartridges and cell phones to raise funds used to fund these prizes. Students received one coupon to put in the drawing for ten Reading Counts points earned. Eighty students won prizes during this second trimester drawing. The following students had the most points for their grade and were guaranteed a spot on the winners' list:

FROM THE MEDIA CENTER, continued:

Middle School Students Celebrate Dr. Seuss Read Across America Day

The National Education Association annually promotes reading with its Read Across America Day. The goal of this event is to celebrate Dr. Seuss's March 2nd birthdate as an opportunity to also motivate people of all ages to read. At the middle school, all staff and students were encour-

aged to write their favorite book title on a white or red paper book. These 800 books were then used to build two large Cat in the Hat styled hats that are now on display in the hallways surrounding the media center.

A Dr. Seuss styled hat made up of favorite books titles.



Reading Counts: Newbery Bookmark Winners

In an effort to promote the Newbery award winning books, the Media Center sponsored a Newbery Bookmark contest and awarded \$10 to the following students for earning the most points by reading these titles from September through February:

Nathan Weckwerth (5th grade)

Maureen O'Brien (6th grade)

Erin Aho (7th grade)

Nathan Yurek (8th grade)

DCMS collects \$1085.40 in General Mills BoxTops

During this past year, the middle school collected over \$1000 in General Mills BoxTop labels! These funds will be used to support the Reading Counts program. We wish to thank all parents, students, and community who support our school by saving and turning in these BoxTop labels to the Media Center.

Reading Counts: Random Newbery Contest Winners

Coinciding with the same effort, The Media Center sponsored a February contest and awarded \$20 to the following students for reading one of the randomly selected Newbery titles during February :

5th grade: Hana Pokornowski

6th grade: no submissions

7th grade: Nathan Schultz

8th grade: Alison Knacke

Reading Counts: Flu Book Quiz Contest Winners

All students were encouraged to read the book they received as a gift from Children's Hospitals of MN & Kohl's Flu Prevention video contest. 142 students read the book and passed the Reading Counts quiz. The following students were selected randomly and awarded \$50. (Funds were donated from the \$3000 contest prize money.)

5th grade: Alayna Johnson 6th grade: Marcus Johnson

7th grade: Matthew Dahlseng 8th grade: Gabby Funk