

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Assessments

Now that May is here, we will be continuing with State Education Department Tests for all eighth grade students. Statewide, 8th graders will be administered the speaking portion of the Foreign Language Proficiency Test and Intermediate Science Test. In June, 8th grade students will sit for the Intermediate Social Studies Assessment. Local exams for Grade 6 and 7 starts on June 9. Please make sure your child is in regular attendance and prepared for all their classes and tests. Make sure that they get a good night's sleep and they start each day with a good breakfast. Working together, we give our students the best opportunities for success.

Any questions regarding the Intermediate Testing schedule or other assessments can be directed to my office at 775-0303 or to the Middle School Guidance Office at 775-9132.

Teacher Appreciation Day

Tuesday, May 6 is National Teacher Appreciation Day. Originally founded by the National PTA, this is a day for honoring teachers and recognizing the lasting contributions they make to our students' lives. We would like to recognize and thank the teachers at Richard T. Stank Middle School for all the work they do to make every day a learning day for their students.

School Nurses Day

On **Wednesday, May 7th, 2008**, we will be celebrating National School Nurses Day. Sponsored by the National Association of School Nurses, this day is observed annually in May. The purpose of the day is to develop a better understanding of the role of the school nurse in the educational setting as well as to recognize school nurses for their role in our schools. We are most fortunate to have an experienced school nurse, Mrs. Diana Knowles, on the staff of Richard T. Stank Middle School. Mrs. Knowles is to be commended for her continued efforts in meeting the needs of our students. A sincere thank you for her work as we celebrate School Nurse Day this year.

Invention Convention

The following students will be recognized as semi-finalists in the Invention Convention program at Binghamton University Events Center on May 10th: Josh Kinney and Bethany Francis. Congratulations to these outstanding students.

RICHARD T. STANK MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE

The following information is posted in the homerooms and office areas in the school. It is being included in this newsletter so parents/guardians are aware of the Dress Code.

The Safe Schools legislation (**NYS Education Law Sec. 2801**) required every school district in New York State and BOCES to adopt a code of conduct. Part of this policy defines what is considered to be appropriate dress for the school setting. We take pride in the appearance of our students. Your dress reflects the quality of the school, individual conduct and school work. All students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly in clothes that are suitable for school activities. Our Board of Education Policy No. 4125 states the following: A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Recognize that extremely brief garments such as but not limited to tank tops, tube tops, net tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, midriff style tops, plunging necklines (front and/or back) and see-through garments are not appropriate. Shorts and skirts must be at a minimum length with student's fingers and arms placed straight down at their sides.
3. Ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
4. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
5. Not include the wearing of hats/head covers in the classroom except for a medical or religious purpose.
6. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender sexual orientation or disability.
7. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

For your information we have listed the Middle School schedule, as known at this time, for the remainder of this school year. Please note carefully all events and activities as they affect your child's schedule. For example, there are no 6th grade classes on the 19th due to 5th grade orientation or May 23 and 26 for Memorial Day weekend. Also, included are local and regent exam dates that involve all of our students. If you have any questions, give us a call.

May	1	Thursday	Student Council Officer Candidate Speeches - Lunch blocks 1, 3 Meet the Candidates Night – High School Library – 6:30 PM
	2	Friday	Student Council Officer Elections.
	6	Tuesday	National Teacher Appreciation Day Grade 8 Science Written Test – AM PTO Meeting – 6:30 – Library
	7	Wednesday	School Nurses Day
	8	Thursday	7th Grade Teachers - Acceleration - 2:20 Conference Room
	12	Monday	PIT Mtg., 2:20 PM, Conference Room Interim reports mailed this week
	13	Tuesday	Budget Hearing – 7:00 Middle School Cafeteria
	15	Thursday	Guidance Counselors, Pre-Orientation Visit to Brookside Grade 5, AM
	16	Friday	Guidance Counselors Pre-Orientation Visit to Donnelly Grade 5, AM
	19	Monday	5 th Grade Orientation - <u>NO 6th GRADE CLASSES</u>
	20	Tuesday	Counselors to Brookside - Grade 5 Post Orientation Meetings Music & Arts Festival – 6:30 p.m. Middle School Budget Vote - 12:00 - 9:00 p.m.
	21	Wednesday	Counselors to Donnelly - Grade 5 Post Orientation Meetings
	22	Thursday	Class Trips 6 th grade – Cooperstown, NY 7th grade – Albany, NY 8th grade - NYC
	23	Friday	<u>NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND</u>
	26	Monday	<u>NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND</u>
	27-30	Tues.-Fri.	Foreign Language Proficiency Testing begins - Grade 8
	28	Wednesday	Spring Modified Sports Recognition Program – 2:20 Cafeteria 7 th Grade Parent Meeting - Acceleration – 6:30 p.m. – Library
	29	Thursday	Awards Assembly Program - 9:00 a.m. – Gym
June	2	Monday	Middle School Cookout – All lunch blocks <u>S V T A EARLY DISMISSAL - 12:30 P.M.</u>
	3	Tuesday	5 th -6 th Grade Parent Orientation (parents only), 6:30 PM, Cafeteria Intermediate Social Studies Grade 8 – AM
	4	Wednesday	Intermediate Social Studies Grade 8 – AM Spring Sports Banquet, High School Cafeteria – 6 PM
	5	Thursday	Civil War Night, Grade 7- 5:30-6:30 PM
	6	Friday	Activities Trip to Dorney Park
	9	Monday	Local Exams Start, Grade 6 and 7
	10	Tuesday	6th Grade Ice Cream Social and Locker Clean-up - activity period (All 6th grade students must stay), Local exams continue
	11	Wednesday	7th Grade Ice Cream Social and Locker Clean-up - activity period (All 7th grade students must stay), Local exams continue
	12	Thursday	8th Grade Ice Cream Social and Locker Clean-up - activity period (All 8th grade students must stay), Local exams continue
	16	Monday	Last Day Regular Classes.
			<i>SED Assessments/Regents Examinations Begin</i>
	17	Tuesday	a.m. Integrated Algebra (8 th Accelerated)
	20	Friday	a.m. Earth Science (Physical Setting), (8 th Accelerated)
	23	Monday	a.m. Foreign Language Proficiency, 8 th grade

*Please note that trip days are days of regular attendance for students not participating in class or activity trips.

WORD OF THE MONTH: PERSEVERANCE: To keep at something in spite of difficulties, opposition, or discouragement.

Literacy Strategies and Skills – Study Skills

Attention Parents: Fall 2008 sport physicals will be held August 4th thru August 8th, 2008. Make-up physical exams will be August 15 and 19th, 2008. Modified sport practices will begin Tuesday, September 2, 2008. All student-athletes must have a physical in order to participate. Call the Athletic Office at 775-9144 to schedule an appointment for August. Any student wishing to have a physical done, before the end of school, can make an appointment through the Health Office beginning in May.

Printed with permission from Parents Still Make A Difference

Encouraging Reading

Bring reading materials with you everywhere

Want to do your child a wonderful favor? Push the message that reading is one of the best ways to spend any moment of free time.

Your child can read when he is:

- Waiting in line with you at the market.
- Waiting at the doctor's office.
- Waiting for the school bus.
- Riding in the car.

Encourage your child to always have some reading material with him. Keep it in the car, in his backpack, in his coat. Don't worry if it's a book, a magazine or part of the newspaper—even the comics.

Take it a step further by going to the library, checking out some books you think he'd like and keeping them in the car for him.

Boys, especially, need encouragement to read. They tend to like reading material about sports, the outdoors, collecting and hobbies. They also like science fiction, mystery, adventure and fantasy.

Be sure to have reading material for yourself, too. Your example is a powerful motivator.

Reprinted with permission from the May 2008 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2008 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Vicki Poretta and Marian Edelman Borden, *Mom's Guide to Raising a Good Student* (Alpha Books, 212-366-2000, www.alphabooks.com).

Screen Time

Studies show that too much TV can lead to learning problems

As the parent of a middle schooler, you should be aware that too much TV may harm your preteen.

Researchers agree that preteens should watch no more than two hours of television a day. And with summer right around the corner, now is a great time to set limits on screen time.

Here are specifics from a recent study, published in a medical journal about child and teen health. The doctors who published the study researched a group of teens for many years. The study began when the teens were 14 and ended when they were adults in their mid-30s.

The doctors found that:

- Teens who watched TV for three hours or more each day were more likely to develop learning and attention problems.
- Teen problems included not doing homework, not liking school, being bored in school and getting poor grades.
- Video games have a similar effect as TV.
- Some teens dropped out of high school. Others finished but did not go on to other education. This was not true of every teen in the study.
- It didn't matter whether the teens grew up in rich, poor or middle-class families. Watching a lot of TV put teens from all of these types of families at risk for learning and attention problems.

Reprinted with permission from the May 2008 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2008 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Jeffrey G. Johnson, Ph.D. and others, "Extensive Television Viewing and the Development of Attention and Learning Difficulties During Adolescence," Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/161/5/480>.

Encouraging Writing

Encourage your preteen to write over the summer

It's important for your child to write over the summer. Summer writing should be purposeful yet fun. Some quick and easy ways to keep your child in "writing shape" include:

- Letters. Encourage your child to correspond with a relative or friend. Email is okay, but instant messaging is a last choice. Encourage your child to write a paragraph, or at least a few complete sentences.
- Lists and schedules. Jotting down a shopping or to-do list may not improve your child's sentence structure. But it reinforces the important idea of writing for a purpose.
- Journals. Give your child a journal at the beginning of the summer. Ask her to write in it to record her thoughts, experiences and emotions.
- Notes. Leave regular notes for your child—at her place at the table, on her pillow, taped to the bathroom mirror. Ask her to write back to you.
- Poetry, prose and lyrics. Perhaps on a rainy day, ask your child to turn off the video games and try expressing herself through a poem or song. The idea of writing a song may be especially appealing to middle schoolers, for whom music is often important.

Reprinted with permission from the May 2008 issue of *Parents Still make the difference!*® (Middle School Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2008 The Parent Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Lynn Dean, “Keep your kids writing this summer,” Partnership for Learning, www.partnershipforlearning.org/article.asp?ArticleID=91.