

Parkside Penguin Press

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Thoughts from the principal

Hello Parkside Families,

Now that September is almost past, the daily routines of school are established. Most importantly, almost all of the kindergarten children can open their own milk!

Our teachers have spent a great deal of time assessing students. This year all kindergarten through second grades are taking the DIBELS assessment, giving us detailed feedback on phonemic and early literacy skills. Teachers will meet each trimester to discuss students who are not meeting benchmarks and to discuss interventions.

Students in grades first through fifth just completed SAT 10 testing. Results should be back by the end of October. We will use these scores to look at student growth and to predict suc-

cess on the ISAT assessments in the spring.

Last year our students did make Adequate Yearly Progress here at Parkside. However, the bar increases every year. This year the goal is for 77% of our students to meet or exceed standards set by the state. Since 72.3% of our students met standards in reading last year, we are all working very hard to make sure we meet this goal. Our school improvement plan calls for 80% of our children to be reading at grade level. I can't stress how important it is for all of us to be working together as a team to help our children. I can't think of anything we do that is more important than teaching our children to read, write and think at grade level. I know we can and will meet this challenge!

Mrs. Shelly Erickson

Fall Reminders

Now that we are in the swing of things, I have several reminders for our families.

- Because we do not start school until 8:30, children may NOT arrive until 8:10. We do not have adults supervising

outside until 8:10. This is also when breakfast is served.

- The children will play on the playground before school if the temperature is above 20 degrees. Please make sure students have jack-



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Oct. 2, Homecoming; early dismissal at 1:45, parade kick-off at 2:15 p.m.*
- *Oct. 2, Scrip orders due.*
- *Oct. 5, PTO meeting at 6:30 p.m., multipurpose room. Playground Committee meeting afterward.*
- *Oct. 8, Fall Fundraiser forms/orders are due.*
- *Oct. 12, Columbus Day, no school.*
- *Oct. 23, Parent-Teacher conferences, no school for students.*
- *Oct. 30, Halloween costume parade at 1:45, class parties at 2:15 p.m.*
- *Our 24-hour attendance line phone number is 862-5015; call with school absence information before 9 a.m., when possible.*

ets when it is cool in the morning.

- Drop off and pick up are going very well because nobody is blocking the entrance or exit; keep up the good work!

Parkside Welcomes New Staff!

If you were at our September PTO meeting, I mentioned that we have 9 teachers new to Parkside and several other new staff members. This might be a record for us!

Dawn Laffey retired as our speech therapist last year, and is being replaced by Cally Hutson. Cally left KJHS to come to Parkside. Another teacher transferring to us is Carrie Harms. Carrie taught 3rd grade Learning Resource at Pepper Ridge last year, and this year she works with our K/1 special education students.

Laura Beal taught pre-kindergarten students in Decatur last year, and this

year also works with K/1 special education children.

Nathan Stice is working with 2nd and 3rd grade special education students. He is a new graduate from Bradley University. Another new graduate, Jamie Lunt, comes to us from the University of Illinois. Jamie is teaching second grade. Colleen Feece (who was hired the Friday before we started school!) is another new graduate, from Illinois State University. She is teaching our additional kindergarten class. Lauren Kaufman, another kindergarten teacher, also worked with that grade for five years in Danville. Amy Ersland, who some of you may remember as Mrs. Purcell's student teacher, is temporarily set up in the lounge with 3rd

grade. Amy Farwell is working with our fifth grade special education students. She previously taught in Decatur, and before that in San Diego. Jenny Davis is a new occupational therapist in our building.

We also have several new teaching assistants. Bethany Pauley works with 4th grade; Jordan Lutes works with 1st and 3rd grades; Patty Marquez and Hayley Sparrow both work with kindergarten special education students.

Please help us welcome our new Penguin staff! We are thrilled to have all of them with us this year!

School Improvement

The school improvement plan has not changed drastically from last year to this. We are continuing to focus on reading improvement because we have not yet met our goal. We are working toward having 80% of all students reading at grade level. We will assess everyone with Fountas & Pinnell benchmark books to monitor their

If you have not scheduled your Parent-Teacher conference yet, please call the office at 862-5014 to set a time for October 23.

growth. We will also be using formative assessment during our guided reading lessons. Students who are not making progress will be provided with inter-

ventions to help them move toward grade level. While ISAT scores are important, our goal extends to the K-2 grades as well. We will continue to use the 7 keys to comprehension strategies that we introduced two years ago. I know many of you understand these strategies and reinforce them with your children at home. Thank you, as always, for your support.

PBIS Update

We are off to an excellent start for the year with Positive Behavior Intervention Systems! All of our students have completed training for their lessons. As we looked at data and compared it to last year, we have only had 12 office referrals so far; last year we had 22 by this time.

Hopefully you have heard your child talk about earning points and what they have spent them on. I've seen children eating lunch in their rooms with their teachers, some have bought the honor of sitting on a cushy chair all day, and some bought September's Happy Feet. Mrs. Greenberg and I had 3 different sponge water fights with a total of 91 students on September 23.

We finished that off with a popsicle. Somehow, I seemed to be the most popular target to get wet! It was a fun time.

Please talk with your children about being "Responsible, Respectful and Safe." For our school to run smoothly, everyone needs to follow these rules. We want to keep our referrals to the office at an all time low!

PTO News

Be a part of Parkside PTO

What a great turn-out we had at our first PTO meeting of the school year! It was wonderful to see so many of Parkside's returning parents, as well as many of our new parents in attendance. We have filled most of our committee positions; a big thank you to those parents who are helping PTO be the best it can be!

If you are interested in serving as a representative for the CAC, please contact one of your PTO officers. CAC is a Citizens Advisory Council that needs input from our community members on

many topics including school safety, student achievement and fiscal responsibility.

PTO will be holding its first fundraiser of the year, and your student will be coming home with an information packet soon. By selling for our fundraiser you will be helping raise funds to add onto our current playground. We hope you will take this opportunity to help us work toward this goal! Also, we will be sending home a no-hassle fundraiser form as well. Please feel free to make a tax deductible donation to PTO anytime of the year.

Many of our 5th grade students

and their parents have volunteered to construct our Parkside float for the NCWHS parade. Thank you to all of those who are offering their time, ideas and supplies! We hope you will be cheering us on during the Friday Oct. 2 parade at 2:15 p.m.

Scrip order forms are being sent home and are due back Oct. 2. Please remember to place your order for gift cards; a portion of each sale goes toward PTO, and ultimately our school. More information is available at the Parkside Elementary website.

Another great way to support PTO is an easy way! Just cut off

your Box Tops and send them into school with your student.

Spirit Wear orders will be taken soon—watch for the flyer. Order forms are due Oct. 9. Spirit Wear is quality clothing that helps our students show their Parkside Penguin Pride!

If you have noticed, many cars around town have an adorable Parkside Penguins magnet on them—if you would like one on your car as well, just send \$5 in an envelope to school marked 'PTO Magnet' and we'll send a magnet home with your student.

We appreciate all that our par-

ents do to support PTO. A great way to find out what PTO is doing for our school is to attend a meeting. Our next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m., Monday Oct. 5. Free childcare is provided so please take this opportunity to come and find out more about PTO, and our school.

Your PTO board members

Co-presidents:

Jenny Demosthenes, 828-4662, jenlou@mchsi.com, and Elizabeth Tomera, 454-8349, tomeras@verizon.net

Treasurer: Melissa Traum, 451-3224, atraum@comcast.net

Secretary:

Jennifer Barlow, 888-9777, jjbarlows5@yahoo.com



Parkside Penguins Rock !

Notes from our Nurse

Help prevent the flu

Good health habits can help stop germs. The CDC advises:

- * **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- * **Stay home when you are sick;** from work, school and doing errands. Keep sick chil-

dren at home. You will help prevent others from catching the illness.

* **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and throw the tissue away once done. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve at your elbow.

* **Wash your hands** often. Washing your hands and the hands of your children often will help protect you from

germs.

* **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth;** germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.

* **Practice other good health habits.** Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, and drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

Upcoming Important Dates

Oct. 2— Homecoming, 1:45 p.m. dismissal, parade at 2:15 p.m.

Oct. 2— Scrip orders due.

Oct. 5— PTO meeting at 6:30 p.m., multipurpose.

Oct. 8— Fall Fundraiser forms/orders due.

Oct. 9— Spirit Wear orders due.

*Stop the spread of the flu;
keep your child at home if
they are not well.*

Oct. 12— Columbus Day, no school.

Oct. 23— Parent-Teacher conference day, no school for students. Call to schedule.

Oct. 30— Halloween costume parade at 1:45 p.m., class parties at 2:15 p.m.

Should I send them to school?

If your child is sick, the best place for him/her is to be at home. Please keep your child at home if he has:

A fever of 100 degree Fahrenheit or higher, or the any of the following symptoms:

Chills, headache, body aches, ear ache, nausea, vomiting or a dry cough.



A student should not return to school until he/she is fever-free for 24-hours without medication.

Remember: medication can only be taken at school if a written request form is completed by the student's doctor and a parent. This includes all over-the-counter medications.