



ISD #466

# DASSEL - COKATO MIDDLE SCHOOL

February 2011 Newsletter

**COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL, GARY JOHNSON

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I usually enjoy the charms and challenges of winter, but the cold and snow of the past month even has me wishing for a few warm days to break the icy spell we are experiencing. Our students have behaved remarkably well in spite of the "cabin fever" that occurs when it is too cold to even venture outdoors during lunch periods. I hope the additional time spent indoors has given students a few extra opportunities to curl up with a good book!

### MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

By the time you receive this newsletter the school board will have accepted a notice of my intent to retire from my position as the principal of the middle school at the end of this year. This is my 33<sup>rd</sup> year as an educator, 24 of which I have spent in D/C schools. (Which means for 50 years I've had to say "I can't stay up late tonight because tomorrow is a school day!") While I have thoroughly enjoyed every day I was able to spend working with students, it is now time to pursue new adventures. My wife, Joyce, a middle school counselor in Hutchinson is also retiring at the end of the year, so we will happily pursue those adventures together.

The students, families, and staff of the D/C schools have made this a wonderful place to serve for most of my career. I have always been and will continue to be extremely proud to tell people that I worked in Dassel-Cokato, and I will continue to spread the word that this is one of the finest school districts in Minnesota.

### ACTIVITY DAY

On February 25 we will hold our annual activity day. This is a full day when students can take part in a wide variety of fun and exciting activities that reward students for behaving well and earning good grades during the second trimester. While there are criteria for participation, they do not preclude any students from some level of involvement. You will soon receive a booklet describing

### Activity Day Continued

each session being offered on that day. Please look through the booklet with your child and help him or her choose sessions that you support. Because of limitations related to certain activities, students will need to select back-up choices as explained in the booklet.

Since we are sensitive to current economic conditions, we have made a deliberate attempt to provide a number of activities that involve either no or minimal cost. If a minimal cost activity still poses an economic challenge for your child's participation, please contact Sandy Jones, our school social worker for scholarship assistance.

Students' opportunities during activity day will be based upon the following guidelines:

#### Academic

Students who are earning an "F" in any class on February 17 will be required to work for the first half of the day in a study hall. They may participate in afternoon on-campus activities.

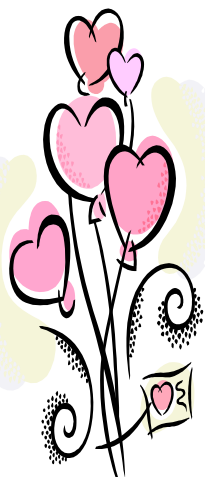
#### Behavioral

Students who earn 3 infractions or one office referral during the 2nd Trimester will, at the discretion of the principal or dean of students, only be allowed to participate in on-campus activities.

#### School Policy

Students who have violated any major school policy, as listed in the student handbook, will only be allowed to participate in on-campus activities.

We hope that our students enjoy this break from our daily routine and feel rewarded for their academic and behavioral efforts.



## HEADLINES IN SCHOOL HEALTH

~Kelly Krueger, LSN

### Meningitis and Vaccinations

#### What is meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal disease, which includes meningitis, is a serious bacterial infection that strikes between 1000 to 2600 Americans each year. Although rare, meningococcal disease can cause meningitis (swelling of the brain or spinal cord) or meningococemia (blood infection). Vaccination has been available for decades and is a safe and effective way to help protect against this potentially devastating disease.

#### Who is at risk for getting meningococcal meningitis?

Preteens and teens are at greater risk for getting meningococcal meningitis and are more likely to die compared with other age groups. Death rates from meningococcal meningitis are up to 5 times higher in teenagers and young adults (15 through 24 years of age) compared with other age groups.

#### How do you get meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal bacteria are spread from person to person through close contact. Common everyday activities (eg, sharing drinking glasses, eating utensils, kissing, or living in close quarters) can put even healthy preteens and teens at greater risk for getting meningitis. That's why vaccination is so important.

#### What are symptoms of meningococcal meningitis?

Meningococcal meningitis can be hard to recognize, especially in its early stages, because symptoms are similar to those of more common viral illnesses. But unlike more common illnesses, the disease can progress quickly and may cause death within 24 hours. Symptoms may include high fever, severe headache, stiff neck, confusion, vomiting, exhaustion, and/or a rash.

#### What can happen if you get meningococcal meningitis?

Although rare, meningococcal meningitis is serious and can potentially cause death of an otherwise healthy young person within 24 hours. About 10 percent of people who get meningococcal meningitis will die. Up to 1 in 5 survivors are left with serious medical problems, including:

- Amputation of arms, legs, fingers, and toes
- Brain damage
- Deafness
- Kidney damage

#### How can you help prevent your child from developing meningococcal meningitis?

Vaccination is safe and effective and the best way to help protect preteens and teens from meningococcal meningitis. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other leading medical groups recommend meningococcal vaccine for:

- Preteens and teens 11 through 18 years of age
- College freshmen living in dormitories
- Children 2 through 10 years of age who are at increased risk or if elected by their
- health-care providers and parents

Vaccination is available for people 2 through 55 years of age who wish to reduce their risk for contracting the disease.

**\*\*Information provided by the National Association of School Nurses**

### REMINDER TO SIXTH GRADE PARENTS

Entrance to 7<sup>th</sup> grade has special immunization requirements that must be fulfilled by the first day of school. Letters will soon be mailed home indicating which vaccine records are still needed here at school. Please look for this letter and submit documentation of immunizations as soon as completed.

### REMINDER ON STUDENT ILLNESSES

Please be considerate of others when your child has been ill. To prevent the spread of illness, we remind you to please keep your children home for a MINIMUM of 24 hours after their fevers break or after they stop vomiting, even if they are feeling better.

## 6TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

In social studies, sixth graders have been studying important industries in Minnesota's past. This included railroading, farming, flour milling, lumbering, and iron mining. Students will also be learning about early immigrants that came to Minnesota. They will be participating in a group research project that studies these early immigrants. Finally, students will be examining the Native American reservations in Minnesota while completing a power point presentation. Keep up the great work on your Minnesota Booklets!

## 6TH GRADE SCIENCE

The sixth graders will be working on an animal research reports during the month of February. The goals sixth graders are expected to accomplish during this report are: correctly practice the research process, use the resources available in the media center to find quality factual information, and learn more about wild animals native to Minnesota. Listed below is a schedule that will be followed while going through the research process. Please note due dates for specific items. We encourage you to ask your student how he/she is progressing on the report. Most of the work will be done at school; however, your student may need to finish some parts of the report at home. Thanks in advance for your help. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your student's 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher.

## CHARGER CAFÉ

To cure after school hunger students can now purchase a frozen peanut butter and jelly sandwich for \$1. The sandwich must be purchased at lunch and will come out of their lunch account.

Thank you for all who participated in our Hawaiian festivities. It sure heated up the winter!

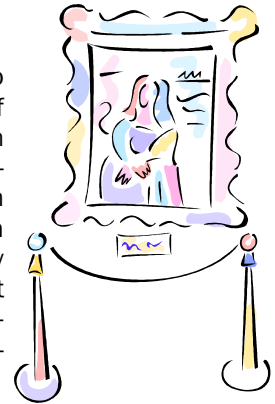
Just a reminder: For those that have free and/or reduced lunch, breakfast is offered for free.

## ART DEPARTMENT NEWS

### Middle School 2<sup>nd</sup> Trimester

#### Art Show

The art department is proud to present the annual exhibit of art created by students in grades five through eight! Artwork will be displayed from Tuesday, February 22 through Friday, March 4 in the hallway near the PAC which means it will be viewable during the middle school band and choir concerts.



The trimester is well underway with students hard at work using their creativity to complete art projects! Pieces on display will be from all students who are currently in art class during the second trimester of school. Please take the opportunity to view the display of artwork from students in this community!

## 2010-2011 Yearbooks On Sale Now!

This year DC Middle School is offering full-color 54-page yearbooks for \$14. Order forms were distributed through Power Hours several weeks ago. The order form indicates a due date of February 1st, but orders will be accepted through Friday, February 4th. Checks can be made payable to DC Middle School. If your child does not have an order form, they may pick one up in the Middle School office.



## PTA

Please join us for the next bi-monthly Dassel-Cokato PTA meeting. Please note the location change.

**Thursday, February 3, 6:30-8:00**

**D-C High School Choir Room, enter door H**

### **Illegal Cell Phone Activity and Our Children**

#### **What All Parents Need to Know**

In the changing world of technology, several unintended consequences have impacted students, schools, and the community. Technological advancements with cell phone cameras and texting have led to new issues of unintended illegal activity and cyberbullying. **Often children can be the perpetrator and/or target while being unaware of the consequences.** Please join us for an informative presentation given by Brian Stoll. Brian is a Senior Probation Agent for Wright County Court Services working with juveniles in the Criminal Justice System.

**ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!!**

If you have any questions about this meeting or the PTA please call Melissa at 275-3394.

## TICKETS ON SALE NOW

Even though it's been just a bit "chilly" lately, March will be here before we know it! Tickets are on sale now for two upcoming events which we are sure will help coax you out of hibernation.

### **Lake Wobegon Brass Band Concert**

Friday, March 4, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: Adults—\$15, Youth—\$5

Reserved Seating at the PAC

### **"Nice People Dancing to Good Country Music"**

A comedy by Lee Blessing. Directed by Dave Metcalf

Four Performances:

Saturday, March 12—7 p.m.

Sunday, March 13—2 p.m.

Friday, March 18—7 p.m.

Saturday, March 19—7 p.m.

All Tickets: \$15 (Enjoy a scrumptious dessert served after all performances!)

Performed at the Dassel History Center and Ergot Museum (901 First Street North, Dassel)

## READING COUNTS

Each month the media center sponsors a contest to encourage students to read and participate in our Reading Counts program. The December contest was "Classes Compete." The communication classes at each grade level had a fun and friendly competition to see which class could earn the most points during December. The following classes were recognized for their success:

<b>5th Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
1st Place: Schmidt	1,597
2nd Place: Brennan	989
3rd Place: Johnson	756

<b>6th Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
1st Place: Erickson	1,534
2nd Place: A Anderson	1,467
3rd Place: Bessingpas	1,299

<b>7th Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
1st Place: Stelzer4	1,527
2nd Place: Stelzer5	1,254
3rd Place: Stelzer6	956

<b>8th Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
1st Place: Harlan2	1,943
2nd Place: Harlan3	1,898
3rd Place: Harlan1	1,579

### **Please Keep the Office Updated**

If you have a change of address or phone number, please call the middle school office at 286-4100 (ext. 1600).

### **ISD # 466**

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