

Mustang Messenger

"Home of the Mustangs"

Wildwood Middle School
February 2013

Letter from the Principal.....

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Let me begin by saying we are now officially in the second semester of school. I want to publicly thank all our families for the support they lend to the achievement of their children by checking agendas for daily assignments, staying in touch either in person or electronically with Live Grades just to name a few things you are doing.

We have some very important events happening here this month. First please mark your calendars and plan on attending our Scheduling Event for the 2013-2014 School Year. Also in February we will be kicking off the PTO Fundraiser. We are working to earn funds for a large projection screen and could use all the help you can give.

We welcome Mrs. Karla Gunnoe our new Assistant Principal to our staff.

Our Online Writing Assessment window for testing begins in February. Please encourage your student to do their best.

Sincerely,

Patricia Brockway
Patricia Brockway, Principal



Scheduling Nights 2013-14

Current 6th & 7th Graders:
February 12

6th grade @ 6:30 pm

7th grade @ 7:15 pm

Current 5th graders:

March 5 @ 6:30 pm

More info to come.

Mustang Magic
t-shirts and sweatshirts
will be sold at the
basketball game on
2/7/13 for \$10 each.

W.M.S MUSTANGS

February 2013

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| | | | | | | |
| 7th & 8th Grade | WV Governor's | Program Applications | Due 5th - 7th | | 1 | 2 |
| | | | | | | Science Fair CTMS |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| | | 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Jazz Full Band Rehearsal | Boys((A) South Girls (H)) | Boys Shepherdstown 8th grade night Jazz Full Band Rehearsal 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM | | |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| | | Jazz Full Band Rehearsal Scheduling (6:30) 6th & (7:15) 7th Graders | | 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM Jazz Full Band Rehearsal PTO Meeting | | Jazz Band Festival Hedgesville High Math Field Day @ WMS |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| | MAC Quarterfi- nals | MAC Semifinals | MAC finals | FFA Banquet 6-8 p.m. | Club Day/AR Store | Jazz Band Performs JHS |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | | |

WILDWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL PTO SPRING SALE

1. Parent Info

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are asking your son/daughter to show their support for their school by selling items from our fundraising brochures. All profits earned from this fundraiser will benefit our students, teachers and our school. Money raised will go toward a Screen for movies at the school and funds for each classroom teacher.

The primary fundraiser is our Cookie Dough, Gift and Jewelry sales.

There are 3 Ways to Sell Items:

1. Sell from the **Cookie Dough, Gift, Candy and Jewelry**:
 2. Complete "**Reach Out**" magazine packet with family and friend names (see bubble #2 to the right).
 3. Order "**online**" using the school ID code (see bubble #3 to the right).
- Please turn in your **REACHOUT BOOKLET** by February 13.
 - Please turn in **Money and ORDER FORMS from Catalogs** on February 26.

NO DOOR- TO- DOOR SELLING!!!

*Pickup will be Thursday, March 21.
(3-6:30 PM)*

2. ReachOut to Friends & Family

Due: February 13



How it works: Fill out Z postcards with names and addresses of people you think would support you in the sale. Great American will send them the postcard you filled out with a list of things they can buy from your school through the mail. We take care of money collection and delivery! Every item sold will make money for your school. Use your parents' Christmas card lists, people who sent you a birthday card and the family address book. Only US addresses please.

Fill out Z postcards and get: A penguin plus lanyard



3. Order ONLINE!!

Go to www.gaschoolstore.com

****Enter School ID # 1395060**

On Line Sales finalized by February 26 will count toward prizes!

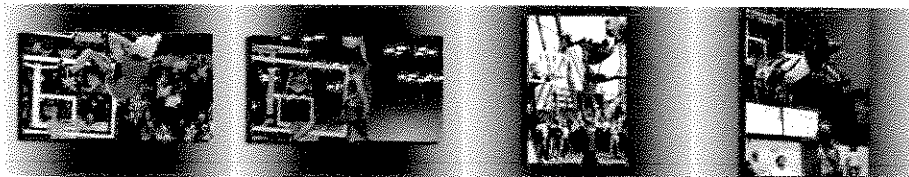
Fundraiser STARTS: Tuesday, February 12

**Fundraiser END: MONEY & ORDERS FORMS ARE DUE
Tuesday, February 26**

PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES!

If we reach a profit of \$5,500.00 everyone will get to the See NBA Dunk Show!!!

*****So do your part and sell at least 4 items*****



Sell 3 items- Penguin

Sell 6 items- 2 Penguins

Sell 9 items- VIP at Dunk Show Front row seat + Autograph + Penguin

Sell 12 items- Super VIP+ Fake Mustache Kit + Penguin

get a FREE JEWELRY ITEM from the Jewelry Catalog of any price!! Just mark your selection (ITEM NUMBER) on the ORDER FORM in the "GOAL PRIZE" box at the top right hand side.

Sell 15 items- Penguin+ Positive say bracelet

Sell 18 items- Penguin + Light up fingers

Sell 20 items- Penguin Family (20)

****Top 3 Homerooms in sales will receive a special reward****

****Questions contact Laurie Ogden 315-254-3904, logden1@comcast.net or Dawna Hylton at dawnh333@gmail.com ****

Middle School Parents[®]

still make the difference!



Resolve to study & stick to routines in the New Year

New Year's resolutions aren't just for adults! Middle schoolers can benefit from them, too. Encourage your child to come up with a few school-related resolutions. If he's stumped about where to start, suggest he make resolutions regarding:

- **Projects.** If your child typically puts off big assignments until the last moment, get him to turn over a new leaf. The next time a book report or research paper looms, remind him to break it into small parts and tackle one bit at a time.
- **Homework.** If your child's study habits are haphazard, refine them. Instead of hitting the books "whenever and wherever," help him designate a work area. Review his after-school schedule and figure out the best time for studying.

- **Writing.** If your child groans when he has to write a paper for school, challenge him to strengthen his writing skills. Writing in a journal for a few minutes every day will do just that.
- **Reading.** If your child doesn't like to read for pleasure, help him set some reading goals. Perhaps he can read 15 minutes every night before going to bed.
- **Extracurricular activities.** If your child signs up for every activity that comes his way, he may be spreading himself too thin. Have him think about which activities can stay and which should go. And remember: School comes first. No activity—regardless of how much he enjoys it—should be allowed to interfere with academics.

Attendance is a priority for school success



Your middle schooler is about halfway through the school year. How has her attendance been?

Strong attendance is as important to your child's school career as the foundation is to a house. Without it, there is nothing to build on.

Need some more convincing on the importance of attendance? Consider this research:

- A study of middle school students in New York City found that attendance rates had as big an impact on graduation rates as did test scores. Students who improved attendance during middle school were more likely to graduate from high school.
- A study in Baltimore found that only 13 percent of sixth graders who missed 10 days a quarter graduated on time.
- A study of middle school students in Philadelphia found that attendance in middle school was linked to higher math achievement.

Source: R. Balfanz and V. Byrnes, "The Importance of Being in School," Everyone Graduates Center, <http://tinyurl.com/83hbw53>.

Three ways parent involvement benefits you and your family



Parent involvement at the middle-school level is just as important as it was in elementary school.

Students' grades, test scores, attendance and behavior all tend to be better when parents are aware of what is going on at school.

But your child is not the only one who benefits when you get involved. Here are three ways being involved also benefits you:

1. **You know who to contact** if you have concerns. You know which teachers teach each of your child's classes. You know the counselor and are familiar with the administrators.
2. **You understand more** about how the school works. Perhaps you are from a very different area than where you are currently living. Perhaps the middle grades in the school you attended were grouped differently. Perhaps it was called a

junior high school or intermediate school. Being involved helps you become familiar with the education system.

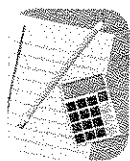
3. **The school and the teachers** have an understanding of you and your family. Perhaps English is not your first language. Perhaps you need support. The school may be able to direct you to community agencies and organizations who can help. If they know what is going on at home, they can better respond to your child at school.

Source: Project Appleseed, "Parent Involvement at the Middle School Level," www.projectappleseed.org/middle.html.

"Children must be taught how to think, not what to think."

—Margaret Mead

Support your child as homework becomes more challenging



As kids progress through middle school, they will likely notice a significant change in their homework. There may be more of it, and it may be more challenging. In most cases, it will be both.

At this point, many parents aren't sure how to react. They may no longer feel comfortable and confident helping with homework. Or they may worry that the child has too much to do and that she will never be able to get it all done.

Rest assured that you are still a valuable resource as your child does homework. You can suggest places for your child to get information.

"Is there a government website that deals with that?" Or you can offer to help her find a book at the library. You can also share tips on keeping assignments organized, which becomes even more important in middle school.

Through it all, keep telling your child that you have confidence in her. Yes, the homework is harder, but she has learned so much. She can do it. Compliment her on her effort. And encourage her to talk to her teacher as soon as possible if she is having a problem.

Source: H. Glenn and M. Brock, *7 Strategies for Developing Capable Students*, Prima Publishing.

Are you setting your child up for success in school?



The middle of the school year is a good time to assess whether you are doing all you can to support your child's academic success. Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

- ___ 1. **Do you help** your child manage homework without actually doing it for him?
- ___ 2. **Do you ask** your child questions about school and have an idea of what he is learning?
- ___ 3. **Do you stay in touch** with your child's teachers and counselors to find out how he is doing in school?
- ___ 4. **Do you support** school rules and policies and expect your child to follow them?
- ___ 5. **Do you tell** your child that his effort is important to you and that you are proud of him? Your encouragement is a big motivator for academic success.

How well are you doing?

Each *yes* answer means you are supporting academic success. For each *no* answer, try that idea from the quiz.

Middle School
Parents
still make the difference!

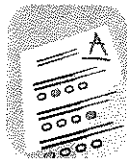
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Strategies can help your middle schooler ace true-false tests



True-false tests may seem simple, but that doesn't mean they're easy. Like every other exam, your child should

prepare for these tests by studying and getting plenty of sleep the night before—and eating a good breakfast the morning of—test day.

To help him do his best on these sometimes tricky true-false exams, remind your child to pay close attention to the wording of each question. He should:

- **Watch out for words like *never* and *always*.** When they appear, it means *every* part of the statement must be correct for “true” to be the right answer.

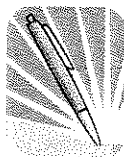
- **Notice words like *sometimes* or *generally*.** These words mean that *most* of the statement must be accurate for “true” to be the right answer.
- **Remember that if *any* part of the statement is incorrect, “false” is the right answer.**

Have your child ask his teacher whether there's a penalty for guessing an answer. This is especially critical before a standardized true-false test.

If there isn't a penalty for guessing, tell him to go ahead and roll the dice. He's got a 50-50 shot of picking the right answer!

Source: “True-False Test Tips-Help,” TestTakingTips.com, www.testtakingtips.com/test/true.htm.

Help your reluctant writer jump over those writing hurdles



Middle schoolers are expected to write at a higher level than they did in elementary school. As a result, you may hear

your previously confident writer say writing is “too hard,” or even, “I hate writing.”

Here are tips to give your child to get her over the writing hurdle:

- **Write one sentence.** Most writers will tell you the most difficult part of writing is getting started. So just do it. Tell your child if she writes one sentence, she can take a break. Later, she can come back and write another.
- **Use resources.** Some children struggle with spelling, grammar and sentence structure. Your child should have a dictionary nearby. A book of English usage helps, too.

These resources are also available online.

- **Brainstorm.** Sometimes your child might say she has no ideas. If there is a writing prompt or suggestion, read it out loud to her. Then ask her to say five words that come to mind. One of these may be turned into an idea. If there isn't a writing prompt, create your own: “Tell about a time when you laughed really hard.”
- **Take notes.** A child may worry that she will lose track of what she wants to say. Keep a note pad handy. Tell her when she thinks of something she should immediately jot it down. Then it will be ready for her to use when she wants to include it.

Source: R.G. Richards, “Understanding why students avoid writing,” AdLit.org, www.adlit.org/article/5892/.

Q: My preteen does okay in school, but she's not working up to her potential. When I ask her why, she replies, “School's not that important.” Where is she getting this from?

Questions & Answers

A: Odds are, from several different places. Although popular culture gives lip service to the notion that school matters, kids often absorb the opposite message. But it can be a subtle message. So subtle, in fact, that you may not detect it at all. Kids today:

- **See examples of unique success.** Stories of self-made millionaires abound. And often, the clincher is that these folks abandoned school. So you can see why your child might think, “Well, if she got rich without studying hard, then I can, too.” This is why it's vital to remind her that these people are extreme exceptions to the rule. Her best chance at success is to take school seriously.
- **Watch ignorance being celebrated.** Whether on TV or at the movies, the most popular characters are often not-so-bright jokesters. But if your child believes intentional ignorance is her ticket to a bright future, she's in for a rude awakening.
- **Hear parents complain.** Do you groan about your child's school projects? Are you too busy to look over her homework? The message your child is getting may not be the one you intend to send. Show your child that school is a priority by asking about school everyday.

—Holly Smith,
The Parent Institute

It Matters: Discipline

Talk to your middle schooler about respect



To be successful in school, your child must learn to respect himself and others, including teachers, school staff

and classmates. Still, many middle schoolers aren't quite sure what respect really is.

Talk with your middle schooler about the importance of respect and the role it plays in:

- **Behavior.** Your child should always think before acting. He should ask himself, "Would I like to be treated this way?" "Will this action give me a positive result." If he can answer *yes*, he will probably act respectfully.
- **Disagreements.** Your child can disagree with someone and still be respectful. Respect uses words, the gentler the better, to disagree. Using curse words or getting physical is the ultimate form of disrespect.
- **Property.** Your child should take care of his textbooks and return items he borrows on time. He should be sure to leave things in the same or better condition than he found them.
- **Friends.** Your child should surround himself with peers who treat him and others with respect. Remind your child that people will judge him in part by who his friends are. That may be all it takes to convince him to choose his friends carefully.

Source: Safe and Respectful, a project funded by the Centers for Disease Control, "Respect for Self and Others," Selfandrespectful.org, www.safeandrespectful.org/teens/respect_home.html.

Discipline at home promotes better behavior at school

Talking out of turn. Not doing work. Using disrespectful language. When teachers must stop teaching to handle such discipline problems, valuable learning time is wasted.

Parents can improve children's behavior in school by laying the foundation at home. Here's how:

- **Set clear limits.** Now that your child is older, discuss what you expect now and why. Ask for her input when establishing rules.
- **Consistently enforce rules.** Rules are meaningless if you enforce them one day and ignore them the next.
- **Help your child learn** the habits of self-discipline. Show her how to set and meet goals, organize



her schoolwork, use a calendar and manage her time.

To support discipline at school, review the discipline policy and discuss it with your child.

Middle schoolers need parents to be role models, not friends



You are many things to your child, but a "friend" shouldn't be one of them. That's because it's your job

to shape him into a responsible adult. And acting as a friend could sabotage that by turning you into a confidante rather than a role model.

For example, suppose your child complains about his "horrible" teacher. A friend might join in: "You're right, she's just awful!"

But if you do that, you're undermining the teacher's authority and

showing your child that it's okay to be disrespectful.

So approach the same scenario as his parent: "I'm sorry if you're having trouble with your teacher. I'm sure you will be able to work it out. But let me know if you need some help or advice."

By responding this way, you're acknowledging your middle schooler's feelings. And you're also being his parent—not just his friend.

Source: J. Lehman, MSW, "Your Child Is Not Your 'Friend,'" Empowering Parents, www.empoweringparents.com/Your-Child-is-not-Your-Friend.php.