

Ohio Elementary School News

November 2009

Dear Parents,

This school year is off to a great start. I have certainly enjoyed my time as Ohio Elementary School's new principal. Ohio can certainly boast about its wonderful faculty, staff, and families.

November brings the first of the New York State Assessments. The fifth grade Social Studies Assessment is scheduled for November 16th and 17th, this year. Parents are important partners in helping our students be ready for these assessments. Making certain that our students come to school well rested (with a good night's sleep) and well fed (with a healthy breakfast). Help our fifth graders start the day ready to do their best!

With the colder weather upon us, please remember that students who arrive before 8:50 a.m. will remain outside and unsupervised, as we are not able to provide supervision at this time. The only exception is if your child is enrolled in the B.A.S.E or breakfast program. If your child walks to school, please time his/her travel time to school appropriately.

Sincerely,
Wendy L. Richards
Principal

Calendar at a glance:



November

- 4th **O.H.I.O. meeting** – 6:30
- 6th Basket Raffle – 6:00
- 11th Veterans' Day – No School
- 13th Family Dance 6:30-8:30
- 16th 5th Grade NYS Social Studies Assessment
- 17th 5th Grade NYS Social Studies Assessment
- 13th Picture Re-take Day
- 19th 5th Grade Chorus Concert
- 20th Early Release Staff Development Day
- 25th **No School**
- 26th **Thanksgiving Day – No School**
- 27th **No School**

December

- 3rd Parent Teacher Conference Day (1/2 day)
O.H.I.O. meeting – 6:30
- 22nd Winter Recess Begins – No School this week

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Check It Out!
**The District Website has
been updated!**



Please visit www.ntschoools.org
for comprehensive improvements to the District site as well the individual
Elementary School pages!

Updates are being made every day, so stay informed on all the latest school and
district information by visiting the web address above.



Parent Teacher Conferences

Reminder: Parent teacher conferences are schedule for this fall.
During December, evening conferences are scheduled for
December 10th. Afternoon conferences are scheduled for
December 4th, 11th and 14th. Each of our teachers provided the
opportunity to sign up for a conference during our Open House in
September. These will be confirmed with you through
classroom teacher. If you have questions or a conflict,
contact your teacher in order to make accommodations



From the Nurse...

School physicals will be performed early in November by our school district's
physicians, Wheatfield Pediatrics.

Please keep your ill children home. There are no "perfect or good" attendance awards this year.
Your child must be fever free (temperature below 100 orally) without the use of antipyretics
(Motrin, Tylenol) for 24 hours before returning to school. Pediatricians report that the harsh
cough may last 2 weeks to a month.

Please have emergency contacts that can pick up your ill child in a timely manner. It's
uncomfortable for your sick child to wait a prolonged period of time in the Health Office and they
could be causing other students to come in contact with the illness.

If your child is home ill or out of school for any reason, please call the Health Office at 807-3802.
You can call and leave a message anytime.

Sincerely,
Beth Galas RN
Ohio School Nurse

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Attention Parents: Notes to Note

Smarter Adults - Safer Kids District Training Dates:

| <u>Date - Time</u> | <u>Building</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Nov. 4 - 11:00 am</i> | <i>Spruce</i> | <i>Auditorium</i> |
| <i>December 3 - 9:00 am</i> | <i>Meadow</i> | <i>Conference Room</i> |
| <i>January 20 - 1:30 pm</i> | <i>Drake</i> | <i>Library</i> |
| <i>February 11 - 6:00 pm</i> | <i>Middle School</i> | <i>TBD</i> |
| <i>March 3 - 4:30 pm</i> | <i>Ohio</i> | <i>Library</i> |
| <i>May TBD</i> | <i>Middle School</i> | <i>TBD</i> |
| <i>June 1 - 9:00 am</i> | <i>NTHS</i> | <i>Guidance Office</i> |

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION

The North Tonawanda Police Department has informed the school district that we will no longer be receiving written notification of level 2 and 3 sex offenders through the mail as we have in the past. The Niagara County Sheriff's Department created a web site listing all the level 2 and 3 sex offenders in their jurisdiction and the NT Police Department has teamed up with them. Level 2 and 3 sex offenders residing in North Tonawanda are now on that web site.

Additionally, the web site will allow users to sign up for a notification service that will automatically notify you via e-mail every time a level 2 or 3 sex offender moves into or from place to place within Niagara County.

The Niagara County Sheriff's Department web site is www.ncsd.com/SOR/. Please also remember that the New York State web site is www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/sor/. The state web site allows you to search by name, county, or zip code throughout New York. The state's toll free number is 1-800-262-3257.

The District will continue with notifications using the District newsletter and District web site www.ntcityschools.wnyric.org.

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SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As winter weather approaches, we would like to share the following information with you.

Our District staff understands the decision to open or close schools due to weather conditions has a big effect on families. We also understand that our students are best served – both academically and socially – by being in school but, as always, the safety of our young people is our top priority.

HOW IS THE DECISION MADE?

The decision to open or close school in bad weather is based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, some of which are:

- **Road conditions** – This information comes from our District snow-plowing crew; our transportation department and the police. The status of City snow plowing efforts is also an important consideration.
- **Amount of snow and/or ice already accumulated and whether precipitation is expected to continue along with the temperature and wind chill factors.** Careful monitoring of weather forecasts.
- **School site conditions** – Information is communicated to the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds from staff members who are responsible for clearing and treating school parking lots, driveways and sidewalks. Any electrical and/or heat problems are also reported by custodial and maintenance staff.

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for the final decision based on the above factors.

HOW IS THE PUBLIC NOTIFIED?

Tune to local radio or TV stations for closing information. The first calls go to TV channels 2 (WGR), 4 (WIVB) and 7 (WKBW) and radio station 930 AM (WBEN) followed by the FM radio stations. Please do not call the schools unless it is an emergency. We are also continuing to implement emergency notification of families through Global Connect. Please make sure that the District has your updated telephone numbers. Also understand after we receive your updated information it will take time to update the District's data base.

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

We always try to make the decision by 6:30 a.m. so we can notify radio and TV stations and alert the transportation and food service departments. Waiting much longer to announce a closing means some parents will have already left for work expecting their children to be in school for the day.

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WILL SCHOOLS CLOSE IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

Keep in mind that, even if weather conditions worsen, we cannot reverse the decision in the morning without endangering students. Once the decision is made to open school, many parents rely on it and leave for work. This includes those who drop off children at the BASE Program as early as 7:00 a.m. If we were to send students right back home, many would return to unsupervised bus stops and empty houses.

Although the North Tonawanda District Staff does our absolute best in this process, we know that no perfect decision exists. Conditions in one part of the City may differ dramatically from those in other parts. Even if your neighborhood is clear, travel elsewhere in the District could be a problem and vice versa.

Therefore, if school is open but the conditions as you observe and consider them are such that you do not feel it is safe for your child to attend school, use your best judgment on whether he or she should attend. Your decision will always be respected.

I hope this explanation helps everyone understand the process we use to make the best possible decision for all in our District.

Vocal Music – Mrs. Strong

This month begins a year of wonderful performances by our choruses, band and orchestra. On November 19th at 7:00, here at Ohio School, our 5th grade chorus will present, “American Every Day”, a look at American history through word and song.

Please join us for this truly powerful presentation.

Your children are learning a Native American stick passing game done by the children in specific tribes around our country. Ask them to teach you the game so that the entire family can join in the fun.

Peer Club – Mrs. Strong

This year Peer Club will be spending the year sharing and caring for others. This character education trait known as Service Learning helps children to see how each of us can make a difference in the world around us by showing the many different ways there are to help others.

In November, we will be making signs to ask others to help us collect food for the local food banks. The children will then organize the boxes for the pantries and make cards to add to the food being delivered. A simple note to show that someone cares.

Please take the time to share with your children your many acts of kindness for others through the years. It will be a meaningful family experience.

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ART NEWS - Mrs. Holler

With two months into the school year it is amazing just how much the young artists have accomplished. The displays are up in the hallway and have brought about many positive comments.

Kindergarteners have been working with pattern, rhythm and multi-step directions. The “Wiggling Caterpillar” and “Bubble Gum Portraits” have brought about a lot of excitement.

1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders have been developing portraits. Some levels were learning while they drew people they know and others learned about “Mona Lisa” and Leonardo DaVinci. A portrait from behind and a face in a mirror is also another view that has been explored. Ask these young artists about the placement of eyes on a face. You’ll be surprised.

3rd graders have also been drawing texture with line as they complete a cityscape. 4th and 5th graders are experiencing the use of a 5.0 calligraphy marker. Calligraphy is the art of lettering. The designs they produced are exciting. The proverbs and facts that they researched and have written in calligraphy will soon be displayed in the hallways.

6th graders have developed sketchbooks which you may have seen at home as they completed their assignments. Weaving and designing these books allowed each to display an individual flair.

Color exploration, blending, creating new colors and understanding the color wheel should bring about wonderful soon to be pieces of art.

The *Fundred Dollar project* is still underway. Check your October newsletter for information. Students, parents, siblings, anyone may participate. It will be extended into November. More Fundred Dollars are available in the art room. The designs that have been entered are terrific! Keep up the enthusiasm!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

When a student is told that their artwork is stored in a *special box*...that means that the piece of art may be displayed in an art show, display or at an event. Students will get these pieces back by June and will be notified if displayed outside of the school. Artwork is now beginning to be rotated in the cafeteria and conference room.

Congratulations to Alyssa Privitera and Sean Dolan for their tremendous effort in designing the 2009-2010 YEARBOOK front and back covers. These designs had begun last year and have recently been finalized. Bravo!

Congratulations to Sophia Grant as she was selected as September Art Student of the Month. Sophia was selected for her respect in using “good manners.”

Congratulations to Madison MacNeil as she is selected for the October Art Student of the Month. Madison was selected for her use of “good judgment” in the art room.

Strive for 25... If your child reads a story about Art or an Artist during the month of November please have them stop by the art room and share the knowledge. Several students have been able to share the surprises in the “Monkey Basket.”

Yes, it is only two months and creativity is well under way.

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Speech and Language News

You have invited your friend over for dinner. Your child sees your friend reach for some cookies and says, "Better not take those, or you'll get even bigger." You're embarrassed that your child could speak so rudely. However, you should consider that your child may not know how to use language appropriately in social situations and did not mean harm by the comment.

An individual may say words clearly and use long, complex sentences with correct grammar, but still have a communication problem - if he or she has not mastered the rules for social language known as **pragmatics**. Adults may also have difficulty with pragmatics, for example, as a result of a brain injury or stroke.

Pragmatics involves three major communication skills:

- **Using language** for different purposes, such as
 - greeting (e.g., hello, goodbye)
 - informing (e.g., I'm going to get a cookie)
 - demanding (e.g., Give me a cookie)
 - promising (e.g., I'm going to get you a cookie)
 - requesting (e.g., I would like a cookie, please)
- **Changing language** according to the needs of a listener or situation, such as
 - talking differently to a baby than to an adult
 - giving background information to an unfamiliar listener
 - speaking differently in a classroom than on a playground
- **Following rules** for conversations and storytelling, such as
 - taking turns in conversation
 - introducing topics of conversation
 - staying on topic
 - rephrasing when misunderstood
 - how to use verbal and nonverbal signals
 - how close to stand to someone when speaking
 - how to use facial expressions and eye contact

These rules may vary across cultures and within cultures. It is important to understand the rules of your communication partner.

An individual with pragmatic problems may:

- say inappropriate or unrelated things during conversations
- tell stories in a disorganized way
- have little variety in language use

It is not unusual for children to have pragmatic problems in only a few situations. However, if problems in social language use occur often and seem inappropriate considering the child's age, a pragmatic disorder may exist. Pragmatic disorders often coexist with other language problems such as vocabulary development or grammar. Pragmatic problems can lower social acceptance. Peers may avoid having conversations with an individual with a pragmatic disorder.

Parents, caregivers, families, and teachers can help individuals use language appropriately in social situations (**pragmatics**). Some general suggestions to help develop skills in three major pragmatic areas are listed below.

Using Language for Different Purposes

- **Ask questions** or make suggestions to use language for different purposes:

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| Desired Language Function | Suggested Question or Comment |
|---------------------------|--|
| Comment | "What did you do?" "Tell me about..." |
| Request | "Tell your friend..." "What do you want?" |
| Question | "Ask me" |

- **Respond to the intended message** rather than correcting the pronunciation or grammar. Be sure to provide an appropriate model in your own speech. For example, if an individual says, "That's how it doesn't go," respond, "You're right. That's not how it goes."
- **Take advantage of naturally occurring situations.** For example, practice greetings at the beginning of a day, or have the individual ask peers what they want to eat for dinner or request necessary materials to complete a project.

Changing Language for Different Listeners or Situations

- **Role-play conversations.** Pretend to talk to different people in different situations. For example, set up a situation (or use one that occurs during the course of a day) in which the individual has to explain the same thing to different people, such as teaching the rules of a game, or how to make a cake. Model how the person should talk to a child versus an adult, or a family member versus a friend of the family.
- **Encourage the use of persuasion.** For example, ask the person what he or she would say to convince family members or loved ones to let him or her do something. Discuss different ways to present a message:
 - Polite ("Please may I go to the party?") versus impolite ("You better let me go")
 - Indirect ("That music is loud") versus direct ("Turn off the radio")
 - Discuss why some requests would be more persuasive than others

Conversation and Storytelling Skills

- **Comment on the topic** of conversation before introducing a new topic. Add related information to encourage talking more about a particular topic.
- **Provide visual cues** such as pictures, objects, or a story outline to help tell a story in sequence.
- **Encourage rephrasing** or revising an unclear word or sentence. Provide an appropriate revision by asking, "Did you mean?"
- **Show how nonverbal signals are important** to communication. For example, talk about what happens when a facial expression does not match the emotion expressed in a verbal message (e.g., using angry words while smiling).

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Homework Tips for Parents

- Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.
- Avoid having your child do homework with the television on or in places with other distractions, such as people coming and going.
- Make sure the materials your child needs, such as paper, pencils and a dictionary, are available. Ask your child if special materials will be needed for some projects and get them in advance.
- Help your child with time management. Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until just before bedtime. Think about using a weekend morning or afternoon for working on big projects, especially if the project involves getting together with classmates.
- Be positive about homework. Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- When your child does homework, you do homework. Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is reading, you read too.
- When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. Giving answers means your child will not learn the material.
- When the teacher asks that you play a role in homework, cooperate with the teacher. It shows your child that the school and home are a team.
- If homework is meant to be done by your child alone, stay away. Too much parent involvement can prevent homework from having some positive effects. Homework is a great way for kids to develop independent, lifelong learning skills.
- Stay informed. Talk with your child's teacher to make sure you know the purpose of homework.
- Have your child do the hard work first. This will mean he will be most alert when facing the biggest challenges. Easy material will seem to go fast when fatigue begins to set in.
- Watch your child for signs of frustration. Let your child take a short break if he or she is having trouble keeping their mind on an assignment.
- Reward progress in homework. If your child has been successful in homework completion and is working hard, celebrate that success with a special event (e.g., pizza, a walk, a trip to the park) to reinforce the positive effort.



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5th Grade News

Reminder: New York State Assessments

Fifth Grade Social Studies Assessment is scheduled for November 16th and 17th.



Fifth Grade students are hard at work this month as they prepare for the state Social Studies test which will be given over a two day period, on November 15th and 16th. We are focusing on writing organized, cohesive essays from document based questions. We ask that parents make sure their children get plenty of sleep before the test, and maybe an extra helping of Wheaties for breakfast!

Math Update: fifth graders are working on multiplying decimals, estimating decimal products, and algebraic variables and expressions.

Science update:

Mrs. McConnell's class is learning about atoms, elements and compounds this month. They are also studying about mass, volume and density. Watch for Room 117's "Mystery Putty" and models of atoms. Soon, they will be testing household liquids to find out if they are acids or bases.

Mrs. Green's class has completed the unit on rocks and minerals and is currently focusing on the human body. They have examined the skeletal system and will also be studying the digestive system, heart and circulatory system, as well as the brain and the nervous system.

Mrs. Mahoney's class is learning about plant parts, and how leaves, stems, and roots help a plant to survive. We are growing bean plants, and after several observations, we have finally thrown away the moldy bread!

FOURTH GRADE

Fourth Grade

The fourth grades have thoroughly enjoyed "locking through" the Erie Canal locks. The Niagara County Museum created many mental images which will bring our future studies to life. Thank you to O.H.I.O. for their continued support.

In Social, we are using geography and mapping skills to explore the wonderful state of New York. This year, we will continue to learn about New York 's history and its importance today.

Our fourth grade math geniuses have recently finished learning about rounding, estimation, and numeric expressions. We will continue to problem solve and begin our study of multiplication in November. Please begin reviewing multiplication facts nightly.

Science continues to revolve around matter and the measuring of matter. Students have learned about circumference, diameter, width, length, height, mass, volume (solids and liquids), and soon density. Your children are all "hands-on". Please help to reinforce these skills at home. Thank you for all your support!!!!

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About our North Tonawanda Youth Vote...

We are very excited that Ohio Elementary School will be taking part in the district wide NT Youth Vote. As it is a presidential election year we encourage you to discuss the election process with your children. Children at every age can feel the excitement of being a part of the democratic process.

The younger members of your family can participate by accompanying you to the voting booth. Children in the intermediate grades can discuss local issues and talk about the candidates running in your neighborhood. Your children in grades 5 and 6 can even discuss the various views of those candidates. Remember the older children in your family will also enjoy the opportunity to travel with you to the voting booth. It is one of those great rites of passage.



We seek to create lifetime participants in our democracy. School and home play an important role in developing civic-minded members of society. We will be having our own mock election at Ohio Elementary on November 3, 2009. The Sixth grade students will be running the election and all students who vote will receive stickers celebrating the event.

Remember Election Day is November 3, 2009. Every vote counts!



From the Library: Mrs. Hasson

Our annual Fall Scholastic Book Fair, has been moved to December. The fair will run from December 8 to December 14. Family night will be held on December 10. This year's theme will be "Give the Gift of Reading." The book fair is a fundraiser to pay for an online catalog in the library. We are presently operating with a card catalog. Our collection's electronic records were gathered over the summer, and are waiting to be imported into the online system as soon as it can be purchased!!!

We have once again subscribed to World Book Online at www.worldbookonline.com. Students and their families may use the encyclopedia. The username and password is ohioes.

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Strive for 25 Go Bananas for Books!



Ohio School has been working hard to meet the state wide goal of reading 25 books. The students around our school are certainly going "Bananas for Books!" All of the children below have shown great dedication to reading and have placed their name on a banana which is hung on our vine that is creeping down the halls. Keep reading everyone!

We have all met the goal of reading 25 books:

Grade 1:

Aiden C, Emily V, Casey O, Johnathan J, James J, Elizabeth A, Allyson K, John A, Benjamin N

Grade 2:

Mitchell M, Malachi P, Megan M, Brianna C, Christian M, Elizabeth H, Matthew G, Jaden C, David R, Joshua J, Sam T, Kira D, Madison H, Michael M, Kirsten F

Grade 3:

Connor D, Jordan J

Grade 4:

Emily O, Jazlyn L, Daniel P, Nicholas P, Gabby S

Grade 5:

Irene J, Olivia H

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Global Connect Program

The North Tonawanda City School District has implemented the Global Connect program within our district. This program is designed to enable us to complete “mass” phone calling under emergency conditions or to share district-wide information with parents. Everyone should have received a Global Connect Call during this year’s school closing due to inclement weather.

In order for this program to work most effectively, we ask you to maintain current contact information with us. If any of your contact information changes, please fill out the form below and submit this to Ohio’s main office. We will then forward the information to our district offices so that the Global Connect system can be well maintained.

Thank you for your support!

Emergency Contact Information

Attention Ohio Elementary School - Please note these changes in our contact information:
Student Name(s) and Grade levels

-
- Our new home phone number _____
 - We no longer have a home number.
 - Our new cell number: _____
 - Our new address: _____
 - Additional persons with permission to pick my child(ren) up from school:

 - Other contact information changes: (i.e.: Grandparent phone number changes if they are listed as emergency contacts)

Parent Signature

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