



# Northwest Junior High

THE DIRECTION OF SUCCESS

## October 2007

Counselor's corner	2
Physical Education	3
Magazine Sales	4
Art News Family Consumer Science	5
Iowa Youth Survey Volunteers Band notes	6

We have had a very positive start to the 2007-08 school year. Enrollment is steady—the official enrollment at Northwest is likely to be just over 600 students—and we now have students fully engaged in classes, athletics and a myriad of co-curricular activities. As of this writing, we have 296 7<sup>th</sup> graders and 317 8<sup>th</sup> graders. If enrollment trends continue, we believe that the number of students at Northwest will be steady for two years and then slowly increase as the large classes in grades K-4 progress through our school system.

We are continuing to organize students into academic teams this year. As most of you know, all students were placed on one of four teams this year. We have two teams in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, teams Vor and Loki and two teams in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, teams Odin and Thor. Students on each team all have the same core teachers, with the exception of math. Teaching teams meet a minimum of once a week to discuss curriculum, student issues and issues of school climate. Parents who have the need to communicate with their child's core teachers can

easily accomplish this by scheduling a time to meet with the team members during the team planning time. Please call the counseling office if you would like to arrange a time to meet with your child's team. Of course the easiest way to meet your son or daughters teacher is to attend parent/teacher conferences. Once again, we will be holding two nights of parent-teacher conferences this fall. We first tired this format last year in order to ease the congestion that results from arena style conferences. Parents of students with the last name beginning with A-L will have conferences from 3:45 to 7:00 on October 3 while parents of students with the last name beginning M-Z will meet from 3:45 to 7:00 on October 10. If you cannot make your assigned date, please feel free to attend during the other conference session. Because several of our teachers have a split teaching assignment, not all of the teachers will be here for the entire time of the conferences. This mostly affects teachers

of elective classes. Please contact the office if you have a question about certain teacher schedules.

October is also the time for our annual magazine sales. If you have a magazine subscription that you would like to renew, please do so through a NW student. Beginning October 3, students will be selling magazine subscriptions. This is our only fundraiser and it supports all of our music and athletic programs and provides vital classroom equipment to the school.

Another pressing need is for tutors and role models for students who can use some extra help.

All of us here at Northwest are committed to providing an exciting and safe learning experience. If you are experiencing a problem with any aspect of Northwest Junior High, please call the school so we can work together to resolve the problem.

# Counseling Department

## Who We Are – Where We Are – What We Do

Mrs. Sadler and Mr. Cooper have returned as the two counselors at Northwest. Mrs. Sadler works with students whose last names begin with A - L and Mr. Cooper works with students whose last names begin with M - Z. Mrs. Moen is the counseling secretary. Their offices are located on the second floor south hallway adjacent to the library.

There are many ways counselors can be of service to students and their families. Mrs. Sadler and Mr. Cooper are willing to talk about personal, family, and school related issues and they encourage parents to call whenever they have questions or concerns.

### ITBS

All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be taking the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) the week of October 22nd. Support from parents is crucial in establishing a proper attitude toward these tests. Any positive encouragement parents can provide is most appreciated. In addition to helping the district gauge the progress of its curriculum, these test results can be most helpful for students and teachers as they identify individual strengths and weaknesses and plan for individual student needs.

### Student Talent Search Information will be available soon

The counseling office will soon be receiving information on the Duke Talent Search (7<sup>th</sup> grade only) and the Belin-Blank Center Talent Search from the University of Iowa (both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). These talent searches identify academically gifted students and allow them to take the ACT or

SAT tests. Students who have scored 95% or higher on ITBS are generally eligible to participate.

Participation in either of these talent searches is completely voluntary. Look for updates on Center Point once we receive the information in the guidance office.

### Center Point

Center Point is an internet based student management software system used in the district. It is an excellent tool to track your child's academic progress. If you would like more information contact the main office, 688-1060, or contact your child's counselor.

### Progress Reports

Mid-term Progress Reports will be distributed to students on Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at the end of the day.

### Arena style Parent-Teacher Conferences

Arena style parent-teacher conferences will be held in the NWJH Multi-Purpose Room from 3:45 PM – 7:00 PM on Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> for students with last names A – L and Wednesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> for students with last names M – Z. This is an excellent opportunity for parents to meet with their child's teachers and check on their academic progress.

### Getting Organized is the Key for Success at NWJH

Do the words "Disorganized and Forgetful" describe your son/daughter? If so, you have a pretty typical kid. Unfortunately, even normal traits can be a real problem for the junior high student. One solution: Help your child get organized! Here are some simple solutions. 1. Be sure your child uses his/her assignment notebook EVERYDAY. Spend just a few minutes each evening going through it and/or Center Point with your child. 2. Help your child beat the paper chase. At least twice a week go through your child's book bag and trapper keeper with them and help them sort out their various papers. 3. Reduce that morning rush by filling their backpack in the evening being sure to check for all necessary materials. Spending just a few minutes each evening helping your child learn how to get organized can make a big difference.

# Physical Education



Clothing: Students are required to wear special clothing to physical education classes. This type of attire allows for greatest ease of movement, safety (no buckles, belt loops etc., to catch or snag on ) and is designed specifically for PE class. We ask that students not wear their regular school clothing to PE because of the extra wear and tear on the clothing as well as for personal hygiene reasons.

The following clothing is required for PE class:

1. A regular T-shirt, long or short sleeved. Regular T-shirts do not have buttons, zippers, etc., and are not turtle necks.
2. Regular Gym shorts with an elastic or drawstring waist. No zippers, belts, or belt loops, buttons, etc.
3. Socks
4. Tennis shoes with shoe laces or velcro closures. No other type shoes will be permitted on the gym floor. Shoes should be the type of tennis shoe that will be comfortable when running.
5. Sweat pants and sweat shirts are recommended for cooler outdoor weather.

6. Swimming suits. It is our recommendation that girls wear a one piece suit.

7. Students must provide their own PE towel. Towels are needed when students swim and when activities require showering after participation.

T-shirts must have the student's last name displayed permanently on the back where it may be easily read. One inch letters work well. Masking tape is not considered permanent. It is recommended that the student's name be placed on all clothing articles.

CLEAN loaner clothes are usually available from the PE staff for students who do not have the proper uniform or who forget their PE clothes. We also have a very limited supply of tennis shoes available.

ABSENCES: Emphasis in Physical Education is on participation. Students may only earn points toward their grade by being in class. All absences not covered by a written medical excuse, signed by a physician will have to be made up. See your individual teacher for your make up work procedures.

School excused absences: Students are allowed one (1) school excused absence per unit. If a student has more than one (1) school excused absence in a unit, the class will have to be made up to receive credit for that day.

PARENT NOTES: An occasion may arise when your child cannot participate in PE and you want to send us a note, e-mail, etc. to request limited or no activity for that specific day. We will honor your request but your child will not receive credit for the class unless they make it up. The class must be made up within one week of the note or no credit will be assigned for that day.

NON DRESS/NON PARTICIPATION – SATURDAY SCHOOL DETENTIONS: Any combination of 3 non dress/non participation days will result in a Saturday School detention. This includes non participation days due to use of a parent note that is not made up with in the one week time frame.

## Physical Limitations Exclusion Form

The Iowa City Community School District has adopted the use of a physical education limitation form. The form was developed by physical educators, health service personnel, and several Iowa City physicians. The primary purpose of the form is to clearly communicate the activity needs of a student who is under the care of a physician. In this manner, appropriate activities may be provided in physical education classes.

Medical personnel (physicians, etc.) in private practice, as well as hospital settings have the forms at their disposal. In the event of a physical limitation, please have your physician fill out the form and return it to the physical education teacher. This helps insure that your child will be provided with appropriate activities that contribute to his/her well being, and prevent the loss of motor skills or any organic functions.

## Physical Fitness Testing

Students in Iowa City are assessed each fall and spring using FITNESSGRAM a health related physical fitness assessment. FITNESSGRAM was developed in 1982 by the Cooper Institute in Dallas, Texas. The objective was to increase parental awareness of children's fitness levels by developing an easy way for physical education teachers to report the results of physical fitness assessments.

Students are assessed in 4 general areas of health-related fitness. Scores are evaluated against objective criterion standards that indicate a level of fitness necessary for health. The standards were established by the FITNESSGRAM Scientific Advisory Committee. Each of the test items was selected to assess important aspects of a student's

health related fitness, not skill or agility. Students are compared not to each other, but to health fitness standards, carefully established for each age and gender, that indicates good health. Once the assessment has been done, the FITNESSGRAM report provides objective, personalized feedback and positive reinforcement which are vital to changing behavior and serve as a communications link between teachers and parents and students.

The FITNESSGRAM tests conducted in our district are chosen from among the following...

**Aerobic Capacity Assessment**  
The pacer – a 20 meter progressive, multi-stage shuttle run set to music (the PACER is also available in a 15 meter distance) or the One Mile Walk/Run

## Flexibility Assessment

The Back-saver sit –and-Reach or the Modified Sit-and-Reach

Muscle Strength Assessment  
The Flexed Arm Hang the Modified Pull-up or 90 degree Push-up

We also assess the Body-Mass Index of students.....

## Body Mass Index

The BMI provides an indication of the appropriateness of a child's weight relative to height using a mathematical formula to determine BMI. Body mass index does not estimate the percent of fat. Look for reports to be sent home in May.



## Magazine Sales - October 4th – 15<sup>th</sup>

S. O. S. Save Our Subscriptions" is our request. This fall we will again be conducting our annual magazine sale beginning October 4th and running until October 15th. We are asking you to please save your subscriptions for us to renew. Renewals will begin effective with the last issue of your present subscription.

Why order from the school? With this program, *40% of the subscription price of each magazine order is retained by our school.* Many student related activities and events are totally dependent upon the profits generated from this sale. Proceeds from the sale are used to purchase athletic uniforms and equipment; literature and musical equipment; and it covers the cost of contests and club expenses. In addition the school also uses the money to purchase additional technology. All special assemblies and many field trips are also paid for as result of the magazine sale. More over, it provides you the opportunity to get more for your money as 40% of your subscription cost remains with us to help fund our student activity program rather than going to businesses outside our community.

Customer satisfaction is guaranteed. The Reader's Digest company has a toll free number you can call for any problems. Annually, thousands of dollars leave our community when people renew their magazines in ways other than through our sale. We would appreciate your assistance in keeping this money in our school.

It takes many volunteers to make this sale a success. If you are able to help between the hours of 7:15-8:15am or 8:30-11:30am during the sale, please contact Laurie Boland at 337-6786 or [dougandlaurie@mchsi.com](mailto:dougandlaurie@mchsi.com). Volunteers are still needed most days. Thank you!



### **Art News**

Just a note to thank everyone who has contributed to the supplies and resources of the art room at Northwest Junior High. The still-life objects, art books, plastic containers, paper scraps, paint are going to good use here. We appreciate each who has contributed and taken the time to drop them off at NW. Thank you.

Students in seventh grade have been studying about linear perspective using this theory of drawing to create illusions of depth on flat surfaces. Large projects included a lettering assignment and an image that contains at least twenty or more objects drawn in one point linear perspective. Students are enjoying and learning this technique with much satisfaction as this enhances their drawings and ability to make things appear 3-D and finished. Sketchbook assignments are a part of each student's portfolio. Parents can encourage and help students brainstorm ideas for their bi-weekly assignment. Seventh graders will begin the ceramics unit toward the end of September. This will be a two week unit that involves developing and executing a unique pottery or sculptural idea. The finished piece will be glazed and fired twice. All students will need to bring grocery sacks and or plastics ice cream buckets to store clay.

CP is an excellent way to check weekly how students are progressing in the class. I encourage all art students and parents to log in periodically. Students will bring all assignments/projects and a weekly journal home in their portfolio at the end of the trimester.

Congratulations to Katherine Goree for winning the Back to School Night design contest and receiving the movie tickets to Coral Ridge Mall. Way to go!! It was a difficult decision made by the office staff.

Studio art students are busy preparing and finishing projects for their first sharing which began on September 20 & 21 when students will be presenting artwork they have completed so far in Studio.



### **Family Consumer Science**

We have been busy with lots of hands-on activities. Activities such as: Exploring being a Caregiver with the electronic "Baby, Think it Over" Dolls; sewing bags, novelty pillows, log cabin pillows, stuffed animals and many others; Happening soon – the Food Unit - exploratory activities in the kitchens - cooking and eating; a guest speaker for the Money Unit; a Coralville Police Officer for the Consumer Unit.

The Northwest Sewing Club has started. We meet on Mondays, 3:30 – 4:30. All are WELCOME! Students may join at any time throughout the year. Bring your projects and have lots of FUN!

Donations of 100% cotton woven fabric, thread, felt, elastic, buttons, wiggly eyes, interfacing, zippers, stuffing and fabric paints are always appreciated.

Mrs. Hanes

# Iowa Youth Survey

Between October 29th and November 2nd of 2007, your child/children will be invited to join their 6th, 8th, and 11th grade classmates in completing the 2007 Interim Iowa Youth Survey. Since 1975, students in Iowa have been filling out a similar questionnaire to provide information about their values, beliefs, attitudes, and activities. **Participation in the survey is anonymous and strictly voluntary, and no student is required to fill out the questionnaire.** The survey will be taken online and will take less than one class period, approximately 20 minutes, to complete. A letter will be sent to all students participating in the survey. It will include options to opt out of the survey if you wish.

## Special Thanks

Thank you to all the parent volunteers who helped at student registration on August 17th. This would not have gone so smoothly without your support. Thanks to Evelyn-Acosta Weirich for calling all of our wonderful volunteers. Also, thanks to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who helped with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade registration. Your help was very much appreciated!

## Band Notes

Changes are happening in the band room, just as they are throughout the rest of the building. Numbers are down slightly because of the students who left NW and are now at North Central. None the less, we are still off to a solid and very busy start of the year. All the 7th grade instrumentalists have now finished their initial sight reading exam. We have handed out and have explained the rotating lesson schedules to the students and have been running lessons for two weeks now. Attendance has been good and it appears that most of the students have a good grasp on understanding the rotation of their lesson times. It is very important that parents get a look at the schedule and help us by reminding the students to attend their band lessons on the appointed day. The reason that we rotate the lesson times is to keep the kids out of academic trouble. By taking them from a different class each week, we are far more likely to keep the classroom teachers happy.

Another change for this year concerns co-director of bands [Mr. William Scheidecker](#). [Mr. Scheidecker](#) is now the director of bands at North Central Jr. High and taking [his](#) place is [Mrs. Jane Triplett](#). [Mrs. Triplett](#) is here on Monday and Wednesday mornings teaching [flute](#) lessons, and taking on some of the conducting duties of the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Band. [We will](#) also be able to use [Mrs. Triplett's](#) extensive background [in jazz education](#) in our jazz program.

**The concert bands at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels continue to be the primary focus of our attention at Northwest. For those students who are looking for a little more involvement outside the school day, we are pleased to offer the following:**

**Jazz Band**-Comprised of trumpets, saxophones, trombones, piano, bass, and drums. The bands meet from 7:30-8:10am. Each band performs in 3 concerts throughout the year, attends the SEIBA Jazz Festival competition, and plays at numerous civic functions during the year. A good deal of emphasis is placed on learning to improvise jazz solos. Membership is limited to students in band and orchestra.

We urge all parents to support the Iowa City Music Auxiliary by joining that organization. Much of the support for our music programs comes from the Auxiliary and we are most grateful. Northwest has always done a good job of this and we want to keep up that tradition of support.

Looks like a very good year. We came to play!!!

