

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 5

HAMS

February 2014

Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

First let me announce that I have accepted a position as assistant middle school principal in the Philipsburg-Osceola Area School District, which is my alma mater. I do not have an exit date, but I look to transition sometime in mid-March. I could not pass up the opportunity to go home and be closer to my family. I have fond memories of Huntingdon, getting to know the people of the community, employees in the district and most of all the students. Huntingdon will always be special to me, it was my first experience as an administrator, and it is the town that I became a father and started a family with both my girls born at JC Blair. There is a part of me that will always be a Bearcat! If you are ever in Philipsburg please get in touch! Please direct questions or concerns to Mrs. Rieffannacht after my departure.

Cyber Safety

The Cyber Safety Presentation for Parents was held January 23 in the LGR. Mr. Patel and Mr. Yoder put on a top notch presentation and answered many questions. I would like to share with you some of the data collected from our survey of HAMS students. I encourage all parents to get involved and be aware of what their children do online and with technology.

63% of HAMS students have a Facebook Account
60% of HAMS students have a Snapchat Account
61% of HAMS students have a Instagram Account
36% of HAMS students have been subject of an inappropriate text message

** Inappropriate defined as anything that makes someone feel uncomfortable*

12% of HAMS students have posted a picture online they would not want their parents to see
60% of HAMS students have sent a "selfie" via cell phones or social media
22% of HAMS students have a social media account their parents do not know about
54% of HAMS students have friends online that they've never met in person
14% of HAMS students have arranged to meet an online friend in person
25% of HAMS students have had an online friend ask them to send an inappropriate picture

Act 80 1/2 Day

Thursday February 13 is a 1/2 day for students. Students will be dismissed at 12:00pm.

7th Grade Field Trip

7th Grade Field Trip to Pittsburgh is scheduled for February



B

E

A

R

C

A

T

S



28. Students will be engaged with interactive exhibits at the Carnegie Science Center.

AR Pizza Party

The AR Pizza Party was held on Tuesday February 4th. 300 slices of pizza were consumed by our students that are on track to meet their AR goal of 25 books read for the school year. We are excited to see so many of our students reading!

Middle School Fancy Dance

A Middle School Dance will be held Friday February 21 from 6:00pm - 8:00pm. Students are encouraged to dress up for the dance.

Harassment Presentation

Nicole Houck from the Huntingdon House spoke to 8th grade students about harassment. She defined harassment for our students and talked about in school and real world consequences of harassment, as well as how to handle being the target of harassment.

Career Day

On Tuesday, May 20, 2014, all middle school students will participate in Career Day. The purpose of the endeavor is to have adolescents explore the exciting world of careers.

Young people dream when they engage in career exploration. Henry David Thoreau said, "If you have built castles in the sky, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." If you have knowledge of a professional in any of the following areas, please contact the school:

Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
Architecture and Construction
Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
Business Management and Administration
Education and Training
Finance
Government and Public Administration
Health Science
Hospitality and Tourism
Human Services
Information Technology
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
Manufacturing
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistic

Technology can be utilized to bridge our students to the outside world. Years ago, our students interacted with a forensic geologist from Colorado via Skype. By working together, the school and community can collaborate and prepare our students for a fulfilling career in a competitive job market.



Good Days Start With Breakfast

By: Mrs. McNitt

We all know that children do better in class when they start their day with breakfast. But far too many students in Pennsylvania still are not getting the nutrition they need at school. This can negatively affect their health as well as their ability to learn and succeed academically. More than half of low-income students who eat lunch at school do not receive school breakfast. Pennsylvania ranks 38th in the country for school breakfast participation according to the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC). The School Breakfast Program is proven to decrease discipline and behavioral problems, visits to the school nurse, and tardiness in schools, while increasing student attentiveness and attendance. Studies also find that students who eat school breakfast show improved reading and math skills, as well as higher scores on standardized tests.

Good days start with breakfast. Try it! In addition to breakfast, you always need balanced meals with low-fat dairy, whole grains, and fresh fruits & vegetables, plus at least 60 minutes of activity each day.

7 Bears

By: Mrs. Watkins

Is it spring yet? I think this is the question on everyone's mind as we have experienced below zero temperatures and periodic snow accumulation. However, despite the chilly temperatures, the 7 Bears have been busy working away in Language Arts. As a concluding project to *A Christmas Carol*, a piece of literature the students read before break, they have been working on constructing a persuasive essay to persuade people to donate to a charity of their choice. This ties in nicely with the play they read because one of the themes in the play we discussed in class was compassion toward others in need. Students spent several days looking up information about their charities and statistical information about the cause for which their charity raises money. After they finish writing their persuasive essays, students will work on creating a PowerPoint to present to their classmates to try and persuade their peers to give money to their chosen charity. Each student will be given a hypothetical one million dollars to donate to any charity they feel is deserving of it after having listened to all the presentations.

Some students are extremely excited to learn how to use PowerPoint. Some may even feel some nerves about standing up in front of their peers and presenting their information and ultimately trying to persuade others to see the value in donating to their charity. Most importantly though, I believe all of them have taken something away from this assignment: researching skills, honing their writing skills, learning how to become better editors, working on public speaking skills, or even how to design an amazing PowerPoint.

Middle School

**“Working together
so all students can
learn.”**



HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

By: Mrs. Schneider

Some of the activities that the students have experienced in physical education are: floor hockey, basketball, volleyball, scooter ball, archery, flicker football, angle ball, kickball, indoor softball, speed ball, fitness center, and physical fitness which consists of the mile run, shuttle run, sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, and V sit (flexibility test).

The students have completed the following units in health: 6th Grade - Personal Health which emphasizes keeping teeth healthy, identifies ways to care for the skin, and describes hair and nail care, describes eye and ear care and explains how to protect hearing. Students are taught factors that influence consumer choices and how to choose health-care products wisely and identify consumer skills that can be used to save money,

Another unit completed by sixth grade is: Physical Activity which explains the benefits of regular physical activity, identifies measure of physical fitness, and identifies benefits of different exercises. Students learn the parts of a fitness plan and how warm-ups and cool-downs are important. Students are given log sheets to compile a fitness plan with healthy food choices and daily activities.

7th Grade - Physical Activity and Fitness are once again stressed in seventh grade with an emphasis on the importance of exercise in an overall fitness plan. This unit identifies the four measures of physical fitness and describes exercises to improve them. Students are taught how to choose activities to meet fitness goals, apply the FITT principle, and warm up and cool down when doing activities. Another unit our seventh grade students participate in is body image which is a very important concept in middle school. This unit describes the importance of a healthy body image, the effects of eating and physical activity on weight, and methods to maintain a healthy weight. Various eating disorders and their symptoms and health risks are explained.

8th Grade - One of the units the eighth grade students get a taste of is Relationships During the Teen Years. This unit explains changes that occur in friendships during adolescence, identifies the qualities of a good friend, explains how to develop communication skills to make new friends, and explains the advantages of going out with a group. Students learn the difference between positive and negative peer pressure, the risks of negative peer pressure, and how to develop refusal skills to resist negative peer pressure. Eighth grade students are also provided with a course from the REACH program with an outside speaker coming in to class concentrating on making good choices in life.

The Huntingdon Area Middle School Health and Physical Education Program strives to prepare students to enter high school and adult life by leading a healthy lifestyle and making good choices

Looking Ahead to Rome and Greece

By: Mr. Anders

The students in the 7 Bears social studies class will be involved in a unit on Rome and Greece. Within the curriculum concepts students will create a building sketch of one of the most important architectural structures the Colosseum. The students will learn the importance of the arch and its impact on Roman architecture. The arch was used in bridges, monuments, buildings and aqueducts. All of these were essential to the advancement of the Roman way of life.

Students will enjoy the opportunity to visually create aspects of Roman culture and explore the background to each of the aspects that they had selected.

The ability to incorporate Visual/Fine Arts through the use of the drawing in Social Studies allows the students to gain valuable insight to cross curriculum material and how important the arts are in all subject areas.

The students will also be involved in a unit on Greece. Within the material will be a novel by Bernard Evslyn. As part of the novel students will select a god, goddess or hero from the reading and create a character sketch. Students will select their character and then either sketch a scene or an image of what was discussed in the novel.

The importance of Greek culture and the ideals of human perfection will be an emphasis throughout the project. Students enjoy the opportunity to visually create aspects of Greek culture and explore the background to each of the individuals that they will select. the ability to incorporate Language Arts through the use of the novel in Social

Studies allows the students to gain valuable insight to cross curriculum material and how important reading is in all subject areas.

HAMS

2500 Cassady Avenue

Huntingdon, PA 16652

(814)-643-2900

Fax: (814)-643-6513

Website: www.huntsd.org



Reading Can Be Fun!

By: Mrs. Abernethy

Students on the 7-Bears team are reading, reading, reading! The students were giving a goal to read 25 books by the end of the school year. The students are well on their way to meeting this goal after the first two 9 weeks of school. Students were asked to complete at least seven books by the end of the first 9 weeks and thirteen or more at the end of the second 9 weeks. Principal, Mr. Pelka, gave an incentive to encourage the students to meet this 13 or more book goal for the end of the second 9 weeks. Any student that read 13 or more books by the end of the second 9 weeks is eligible to attend a pizza party! Many 7-Bears accepted the challenge and completed the thirteen book requirement.

Students on the 7-Bears team have been visiting the AR Store more frequently this year to spend their hard earned points from reading. The Literacy Coach, Mrs. Decker has been able to open the AR Store for students on F-days, 7th period, during the cycle. Students accumulate points each time they take an Accelerated Reader test. These points can then be traded for items in the store that the student chooses when shopping at the AR Store. New items to purchase at the store have also been added which include items such as gift certificates for local restaurants and movie passes for The Clifton 5 in downtown Huntingdon.

Students have been working in the classroom to get each other excited about reading. Students read for homework a book that they have selected in the library or from the classroom and then share some details about their story with a partner in their class. Students participate in this Partner Pair Share activity during reading class to share what they enjoy about the book they are currently reading and to perhaps interest another student to read the same book after they have finished. Students have begun to trade books with each other and even with their teacher! The students will again be required to read at least an additional six books for the third 9 weeks. The expectation will continue into the fourth 9 weeks as well to allow for the cumulative total of books read by each student to hit the 25 book goal mark by the end of the year. There will continue to be additional incentives along the way to encourage each student to keep reading.

7/8 CATS

By: Mr. Orenshaw

There is never a dull moment around the 7/8 Cats team and this time of year proves to be no different. In Math class students are learning to find different measurements and calculations for various two and three dimensional objects. This includes students using measurement tools and different formulas to find the area of circles, triangles and quadrilaterals and to find the volume of cylinders, prisms and cubes. Students will be able to apply this knowledge to tile a floor, insulate an attic or store liquids and solids.

In Social Studies Mr. Smith's 7th grade students are learning about Egyptian pyramids and Pharaohs. They will be creating pyramids to display their understanding. 8th grade students are learning about Spanish Colonial America while completing a webquest to enhance their learning experience.

Webquests seem to be the theme of the team, continuing into their science classes. 7th grade students are completing webquests to learn about protists, which are microorganisms that can range from harmless algae to dangerous sickness-inducing organisms. Ms. Goodman is having our 8th grade students complete webquests to discover information on earthquakes.

Students in Language Arts have been exploring three types of expository essays and will now put that understanding to use by creating a thesis that they will explore through a five paragraph essay. The essay can be on nearly any topic of interest to the student but must use at least two outside sources. These essays will be in MLA format and should impart wonderful knowledge to all of their readers.



Homeroom 115 Rocks!!

By: Mrs. Dickson



On December 20th, the middle school students spent their last day at school before winter break watching the teachers and the students have fun playing basketball. All the proceeds that amounted from this effort were donated to the American Cancer Society. Though, the hard work was done before the game. Homerooms participated in a school wide competition to raise money. The homeroom that raised the most money was able to get VIP seats for the basketball game and the chance to go out on the court and play! After a week of generous donations from the students, Homeroom 115 came out as the winners. They raised over \$130 in just their homeroom alone. The day of the game, they sat in their well earned seats and in the last quarter a majority of the homeroom joined in to play. They even persuaded their homeroom teacher, Mrs. Dickson, to play. Mrs. Dickson was extremely touched by the generosity and enthusiasm that her homeroom showed before and during the game. Good job Homeroom 115!



ELA Writing Field Test

By: Mrs. Rieffannacht

As winter continues the middle school is beginning to turn our focus toward preparing for our annual state testing period. This year we will begin with a field test from the state. It will consist of one session for every student on February 13th. This test is an opportunity for the students to experience the format for the new test that will be administered next year. The purpose of the field test is to allow test creators to see how student do on the questions and ensure the assessment is fair. 6th, 7th and 8th grade students will take one eighty minute session on the morning of the 13th. We encourage students to do their very best on this test. Some ways they can prepare to take it are getting enough sleep the night before, eating a healthy breakfast and coming in with a good attitude ready to achieve.

PSSA Testing Dates

As March fast approaches, so do the PSSA's. Please keep this in mind when scheduling appointments and family time away from school. The PSSA's, Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, is given yearly to students in grades 3 thru 8. Testing is scheduled to begin mid March and end early May, as listed on the school calendar

If you have any questions regarding the testing, please feel free to contact the school.



Career Day

By: Mrs. Miller

On Tuesday, May 20, 2014, all middle school students will participate in Career Day. The purpose of the endeavor is to have adolescents explore the exciting world of careers.

Young people dream when they engage in career exploration. Henry David Thoreau said, "If you have built castles in the sky, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them." If you have knowledge of a professional in any of the following areas, please contact the school:

Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
 Architecture and Construction
 Arts, A/V Technology, and Communications
 Business Management and Administration
 Education and Training
 Finance
 Government and Public Administration
 Health Science
 Hospitality and Tourism
 Human Services
 Information Technology
 Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
 Manufacturing
 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
 Transportation, Distribution, and Logistic

Technology can be utilized to bridge our students to the outside world. Years ago, our students interacted with a forensic geologist from Colorado via Skype. By working together, the school and community can collaborate and prepare our students for a fulfilling career in a competitive job market.



Spring Is a Time of Anticipation

By: Mr. Sowers

It's almost the time of year when blossoms are anxiously waiting to burst through their buds and show the world what spring is all about. Unfortunately, the changing weather also becomes the time of year when students are ready to burst through the school doors and show the world what having fun is all about. The Eight Bears would like to take the time to encourage students to not lose sight of all the goals they have set and reached during the 13-14 school year. Often times, when the sun is shining and students are in class looking out of the windows, thoughts of riding bikes, swimming, fishing and playing sports are lazily drifting behind their eyes. At the same time students are daydreaming about summer, homework, grades and work ethic are pushed to the dark corners of their minds. The last two marking periods are the most important because the way students end their eighth grade year will be the way they start their ninth grade year. If a student finishes his/her eighth grade year not completing assignments, then there is a very good probability that he/she will not do his/her homework when he/she returns to school as a freshman, since the weather is similar at both the end and the beginning of the school year. Students need to anticipate the coming of their high school years and prepare for the academics and responsibility that lies ahead of them, just as they are anticipating the summer and the relaxation that it brings. As coaches, we have often told our players at the end of a game to "finish strong." We would like to extend this bit of advice to our students as well. Finish strong at the end of your eighth grade year, so you will develop the habits necessary for success in the high school.



EVENTS

- February - ELA Writing Test**
February 13- 1/2 day for students
February 14– Snow Make-up Day
February 17– No School -Vacation Day
February 24– Progress Reports
February 28– 7th Grade Field Trip to Pittsburg

Mission

Our community engages all students to maximize their learning and leadership potential as global contributors.

Vision

Our students achieve their full potential and experience success, leaving school inspired to continue learning every day.

Values

Safety, Excellence, Respect, Integrity, Lifelong Learning.

Homework Help

Monday through Thursday of each week, help for students will be available. Our homework Help tutoring program is available to all students that need more time to develop academic skills and time to complete homework. Hours for help are 2:45 –4:00 PM and transportation will be the responsibility of the parents. Please contact the school if you are interested in the program.



TELEPHONES

A telephone, located in the main office, is provided for students' use. A student **MUST** first have permission from the teacher to come to the office to use the phone. The student will then gain permission from the office staff. The student is then required to fill out the phone log located by the telephone. **Student phone calls are limited to forgotten school work, lunch or an item needed for class. Students will not be given permission to call regarding after school arrangement of other non-school related questions.** Phones privileges may also be suspended if a student is not forthcoming with their reason to call . (Page 17 of the Student Handbook)

ALTERNATE BUS ASSIGNMENT

Alternate bus assignments will **NOT** be granted for social reasons. Parents **MUST** contact Central Office, transportation 643-4140 ext. 2126 to have this approved.

SNOW MAKE-UP DATES

February 14 and April 17, 21 & 22, 2014. The February 3rd snow day will be added to the end of the school year, but other considerations are being explored.

