

NEWSLETTER NEWSLETTER

PLEASANT VALLEY ELEMENTARY

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2008, JANUARY 2009

Principal's Thoughts

We have all started this 2008-09 school year confident and proud. Thanks to hard work, hands on teaching strategies, Differentiated Instruction and EAP tutoring, Pleasant Valley moved out of the PSSA Warning status, which means as a school we want to maintain our success or do even better this year with our PSSA scores! My number one goal for the 2008-09 school year is to maximize student achievement for all students.

Grade 4 PSSA Science scores were recently reported and our Pleasant Valley score was a 96%! Kudos to the grade 4 teaching staff and our current fifth graders because of their stellar science results.

The AASD adopted a new Science series for this school year for grades 1-6. Teachers and students have been excited to experience the many hands on materials available for experiments. Harcourt has done a great job of aligning the new Science series with state standards and made this Pennsylvania text relative to our geographic area.

Response to Intervention (RTI) and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels); both offer teachers of K-2 data to place students into Differentiated learning groups to assist with specific, necessary early literacy skills. All of Kindergarten through grade 2 is on the road to success with this new district initiative. We are already seeing positive results.

My favorite part of being the building principal or Instructional leader,

is when I do my daily school wide walk-about. I enjoy the relationships I am building with the smart, kind, funny Pleasant Valley students.

Arrival

Thank you for reading the first newsletter of the school year that addressed students arriving after 9:10 am. One of my goals for the 2008-09 school year was to decrease the number of students who arrive late or to the classroom after 9:10 am.

I have noticed a difference for the better and teachers have reported that this year they can begin their educational day right after the 9:10 announcements. Thank you for making your schedule fit the school schedule.

*Any student arriving after 9:10 will continue to need a late note signed by the school secretary and sent to the classroom teacher. Tardiness will be indicated on your child's report card.

Technology

A special thanks to Mr. Scott Hord who kindly offered to update our Pleasant Valley web site. It looks phenomenal and we all appreciate his time and efforts.

We recently received 60 new flat panel IMAC computers for our computer labs. The computer lab computers were placed into the teacher's classrooms. Thanks to the district's technology staff for updating the technology at the elementary level.

Time for Kids Magazines

As part of our school wide reading goal, I was able to order Time for Kids magazines for Kindergarten through grade six again this year. It serves as an effective nonfiction resource that all students need the opportunity to read and comprehend. It is a weekly magazine that is Differentiated based on grade level. Teachers and students look forward to this informational text.

EAP K-2

Mandy Tippett was hired as the EAP Reading Teacher for grades K-2. The EAP Reading program is new to the primary grades across the district. As part of the PV Team, Miss Tippett teaches phonemic awareness activities with identified students. The students are selected from the data gathered from the DIBELS and diagnostic assessments. In the morning during first and second grade's Response to Intervention time, Miss Tippett helps to Differentiate the Instruction by pulling groups of students and working with them. She focuses on specific skills that the students will need to become proficient readers. In the afternoon, she works with groups of children from Kindergarten and first grade implementing LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) Interventions. These interventions are geared toward the students and the skills they need. The EAP Reading program is running smoothly and is coordinating nicely with the core instruction in the classrooms.

EAP 3-6

At the beginning of the year, select students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 were chosen to be part of the Educational Assistance Program (EAP) taught by Miss Kauffman. EAP provides additional reading practice during the regular school day for these students, in efforts to boost their comprehension skills. Throughout the year, students will learn and practice reading strategies that will help them to become more fluent readers and help them to better understand what they read. In a relaxed setting, students are encouraged to ask questions, and share their thoughts about what they read together.

Ask any 3rd grade EAP student about how tadpoles change to become adult frogs. After reading the book From Tadpole to Frog, they are pros!

Fourth grade learned about the dangers of wildfires, and the techniques firefighters use to put out wildfires in the book Hotshots.

Fifth grade enjoyed making a life-sized paper model of the jaws of a megalodon shark. They could tell you more than a few facts about this gigantic prehistoric fish!

Students in 6th grade just finished reading a true story about three whales who found themselves in a dangerous situation, and the people who worked to help save them. In the next few days 6th graders will complete a small research project to learn more about whales.

Miss Kauffman is so proud of all of the 3rd – 6th grade EAP students and looking forward to many good books and fun projects to come!

Fire Safety Assembly

On Wednesday, October 22nd, students learned life saving tips from fire chief Tom Sral from Lakemont Volunteer Fire Company. Students received valuable information, handouts, and fire hats. The firemen were cooperative and patient with all of our students. Excellent Assembly!

Q-Site

Last year the Q-Site committee was very generous with the funding of field trips, science and math manipulatives and nonfiction novels. This year Q-Site will continue to work toward a school wide Reading goal with the integration of Science and Math. First grade will continue to team with 6th grade with its "Reading Buddies" program.

The new emphasis this year will be science. Students will read leveled science readers and participate in activities and experiments together. Q-Site is currently discussing the idea of a school wide Career Day or science fair in the spring.

American Education Week

Pleasant Valley is planning and preparing for some fun and exciting activities during American Education Week, Monday, Nov. 17th – Friday, Nov 21st.

Each teacher will be inviting you into his/her classroom during that week to observe a lesson. You will be given the opportunity to observe a PSSA Reading or Math lesson from teachers in grades 3-6 and a Language Arts/Literacy lesson will be taught in Kindergarten through grade two.

You will be invited to your child's Phys Ed and Music classes. Please look for specific invitations so you can mark your calendar. We welcome your attendance to any or all of these events in November.

Barnes and Noble Book Fair for Pleasant Valley

Please celebrate American Education Week with our staff and students on Tuesday, November 18th from 6pm – 8pm at Barnes and Noble. Do your holiday shopping from 9am – 9pm on Nov. 18th while benefiting our school. There will be grade level performances from 6-8pm and a percentage of your Barnes and Noble purchases will benefit Pleasant Valley School. There will be approved Barnes and Noble Book Fair Vouchers. Many of our area schools have hosted Book Fairs at Barnes and Noble, this will be Pleasant Valley's first attempt.

Athletics

Our football season is coming to a close. Thanks a million to the coaches, players, cheerleaders, and cheerleading advisors. A special thanks to our Athletic Director, Chris Kirwin, who helped to organize all the coaches and teams.

The Altoona Football League fifth and sixth grade boys tackle football team, Caldwell Banker, will be playing on Tuesday, October 28th in the Championship game against M & T. Please come and cheer on our boys at Mansion Park, 7:00 pm.

Congratulations to both fourth grade flag football teams and now we can all look forward to basketball season!

Elementary Conferences

Pleasant Valley is planning to conduct Parent Teacher Conferences for Kindergarten through grade six the week of Thanksgiving. Conferences will be held on Monday, November 24th in the evening and on Tuesday, November 25th, 2008.

On Monday, November 24th, school is in session for all students. Conferences will begin at 4:00pm. On Tuesday, Nov. 25, school is not in session. Teachers will be sending you the necessary paperwork with a specific parent teacher conference time. Teachers would like to meet with all parents, so please mark your calendar and don't forget to attend your child's conference.

Pleasant Valley School Association (PVSA)

Thank you for participating in the school fundraiser this year. Your cooperation and donations helped the school to reach its projected goal of approximately \$20,000. Please remember to pick up your fundraiser items on Wed., Nov. 19 from 3-7 pm or on Thurs., Nov 20 from 8-10 am or 3-7 pm.

The BMX Bike Show reward night was an awesome way to celebrate students that had sold more than 5 items or paid the Fair Share.

The Fall Harvest parties held on October 23 and 24 were a huge success again this year. It amazes me how this great event for our students all comes together. Thank you, one and all, for providing supplies, your time and your cooperation. Thanks to the PVSA and the many parent volunteers.

Look for information pertaining to the Holiday Shop planned for Dec 10, 11, and 12th. Specifics to follow from PVSA.

ESL News

Cultural diversity is growing among children in public schools. The AASD is home to children whose families speak languages other than English. We are fortunate to have several ESL students enrolled at Pleasant Valley.

Snow Days

On snow days a decision will be reached whether to have a two hour delay and/or to close school. The purpose for the two hour delay is to give our custodians time to have sidewalks cleaned. In most cases the district will start with a delay and upgrade to a closing if said closing is warranted. When on a two hour delay, students would report to school at 11:00 AM.

Please listen to one of our local radio stations or watch TV for information on school delays and/or closings.

At PV We Let Children Know We Care

Children don't really care how much teachers know until they know how much they care.

*As a PV staff we never underestimate the smallest of acts that keep a child from falling through the cracks, help another to fit in, or turn a life around: a smile, a word of praise, a listening ear, a kind word, an act of caring.....all have the potential to be a turning point in a child's life. **We Care About Kids!***

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER, 2008



November 3	Report Cards go Home
November 5	Provine Individual Pictures
November 10	Inservice – No School
November 11	Holiday – No School
November 17-21	American Education Week
	Music In Our School
	Phys Ed In Our School
November 18	Barnes & Noble Book Fair for PV 6-8PM
November 24	School In Session
	Evening Conferences
November 25	Conferences – No School
November 26 – Dec 1	Holiday – No School

DECEMBER, 2008



December 10, 11, 12	PVSA Holiday Shop
December 22	Inservice – No School
December 23 – January 2	Holiday – No School

JANUARY, 2008

January 5	School In Session
January 16	Inservice – No School
January 19	Holiday – No School
January 22	Second Marking Period Ends
January 28	Report Cards Go Home

