

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 7

HAMS

April 2014

Principal's Message

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It is with great pride and excitement that I write this letter of introduction to you as the new appointed Principal of Huntingdon Area Middle School. I possess over 14 years of educational experience spanning from chemistry teacher to general science teacher to administrative positions such as Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, and Academic Principal before coming to Huntingdon Area High School. I am elated to bring my skills as an educational leader to your son/daughter's school and work with you as a partner in education to ensure your child's success.

I currently live out by Seven Points and in Shippensburg. I have been married for 10 years to Ron, a history teacher in Chambersburg Area School District. I have a daughter, Alessandra, and a son, Abram. In my spare time I enjoy reading, boating, spending time with family, and shopping.

I anticipate a successful (and busy) remaining 2014 school year. Please



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stop in or call to make an appointment to discuss any concerns, suggestions, or ideas to help this HAMS the best school!

Educationally yours,
Mrs. Luffy

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COUNSELORS CORNER

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Parent Meeting
By: Mrs. Miller

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On Tuesday, April 22, 2014, there will be a middle school orientation for parents/guardians of fifth grade students.

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This event will be held at the Huntingdon Area Middle School at 6:30PM in the Large Group Room. Parents will have an opportunity to observe a slide presentation, learn about the scheduling process, and ask pertinent questions involving the transition to the middle school. **Students are not required to attend, as there will be Sixth Grade Student Orientation in June.**

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As the school counselor, I aspire to make your child's transition to the middle school successful. I am dedicated to the academic, personal, and social development of adolescents and believe that communication between home and school is paramount. It will be an honor and pleasure to meet with you. Please come!



Cooking in the Classroom

By: Mrs. Gibbs

Whether it be the smell of bacon frying or cookies baking, mouth-watering scents from the Life Skills classroom frequently fill the hallways of the Huntingdon Area Middle School. A major part of the life skills curriculum is cooking and preparing simple dishes and snacks. The students are responsible for reading recipes, measuring ingredients, mixing ingredients, and cooking/baking the snack.

The clean-up process is not as much fun as the preparation process, but it is certainly a necessity. The students take turns washing the dishes, drying the dishes, putting the dishes away, and cleaning off the table.

The best part of the process, however, is enjoying the finished product! Students love trying new recipes and are proud of their delicious creations.

The Huntingdon Area Middle School Life Skills class would like to share one of their favorite recipes.

French Toast Casserole

¼ cup of butter
¾ cup of brown sugar
4 eggs
1 ½ cups of milk
1 teaspoon of vanilla
1 tablespoon of powdered sugar
1 loaf of French toast bread
butter for spreading
extra brown sugar, white sugar and cinnamon to sprinkle

Melt butter and add brown sugar. Stir until mixed. Spread the butter and brown sugar mixture into the bottom of a 9x13 inch pan. Beat the eggs, milk, vanilla and powdered sugar together. Lay down a layer of French toast bread. Ladle on half of the egg mixture. Sprinkle with brown sugar and cinnamon. Spread a thin layer of butter on one side of the French toast bread for the next layer. Lay down the second layer of bread, butter side up. Ladle the rest of the egg mixture over the top. Sprinkle with white sugar and cinnamon. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In the morning, remove from the refrigerator, uncover, and preheat oven to 350*. Once preheated, bake for 45 minutes and enjoy!

7 Bears

Having a Super Year in Science

By: Mrs. Thomas

Seventh grade students at the Middle School have a very exciting year in science because they are exposed to a wide array of topics in life and physical science. These topics include cells, heredity, viruses, animals, bacteria, protists, fungus, plants, motion and energy.

So far, 7-Bears have enjoyed studying the six kingdoms of life through an assortment of projects and hands-on experiences. Students on the 7-Bears team began the year by creating viruses, growing fungus and collecting bacterial cells from around the school, which they watched grow and reproduce on nutrient agar. After studying viruses and bacteria, students learned how easy infectious diseases could spread by performing an experiment that used phenol red and sodium hydroxide to spread a “disease” around the classroom. Before beginning to study the animal kingdom, students also had an opportunity to view protists under the microscope.

Heredity is the last subject matter covered in life science and seems to be the students’ favorite topic. While studying genetics, students learn about dominant and recessive traits, genetic disorders, human inheritance and probability. Students get an opportunity to view traits, such as fur color, and create punnett squares to determine the probability of these traits being passed to future generations. They also are able to build DNA models using K’Nex. To conclude genetics, students build “Reebops,” a genetic creation, from marshmallows and other assorted snacks. During this project, students are given the genes of two parent “Reebops” and are asked to use punnett squares to determine the traits of the next generation of “Reebops.” Students then determine what their “baby Reebop” would look like and create it using a variety of snacks.

In conclusion, the 7th Grade Bears have had a very exciting year studying life science and have many stimulating, hands-on labs to look forward to in physical science during the last few weeks of this school year.



Poetry in the Spotlight

By: Mrs. Streightiff

The 6 Cats students will begin a two week poetry study in April. The Poetry unit will be conducted in both Reading and Language Arts classes. Mrs. Mykut and Mrs. Streightiff will coordinate their lessons to extend these activities across the curriculum. The students will work in small groups to perform a choral reading of a poem. This will give many of our sixth graders an opportunity to show their creativity and flair for the dramatic by creating backdrops, costumes, and using props to act out each poem.

The students will write clerihew poems, limericks, found poems, concrete (shape) poems, free verse, odes, and several other forms of poetry. They will also have the opportunity to read and explore the works of famous poets such as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, and many more.

The culminating activity for the unit will give the students a chance to showcase their poems in a Poetry Café. Our classrooms will be transformed into a casual coffeehouse setting with tablecloths, a stage, a microphone, and a spotlight. The students will share a variety of poems they've created over the two week unit. The café gives our sixth graders an opportunity to share their work with peers and appreciate the talents of others. This poetry study will give each student an opportunity to 'shine in the spotlight.'

SNOW MAKE-UP DATES

April 17 –1/2 day

April 21 & 22

June 9, 10, 11 & 12.

Nurse's Corner

By: Mrs. Felton

Nutrition and Health of Young People:

*Eating healthy helps reduce one's risk of developing obesity, osteoporosis, iron deficiency, and dental caries

*Healthy eating also helps reduce the risks of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

*Individuals who eat fast food one or more times per week are at increased risk for weight gain, overweight, and obesity

*Drinking sugar-sweetened beverages can result in weight gain, overweight, and obesity

Smart snacks:

*Peanuts

*light popcorn

*low fat tortilla chips

*granola bar

*fruit cup

*cheese stick

BOX TOP FOR EDUCATION

Box Tops class room competition will be held April 7 until April 25. You are welcome to start collecting now. Currently, Mrs. Rieffannacht has agreed to certain humorous antics if we reach certain goals.



UNSEALED BEVERAGE CONTAINER GUIDELINES

Students are not permitted to bring opened and/or glass beverage containers to school with out permission. Appropriate drinks (energy drinks are not appropriate) are to be consumed in the cafeteria or during a classroom activity. OPEN beverage containers are NOT to be kept in lockers. If you wish to send a beverage to school with your child, you MUST stop in the school office and complete the required form.

LOST AND FOUND

If your child has lost/misplaced something, please ask them to check the ever-growing pile in the Cafeteria. Items found are placed in a box in the back of the cafeteria. If items are not picked up by the end of the school year, they are donated to the Salvation Army.

EXCUSES

When a student returns to school after an absence, the student must present a properly signed excuse during the homeroom period. If you have obtained a written excuse from your doctor, please send this excuse to school. Student have three (3) days after they return to school to hand in their excuse. Days not covered by a legal excuse will be marked illegal on the students record. Excuses do not have to be accepted after the three day window.

Pi Day!

By: Mrs. Perez

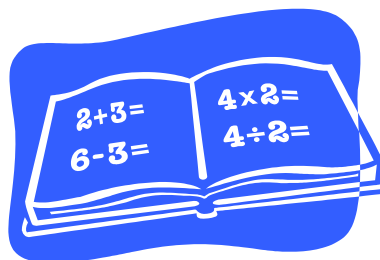
The month of March is also home to one of the greatest academic holidays of the year: Pi Day! On this glorious day the 7/8 Cats learned a bit about the number 3.14 by writing “Pikus,” eating pie, and being able to actually pie a few lucky teachers in the face.

The lesson for Pi Day incorporated the following lessons:

Part One was devoted to learning the history and mathematical uses of pi. Students learned how this value is obtained and how the value of pi is helpful to find the circumference and area of circles and to find the volume of 3-dimensional figures such as cylinders, cones and spheres.

In part two of the lesson, students learned the how to create a traditional Japanese poem called a haiku, that follows a syllable pattern of 5-7-5. Students then created haikus celebrating Pi Day.

After the lessons, students brought in their favorite pie treats to share with the class. From the traditional apple to chocolate margarine, students’ taste buds were overjoyed. However, the fun wasn’t over yet! After eating, students competed in various competitions including best Pi Day t-shirt, best Piku, and the most digits memorized of mathematical Pi. Those lucky students were then able to throw a pie in the face of a lucky teacher! Overall, it was a day to remember for the 2014 school year!



HAMS

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Huntingdon, PA 16652
(814)-643-2900
Fax: (814)-643-6513
Website: www.huntsd.org

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.



BREAKFAST@SCHOOL Continued

By: Mrs. McNitt

On Friday, March 7, 2014, the Middle School celebrated National School Breakfast Week

Two ways - the start of the portable Bearcat Breakfast Cart and 'Free Breakfast Friday'. From the Bearcat Breakfast Cart, students can now get a Grab N' Go breakfast bag. The bag features milk, juice or fresh fruit and one of the following items in their bag – whole grain banana bread mini loaf, whole grain chocolate chip mini loaf, whole grain chocolate donut, whole grain muffin, or a variety of Pop Tart flavors. Response has been positive and students seem to like the grab and go concept.

While the breakfast cart was a new start, the breakfast offerings in the cafeteria also increased to include a hot breakfast item each morning. A different whole grain choice is offered each morning including, but not limited to: apple frudel (similar to a warm apple tart), a mini cinni (similar to a warm cinnamon roll), mini pancakes, mini waffles, and mini French toast.

Students can choose from one of the new choices plus milk and fruit or juice. Or students can choose from a selection of whole grain cereals and whole grain choices plus milk and fruit or juice.

Overall, the response has been very positive and students like the convenience and new variety of choices. Stay tuned for more variety and different selection combinations.



For 6th Grade BEARS, Reading is becoming a habit!

By: Mr. Mitchell

During reading class, the students are involved in Reader's Workshop, Guided Reading, Shared Readings, and Interactive Read Alouds. In the beginning of the year, the reading classes developed a Reading Bill of Rights. These rights, which were negotiated with the teacher, enabled to students to use classroom cushions to make reading more comfortable and relaxing. The readers also were able to hold book discussions, respond in a variety of ways, read outside when appropriate, and have a break from homework one day a week. The ability to choose whatever book they wanted to read was probably the most popular of the students.

The reading instruction in 6th grade this year is not the only thing that is changing. The students are also making changes in their reading habits. During moments of down time, 6th grade BEARS can be seen with their noses buried in their books. Asking kids to put their reading books away so that you can continue instruction is a nice problem to have.

With the students engaged in the reading process, the struggle to achieve the PA Standard of reading 25 books is diminishing. A pizza party was held at the half way point for readers who had completed 13 or more books. There will be another reward at the end of the 3rd marking period for those students who have completed at least 19 books.

The following are some comments from the reading student when asked what they liked about reading this year:

"We get to choose our own books."

"I usually get a lot of time to read."

"We get to help choose our read alouds (Touching Spirit Bear, Harris and Me, and Swindle)."

"We get to read 20 minutes a night for homework."

"Sitting around the room and reading."

"Reading outside on warm days."

"I like taking AR tests in class."

6th Grade BEARS reading students are making great choices in becoming *lifelong readers!*

8 Bears By: Mr. Quinter

The 8 Bears have been working with local resources to help enrich our classroom experiences for years. This year we have integrated a Published Author Day. Hopefully, you have already read about our Author Day in the Daily News. Payton Casner and Natalee Shingler did a great job working with Mrs. Decker and Mr. Uhrich to develop their first publication, and we commend them on a job well done. An activity the 8 Bears will be a part of this year has been one that students in the past have thoroughly enjoyed.

For the last 3 years, we have taken part in the Trout in the Classroom program sponsored by the PA Fish & Boat Commission and the John F. Kennedy Chapter of Trout Unlimited. This program promotes coldwater conservation with Brook Trout being the focal species. Students have been involved with egg separation of the eyed eggs, tank design and maintenance as well as continued water quality testing. The fish have hatched into sac fry, developed into swim-up fry and now fry during the past 16 weeks. Students have had the opportunity to watch eggs develop through these stages while in class.

The program's culminating activity is a release of the fingerling trout in late May. The 8 Bears will have the opportunity to take a field trip to the C. Barton McCann School of Art, a few miles North of McAlevey's Fort and release the fingerlings into Laurel Run. We will take advantage of the wonderful setting with many hands on activities for the students. If any parents have an interest in helping with the Trout in the Classroom program in any way, please contact the Middle School and set up a time to meet with us. We welcome any opportunity to give our students as many experiences outside of the rigors of the classroom as possible. If you have any suggestions or have some expertise you would like to share with our students, please contact any of the 8 Bears teachers. The more involved we can get the community, the more successful our students and programs will be.



HAMS Jazz Band

By: Mrs. Canner

The HAMS Jazz Band has been busy rehearsing after school on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00pm. These dedicated groups of 20 students flood the hallways with a variety of jazz selections including *It's Only a Paper Moon*, *Europa*, *Birdland*, and *Moondance*. These musicians have the opportunity to create music in a style other than that typically heard in a band setting. In doing so, many of the jazz band members try improvising, where they might solo and show their creative musical skills. The HAMS Jazz Band will be performing at a number of places in the community this spring. Keep up the good work and the sweet sounds



EVENTS CALENDAR

- April 7- End of Third Marking Period
- April 11- Report Cards go home
- April 14- Jr. High County Band
- April 17- Act 80 Day- 1/2 day for students
- April 17- Financial Aide Night -6:30 PM
- April 18- Vacation Day -Good Friday
- April 21 & 22- Snow Make Up Days
- April 22- 5th Grade Parent Orientation 6:30
- April 25- 6th Grade Band Fest
- April 28 & 29 - Science PSSA -8th Grade

Financial Aid Night

Did you know that you can apply for grants and scholarships regarding post secondary studies beginning in the seventh grade of your child's educational journey?

Do you want to help your son or daughter avoid accumulating a mountain of debt to obtain a degree from a college or trade school? Come and learn more during the first Financial Aid Night at Huntingdon Area Middle School on April 17, 2014 at 6:30 PM in the Large Group Room. Mr. Dan Wray from Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency will provide valuable information for all. Our eighth grade students were so inspired by this individual that they requested that Mr. Wray return for an evening discussion with adults. Please read about Mr. Wray's biographical information below and come. Light refreshments will be provided.

Dan Wray is a regional representative for the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), a state agency whose primary goal is "Making Higher Education Affordable".

Dan spent his youth laboring on construction sites, mounting tires, pumping gas, mowing lawns, and doing a whole lot of other things that convinced him to go on to higher education. He received a Bachelor of Science degree and commission as an Ensign from the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT, way back "when ships were wood and men were iron". OK, maybe not quite that long ago.

During eleven years with the Coast Guard, Dan did a whole lot of the things you see in the movie "The Guardian" with Ashton Kutcher and Kevin Costner, as well as a ton of things Ashton Kutcher and Kevin Costner were afraid to do. He spent many months north of the Arctic Circle on the polar icebreaker Northwind; played wing on the Coast Guard Academy's rugby team; sailed on the square-rigger Eagle; and in the process traveled to 48 states, 2 US territories, and 35 foreign countries.

Since his Coast Guard days, Dan has worked for Penn State and several financial assistance organizations, helping students (including his own five children) maximize their gifts, achieve a higher education, and find their dream career

