

# DASSEL - COKATO MIDDLE SCHOOL

January 2012 Newsletter

**COMMITTED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**

## **FROM THE PRINCIPAL, BRIAN FRANKLIN**

It is hard to believe that another year is behind us, along with the many events that will have entered the history books. It is also that time of year when many New Year's resolution ideas start making their appearances. Most of these resolutions we hear about are for adults. They might be losing weight, exercising more, reducing debt, quitting a bad habit, or even starting a more productive habit. What resolutions can we expect of our children at home or school? It may be easy to select something as simple as putting more effort into a class. The best types of resolutions are ones that are specific, attainable, and measurable. Setting a specific, attainable, and measurable goal can be as simple as dedicating one hour after school to homework, turning in every assignment on time, or setting their own alarm clock to wake up and get ready for school. The key ingredient to obtaining any goal is anticipating the obstacles which may be encountered and responding productively to these obstacles, while still remaining focused on the goal. The best part of reaching a goal is the inner feeling experienced when overcoming personal challenges. By setting academic resolutions, your child's performance has the potential to improve here at school, which is the main goal of learning!

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## **Middle School Web Site**

The Dassel-Cokato Middle School website is updated often with new information and new tabs students can utilize. On the left hand side of the DCMS web page you will find tabs titled ~ Instructional Sites and another titled ~ Staff List & Websites. Both of these tabs allow you to see many other links to websites your child may utilize to practice concepts and topics taught here at school. On the right hand side you will also find a section titled, "Preparing for MCAs." This section allows parents and students to connect to links to help children practice for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in math and reading. All of these areas on the middle school web site are great tools for parents and students. I encourage you and your child to spend some time looking at these great resources for many learning opportunities!

## **Winter Conferences**

On January 23 and 26, we will be having the middle school winter parent/teacher conferences from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Teachers will be sending more information home with students after the holiday break. These conferences mark the half-way point of your child's school year. It is a great time to review and reflect on the first part of the year and to set goals with your child for the remainder of the year. Please remember, you can always contact the school to speak with a teacher or set up a meeting if you have any questions or concerns about your child. We welcome the opportunity to talk with parents about their children. We look forward to seeing you either January 23 or 26, 2012.

### **Upcoming Events:**

January 3, 2012: School Resumes

January 6, 2012: FLY Mentor/Mentee Breakfast

January 16, 2012: Martin Luther King Day, no school for students

January 20, 2012: Mentor/Mentee Field Trip

January 23 & 26, 2012: Parent/Teacher Conferences, 4 p.m.—8 p.m.

## READING COUNTS 1st TRIMESTER DRAWING WINNERS

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 purchase these prizes. Students received one coupon to put in the drawing for ten Reading Counts points earned. One hundred students won prizes during this first trimester drawing. We wish to congratulate everyone for their reading efforts and especially the following students who earned the most points for their grade and were guaranteed a spot on the winners' list:

### 5th Grade

Elizabeth Knutson 408 points

Eleanor Weckwerth 407 points

Blake Johnson 400 points

### 6th Grade

Mark Pringnitz 821 points

Sara Cronk 630 points

Ingrid Mikkola 524 points

### 7th Grade

Nathan Weckwerth 1,036 points

Kara Thielsen 810 points

Arissa Nowak 721 points

### 8th Grade

Whitney Tormanen 709 points

Joshua Yurek 596 points

Dylan Grack 580 points

## READING COUNTS "LOOKING FOR LEXILE" CONTEST WINNERS



Every year the media center sponsors monthly contests to encourage students to read and participate in our Reading Counts program. The November contest was "Looking for Lexiles." Students were encouraged to read books within their Lexile range, and for every book they read in

their range, they entered a coupon into a drawing. We wish

to congratulate the following students who earned the most points in their grade on that date. These students were awarded a certificate and a \$10 cash prize.

5th Grade: Abbie Stertz

6th Grade: Delaney Keaveny

7th Grade: Braeden Cates

8th Grade: Kayla Jo Lundin

## NATIONWIDE YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST

The Litchfield VFW recently sponsored a nationwide youth essay contest. This competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on democracy and patriotism. This year's essay theme was "Are You Proud of Your Country?" Three of our DC eighth

graders submitted essays for this contest and the third place winner at the local level was Molly Hoikka. She was recognized at an awards ceremony in Litchfield along with the other local winners. Molly received a certificate of merit and a \$25 cash prize. Congratulations, Molly!

## 6th Grade News

**Science**—Students will finish exploring physical science concepts from Chapter 11, “Exploring Forces”. This study will lead into Chapter 12, “Exploring Energy”. Students will learn about wave motion and how it is measured as well as how sound energy is transferred. The sixth graders will explore light and how it travels and complete labs to learn more about colors of light.

**Health**—Sixth graders will be covering the following chapters in Health: “Staying Safe Every Day” and “Community Health”. Students will learn how to stay safe at home and in their communities by recognizing health hazards and dangerous situations. They will also learn ways to prevent violence and resolve conflicts. Students will also study what to do before, during, and after various natural disasters.

**Social Studies** —In social studies, sixth graders will be studying important industries in Minnesota’s past. This will include 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. Keep up the great work on your Minnesota Booklets!

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Communications Class

### Grandparent Interview:

Students have been asked to interview a grandparent or an older adult over the winter break. They will write a paper detailing the life experiences and wisdom of this person. Students were asked to include at least three photos in their report. We hope this assignment gives grandparents the opportunity to pass along their life stories and legacy to a younger generation.

### Graphic Novels:

*POW! BAM! EEK!* These expressions are commonly found in graphic novels where stories are told to the reader through images. Graphic novels challenge students to interpret pictures and make inferences with only a limited amount of text, if any at all. Seventh graders were asked to read a graphic novel and create their own mini-graphic representation of the story.

### Reading Requirement:

Please continue to encourage your child to consistently read outside of school. We recommend a variety of reading materials such as fiction and nonfiction books, graphic novels, newspapers, magazines, web-based literature, or books on tape. It is helpful to engage your child in conversations about what you are each reading.

## 2011-2012 YEARBOOKS GO

### ON SALE IN JANUARY

This year DC Middle School is offering full-color 54-page yearbooks for \$15. Order forms will be distributed through Power Hours on January 9th. The order form deadline is February 3rd. 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.

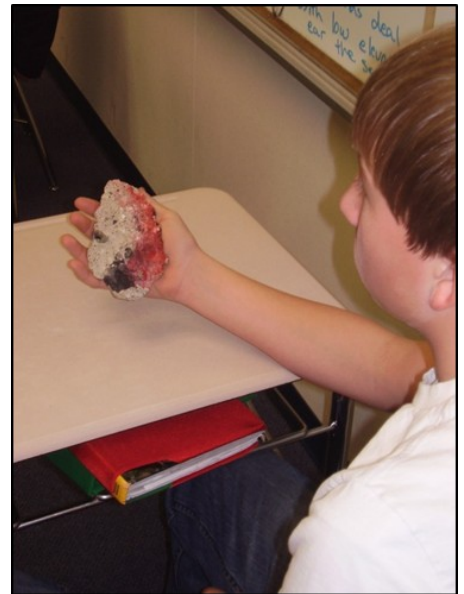
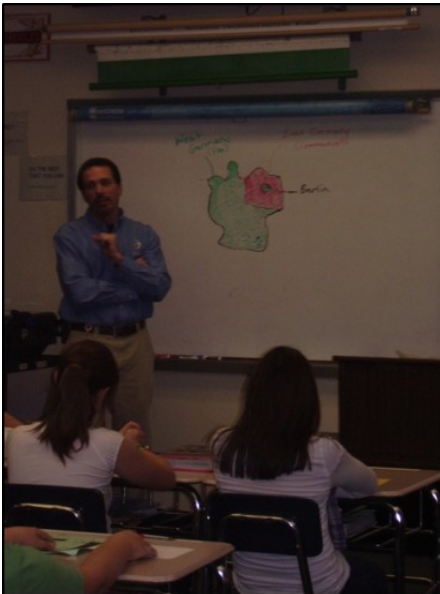


## MR. FRANKLIN ADDRESSES 8TH GRADE CLASSES

Eighth graders have been learning about West-Central Europe recently in geography classes. West-Central Europe includes France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and the BENELUX countries (Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg). While learning about Germany, Principal Brian Franklin stepped in and talked about his experiences with the Berlin Wall. Franklin visited the wall during the spring of 1990, shortly after communism fell and the wall started

coming down. He compared his time there to when his sister visited a few years earlier while Germany was still divided.

Mr. Franklin also had pieces of the historic wall to share with students along with other souvenirs. Students found Franklin's presentation interesting and loved holding parts of the historic wall in their hands. Thank you for sharing Mr. Franklin!



### STUDENTS OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER

#### 5th Grade

Joanna Koivisto  
Patricia Aho  
Blake Johnson  
Will Mattila

#### 6th Grade

Lea Halonen  
Olivia Travis  
Kevin Rokala  
Caden Webb

#### 7th Grade

Yolanda Sanchez  
Harper Aspen  
Ean Johnson  
Tyler Oja

#### 8th Grade

Kailyn Warner  
Courtney Forester  
Grant Wilson  
Henry VonOhlen

### Physical Education Classes to Start Swimming in January

Physical education classes will start swimming right away in January. Students will need swimsuits and a towel. Any questions contact Carrie Berggren 286-4100 (ext. 1655) or Cole Flick 286-4100 (ext. 1654).

### Charger Café

Happy New Year from the Charger Café! Just a reminder, if your child qualifies for free and/or reduced lunch, breakfast is offered for free. Breakfast is served every morning from 7:45 a.m.—8:05 a.m.

**PTA**

On Saturday, November 19, approximately 100 students in grades K-6<sup>th</sup> braved the cold and wind to participate in the first annual DC Fun Run. This event was sponsored by the DC PTA and Dassel Snap Fitness to promote health and fitness in the community in conjunction with National PTA's Healthy Lifestyles month.

The event was held at the High School track. Students in grades K-2 ran ½ mile, 3-4 grades ran 1 mile, and 5-6 grades ran 1 ½ miles. Students also had the opportunity to participate in other fitness related activities such as sack races, jump rope, hula hoops, and more. Each par-



ticipant received a “DC Fun Run Finisher” shirt and healthy snacks. Trophies were awarded to the top three finishers in each age group. All participants were also entered into a drawing for prizes including IPOD’s, Scheel’s gift cards, and Overtime Ink gift certificates. Thanks to all who participated. Next year we will definitely target an earlier date!!!

At the PTA’s December membership meeting Bernie Reinke, Food Service Director for Hutchinson, Litchfield, and Dassel-Cokato school districts, presented information on the process of purchasing our students’ meals and the guidelines that are followed. Brian Franklin, Middle School Principal, also presented information regarding middle school lunch procedures. Notes from the meeting can be found on the PTA website, [www.chargerpta.com](http://www.chargerpta.com).

In February, the PTA will be hosting Alisa Johnson, Middle School Dean of Students, to educate parents and the community on “Professional Learning Communities”. Mrs. Johnson is a member of the district team that oversees these professional development teams among our teachers. “Professional Learning Communities” is an on-going program in which the teachers and administrators continuously seek and share learning and then act on what they learn. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals so that students benefit. As an organizational arrangement, the professional learning community is seen as a powerful staff development approach and a potent strategy for school change and improvement. Parents and community members concerned about school improvement are encouraged to attend.

**HEADLINES IN SCHOOL HEALTH**

**~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. A fever is considered a temp ≥ to 100.

**~FLU VACCINES~**

The Wright County Public Health Wellness on Wheels—WOW—Van provides low cost vaccinations for those without health insurance or with high deductibles. Vaccines are just \$10 if eligible. Call 763-682-7717 to find out if you qualify. A WOW van schedule can be found at: <http://www.co.wright.mn.us/departement/humanservices/wowcal.asp>

**~SCOLIOSIS SCREENINGS FOR 5<sup>th</sup> AND 6<sup>th</sup> GRADE GIRLS~**

Scoliosis is a medical term for a curved backbone (spine). It can either be present at birth or develop during childhood. Most cases are mild but children with a severe curve may need further intervention. The Minnesota Department of Health recommends selective screening in schools for scoliosis. Girls in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade are recommended for screening. Scoliosis screening will be performed during swim class for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade girls during January and February. If you have a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade girl and you do NOT want her screened for scoliosis, please let the health office know.

Middle School Health Office: 286-4100 ext.1605 (DebRyan) or contact Tracy Kraemer, LSN for D-C School District at ext.1804.