



ISD
466

DASSEL - COKATO MIDDLE SCHOOL

May 2011 Newsletter

COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

FROM THE PRINCIPAL, GARY JOHNSON

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Principal's Message

This is my last newsletter article before my retirement takes effect and I move on to my next adventure. It is difficult for me to express how much I have appreciated the opportunity to work with the students, families, and staff of the Dassel-Cokato School District for the past 24 years! I have attempted to start most of my mornings as a principal by simply standing in the hallway outside our office and greeting students. Their return smiles and conversations always remind me of my great fortune in spending a career educating children. I, especially, thank all the parents and guardians who have worked directly with me to address a particular issue in their children's lives. The most successful solutions to any student's problems come from a patient, respectful, and understanding relationship between the school and the student's home.

I hope that a few of our paths may cross at some point in the future; until then, I bid you farewell.

Mr. Johnson

Third Trimester Incentive Activities

At the end of the year our students are given an opportunity to participate in various activities designed to reward positive academic performance and good behavior they have maintained during the third trimester. This year 5th grade students will, again, go to the Becker Community Center, 6th grade will go to the Monticello Community Center, and grades 7 and 8 will go to Valley Fair. Students who have earned a failing grade or who have failed to qualify for the reward trip because they don't meet the behavior criteria will be expected to attend school on the day of the reward trip just as they would on any other day. They will spend the day trying to improve their grades and helping staff at school. Students who do not qualify for this activity will receive a notification letter from our office.

Summer School

Our summer school program is an excellent opportunity for students to spend their June mornings improving their math and reading skills. The program is designed to assist any students who could benefit from additional instruction and for students who have failed a course throughout the school year. Classes for students in grade 5 - 6 are taught in multi-grade clusters and focus on math and reading skills. Classes for 7th grade students include remediation in math and reading and a service project. 8th grade students focus on developing skills and goals necessary for high school success. Summer school instructors are Ms. Runquist, Ms. Athmann, Mr. Randy Johnson, and Mr. Bessingpas.

Classes will be held Monday through Friday from 8:00 -12:30 starting June 8 and ending July 1.

If your child has failed a class this year and needs to complete summer school in order to advance to the next grade, you will receive a letter from us. If you would simply like to enroll your child in summer school to take advantage of the additional instruction, we will have enrollment forms available in the middle school office in early May. If you have any questions regarding summer school please contact me at 286-4100 ext. 1604.

Immunizations

Our school health office has already started sending out notices reminding parents of the need to have student immunizations brought up to date before the school year begins next fall. **This is especially important for students entering 7th grade, since state law forbids school attendance in that grade without current immunization records.** Unfortunately, I have been placed in the unpleasant position of sending students home on the first day of school because their updated immunization records had not been delivered to our office. Please make certain that your child has current records on file before the start of the school year.

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A HALLOWEEN TO REMEMBER

~Alexis Erickson, 6th Grade

I turned and ran down the street. My Halloween candy went flying in every direction. You will never believe what had just happened to me. I was picked up by a dragon. The dragon could talk. He couldn't talk out loud but he could talk to me in my mind. I was so scared. I told the dragon to put me down but he wouldn't. He said he was taking me to a special place. I asked him where but he didn't answer. He just went faster. When we got close to where we were going, he slowed down. We went into a cave, it was very dark. I saw fire but when I got closer, I saw it was a dragon breathing fire. She talked to me and she said that I was a dragon too. I didn't believe her. She said, "It is true, you are my son. You're supposed to be a king. I'm glad I found you." The other dragon asked what I was wearing. I said, "It is Halloween." They both looked puzzled. I asked if they knew what Halloween was. They said, "No," so I told them. "It's when you carve pumpkins and dress up," I said. "You go to people's houses and get candy." Then they understood.

I asked, "Why don't I look like you if I'm a dragon?" They looked at each other. They said, "You will soon." They brought me to my room. It was bright with gold everywhere. They said, "You should go to bed." I went to bed and in the morning I got up and looked in the

mirror. I looked like a dragon. I screamed but fire came out of my mouth. The two other dragons came in. They said, "It's breakfast time." We went out of the cave. I said, "How do we get breakfast?" "It's down there," they said. I looked down and it was a 20 foot drop. My eyes widened. "How do I get down there?" I asked. "You fly down," they said. I stared at them for awhile. Then I jumped, I fell 5 feet. Then I went up, I was flying! I looked down, they said, "Come down for breakfast." There were pancakes and sausage, it was very good.

They said it was time for flying lessons. They taught me how to breathe fire. It was fun. I remembered my real parents. They probably were worried sick. I asked the dragons if I could go see them. They said that I could so I flew down to my house and changed back to a human. When I opened the door, they were making lunch. When I went into the kitchen, they came and hugged me. They said, "We're so glad that you're safe." I told them about my real mom and dad. Then mom said, "We know, we found an egg. We brought it in the house. Then it opened and there you were, a little boy." I asked, "Can I go with my real parents?" They said, "Yes, but come back and visit." Everyone lived happily ever after.

Reading Counts:

Classic Bookmark Contest Winners

In an effort to promote the Classic collection, the Media Center sponsored a March contest and awarded \$20 to the following students for earning the most Reading Counts points on their classic bookmark:

- 5th grade: Natalia Marttinen (172 points)
- 6th grade: Jordan Aho (134 points)
- 7th grade: Ross Aho (292 points)
- 8th grade: Gretta Pokornowski (224 points)

Reading Counts:

March Random Classic Winners

In an effort to promote the Classic collection, the Media Center sponsored a March contest and awarded \$20 to the following students for reading one of the five classic books randomly selected during the month of March:

- 5th grade: Anna Wagner (Old Yeller)
- 6th grade: Daren Foley (Call of the Wild)
- 7th grade: Jacob Struthers (Hobbit)
- 8th grade: Isak Hattaja (Call of the Wild)

6TH GRADE HEALTH & SCIENCE

Science - 6th grade science students will end the year by completing a unit on Simple Machines. Students will use motorized Lego sets to practice problem solving and mechanical skills.

Health - The last health unit is "Family and Responsibility". Students will learn that responsibility and self-discipline are important parts of growing up. They will also learn that communication, cooperation, and compromise are essential to a family's success.

6TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

For the remainder of the year, sixth graders will be exploring the history, geography, and cultures of Latin America and Canada. They will learn about these regions through a variety of activities that include mapping, creating a travel brochure, and traveling through Canada in a travel activity.

CHARGER CAFÉ

May is here and that means field trips for the middle school. The middle school kitchen has bag lunches available which include the following: ham and cheese sandwich, mayo packs, carrot packs, apple, bag of chips, treat, and a juice cup. If your child would like a bag lunch from our kitchen, please have them inform their teacher a day ahead of time. Also, we have PBJ's available for after school activities. They can be purchased for \$1 at lunch time.

As always, if your student is free or reduced, a free breakfast is available to them. Studies show that breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Thank you,

Barb Quast, Middle School Kitchen Manager

Art Department News

The Middle School Art Show, displaying work from students in grades 5-8 who are currently in art, will be occurring from Monday, May 23 through Friday, May 27. The art will be displayed in the hallway near the PAC. The art show will be available for viewing during the band and choir concerts. Please stop by to enjoy the artwork that has been created by the Dassel-Cokato Middle School Students.

HEADLINES IN SCHOOL HEALTH

~Kelly Krueger, LSN

Attention parents: Please make arrangements to pick up any medication that has been stored in the Health Office this year. For the safety of all students, medication will not be sent home with students unless we have received written consent from a parent/guardian. A consent form will be mailed to you by the end of May.

Medication that has not been picked up by 3:30 p.m. on Monday, June 6, will be destroyed. Please call the Health Office if you have any questions.

Thank you and have a great summer!

Coming Fall 2011: New Harmonies

What do blues, country, gospel, rhythm & blues, folk and rock 'n' roll have in common? All are musical styles that emerged from America's rich immigrant cultural traditions. "New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music," an exciting exhibition from Museum on Main Street, takes a look back at this music and how it served as the foundation for many musical genres appreciated worldwide today. Museum on Main Street is a partnership of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and the Federation of State Humanities Councils.

Next fall, The Dassel Area Historical Society (ERGOT) has the exciting opportunity of hosting this fun and interactive traveling exhibit.

We are hoping to allow all students in our district to visit the exhibit in October. Also, we will be hosting Soli Hughes and the Thunderbirds, surprise musical guests. We will also theme our entire fall around the traveling exhibit and local exhibit "We'll Walk Hand in Hand," focusing on the many different cultures and ethnicities in our communities. We are very excited about the upcoming events!

If you are interested in helping out with the exhibit (at the museum or with the schools), please contact Jessica Luebker (286-4100 ext. 1634) or Carolyn Holje (275-3077). Thank you!

2011 Grades K-8 Youth Art Exhibit

Exhibit Hours are:

April 30, 10 a.m.— 5 p.m.

May 4, 5, 6; 3 p.m.—8 p.m.

May 7, 10 a.m.—5 p.m.

At the Hutchinson Mall

