

MMS NEWS FLASH

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Dear McHenry Middle School Families,

I don't know about you, but the year seems to be moving along very quickly. It's hard to believe that we're entering the final week of 2011. As my old track coach told me when I was in seventh grade, "The most important part of a race is to simply finish it strong." With that being said, I want to wish all the students good luck as they finish out this calendar year. Finish strong and let your parents and teachers know if there's any way they can help you finish this race to the best of your ability. Parents, please help us keep your students on top of their grades during this time so that they can start up the new year on a positive note.

I'd like to finish this newsletter off by sharing with you something I found in the October 22, 2009 issue of *The Chicago Tribune*. Even though it's a couple years old, I still think its message rings true.

In today's economic climate, many families are tightening their belts. The luxuries are the first to go: the dinners out, the extra car, the additional cable stations. However the one thing that isn't seen as expendable is education. After all, there is only one sure-fire solution to riding the wave of uncertainty for the future: a better education for our children.

The best way to protect children from uncertain futures is by providing a quality education to help them secure their footing to be successful in any economic climate. Education is the best way to make certain that today's children have a stable future to look forward to.

"As early as the elementary level, children are developing core skills such as reading, math, and comprehension that are the foundation of the academic skills" says Roseann Palermo from the Oxford Learning Center in Palatine.

Studies have shown that the earlier that children secure basic academic skills, the better their chance of having a smooth transition into higher education. When the outcome is the best possible educational future for our children, an educational investment is always worth the venture.

In a holiday season where all of us will inevitably be scrambling from store to store to find that perfect gift for our sons and daughters --myself included--I think this is a nice article that provides us a helpful perspective on what really matters. As I search for those elusive "perfect gifts" for my son and daughter, it's comforting to know that really just the act of instilling a love for reading, writing, creating and thinking would probably be the best gift of all. It seems pretty simple, but just reading with our children, talking with them about current events or art or politics, helping them out with their homework, and showing them how much we value their education is probably the least inexpensive but, ultimately, most valuable treasure we can give them.

Thanks for taking the time to read this newsletter. Enjoy the time off with your friends and family. I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Mr. Reitz
Principal

Important Dates

Dec. 21 st – Jan. 3 rd	Winter Recess – NO SCHOOL
Jan. 4 th	Classes Resume
Jan. 6 th	End of 2 nd Quarter
Jan. 13 th	Report Cards Go Home
Jan. 16 th	Martin Luther King Jr. Day NO SCHOOL
Feb. 3 rd	Mid- Quarter Reports
Feb. 9 th	Early Release Day – Dismissal @ 12:35
Feb. 20 th	President's Day – NO SCHOOL
Feb. 21 st	Parent Teacher Conferences 8:30-3:30 PM NO SCHOOL

**Character Counts
Word for January is
CARING**

A Note from the Health Office-

On January 4, 2012 all 8th grade students, new and transfer students, and students with special needs will be undergoing state mandated vision and hearing screening. Representatives from McHenry County Department of Health will be onsite performing the screenings and parents will be notified by mail if follow-up with a board certified specialist will be required.

Please be aware that during the winter months an increase in influenza and gastrointestinal illnesses is common within the school setting. In an effort to decrease the spread of infection among students please remember to keep your child home for 24 hours after any fever or vomiting episodes, children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. In addition, proper hand washing hygiene, appropriate amounts of rest, a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and 30-60 minutes of physical activity daily are essential in helping your body fight off infection and stay healthy.

The McHenry County Department of Health requires all schools to report symptoms and/or illnesses in an effort to track symptomology. In addition, the school district is better able to contain contagious symptoms through the use of specific environmental cleansers and techniques if an increase in infection is documented. Please do not be offended if school representatives request additional information related to your student's illness as it is in the best interest of your child. Any questions related to illness may be directed to the health office.

A new law requiring one dose of Tdap for all student in grades 6-12 was approved and will go into effect Fall 2012. The law states that any child entering sixth grade shall show proof of receiving one dose of Tdap vaccine (after their 11th birthday) regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose. In addition, all students entering grades 7 through 12 who have not already received Tdap are required to receive one dose of Tdap regardless of the interval since the last DTaP, DT or Td dose. For questions regarding the new law please call the IDPH immunization program at 800-526-4372.

CHORUS NEWS

Solo Ensemble is well underway. We have 24 students singing solos and another 73 students participating in ensembles! This is such a great opportunity for our students to learn quality vocal music. I applaud those of you who chose to take on this endeavor.

Thank you to the parents and students who participated in the December 6th band and chorus concert. We had a great night with wonderful musical performances by the students. I look forward to watching them grow as musicians throughout the year!

7th and 8th grade students received a permission slip to sing at the Chicago Field Museum on Wednesday, February 22nd, 2012. This will be a rewarding and exciting trip for our students. The first 8 parents who sign up to chaperone get in free! Let me know if you are interested. Additional permission slips can be found on the chorus website.

Madrigals have been busy this season. Thank you to all of you who performed in the Christmas Walk! It was great to have MMS represented in the community. Madrigals will also be performed at Duker School, Landmark School and the McHenry Public Library on Monday December 12th. Keep up the great singing Madrigals!

I wish you all a very happy holiday season. See you in 2012! Enjoy the holiday season! Mrs. Munn

BAND NEWS

6th, grade band and 7th, and 8th grade band, it has been a great year already and I cannot tell you how proud I am of all your hard work. Don't forget to take home your instruments home. Winter break practice logs are extra credit and due when we turn to school in January. Have a great break and I look forward to more great music making in 2012!

Musically Yours,
Mrs. Paul

MURAL CLUB: Will meet every Thursday in the months of January and February.

WMMS News: The news crew has been hard at work advertising for school events and creating news segments to showcase the many student and staff talents. See Mrs. Ladendorf in the Tech Room (B109) or email her at kladendorf@d15.org for more information. Students must arrange for a ride prior to the meetings.

Yearbook: The Yearbook club has moved their meeting days from Mondays to Tuesdays from 2:30pm – 4:00pm in the Tech Room (B109). We will meet every-other Tuesday until the yearbook is due in March. Students must arrange for a ride prior to the meetings. Please email Mrs. Ladendorf with any questions (kladendorf@d15.org).

6 RED

The 6 Red team wishes everyone a safe and happy winter break. We look forward to seeing everyone back in 2012!

In 6 Red Math Core C & D are finishing up Chapter 2 - The Language of Algebra. They did a great job applying the order of operations to varied math equations and showing the relationship between constants and variables. Next they will be learning how to compare and order decimals and fractions and the relationship between the two. Core A & B are finishing up the pre-algebra in chapter 2. They learned to apply the order of operations as well as compare and order large numbers. They are learning the difference between variables and constants and how to find out what the variable is. Have your student write down an example of the Associative, Commutative, Distribute and Inverse Property labeled as such, and turn it in with a parent signature for some extra credit. In language arts, the students are wrapping up their novel study of *Hatchet*. Upon returning from winter break, they will begin writing a narrative essay. Winter break is an awesome time to read an awesome book! Congratulations to Kevin Santopadre, he qualified to move on to the next level of the National Geographic Geography Bee here at MMS! Our social studies classes will continue to learn about the wonders of our earth through a variety of geography lessons this year. Science classes have just finished exploring fresh water; see if your learner can explain how we clean polluted water for drinking. We will continue our investigation of water by exploring the mysteries of the ocean.

6 SILVER

(Must be read to the tune of Deck the Halls....Happy Holidays!)

Deck the halls...it's the end of the quarter...falalalala...we're almost done! Half the year has come and gone falalalalalalalal! On we go to a brand new year...falalalalalalalal! Learned the ancient Egyptian culture... falalalalalalalal!

See the Egyptian projects finished falalalalalalalal! They're on display in the LC now... falalalalalalalal! Follow us in reading stories falalalalalalalal! While we pick out personification falalalalalalalal!

View the beauty of the pharaohs falalalalalalalal! Rocks are formed in many ways falalalalalalalal! Hear our songs about our rocks falalalalalalalal! Hope you have a joyous new year falalalalalalalal...!!!

6 WHITE

In science, students had a good time mummifying limes for a cross-curricular activity that went along with the study of Egypt in social studies. It will be exciting to see how they turned out in a couple of months. The students have a lot of neat experiments coming up in the Mineral Unit that they will enjoy. During the month of January the social studies classes will be covering Ancient Greece. Some of the highlights of this unit are the study of The Birth of Democracy, Greek theater, architecture, philosophers, and Athens vs. Sparta. In Mrs. Comstock's math class students are finishing up their extended unit on fractions. After winter break, they will move into algebra. Mrs. Kagan's math classes have been working on geometry and the students have started to learn many of the different functions on their calculators. Mrs. Evanger's Read180 class is completing a review of active reading strategies and will be starting their next workshop after winter break. Keep reading for your reading log! In Ms. Marks' language arts the students are finishing Unit Three, working with Non-Fiction. When we return, the classes will be switching gears and working with Greek Myths and Fables. Keep reading over break, do not forget you need to have two book reports finished by the time you return, with one being a Science Fiction Novel. E

7 RED

Congratulations to our November Students of the Month: Autumn Holmstrom, John Anderlik, and Charlie Mendez. Ms. Martin's math classes, Cores A, B, & D have been busily working on their geometry unit. Students have been applying geometric formulas to different polygons. They will conclude this unit before the winter break. Ms. Martin's Core C math class just finished their unit on percents. They are able to calculate percent increase and decrease. They also are able to apply what they learned to compute different word problems. Before the winter break students will be making origami boxes. Please send in a winter card for them to use. This does not need to be a new card. They will be using it to fold the card into a box by measuring different angles and lengths. Mrs. Sheppard's science classes are finishing their studies of cells. We are learning about classification and will be getting a new book after 2nd quarter. We will begin studying all about those things we call microorganisms. Keep up the good work and don't forget those corrections. Students are finishing up the school year in language arts by presenting to their classmates on the proper use of punctuation and grammar. Mrs. Devine's social studies classes are finishing up our Constitution unit. We discussed the problems of the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention and compromises, the document structure, adoption, and the Bill of Rights. After the break we will be studying the first Presidency and Washington D.C. Have a wonderful break!

7 SILVER

In science the students are writing a paper comparing the movie *George of the Jungle* to their science books. This is a fun paper that the students really enjoy writing because they get to be creative. Our field trip to Prairie View Education Center is on Monday, December 19. Be sure to bring a lunch and dress warmly for the outdoor portion of the field trip. In math, Core C just finished a unit that has the students find area of a variety of different shapes. Core D is reviewing number sense with rational and irrational numbers. We finished reading *A Christmas Carol* in language arts class. Students were challenged to perform random acts of kindness during the week. For each act of kindness, students added a link to our classroom chain. Just a reminder that Accelerated Reader is due on Friday, January 6. In social studies we finished our geography unit. Students did a great job on latitude and longitude! Congratulations to the November Character Counts students: Tom Riordan, Hanna Bush, Tommy Damiano, Daniela Zarate and Joey Larson. Way to go! We wish our students and their families a wonderful winter break! We'll see you next year!

7 WHITE

With almost two quarters complete, the students of the 7 white team are looking forward to a well-deserved winter break. In Mrs. Villacres's math class students are continuing to work with fractions and graphs. Meanwhile, Mrs. Stanard's cores A,B, and D continue to explore fractions and will work with fractions up until the break. Students in Core C are working in unit rates and unit prices to form proportions that are tested with various methods that include graphing, equivalent ratios, and cross products. In science class, Mr. Shevchik's students have recently completed a unit on Bacteria and Viruses. The students came up with their own "Newly Discovered Virus," which was a very interesting project. Mrs. Schnurr's language arts classes have begun their study of the novel, *My Brother Sam is Dead*. This historical fiction novel is set during the American Revolution, a time period that students have recently finished studying in Mr. Phillips' social studies classes.

8 RED

8 Red Science students couldn't be hotter. We have recently experienced three types of heat transfer. We enjoyed conductively cooked pancakes of science, held a love tester and watched a bird drink as we basked in the heat of the moment. Science fair packets have been sent home and there are two deadlines to be met before Winter Break. Encourage your students to run their experiments and record data during the break. Mark your calendar for the Feb. 7th Science Fair. In language arts, students are working on identifying and using many different types of sentence structure--including simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentence structure. In social studies, students have finished up their WWI unit. Students learned about the people, causes and results from WWI. They also made their own propaganda poster, which focused on getting Americans to help support the war effort. Lastly, students wrote a paragraph summary on the Christmas truce of 1914. In math, all the classes are wrapping up chapter 5 --just in time for Christmas break. We hope you have a good one!

8 SILVER

8 silver language arts students have been reading various plays. We have been talking about stage directions and the importance of reading with expression. The students will be performing *A Charlie Brown Christmas* for their class soon. If you would like to see the video, ask your child to bring home a copy. 8 silver social studies students are just finishing up the chapter on progressive reforms in the late 1800's and early 1900's. We have spent some time discussing women's suffrage, prohibition, and President Roosevelt. The students are currently beginning the chapter on World War I. In science, 8-silver students recently completed their study of forces, motion, and energy by studying heat and temperature. Students are currently attracted to, or repulsed by, a brief exploration of magnets. Additionally, students have started working on their projects for this year's 8th Grade Science Fair. Information packets have been distributed to students and project plans are due before students leave for winter break. Be sure to ask your student about his/her project. There are many creative ideas! Math students have just finished a unit on proportional reasoning. We have spent time learning about comparison shopping through the use of unit rates. Algebra students have been busy learning about how to use slope to find the equation of a line.

8 WHITE

In Algebra, students are solving linear systems by graphing, substituting, and eliminating. Pre-algebra students are starting a unit on Geometry. Check out Mrs. Peter's web page on the district website to download class notes and check out extra practice links. Science students are working on their projects for the Science Exhibit to be held on Tuesday, February 7th. Be sure to mark your new 2012 calendars. All 8th graders are required to attend the exhibit from 6:30-7:30 p.m. In class we have finished our book on Force and Motion and are starting the book *Introduction to Matter*. We have been working with finding the volume and mass of different objects while doing hands on labs using graduated cylinders, overflow cans, triple-beam balances and spring scales. Language Arts students are reading *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. We have had some interesting discussions about the 60s, social classes and teenagers in general. S.E. Hinton started writing the novel when she was 15 and had it finished and published when she was just 17.

LEARNING CENTER NEWS: Winter break is upon us! With all the excitement of the holidays, children often forget the importance, fun and, often, relaxing aspects of reading. Be sure your children have completed their 2nd quarter reading requirements (2nd quarter ends the Friday we return from break!!) and encourage them to start on their 3rd quarter goals. Research shows the more a student reads, the better they do academically.

A heartfelt THANK YOU goes out to the PTO and all who supported the Fall Book Fair through their purchases. Lisa Gates, Denise Berwick, Sue Hansen, Tami Reif, Barb Sharp, Anna Schweder, Amy and Mary Cate Peterson, and Rhonda Leon deserve an extra special note of gratitude for volunteering their time to help out at the Fair. Success is always measured through the help of family and friends. Students may not show it, but they do enjoy seeing their parents support the school.

UNIFIED ARTS

Physical Education Department of MMS: It is hard to believe that before you know it, we all can get out and ski, snowboard, snowmobile, snowshoe, build an igloo or just go for a walk in the woods with the snow falling around us. We are busy in Physical Education with some Basketball, Team Building, Challenges, Activity days (Pacer, big loop, pyramid activity), Crate climbing, Dance, Wrestling, Volleyball and our final activity in this term is the big Volleyball tourney!!!! The students get to pick teams, come up with a PROPER team name and pick the level of competition they want to participate at. Going on 19 years of doing this tourney and lots of bragging rights on hand. The students have been doing a much better job at being prepared for class. You want to increase your core muscles??? During every commercial break as you are watching TV, get down on the floor and hold a plank position for 30 - 60 secs. Are you missing a Blue Mongoose BMX bike that has rear pegs? You left it here after the MMS Triathlon? We have it. You need to claim the bike before the 10th of Jan. Otherwise we are going to donate it to a charitable organization. Happy Holidays!

As most of you know by now, we do Crate Climbing in our Physical Education Dept. We have a shirt that we have created. Well, some of your children have asked if they can buy one. They are available at McHenry Favorites (by Target). A portion of the sales (donated by Favorites) come back to us for purchase of more crate climbing equipment. The shirts cost \$10 and I am sure would be a great present for any student.

Technology: Term 3 is in full swing! All students are off to a wonderful start in technology class! 8th grade students will be researching companies and marketing ideas after winter break. 7th grade students are focusing on who they are and who they want to be – their family history, heritage and characters and traits they want to exhibit as people. They are currently working on family trees and will begin a history of their heritage after break. 6th grade students are reviewing and enhancing their Microsoft PowerPoint skills as well as their research skills by researching and creating a presentation about the moon to prepare them for their International Exchange with China via Kidlink.

Support MMS Technology! The students of MMS are using more technology every day for their core and exploratory class projects. One of the biggest changes is the number of students taping and editing videos for presentations. However, we do not have enough video cameras to go around and our three Flip cameras are in daily high demand. Through DonorsChoose.org, an organization that allows teachers to post projects and have donors from around the world donate to them, Mrs. Ladendorf has created a project for donors to help us get three new digital video cameras. Please visit or share our grant site www.donorschoose.org/mrs.ladendorf to see what great projects we want to accomplish or donate to our technology department!

McHenry District 15 Announces a NEW Food Service Program!

McHenry School District 15 is excited to announce that is starting February 1, 2012 a NEW Food Service program will be utilized district wide. This new system will offer online flexibility to parents and students. Benefits will include easy online payment options for school lunches as well as parental tracking in Skyward Family Access of the payment history and balance of your student's accounts.

The food service department is extremely excited and looking forward to working with the community to create and utilize this new well balanced approach for the everyday business and functionality of our school cafeterias. More information and details will be forth coming during the upcoming months.

Kids Out of School? Have some winter break fun at YMCA Camp Duncan

Come join **YMCA Camp Duncan** for Kids Day Out while your children are on winter break! Kids ages 4 thru 8th grade will participate in activities such sledding, nature hikes, archery, arts & crafts, games, and more! Kids Day Out program runs from 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. with extended care at no additional cost from 6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Visit www.ymcacampduncan.org, call (847) 546-8086 for more information, or check YMCA Camp Duncan out on Facebook!

The McHenry Warrior Booster Club presents their 2nd Annual Trivia/Game Night Fundraiser on Saturday, January 28, 2012

31 North Banquets

Doors open at 5:4 PM \$25 per person / \$200 per table or \$300 for Corporate tables

Help support McHenry High School athletics by attending the Booster Club's trivia game night!

The \$25 per person (\$200 for a full table of 8) includes food, games, and prizes. Invite your friends, neighbors, family and co-workers over the age of 21---anyone who wants you provide the players... the boosters will provide the fun on Saturday, January 28th at 31 north!

Sign up as a team or an individual using the form below and mail with your check payable to the McHenry Warrior Booster Club to the address shown. For information on corporate tables or to pay by credit card, contact Jean Benedetto at 815-759-1358 or send an email to mchsgamenight@aol.com.

