



Northwest Junior High

THE DIRECTION OF SUCCESS

October/November 2008

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Gregg Shultz, Principal	
Carla Krogman, Associate Principal	

We have had a very positive start to the 2008-09 school year. Enrollment is up slightly—the official enrollment at Northwest is likely to be about 630 students—and we now have students fully engaged in classes, athletics and a myriad of co-curricular activities. As of this writing, we have 334 7th graders and 294 8th graders. If enrollment trends continue, we believe that the number of students at Northwest will increase for the next four years topping out at around 700 students.

New to Northwest this year is our new on-line student database, PowerSchool. Much like our previous on-line program, Center Point, PowerSchool allows parents to access assignment, grade and attendance information. Earlier this month, notices were sent out to all parents announcing that user names and passwords are now available through the school. If you haven't picked up your password and user name you can do so by coming to school during business hours or by calling the school and requesting that we give the information to your son or daughter to deliver home. I encourage all parents who have internet access to pick up their passwords and check on assignment completion. Parents have told us that this has changed dinnertime conversations from "Do you have any homework?" to "When are you going to finish your math assignment that I see you haven't yet completed?"

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 7th grade, teams Vor and Loki and two teams in 8th 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 daughter's teacher is to attend parent/teacher conferences. Once again, we will be holding two nights of parent-teacher conferences this fall. We first tried 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 Wednesday, October 8 while parents of students with the last name beginning M-Z will meet from 3:45 to 7:00 on Tuesday, October 14. If you cannot make your assigned date, please feel free to attend during the other conference session. Be-

cause 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 1, 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.

Finally, as with all schools, our main mission is to see that every student is challenged and grows intellectually and socially. In order to ensure that all students can succeed, we have developed a variety of "safety nets" for students who are struggling. To name a few, we have tutoring after school on Wednesday, intervention services during and after school, an in-depth academic mentoring program (AMP) and specialized instruction. If you see any indications of that please call the school and speak with a counselor or an administrator.

Counseling Department

Who We Are – Where We Are – What We Do

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 7th and 8th grade students will be taking the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) the week of October 20th. 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 (7th grade only) and the Belin-Blank Center Talent Search

from the University of Iowa (both 7th and 8th 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 the NW home page once we receive the information in the guidance office.

Progress Reports

Mid-term Progress Reports will be distributed to students sometime during the week of September 29th.

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 8th for students with last names A – L and Tuesday, October 14th 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 PowerSchool 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. Medical excuses are to be used for extended absences only (three or more class period) or for activity restrictions due to injury or illness. 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 and the one minute curl up test.

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 1st – 13th

S. O. S. Save Our Subscriptions" is our request. This fall we will again be conducting our annual magazine sale beginning October 1st and running until October 13th. 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. Volunteers are still needed most days. Thank you!



Family Consumer Science

We have been busy with lots of hands-on activities.

FCS1 activities for Clothing Care & Repair Unit – sewing buttons, mending tears, ironing & doing the laundry; Sewing - bags and stuffed animals. Happening soon – guest speaker for the Money Unit, explore being a Caregiver with the electronic “Baby, Think it Over” Dolls. Last but not least is the Food Unit - with exploratory activities in the kitchens – cooking, nutrition and eating.

FCS2 activities began with an intro to Interior Design with the Food Unit following. In addition, we cover Consumer Education and Sewing for the Home.

Food for Fitness is a course to help student learn about how to prepare healthy foods. It includes studying nutrients and why we need them. Thus far, we have reviewed basic kitchen essentials and have made healthy popicles, and energy drinks.

The Northwest Sewing Club will begin September 8th. We meet on most Mondays, 3:30 – 4:30. All are WELCOME! Students may join at any time throughout the year. Bring your projects and your sewing supplies. Members will take turns bringing in snacks to share – a Snack Calendar will be maintained. Then snacks will be served (3:20 -3:30) in the Foods room prior to entering the Sewing Room

Donations of 100% cotton woven fabric, thread, felt, elastic, buttons, wiggly eyes, interfacing, zippers, stuffing and fabric paints are always appreciated. Hope to see you then.....Mrs. Hanes

Artist- in –Residence at NW

Our school district received an ICCSD Foundation Excellence Grant to fund bringing Desdamona as a spoken word artist -in –residence to our six secondary schools this September. She performed at Northwest in the Little Theater for a large audience second hour on September 22. Afterwards she and beat box musician Carnage led small group workshops where students experimented with creating and performing their own original rhythmic spoken word compositions. We thank the Foundation for providing this enrichment experience for our students.

Art News

Students in Art 1 have been studying about linear perspective using this theory of drawing to create illusions of depth on flat surfaces. A project they are doing with this is making 20-30 different size and shape cubes using a right angle. They also are studying color theory with this project as each side of the cube will need to match the color theme of their choice. Artists will then design their own room by using 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 grade. Parents can encourage and help students brainstorm ideas for their assignments and also remind them to use them during free-time. It would be great if they can get in the habit of drawing by observation (looking at something) and also invention (creative drawing from an image they see in their head) Any journaling and note-taking is also encouraged.

Studio art students are busy preparing and finishing projects for their first sharing which began on September 18, when students will be presenting artwork they have completed so far in Studio.

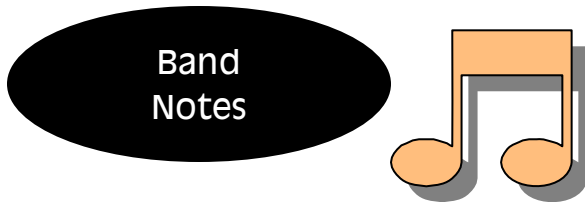
PowerSchool is an excellent way to check weekly how students are progressing in the class. I encourage all art students and parents to log in periodically. Students will bring all assignments and projects home in their portfolio at the end of the trimester.

Congratulations to Savantha Thenuwara for winning the Back to School Night design contest and receiving a \$10 gift card. Way to go!!!!

Bus Lane

In order to protect our students and to alleviate the traffic problems caused by "pick ups" and "drop-offs," a special lane is in place in the South parking area. ONLY buses will be using the lane immediately in front of the school building. All other traffic should use the additional lane. Please observe the BUS ONLY rule for the safety of our children.

To minimize traffic in the main south lots it is recommended that you pick-up your child in the North parking lot after school if you are doing so during the rush period from 3:15-3:40 pm.



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.

We are very pleased to have Mrs. Triplett with us again this year. She will be working with our flute students, one of the jazz bands, and will be doing some conducting with both 7th and 8th grade bands.

The concert bands at the 7th and 8th 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.

Special Thanks

Thank you to all the parent volunteers who helped at student registration on August 12th. Student registration would not have gone as smoothly as it did without your help. A special thank you goes out to Patty McCarthy for calling all of our wonderful volunteers. Also, thanks to the 8th grade students who helped with the 7th grade registration. Your help was very much appreciated!

Open Enrollment

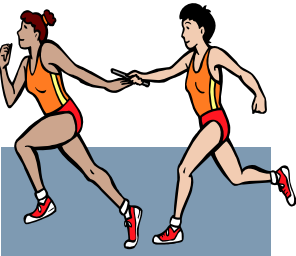
The completed form for open enrollment must be filed with both the resident and receiving district by March 1 of the year preceding the school year for which open enrollment is desired for students entering grades 1-12. The deadline for kindergarten students is September 1. Iowa Code section 281-17.3(2)



The Northwest library has over 250 new books that were ordered over the summer. Some of these will be used to support the classroom curriculum and various research projects. Most of them are fiction books to encourage students' leisure reading. We have new mysteries, fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, sports, teen stories – suspenseful page-turners and light humorous fare. There's something for everyone.

Information about the library hours, policies, and resources can be found on pages 25-27 in the front of the student planner. There is also a sample bibliography that students can refer to when they are doing research projects in their content area classes.

Encourage your students to visit the library and check out the new books!



Run For The Schools

Sunday October 5, 2008

Races begin at 8am

Downtown Iowa City (Corner of Gilbert St. and College St.)

WALKERS AND RUNNERS: Join your friends and neighbors on Oct. 5th for the annual Run for the Schools to benefit the Iowa City Community School District Foundation. Presented by MidWest One Bank and supported by many local businesses, this event is organized by the Iowa City Road Races to benefit area schools. Five events, ranging from a ½ mile Fun Run to a half marathon, are set up to accommodate participants of all ages. What a great way to enjoy a crisp fall morning with your family!

Race registration forms are available at your school, or online at www.iccsdfoundation.org. Every school in the district will receive money from this event!

Direct donations are also appreciated and can be made by visiting www.iccsdfoundation.org

Please contact the ICCSD Foundation for more information – 688-1012 or brennan.jacki@iccsd.k12.ia.us



Chess Club

Northwest held its first chess club meeting on Sept 19th from 3:20 to 4:20 pm in room 237. Anyone interested in playing chess or learning how to play chess is welcome. See Mr. Recker for more details.

FREE CAR WASH

Donations Gladly Accepted

Sponsored by the
Iowa City Music Auxiliary

Saturday, October 4
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

4 CONVENIENT SITES

University of Iowa Credit Union, *Mormon Trek Blvd., Iowa City*

Hy-Vee Gas, *Highway 6 West, Coralville*

Hy-Vee Grocery Store, *First Ave., Iowa City*

Sherwin-Williams (*east of Midwest One Bank*), *Hollywood Blvd., Iowa City*

To benefit the
Performance Music Programs
in the
Iowa City Community Schools

