

# MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



PETOSKEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

801 NORTHMEN DRIVE

PETOSKEY, MI 49770

231-348-2150

November 2011

## NOTES FROM MR. TAYLOR

### *Parent-Teacher Conferences*

The first Parent-Teacher Conferences of the 2011-12 school year will be held at the middle school on Tuesday, November 15th and Thursday, November 17th from 5:00p.m.-7:15p.m. In order to reduce your waiting time during conferences, we ask families with names ending in A-M to come on Tuesday evening and the N-Z families to come on Thursday evening. If your child's teachers have made other arrangements and scheduled appointments, please honor those times and dates first. Our exploratory teachers (Art, Band, Computers, Enrichment, Life Skills, Tech. Ed., Vocal Music, etc.) will be available in their classrooms. Please note there is a major difference between middle school and elementary school parent/teacher conference times. Elementary teachers see between 20-28 parents so individual conference times can be scheduled. At the middle school, teachers see between 90-120 parents. This is why we see parents on a "first come, first serve" basis. This means there will be significantly more waiting than in elementary. We are always open for suggestions if you see a better way to arrange conference visits. However, with our teachers now having grades available on-line 24 hours a day and individual websites devoted to specific classroom information, we hope this helps keep you more informed on student performance.

### Petoskey Middle School: New MEAP Benchmarks

The Michigan State Board of Education recently announced changes in the way MEAP tests (grades 3-9) will raise the bar for all students. ***This year, students need to score much higher on these tests to receive a "proficient" rating.***

For example, if 95% of the 7<sup>th</sup> graders were "proficient" in MEAP math last year, then (***with the same score as last year***) only 62% would be "proficient" this year. As you can imagine, for many schools in Michigan the change to higher benchmarks could have an undesirable impact on student scores, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports, and State Report Card grades. (More information on the new cut scores can be found at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New\\_Cut\\_Scores\\_FAQ\\_365040\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New_Cut_Scores_FAQ_365040_7.pdf).)

At the Public Schools of Petoskey, staff members continue to refine the practices that best support student growth. If your student is reported on MEAP as "not proficient" this year, it does not necessarily mean that he/she is failing to make progress. We are committed to continual improvement, and student test scores are increasing. The middle school team offers students a rich educational experience with many opportunities to excel. Thank you for supporting the high-quality learning environment that makes Petoskey Middle School a "Special Place for Everyone."

PETOSKEY MIDDLE SCHOOL



A SPECIAL PLACE FOR EVERYONE

### *Upcoming Dates:*

- November 15**  
Parent Teacher Conferences  
5:00 p.m.-7:15 p.m.
- November 17**  
Parent Teacher Conferences  
5:00 p.m.-7:15 p.m.
- November 23- 25**  
Thanksgiving Break
- December 2**  
Winter Dance  
3:15 p.m.—5:00 p.m.
- December 7**  
Winter Band Concert  
7:30 p.m.—PHS gym
- December 23**  
First Day of Holiday Break
- January 3**  
Return to School

### *Holiday Help*

If you are in need of assistance this holiday season, please fill out the enclosed form and return it to the middle school office. This form gives us permission to release your name to various organizations who will be inquiring about needy families in our community. If you have students enrolled in several buildings, please return the form to one building only.

### *Lost and Found*

Our lost and found box is already overflowing. If your child is missing clothing, glasses, books, jewelry, etc., stop by the office.

### ***Medicine At School***

If your child will be taking medicine at school, please make sure you have filled out and signed a medication permission form. Forms for prescription medicine must be completed by a physician. **ALL** medicine, including cough drops, must be kept in the office.

### ***Safety Procedures***

Just a reminder: For security reasons, the far right front door is the only one unlocked during school hours. If you are visiting, please check in at the office. Our goal is to keep your child as safe as possible while at school.

### ***PowerSchool Information***

Please be reminded to utilize PowerSchool, our data management system. PowerSchool allows you to view your child's schedule, grades, assignments, and attendance 24 hours a day. You can access PowerSchool by visiting our website - [www.petoskeyschools.org](http://www.petoskeyschools.org). If you want instructions for using PowerSchool or need a user name and password, please contact Mrs. Davis or Mrs. Schaub in our Media Center at 348-2291.

### ***Daily Announcements***

To know what is going on at the middle school, read the announcements which are posted daily on the middle school webpage. To access, log on to [www.petoskeyschools.org](http://www.petoskeyschools.org). Select the Administration drop down box under the Middle School or go to the Information Station website maintained by our Media Center - select Teacher Pages and Resources. The daily announcements are posted at the bottom of the page. This is a great way to keep informed of the activities and events in our building.

### ***Study Lab***

Study lab is available every Monday through Thursday from 3:15pm until 4:15pm in the Middle School library. This is an opportunity for your child to get help with schoolwork, get caught up on missed assignments, or get some work done on their own. Computers are available for schoolwork assignments only. All students who are coming to study lab must have something to do. For more information visit [www.petoskeyschools.org/msearch](http://www.petoskeyschools.org/msearch)

### ***Flu Season***

With flu season approaching, we want to remind you of ways you can help reduce the spread of flu in our school:

- \*Remind your children to wash their hands
- \*Remind your children not to share personal items
- \*Remind your children to cover up their coughs and sneezes

In addition we also want to remind you to:

- \* Know the signs and symptoms of the flu
  - Fever of 100 degrees or greater
  - Cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, body aches,
  - Headache, fatigue
- \* Keep sick children home for at least 24 hours after fever breaks
- Do not send children to school if they are sick

For more information about flu prevention visit the following website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

### **Vacation/Trip Requests**

If your child will be taking an extended leave of absence from school, please make sure that they get a completed vacation/trip request form. Each teacher must indicate if there will be any coursework requiring completion while they are absent. Once each teacher has completed, the form must then be signed by a parent and returned to the office for the principals' or assistant principals' signature and a copy must be left in the office before the trip.

### ***Buy Your Yearbook Online***

Yearbooks are now on sales!! Click on the link on our school website or log on to: [www.shop.jostens.com](http://www.shop.jostens.com) and order yours today!!! Personalization is available on-line only. Call Mrs. Pattullo at 348-2290 for more information.

### ***Before School***

With the weather getting colder students are now allowed to wait in the foyer before school. Please remember, though, doors are not open until 7:40 am..

### ***Media Center News***

A big thank you to everyone who mentioned Petoskey Middle School when making purchases at McLean & Eakin Booksellers. Thanks to their ten percent for schools program, we were able to purchase almost \$200 in new books for the media center.

