

# Pontiac Jr. High School Newsletter

January 2010

## Message from the Principal

Happy New Year in 2010!!! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday break.

Our Band and Chorus presented a wonderful winter concert at PTHS on December 16! The students did a great job performing and the audience was fantastic! Thank you to all the family and friends who attended the concert. Great job Mrs. Ramseyer and Mrs. Hornstein preparing the students for the concert.

**The ISAT tests are coming! On March 1-12** all of our students will be taking the ISAT tests in Reading and Math. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will also take the ISAT test in Science. The 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the Writing ISAT test.

**The main test schedule will be March 1-5** with any needed make up test on the remaining days. We must test every student. Please be sure to keep these dates in mind as you schedule any appointments for your students. They always perform better on tests when they take them with the whole class.

Second quarter report cards were sent home with students on Wednesday, January 6. Please watch the school calendar for the dates students receive progress reports and report

cards. I also send a Teacher Ease email announcement reminder. Every student is given a progress report at the middle of the quarter and a report card at the end of the quarter. Please contact the school if your student did not bring home a report card.

Our school district continues to implement a federal mandate called **Response to Intervention (RtI)**. This process focuses on core instruction and on providing additional support to students as needed in small groups.

At PJHS we are using a universal screening called MAZE which is a very brief measure of the student's reading achievement. In the elementary grades teachers use Dibbles Screening. We administer this screening three times a year. Our next screening will be on January 20 in Literature class. When we review these results we identify any students who would benefit from our reading intervention. Small groups of students at each grade level are working on "6 Minute Solutions" during the extra class time during the 5/6/7 hour. This is not a special education activ-



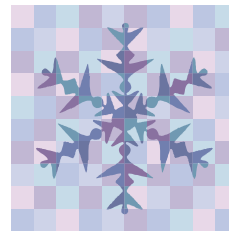
ity or class. It is a regular education researched based activity to help our students.

In all Literature classes one day a week the whole class works on "6 Minute Solutions" as a whole group, core curriculum activity.

I want to thank you for helping us keep our students healthy and in school. We have had great cooperation from families to all the recommendations from our nurse and the Health Department. We know that has helped a great deal.

We know that when parents show children that they value education, students achieve so much more. Thank you for all you do to support your student in school.

*Mrs. Judy Donze*



## Upcoming Dates

- **Jan.14th**-Early Dismissal 11:15a.m.
- **Jan.14th**-Boys Basketball vs Washington Central 6:00pm
- **Jan.18th**-No School-Martin Luther King, Jr Day
- **Jan.19th**-Boys Basketball vs Chiddix 6:00pm
- **Jan.18th**-Girls Volleyball vs Lexington 5:00pm
- **Jan.26th**-Girls Volleyball vs Prairie Central 5:00pm
- **Feb.3rd**-Sports Booster Mtg. 6:00pm in the Commons
- **Feb.4th**- Girls Volleyball vs Kingsley 6:00pm

## 6th Grade Science

The sixth grade scientists are studying mollusks, annelid worms, arthropods, and echinoderms. Invertebrates have a bad reputation of being creepy pests that harm people. But the students were surprised to learn that most invertebrates are harmless and many are helpful to people. Some invertebrates are beautiful creatures such as butterflies, starfish and mollusks that



have elegant shells. Unfortunately, since we don't live near an ocean, some invertebrates are unfamiliar creatures to our students, but hopefully by the end of the unit, they will have a better understanding and appreciation for invertebrates and their characteristics.

Mrs. VanHoveln

## Science Humor

**Question:** What do you call a mollusk who is up to bat at a baseball game?

**Answer:**  
A slugger

Pontiac Jr. High  
School

600 Morrow St  
Pontiac, Illinois  
61764

Phone: 815-842-  
4343

Fax: 815-844-6230

On the web

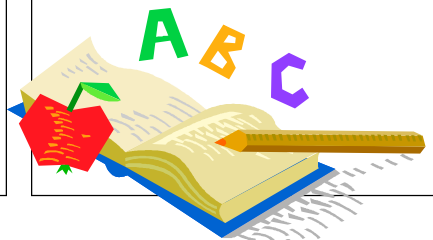
[www.pontiac429.org](http://www.pontiac429.org)

## From the desk of Miss. Rapp:

I hope everyone had a wonderful break. The students did a great job on their winter choral readings. We went around to various classrooms here at the Junior High and Washington Elementary and performed each one of our readings to those classes. In spelling we are continuing on with Unit 15. In English we are starting on Unit 4 with Modifiers and then we will be starting a writing unit towards the end of January. It's important that the students work hard at taking notes in class and studying for tests. We

have weekly spelling tests and our English tests are about every 2-3 weeks. I hope everyone has a safe winter and a great 2010!

Miss Rapp  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts



## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies News

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, we completed a project called winter festivals around the world. Each student created a power point, craft and found a recipe related to a country. The students learned a lot about the different traditions of the country they chose to study in depth. The next unit we will be covering is Mexico. In this unit we learned that Mexico is called "The land of the shaking earth" by the Aztec. Ask your student why it is called this. In addition, we covered information on the land, economy and people of Mexico.



## Synergy Class

Tower Crushing took place in Synergy on December 18th. The top 3 finishers were: Brittney P., 348 psi, CC W., 392 psi, and CJ C., 356 psi. Great job by all students!

## Geography Bee

We held our Geography Bee this past week. Thank you to all those who participated and congratulations to our top winners.

1st Place-Alex Brown  
2nd Place-Brett Dunlap  
3rd Place-Jessica Ping



## Dean's Notes

It's hard to imagine that half the school year is already over. With the second semester already beginning it will go by quickly, and spring will be here before we know it, although that hardly seems possible right now.

PBIS continues to be a big buzz around the school, and in addition to giving out weekly prizes we were able to give away 35 prizes at our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter celebration! Not only does it help the kids in being excited about positive behavior, but it also works. To date our office referrals are down 38% compared to what they were a year ago. This means students are receiving more **academic engagement time**, which is the number one variable in student learning and success.

Please remember that anytime students have a problem with other students or anything else they can always feel free to come in and see me. My door is always open. Remember that bullying is unfair and one-sided. It is when someone keeps hurting, threatening, frightening, or leaving someone out on purpose. Please do not be a bystander. Report this behavior to an adult and/or fill out a bullying referral report in the office.

Also, students are required by law to be in regular attendance at school. Parents please call the office by 9:00 a.m. at (815) 842-4343. After a student has been absent for 15% of the total school year due to illness, they may be required to provide a physician's notice. Students who are unexcused to school will be turned into the Livingston County Truancy Review Board.

Mr. DeLong  
Dean of Students

## Lock In Committee ...

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual PTO LOCK IN will be held on Saturday, April 10 from 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM at PJHS.

Later in March, students will receive an informational letter for the LOCK IN with the permission form and volunteer form.

Volunteers will be needed to supervise students and activities during shifts. All volunteers need a completed background check so if you have not done that yet and you would like to volunteer, please contact the office. It takes many volunteers to make this



this

## School Store

School Store is now open! Every Tuesday, the school store stops at your student's classroom. Items for sale include:

- \*\*Pencils \$0.25
- \*\*Lead \$1.00
- \*\*Mechanical Pencils \$1.00
- \*\*Folders \$0.50
- \*\*Notebooks \$1.25
- \*\*Erasable Pens \$1.00
- \*\*Pens \$0.25

## Sixth Grade Social Studies News!

### Mesopotamia Continued....

Around 4000 B.C. farmers living between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers built canals to try to control flooding. They also built cities and developed a system of writing. Eventually, a strong ruler, Sargon, united the region into a kingdom called Sumer.

- On what continent is Mesopotamia located?
- Who was Hammurabi?
- Where is Canaan located?
- What direction does the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flow? Into what body of water do they flow?
- Why is Mesopotamia called by that name?
- How were the Tigris and Euphrates like and unlike the Nile?

These and many other questions will be answered as we continue our study of Ancient Mesopotamia! Enjoy!



## 6th Grade Language Arts

Our language arts classes are changing just a bit 3rd quarter. We will continue to still work on grammar and writing for the rest of the year; but, instead of working out of our spelling texts, we will be using our vocabulary books. Like our spelling books, we will be introduced to 20 new vocabulary words each week. Students will be responsible for learning their definitions, synonyms, and antonyms along with some book exercises. On Friday, or the last day of the week, we will have a VOCAB test. Some students really enjoy this change from spelling to vocabulary. Others find it to be a little more challenging. Please help your student review the 20 words for our weekly tests. We will begin VOCAB the week of January 11th. Students will need to have a 2-pocket folder to keep their work in, along with their paperback text books.

I also want to thank my classes for their donations of treats, toys, and supplies to our "Animal Tree" during December. The donations were delivered to the Livingston County Humane Society and were very much appreciated.

Looking forward to a good second semester.

## News from the School Counselor:



The holidays are over.....and, there is a sigh of relief from many. I am hopeful that many of you were able to spend good quality time with your children and families. If not, try to make a conscious choice to plug into your child's world. Talk to him/her about his day, his friends, his activities, etc. If you talk to your children on a consistent basis about things that *don't* matter, it will be much easier for him/her to talk to you about the things that *do* matter. Keep that line of communication open. When your child does confide in you about something that does matter to him, remember to remain calm and take that time to listen to him- I mean really listen by making eye contact and reflecting back what you heard/understood. Allow yourself to be someone that he can confide in.....if he is in doubt about confiding in you, he will confide in others that may or may not give similar guidance. Communication is huge with any relationship; however, it is of vital importance to an adolescent in an ever changing world. So remember.....ask questions and get involved - **communicate** - and plug into your child's world.

Marci Hunt  
School Counselor ,QMHP, MA, LCPC,

## Computer/Technology Education News



Congratulations to 3 more students who completed the typing program AND met their personal typing goals! **WAY TO GO TO: Bre Bagley, Katie Dixon and Kiah Graveson.** Everyone did a great job this quarter, especially with your persuasive PowerPoint presentations! Can't wait for all the "fun" stuff we will do next year!

~Mrs. Chiodo



### Character Counts

#### Pillars to live by:

- CARING**
- RESPECT**
- FAIRNESS**
- CITIZENSHIP**
- RESPONSIBILITY**
- TRUSTWORTHINESS**





## ATTENTION 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PARENTS AND STUDENTS:

Now is the time to sign up for the PTHS Computer/Keyboarding Fundamentals Proficiency Exam. The purpose of this *optional* test is for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who already are proficient at typing, using Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint to test out of the high school class so they can open up their schedules for other elective classes.

Any student wanting to take the exam can pick up an application in Mrs. Chiodo's room, the junior high office, or download an application from Mrs. Chiodo's home page (Explore teacher) on the district web site <http://www.pontiac429.org>. Students **MUST** be recommended by a junior high teacher and have the checklist for eligibility filled out to take the test. Applications must be turned into the high school by Wednesday, January 27, 2010. You will only need to choose **one** of the testing dates: Saturday, January 30, 2010 from 9-11am OR Wednesday, February 3, 2010 from 3:45-5:45 pm.



Feel free to email me with questions at [chiodochr@p429.k12.il.us](mailto:chiodochr@p429.k12.il.us)

## Health News

### Medication Administration

Many of our local doctors are now asking for 24 hour notice in signing our med Administration papers. So, if your child is seen in the doctor's office and you feel the med will need to be given at school, please have the paper signed at that time or be willing to come in and administer the medication at school if needed. Unfortunately, we are not able to give medication without a parent and doctor signature.

## Scholastic Bowl 2010

I would like to welcome all students that plan to participate in scholastic bowl this year.

We will be starting practice on Wednesday, January 6<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 4:30.

I have sent home a schedule of all practices for January.

We will practice every Monday and Thursday unless otherwise noted on the practice schedule.

We will be having a parent meeting at 4:45 on Thurs. Jan 21st to discuss expectations and rules for the next year. Please plan to attend.

I will be handing out the schedules for the meets during the parent meeting.

I would appreciate any and all help.

Please be sure to volunteer!!!

Thank You

Mrs. Cheryl Krueger

**2010 KINDERGARTEN/PRE-SCHOOL SCREENING  
FOR AGES 0-6**

**Dates: February 23-26, 2010  
(Tuesday through Friday)**

**Location: Presbyterian Church, Pontiac**

**Please call 815-844-5448 for an appointment  
(Beginning Monday, February 8)**

**Birth - 2 ½ year old children:**

OSF staff will conduct screenings Wednesday, Feb. 24 - Friday, Feb. 26.  
Special Needs Office will take appointments.

**2 ½ - 4 year old children**

**(not age-ready for Kindergarten):**

District #429 staff will conduct developmental screenings and will screen  
vision and hearing for children older than 3 years.

Special Needs Office will take appointments.

*If your child successfully completed play-based screening last year, there  
is no need to have your child screened again unless there is a new concern.*

**4-5 year old children (age-ready for Kindergarten):**

We would like to screen your child even if they have been seen by our Dis-  
trict's screening team in the past. Your child must turn 5 by September  
1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 to enroll in Kindergarten for Fall 2010. Please bring a copy of  
your child's birth certificate to screening. Students currently enrolled in  
our Pre-Kindergarten program and ECSE program do not need to have a  
screening appointment.

They are screened in their classrooms.