

Dassel-Cokato Middle School October 2009 Newsletter

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WWW.DC.K12.MN.US/MSCHOOL

From the Principal's Desk:

Our school is alive, once again, with the bustle of 726 students moving from one learning adventure to another throughout the day. I hope you are hearing positive stories about your child's experiences at school! (mixed, perhaps, with a few groans about homework...) It seems to take a while for students to develop an evening routine that allows for both study and play. We appreciate your efforts to help kids establish a time and place where they can routinely settle in for a period of concentrated study and homework completion. It is also very helpful when parents take time to deliberately ask their children about the events of their school day and discuss with them some of the concepts they have learned. Connecting school-based knowledge to their home lives helps student retain information.

Open House Events

Thank you to all the parents and students who were able to attend our open house events in August. The turn-out was exceptional this

year! If you have suggestions for ways in which you think we might improve them next year, please call me or send an email. We are always interested in your ideas.

Parent Conferences

On October 12 & 13, we will offer arena style parent-teacher conferences from 4:00 – 8:00. The format for these conferences allows you to visit with all of your child's teachers, so that you can establish a relationship early in the year. While we try to keep these conferences relatively short in order to accommodate numerous parent meetings, the waiting lines to see particular teachers can sometimes get a bit long, and you may have to be a little patient.

On March 15 & 18, we will offer scheduled, student-led conferences where you will have an opportunity to meet with one of your child's teachers and partake in a student-led discussion of your child's progress.

While not all parents favor both styles of conferencing, we encourage you to attend both conference events, as they are the best means of engaging in a discussion that involves parents, students and teachers in one setting. We will send you more details about the conference formats immediately prior to those dates.

Parent Volunteers

We are always looking for parents willing to assist with various middle school activities. If you would like to be added to our list of volunteers, please contact our volunteer coordinator, at peggy.smith@dc.k12.mn.us or call Cindy in the middle school office.



Up-Coming Events

10-5	Vision & Hearing 5th/7th
10-12	MS Conferences 4:00-8:00
10-13	MS Conferences 4:00-8:00
10-15	MEA No School
10-16	MEA No School
10-19	Staff Dev./Teacher Planning
10-22	Fort Snelling Field Trip-6th
10-30	Picture Retake Day

√out the Sept edition of

The Talented Times

For Parents & Educators of the Gifted & Talented
<http://www.dc.k12.mn.us/dassel/odyssey/index.html>

6th Grade News

Websites:

Dassel Elementary:

<http://www.dc.k12.mn.us/dassel/odyssey/index.html>

Cokato Elementary:

<http://www.dc.k12.mn.us/cokato/odyssey/index.html>

Middle School:

http://www.dc.k12.mn.us/ms/special_services/index.html#Gifted

Social Studies

Sixths graders have started the year learning about the state of Minnesota, its prehistory, and mapping the state of Minnesota. Students even got to go on their own artifact dig! Next, students will be learning about the Dakota and Ojibwe Native American groups that settled in Minnesota. We will be starting our Minnesota Booklet project that is due March 19, 2010. Finally, the students will explore Historic Fort Snelling in social studies. They will then be able to visit the fort on October 22. We are off to a great start this year in social studies!



WANTED!

Pork and venison hearts for 6th grade health classes to dissect. Please contact Jeff Neutzling (1622), Paula Trisko (1623), or Katie Erickson (1619) if you are able to donate. Thanks!

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.

Math

In sixth grade math we are in the process of working on chapter 1. In chapter 1 the students are exploring 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 equa-

tions by using inverse operations and to solve word problems by writing algebraic equations.

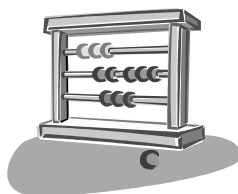
As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child, please feel free to contact us. All of us here are interested in your child and want to be sure that this year’s mathematics experiences are enjoyable and promote a firm understanding of mathematics. Thanks for all the support you give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

8th Grade News

Already in this young school-year, 8th grade geography students had the opportunity to learn “hands on” about GPS units! Ed Meyer is a retired teacher, and has worked part-time for nine years at *Gander Mountain* in St. Cloud. He gives seminars there on how to properly use GPS units, as well as helping shoppers decide what type of unit may work the best for them. On Friday, September 18th, Ed stopped by to geography classes to teach DCMS 8th graders what he knows. In the past, Ed has presented to students in Becker, Foley and St. Cloud.

Ed gave a short presentation on GPS units in the classroom. Then groups of students had the opportunity to go outside and search for hidden “treasures” that were hidden earlier in the day on campus. Students only had the “waypoints” or coordinates to guide them. It was a fun way for students to learn on a beautiful day outside. A big thanks to Ed and to *Gander Mountain* for providing prizes for the groups that found their treasures the quickest!

Students at DCMS will have even more opportunities to use GPS technology. Grants recently received from Meeker Cooperative Electric Trust and the RBC Blue Water Project will allow us to purchase Garmin GPS receivers for use in the classroom. We’ll keep you posted on these exciting projects as they unfold!





Cory , Hannah , Kaylee , and Paige look to the GPS for guidance.



Ed Meyer shows a group how to program the GPS unit.



A group including Shane , Joel , Ellen , and Liana sprints off to try and locate their "treasure."



Mr. Stang, Mrs. Johnson, and Ed pose for a picture with the winning group from 1st hour!



Cold & Flu Season 2009-2010

Just the facts from the Nurse's Desk

During this school year many children and adults will get sick with a cold or flu (influenza). For most, treating these illnesses at home with lots of rest and extra fluids will be the best approach. The symptoms of a cold or flu are similar. Cold symptoms include a runny nose, sore throat and sneezing and usually develop slowly. Flu symptoms develop more quickly and tend to be worse than cold symptoms.

Common signs & symptoms of the flu include:

Fever over 101°F in adults and often as high as 103°-105°F in children.

Anyone with a fever greater than 100°F must stay home from school.

Chills & sweats

Headache

Muscular aches & pains, especially in back, arms & legs

Fatigue & weakness

Nasal congestion

Loss of appetite

Diarrhea & vomiting in children

Influenza viruses travel through the air in tiny droplets when someone with an infection coughs, sneezes or speaks. You can inhale the droplets directly, or you can pick up the



germs from an object, such as a telephone or computer keyboard, and then transfer them to your eyes, nose or mouth.

Ways to stay healthy during cold & flu season 2009-2010

Wash your hands. Frequent thorough hand washing is the best way to prevent many common infections.

Eat & sleep right. Eat a well balanced diet with fresh fruits and vegetables and drink plenty of water. Get to bed early.

Exercise regularly. Cardiovascular exercise -running, walking, biking, aerobics-boosts your immune system.

Avoid crowds during flu season. Flu spreads easily wherever people congregate.

Annual flu vaccination. If you normally get a flu shot, the best time to be vaccinated is October or November. Your body needs about 2 weeks to build immunity following a flu shot.

Please stay home if you are sick!!



From the Middle School Kitchen

Could it be October already? Time sure flies when you are having fun. We have had a great start to our school year. Everyone is happy to be back in the groove again.

Remember, we are always looking for subs in all 4 schools, so if you would like to work a few hours a week, please contact the district office.

If your child needs a bag lunch for any reason we are happy to make it for him/her.

We have a very successful breakfast program here in the middle school. If your child gets a free or reduced lunch, they are entitled to a free breakfast. Remember in order to have success in studying and to continue getting those good grades, you need to have a good breakfast. It is the most important meal of the day.

PTA News

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

Influence decisions that affect your child's learning

Become more informed about topics that affect our children and their schools

Get to know school administration and some school board members

Receive emailed copies of school board minutes and agendas

Meet other community members

Being a member of the PTA DOES NOT mean

You do not have to attend every meeting

You will not be made to volunteer many hours

You will not have to do lots of fundraising

You will not have to be on a committee unless you choose to

Upcoming Meeting:

Thursday, October 1 at 6:30-8:00 in the high school media center. Lorene Force and Rob Nudell, the elementary principals, will be the guest speakers. They will be talking about the MCA test results as well as other topics. This is a great time to learn more about what is happening at the elementary schools as well as bringing any questions you may have. You do not have to be a current PTA member to attend, the D-C PTA welcomes ALL community members!

The PTA meets regularly the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 in the high school media center.

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

Upcoming Arts Association Events:

Todd Green in Concert

Todd has astounded audiences across the country with his diversity on a multitude of string, flute and percussion instruments from all over the world. His performance will be enhanced by digital samplers, which allow him to record and over-dub instruments one by one, making him a one-man-orchestra of unique and exotic instruments. As fascinating to watch as to listen to, Todd intersperses his playing with entertaining explanations of the music and the instruments. His performance will be enjoyed by the entire family. Prepare to be amazed!

The D-C Arts Association is also bringing Todd into the school on October 29 for educational student clinics for all middle school students as well as the high school music students. The concert is a totally different program than the clinics, which are show-and-tell-type demonstrations of the instruments themselves. Todd's concert complements the clinics but is a musical adventure exploring the musical styles of many different cultures.

Public Performance: Sunday, November 1, 3:00 PM

Tickets: Adults \$12 and Youth \$5

Location: D-C Performing Arts Center

Information and Ticket Purchases: D-C Community Education, 286-4120

Adult Enrichment Opportunities Through Community Education

The following upcoming courses are offered through Community Education. Please call 320-286-4120 for a Fall Brochure or for more information.

First Aid - Monday, October 5, 6:30-9:30 pm, \$35

Your Happy & Healthy Pregnancy - Monday, October 25, 6:30-8:00 pm, \$10

Introduction to Essential Oils - Thursday, November 5, 7:00-8:30 pm, \$5

What a Crock! (slow cooker ideas and recipes) - Monday, October 5, 7:00-9:00 pm, \$29 (includes cookbook)

Go Green, Live Clean, Save Money - Tuesday, October 6, 6:30-7:30 pm, \$15

Scandinavian Baking - 2 Thursdays, October 8 & 22, 7:00-9:00 pm, \$25

Quilted Purses - Saturday, October 3, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm, \$20 (see samples in the Community Ed. office.)

Deer Cutting for Dummies - Monday, October 12, 7:00-9:00 pm, \$46 (includes reference book)

Adult TaeKwonDo - Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:40-8:40 pm, \$60/mo.

Instructor-Facilitated Online Courses - Choose from more than 250 classes! Visit 222.ed2go.com/dc

Love & Logic

Workshop for parents of Middle & High School Students

This class will be a one-night crash course for parents of middle school and high school students to learn effective ways to **raise kids who make responsible decisions even when no one is watching.**

The Love and Logic instructors will walk parents through common parenting issues such as; curfew, driving, handling peer pressure and alcohol use.

This class is FREE and FREE child care is also available. Participants must be a resident of the D-C school district or Meeker County to attend this class.

Offered by Meeker County Public Health

Tuesday, October 6

6:30-8:00 pm

FREE but pre-registration is required

Registration Deadline: Friday, October 2

Call Community Education to register at 320-286-4120