

Honey Bunches of Notes

A Monthly Newsletter

December, 2010

Upcoming Events:

- December 10: Curriculum Celebration
- December 15: Board Meeting
- December 16: Winter Performance
Honey Creek/High Point Craft Sale
- December 20-31: Winter Break



News From the Director

Greetings,

I hope that all of you had a pleasant Thanksgiving weekend and found time to share with friends and family. I'm sure you have noticed that it can be quite dark when you drop your children off in the morning. You've also probably noticed that some of the younger children have a tendency to run from the parking lot to the main entrance when it is raining and cold. Please keep in mind the safety of all children when dropping off or picking up your children, and refrain from parking in the crosswalk so that others have a clear, marked, and safe route to the building.

Honey Creek has two major events taking place this month. Our Curriculum Celebration will be held on December 10 from 5:00-7:00 pm. This is a great opportunity to have your child guide you through the work she or he has been doing for the past few months. Please feel free to invite family, friends, and neighbors to the event.

On December 16, we will hold our Winter Performance at 3:30 pm, when our students will showcase their musical talents. The performance will include piano recitals, instrumental performances by both our fifth grade and middle school bands, a vocal performance by our middle school choir, and the kindergarten through fifth grade performance of *Joust: A Medieval Musical*.

Prior to the performance, the joint Honey Creek/High Point craft sale will be taking place. This is a great time to support both schools while picking up a holiday gift or treat.

Again, please remember that parking along the curb is not permitted at any time. All vehicles are to be parked in the parking lot.

See you soon!

Al

Phoenix Rising Campaign

There is now an option to use a direct debit form to contribute to Phoenix Rising. Using the ACH will make contributing to Phoenix Rising easier for some people! Please return the completed form/voided check to Shellee Almquist or Karen Giltrow. Your information will be kept safe. Thanks!

Board News

The Honey Creek Board of Directors met for its regular meeting on Wednesday, November 17th at 6:15.

Following last month's adoption of the 2010-2011 Board Goals, this month's meeting focused on creating the operational means to meeting these important goals.

The important strategic planning process continues to move forward with the consultation of Steven Nose.

Libby Sheldon
Secretary

Board Kudos

-to the Phoenix Field Hockey Team for a successful 6-1-1 season, with help from Coach Kristin Vespa and the following volunteers, Joanne Beemon and Lauren Hall.

-to the STEM committee for organizing and carrying out a successful "Lunch with an Expert" event

-to our volunteer experts, Elaine Economou, Kemba Mazloomian...for volunteering their time on the behalf of our children

-to Kim Smith, in collaboration with the PTO for a successful Fall Festival

-to Kristin Vespa and her volunteer helpers for planning and the execution of The Presidents Challenge Physical Fitness Test. Special thanks to Marie Askins, Andy Sheibar, Karen Hockley, Christina Dobrick, Sherri Borer, Helen Darling, Amy Storey, Jeanne LaPalm, and Mario Jordan

-to Alex Foulis and the entire Wellness Committee for organizing the Fun Run

-to Marion Van Loo for a successful Book Fair

-to Johnny Thompson for leading the AS-L initiative this year and to the 2009-2010 President's Volunteer Award winners, Abby Knox, Jesse Rubin, Will Brighton, and Saima Harrison.

Honey Creek PTO

Your PTO at Work!

The Honey Creek/ High Point Craft Sale is approaching and the PTO will again be giving each child \$1.00 to spend at the craft fair. We would like to thank Jeannie Crayne and Linda Knox for working together on this event, and we would like to thank all the teachers who are busy planning craft activities for their classrooms to do. The date for the Craft Fair is December 16, and once again that is also the date of the Winter Performance. From the songs I am hearing around the house as my daughter practices, it sounds like this year's performance will be very fun!

Did you know that last year almost \$5000 raised by YOU for the PTO was used to buy the sound system that you will be enjoying at the Winter Performance? Thank you for going out of your way to use scrip and recharge cards so that the school can continue to benefit from the these funds! See you at Winter Performance!

Scrip News

Hello all and Happy Holidays! It is that time of year when visions of sugar plums and scrip cards dance in our heads.

Please note that the **deadline for ordering scrip this month is Wednesday December 8, 2010**. The orders will definitely be available for pickup on Wednesday, December 15th. We will likely email folks when the cards are available. Any questions regarding this should be sent to Alex Foulis at: alexfoulis@hotmail.com.

We will be selling scrip on Wednesday mornings at the front entrance and on Bagel Fridays in the cafeteria. Scrip makes a great gift for family, friends and teachers. If you want to give one of our great teachers a gift card, but are not sure what they would like, we can give you a scrip gift certificate in any amount you would like and you can let them pick it out for themselves.

Alex Foulis is now our lead person on scrip sales and Sue Kirkup will be concentrating on recharge. Sue will probably be making a pest of herself as she makes sure that everyone has all the info on how recharge works at each grocery. Please forgive her and let her know if you are already participating.

November scrip sales were \$11310. Thanks everyone!

Your scrip team.

Honey Creek Community School ACH Authorization Agreements

Direct Payment Withdrawal Authorization Form

I hereby authorize the HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION to initiate debit entries, from my account indicated below, for payment of the amount listed on this agreement. I, also, authorize HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION or CHELSEA STATE BANK to reverse any debits made to such account in error. This authority is to remain in full force and effect until HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford HONEY CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION and CHELSEA STATE BANK a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

Date _____ Name (Print) _____ Financial Institution Name _____

Employee Number/SS# _____ Account Number _____ Financial Institution Number _____

IMPORTANT! CIRCLE TYPE OF ACCOUNT: CHECKING or SAVINGS

Please Withdraw \$ _____ from my account

once a week, on the _____ day of the week
or
once a month, on the _____ day of the month
or
every _____ months on the _____ day of the month

Signature _____ Amount _____

CHECK ONE:
 I am not currently participating in the Direct Payment Withdrawal Program
 ADD - Withdraw my payment from the account shown.*
 I am currently participating in the Direct Payment Withdrawal Program
 CHANGE - Change financial institutions and/or account number.*
 CANCEL - Stop my participation in the program

TAPE YOUR VOIDED CHECK HERE

NOTE: Always get the Financial Institution Number from a check; never use the information from a deposit slip.

Early Elementary News

Early Elementary students have been hard at work preparing for the Curriculum Celebration. As the culmination of our study of the author Patricia Polacco, the children worked in groups to make a diorama that depicts a scene from one of her books. They then shared the understandings they gained from learning about her family history through her books. The children have also been learning about life cycles. After reading many books about the life cycles of people, different kinds of animals, and plants, we visited the Botanical Gardens to observe patterns of life cycles in nature. In the classroom, the children drew pictures and made observations as our painted lady caterpillars went through their life cycle right before our eyes. They then worked in groups to make a poster depicting the life cycle of a butterfly, chicken, frog, or plant to present to the rest of the class and shared the understandings they gained through their study of life cycles.

The work you will see at the Curriculum Celebration demonstrates how we "teach for understanding". When we plan for theme, we take all of the state-mandated goals for social studies and science, and we develop integrated thematic units that focus around a concept and a set of understandings that the students will learn throughout the year. The children are then able to apply these understandings to all areas of learning, rather than just learning a set of facts in isolation. In this year's theme, "Journeys", the concept is patterns, and the understandings are that "learning helps me to see patterns"; "I can make observations to discover patterns"; and "when I discover patterns, I can make informed choices". When you read through the children's reflections on their projects from the unit "My Journey", you will see how they were able to apply these understanding to make informed choices about family patterns and patterns in life cycles.

We also use the concept of patterns and the same understandings in planning our Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) projects. As we begin our unit, "My Journey through School", the students are making observations of patterns they see in our school community. As they discover patterns of things that are not working as well as they could, they are making choices to do service projects to improve their school community. We will have a list of their service project ideas at the Curriculum Celebration.

Middle Elementary News

Thanksgiving may have already passed, but we'd like to reiterate how thankful Mary, Salli and Tammy are for the wonderful support we get from our children's families! From special projects to fruit bowls to help with classroom supplies, parents are always jumping in and lending a hand. We had a great time making pie and popcorn and did lots of math, science and reading with this project. December is when we make projects for our Holiday Craft Fair. Again, thanks to the many parents who have donated time or supplies for our Scribble Cookies and coasters.

In Language Arts, we have continued to read a lot of nonfiction and practice using different organizers to take notes and remember what we read. We then are taking this information and putting it in our own words as we write reports. After nonfiction writing, we will dabble in a bit of poetry and learn how this genre works. Children are increasing their vocabularies, fluency, accuracy and stamina every day during Read to Self. The best way to become a better reader is to read, read, read, read and we do it everyday in the 2/3 classrooms!

All students have gotten practice measuring length, mass and capacity in both the standard and metric systems. There are a lot of units to learn (centimeters, grams, ounces, cups, ect) so take your child on a tour of your house and see what you have that has been or can be measured.

Our focus has been on Social Studies as we learn more about the life of Native Americans in Michigan. We are learning who, when and why explorers came over from Europe. A 2nd grader was heard saying, "Why didn't Columbus just use his GPS?"

The weather is shifting and creating quite a mess on the playground. Please make sure your child has a pair of boots to wear outside and something for inside—slippers, flip flops, tennis shoes, just something that stays clean and dry at all times.

We look forward to seeing you at our Curriculum Celebration on December 10th!

Later Elementary News

Happy holidays, everyone! We hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving and that you all had a wonderful time with friends, family, and feast! It's hard to believe it's already December... so far it's been a relatively uneventful entry into winter - let's hope mother nature continues with this easy transition into the winter season! The following is a brief overview of past, present, and future happenings in 4/5!

Our field trip to the Motown Museum was great! Michigan - and the city of Detroit, in particular - is full of wonderful cultural history. We saw the piano Marvin Gay played when recording some of his most famous hits... we saw the stage uniforms worn by the Jackson Five... and we learned that Motown's influence spanned the globe, influencing musical groups like the Rolling Stones and the Beatles. It was also an awesome chance to experience downtown Detroit.

In social studies students have been working to complete their Pure Michigan advertisements. Currently, students are recoding their ads during technology class. They're also in the process of selecting images for their videos. These ads are turning out great, and we look forward to sharing them with you all at our Curriculum Celebration on December 10th.

In language arts students completed their poetry unit and are now reading the book *Hatchet*, and in science students created landforms using clay - they are still in the process of completing these projects. Students are also learning about fossils, and they recently did a "fossil dig" with chocolate chip cookies - a much tastier dig than the ones that typically take place in Montana and Utah!

Please feel free to contact your child's math teacher if you have any questions about math. We hope you all have a great start to this Holiday season, and we look forward to an enjoyable three week push before our winter break!

Best wishes,
The 4/5 team

Middle School News

Social Studies

In Social Studies, students will be wrapping up the first part of the unit on the Revolutionary War, having finished their Creating a Character historical fiction assignments. Early in the month, they will be conducting a mock trial of Thomas Preston, the British captain in charge during the time of the Boston Massacre. Kids will be analyzing actual testimonies and will be taking on one of several roles: as witnesses, lawyers or Preston himself. We would love to have several parents volunteer to act as judges on Wednesday, December 8th and Thursday, December 9th to determine which side - defense or prosecution - provides a better case.

The rest of the month will be spent on the war itself. If all goes well, we'll have some time before break to begin our unit on the Constitution.

Language Arts

As we enter the month of December, we are beginning to examine the "reader response theory" of literary criticism. Though students may not initially see the connections between text and their own lives, this theory of viewing literature helps to make those processes and connections a little more clear. Before winter break arrives, we will be wrapping up our literature circles on the historical fiction books and will be working on reader response projects. This has been a particularly interesting round of lit circles due to the launch of our classroom Moodle, which has allowed students to take part in online book talks with the other middle school students who are reading the same novel as they are.

Make sure to stop by the gym during curriculum celebration to check out the Mango Street Projects, student writing portfolios, and get a peek at our classroom Moodle!

Mathematics

Course 1 just finished a unit on fraction operations. We will be looking a little deeper at how they fit into our lives with applications (story problems). If you have any real life story problems dealing with fractions feel free to send them my way; the kids don't always believe me when I say "you will use these skills in real life." Next, we will be looking at the relationship between fractions, decimals, and percents and operations with decimals.

Course 2, also just finished a unit on fraction operations, but included in their unit was all rational numbers, like positive and negative fractions and decimals. We will pause here to use those skills, and add in measuring skills, to create a project. Watch for it at the curriculum celebration. Next, we will be reviewing percents and adding many applications with percents.

Course 3 has been working diligently on dilation project which will be presented at the curriculum celebration. We have had over a week and a half in class to work on the project, so we will be moving on to applications with percents; from discounts to tips, percent change to simple interest, and more.

Algebra has finished up a unit in equations and are moving on to inequalities. Hopefully, we will have a chance to begin exploring different functions before winter break.

To see the daily assignments go to <http://honeycreekschool.org/ms/about/mathematics/>.

Cindy

Science

In only a matter of two weeks Honey Creek will be dazzled by the simple machines students are creating in the middle school. Levers, pulleys, screws, wheels, inclined planes, and wedges OH MY! Join us at Curriculum Celebration on Friday, Dec 10th to see these creations in motion.

As part of the engineering process, middle school students are also preparing a technical presentation to deliver during class. Students will reflect upon their process and present why and how they designed their machines as a team.

Towards the end of December, we'll also take a look at and reflect upon how simple machines have evolved over the years, but still an important part of our everyday lives. At the beginning of the year, the middle school moves towards understanding how energy works through sound and light. It will make for an "enlightening" project involving those two other forms of energy, as we try to manipulate them in melodious ways.

Music

Please join us on Thursday, December 16, 2010 at 3:30 as Honey Creek Community School elementary students present: Joust! A Medieval Musical. Imagine a world where all weapons were replaced by musical instruments! Welcome to the legend of King Arthur and his Knights for the Round Table like you've never seen it or heard it before. This medieval marvel is complete with jousting knights, delightful damsels and court jesters. Students are encouraged to dress as knights, kings, queens, princes, and princesses, but please no swords. If students do not wish to dress in costume please have them wear nice dress clothes. Band and choir students need to wear white shirts and black pants for their portion or the concert. The order of the concert will be Band 1, Band 2, Choir, and Elementary Students. We hope to see you there!

Physical Education/ Swimming

This past month I attended the annual three day convention for the Michigan Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. The convention was very inspiring and full of great ideas to use in the gym and pool. We are still plugging away at our Presidential Fitness Testing with some classes finishing and others almost completed. I will share the results with you as soon as I compile all of the data. As we finish our testing, we will be moving into a yoga unit through the end of the year.

In MS swim elective, we have been continuing our stroke refinement, synchronized swimming and just started using Aquatic Phitdeck. Please ask your student what Phitdeck is all about! With the 2,3's and 4,5's we have been using peer feedback in small groups to improve our freestyle, back crawl, and breaststroke. The K/1's have been putting together all the parts we have been working on to complete their front crawl and are working hard to swim a full length without touching the bottom!

Please remember to send your child with gym shoes, goggles, swimsuits, and towels on their appropriate day!!!

Art

Students have been hard at work on their projects, and I've been making sure that everyone has gotten their projects up on Artsonia. A special thank you to all of the parents, family and friends who have visited the site and joined the fan club – your continued support of the art program at Honey Creek is wonderful, and very important.

K/1 students finished their projects in which they learned about lines and created city skylines, and they have now finished a project on texture by making owls. Next we are moving onto some abstract art by learning about Paul Klee. 2/3 classes have been doing some wonderful work in learning about Native American art. They created paper moccasins, paper 'birch bark' containers, and are now finishing up Navajo textiles, which incorporates symmetry, shape, color, and even some yarn! 4/5 classes learned about organic and geometric lines, as well as using contrast, to create bold line designs. They are now moving onto a Vincent van Gogh project in the style of *The Starry Night*. Middle School classes are starting their big Pop Art unit by doing printmaking in the style of Andy Warhol. They just finished up their cereal box advertisements, which act as a fun warm up project to begin the introduction of the Pop Art unit. Artists we will cover in the unit include Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Wayne Thiebaud, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Peter Max. Elective is beginning a project on abstract painting, and studying Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.

If you still haven't had a chance to see our art website, you can go to www.artsonia.com/ [HoneyCreekCommunity1](http://www.artsonia.com/HoneyCreekCommunity1) to check it out. I'm very proud of all of our students, and thank you again for supporting them and their artwork!

~Lindsay Parrish

Technology

In 2/3 Technology, students finished up our Kinetic Sculptures project by watching video of a professional sculptor who uses the engineering design process, looking at photos from the project by accessing our file server. This week we started building presentations about how bicycles work, which emphasizes searching for information as well as building understanding about how systems work.

In 4/5 Technology, students have been learning about recording audio using GarageBand, iMovie and our laptop computers. These are being turned into video advertisements based on the Pure Michigan campaign from a few years ago, which is a project Cam has been leading.

In the MS Technology classes, students finally finished their Camp Tamarack Video Diaries and celebrated by viewing and discussing them. Now that the first round of big MS projects are done, we did a basic Computer Skills session, then started several sessions of Science/Tech/Engineering integrated work, based on the Design Challenge that students are working on for Jon's science class.

The Web Design students are working on completing their first 6 assignments, and are now starting to work on a final project (a standalone website based on a hobby, interest, or AS-L project). They are turning into knowledgeable Web coders! Please be sure to come and see the Technology projects that will be on display during the Curriculum Celebration!

Media Center

In case you hadn't heard, the Book Fair last month made a nice profit for the Media Center- \$250 in books from Scholastic, and \$750 cash. Al and Shellee have approved spending this money on improvements to the MC that will especially benefit the Middle School students and teachers.

Earlier this month, I met with Jon's base class, and had a substantive discussion on their impressions and experiences with the MC, and on what materials and services they'd like to see there in the future. We agreed that more age-appropriate material is needed, and I have taken suggestions from all the Middle School students and have begun purchasing. We also agreed that we are lacking a more Middle School-friendly space. We'll be buying a new, cool rug for the Fiction area, and moving the current rug into the Picture Book area for the younger students to enjoy. We'll also be looking for some soft furniture such as a love seat and maybe an arm chair or two. To celebrate the changes in the MC, the Middle School classes will be treated to a "Reveal" party during their MC time the last week of school before winter break. We'll have all the new stuff available for reserve (everyone gets a look first before check-outs begin) and some snacks.

As you may remember, the MC has a wish-list on Amazon.com that can be used to direct donations to our collections. If you are seeking to give something to the MC, you can search under Honey Creek to locate the list.

Thanks go out to Bill for his help in getting the first MC web page started. It's located in the left-hand column of links on the Honey Creek home page. I'll be putting the

Amazon.com link here, as well as information about new materials, and links to useful references for student researchers and information for teachers.

Please keep your suggestions coming for materials that we need to add to our collections. The aim is to be as strong a support to our curriculum as is possible, and you are the ones who are experts here.

I'll be drafting the outline for our group of student book reviewers to get started soon. The Review Crew will be made up of students on any grade level, writing about their reading and recommending titles to their peers.

Reading kits are now being processed. Each kit consists of a simplified-text book, an audio book version of the text on CD, and a computer disk to accompany the material. I've begun cataloging these items with Adventure books, as the 4/5s are reading this genre now. There is a wide range of topics available, and you can see them in the MC in the Media Collection corner in the hang-up bags.

After School Programs

ON-SITE EXTENDED DAY STUDENT CARE WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING “EARLY DISMISSAL FRIDAYS:” January 28th; February 11th; March 4th & 11th; April 22nd; and May 6th. Please register 1 WEEK BEFORE in order to receive the Early Bird Discount. Also, please remember that you MUST give us 48-hour WRITTEN notice to cancel any pre-registered care without being held financially responsible.

SPECIAL CLUBS There are still openings for the following after school special clubs:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Music Lessons				
	Italian	Choi Kwang Do	Dance	Swim Lessons
	Dance	Theater		

Please pick up a registration form from the after school programs bulletin board or online. **IMPORTANT:** You must give 30-day written notice to change/cancel your regular after care schedule. You may email your changes to: afterschool@hc.wash.k12.mi.us.

4H Basketball Chess Baking/Cooking Baseball Music
 Writing Drums Football Yoga Swim Lessons Art
 Gymnastics Knitting/Sewing Violin Crafts Fitness Theater
 Orchestra Tech Study Skills Soccer Tutoring Scouts/Campfire
 Dance (ballet, hip hop, international, tap) Language Rockets & Robots
 Lessons (Chinese, French, German, Spanish)

PLEASE CARE WHAT YOU WEAR. Recess will be outside everyday. Except for hazardous weather conditions (lightning, severe storms, wind chill below -10° F), we will always go outside for recess. There is limited indoor space that allows the children opportunities to move around energetically. Children should always dress for the weather. Students must wear snow pants, boots, coat, hat, and mittens or gloves in order to play in the snow and sled.

Other News: Curriculum Celebration

Mark your calendars for Honey Creek's Curriculum Celebration on Friday December 10th from 5:00p.m. - 7:00p.m. Please take this opportunity to learn more about the HCCS curriculum, instruction and assessment. Student work and projects will be on display in the following rooms:

- Middle School and Technology in the gym
- 4-5's in the gym
- 2 - 3's in the A Wing Centrum
- K-1's in the pit

Hope you can join us.

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING STARS!

Congratulations to our students who earned the 2009-2010 President’s Volunteer Service Awards: Abby Knox = Gold (100+ hours); Jesse Rubin, Will Brighton, Saima Harrison = Bronze (50+ hours). All students who complete 50+ hours of service in one calendar year are eligible for the award. Students should record their service hours and submit them to their teachers.

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We're on the Web!

<http://honeycreekschool.org>

Need to submit something to next
month's newsletter?

Email submissions to Amber Byers at:

abyers@hc.wash.k12.mi.us

by the last Friday of the month!