

Menomonie Middle School Newsletter

November/December 2015

Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 11 - Veteran's Day Program: 9:45am

Nov. 11-18 - Book Fair

Nov. 12 – Conferences 4-7:30 pm

Nov. 17 – Conferences 4-7:30 pm

Nov. 25-27 - No School

Dec. 1 – MMS Site Council Meeting 4-6pm

Dec. 5 – Science Olympiad Invitational @ Boyceville

Dec. 7 – 6th Grade Music Concerts: 7pm

Dec. 8 – 7th Grade Music Concerts: 7pm

Dec. 15 – 8th Grade Music Concerts: 7pm

Dec. 18 – Gymnastics Performance Night: 6pm

Dec. 22 - Holiday Tour(Bel Canto/Holiday Groups)

Dec. 24 – Jan. 3: No School/Winter Break

Jan. 21 – MMS Site Council meeting 4-6pm

Feb. 18 – MMS Site Council meeting 4-6pm

April 14 - MMS Site Council meeting 4-6pm

May 10 - MMS Site Council meeting 4-6pm

Greetings from Principal Everson!

Relentless Learning Opportunities at MMS

"Learning is not a race" at Menomonie Middle School. It is our middle school purpose and obligation to warmly insist and command the learning and achievement of all grade level standards. It is important that we honor individual student learning "when" it occurs rather than "if" it occurs. As we prepare each student for high school course work and beyond, it is our mission to ensure that each student is held accountable to learn and achieve all essential grade level learning standards.

Have you ever wondered why teachers provide the opportunity for a student to re-take an assessment or re-do an assignment? One might understand the notion of re-dos and re-takes better by comparing course work and course assessments to household chores assigned to our children at home. Imagine assigning your child to do the dishes and fold the towels by 8:00 pm. What might you do if this work was not done on time? Perhaps the first thing you would do is ask "why" the work was left incomplete. If the answer was "I didn't understand what I was assigned to do" you might re-explain or model how the work is to be done. If the answer was "I forgot" you might re-assign the work and insist that it be done according to a new deadline. It is doubtful that you would simply "forgive" the work or give your child a "zero."

Teachers have an excellent intuitive sense about which students are "unable" to complete assignments and/or assessments because they need more time and support, as compared to students who are "unwilling" to complete assignments and/or assessments due to a poor work ethic. Students who "can't" versus students who "won't" need different types of support. Menomonie Middle School is prepared to provide relentless learning opportunities for both types of learning challenges.

Are you interested in more information about why teachers allow students to re-take or re-do assignments and assessments? If so, consider reading Rick Wormeli's article titled "Redos and Retakes Done Right" included in pages 14-18 this newsletter.

Standards Based Grading What Do These Numbers Mean?

The measurement of individual student learning per course has evolved over the past decade. We know so much more about teaching and learning than we did a decade ago. A glance at our current report card will reflect these advancements. Report card statements and grade marks can be overwhelming and a bit confusing. Our MMS Site Council is working with several parents/guardians to review our grading practices and report card. Efforts are underway to develop a deeper understanding between school and home about what standards based grading is and what it is not. We are also discussing improvements to the look and length of our middle school report card.

The next time you find yourself confused about our grading model, consider the "Bike Analogy" – included on pages 19-25 of this newsletter. This analogy may help you compare traditional grade marks (A, B, C, D, F) to our current and progressive numerical scale (4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1.5, 1, .5, LE). This numerical scale is used in our district in grades Kindergarten through grade 8.

You may also consider joining our MMS Site Council to participate in this year's on-going conversation about grading.

Our MMS Site Council minutes are posted on our MMS website after each after-school meeting under Featured News.

Learn On, Principal Stacey Everson



Student Drop Off

Please remember to use caution when dropping off your children in the morning. Unfortunately, we have had a couple of close calls recently as people accelerate through the open lane. People are using the open lane as they have either already dropped the students off or they are attempting to get to the front of the drop off line. For the safety of the students, we ask that students are dropped off in the right lane next to the sidewalk. Recently, we have had an increased number of people choosing to drop off students in the staff parking lot. We do not encourage this practice as it results in students crossing through the traffic lanes. This has become even more dangerous as the people in the right lane have to look over their left shoulder anticipating traffic accelerating from behind. Their eyes should be focused ahead on the pedestrians crossing from the staff parking lot. This becomes even more dangerous anticipating the upcoming shorter days and ice covered roads of winter. We also have more students being dropped off in the winter versus walking and riding bikes.

Due to drainage and plowing issues, we are unable to install permanent speed bumps. However, we are investigating the possibility of utilizing a non-permanent form of a speed bump. The gate in the south end of the staff parking lot will also be closed off to limit vehicles cutting diagonally across the staff parking lot. However, neither of these solutions is more impactful than your ability to drive cautiously during the morning drop off. Thankfully, the large majority of you exercise caution, patience, and proper protocol each day during drop off. We appreciate your cooperation.



Hello Parents and Guardians:

We have found some helpful information for you regarding internet safety, from the website **Kidshealth.org** - an excellent resource you may wish to visit on-line.

We all love our personal computers, smartphones, tablets, and countless other electronic devices. They've changed how we live, work, study, and play.

But as hard as it is to imagine life without them, these tools come with some downsides. Our children are sometimes confronted with challenges to their safety, their self-esteem, and their moral compasses.

Here are two of the topics of high interest to parents:

*The Internet is a wonderful resource, but access to it has its hazards for kids. Here's how to make sure your child surfs the web safely.

Internet Safety

http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net_safety.html

*Cyber bullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass or target another person. Here are some suggestions on what to do if online bullying has become part of your child's life.

Cyber bullying

http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/cyberbullying.html

There are several other excellent topics related to your children's wise use of technology in this website. Please take a minute to explore this excellent resource. We must work together to empower our students to be safe when using technology.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call us at 232-1673.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Horner and Mr. Mountin

DO YOU WANT MORE SUPPORT AS A PARENT?



Hosted by the Family Resource Center in collaboration with the Dunn County Partnership for Youth and Crossroads Community Center

Come talk with other parents who may have the same concerns as you!

Meetings will be held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month starting

November 17th 5:30-7:30pm

at Crossroads Community Center, 710 4th Street E, Menomonie

Meeting topics will include daily parental concerns, such as conflict resolution, positive discipline, school readiness, and much more!

Registration is required (by the first Tuesday of each month) to receive:

Free Dinner!
Take home incentives!
Free Childcare!

Register with Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or by email at marie@frcec.org







Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or <u>marie@frcec.org</u> Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or <u>marie@frcec.org</u> Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org Marie Guzman at 715-828-2440 or marie@frcec.org



Hello from the "Encore-ner"

Mrs. Brenner teaches Art: The purpose of Art is to provide 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students with the opportunity to develop and apply the key concepts within Art. Key concepts include: printmaking, mixed media, drawing, ceramics, acrylic painting, and sculpture. Students will benefit from these courses through hands on experiences, while being exposed to aspects of creativity and originality. Student's artwork is then displayed throughout the school.

Miss Ehrmantraut teaches FACS: Family and Consumer Science/Health is an awesome experience for all students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. We learn about many key concepts concerning families, careers, the human body, food and nutrition, and even sewing. Students will master hands on techniques linked with the FACS standards. 6th grade students focus heavily on families and how they are a part of their family. 7th grade focuses greatly on Health and how the body works. 8th grade has four main units including career research, pregnancy and human growth, sewing, and nutrition.

Mrs. Galbreath teaches Keyboarding/Computer Apps/Business: 6th Grade Keyboarding students utilize the touch-typing method to increase the words per minute they can type and accuracy.

7th Grade Computer Application students discuss digital literacy, build websites that contain content related to savings, spending and investing, work with Microsoft Excel and do an introduction to computer code.

8th Grade Business students run our Middle School store and also write a cover letter and resume to use for a job interview for a position at the school store.

Señora Lemanske teaches World Cultures/Spanish: The 6th grade World Cultures, 7th and 8th grade Spanish courses offer many interesting activities and lessons. The main goal of each class is to familiarize students with the French, German and Spanish cultures and languages. Through these courses, each student will gain an appreciation, a feeling of success and acceptance of the study of world languages and cultures. At this time, students are getting ready to celebrate the "Day of the Dead" an Indo-Hispanic holiday that encourages appreciation for family and a love for art and folklore as no other holiday.

Mr. Phillips teaches Technology and Engineering Education: In Technology and Engineering Education, the 7th grade students are learning about STEM and engineering and the importance they have on our society. Activities and projects emphasize measurement, communicating through sketches and drawings, design, and 3D modeling for production. In 8th grade the focus is on mechanisms, robotics, and programming.

We're here to help you! Sometimes it can be confusing to know who to talk to. Here are a few of the main phone numbers and people to talk to.

Main School Number: (715) 232-1673

Attendance Secretary - Betty Cruz - ext. 30100 Student will not be at school Student is leaving school early—appointment Student has a planned absence—vacation Have a question about your student's attendance.

Nurse's Office - Cindy Beaupre-ext. 30103 Student is sick and would like to leave school Questions regarding medications and plans

Food Service - Julie Neubrand - (715) 232-2794

Food Service is located at the High School Questions about lunch accounts

Guidance Office - Jason Mountin - ext. 30108 Questions regarding students in Grade 6 and Grade 7 - Silver Side

Guidance Office - Nancy Horner - ext. 30112 Questions regarding students in Grade 7 - Gold Side and Grade 8

Main Office - Tina Liestman-ext. 30111

Have a question about your student's fees—tech, print fee, athletic/club fees, etc.

Parent/Family Online Access

Online Family Access is available for all families in the district. To obtain a username and password, contact our district office at (715) 232-1642. Please, for security reasons, do NOT share your parent login with your child. Go to www.sdmaonline.com and click on the Family Access Login link on the left side. You can access your child's attendance, grades, fees and lunch balance.

Attendance Reminder

Good school attendance is one predicator of academic success. All Menomonie Middle School students are required to be in attendance from 7:43 am to 2:54 pm. Additionally, students are reminded that they have a maximum of 10 school days that can be missed during the school year for personal illness, religious services, and family activities. If a student needs to attend an appointment during school hours, a note from a parent/guardian or that business office needs to be turned into the Attendance Office the morning of your appointment so we can get your student a pass and that it does not count against those 10 days. If your child is absent, please call the Attendance Office.

Parents

Sign up to receive daily announcements. newsletters, and other important updates. The link is available on the middle school website.

Go to Parents & Community, then to Parent Tools. You will see a drop down menu listing Daily Announcements. Click on that link. This will take you to the Middle School Announcements page. On the right side is a Subscribe button. Click on that and follow the prompts.

Please remember to update your information, emergency contacts, and fill out permission forms on Skyward Family Access for your student(s). This is important for field trip permission, student and bus code of conduct, video/photographing permission, computer network agreement, health services standing orders, and more. You can also pay online fees for the middle school and sports fees.

Free and Reduced Lunch

Families who may be experiencing financial hardship are ree & Reduced encouraged to apply for the free and reduced lunch program. Guidelines change and family circumstances change as well. Applications are available in the middle school office, as well as the district office. Many times our families are struggling to make "ends meet" and if they are eligible for assistance, it could really help their family. In addition, students who meet free and reduced eligibility are often times eligible for other programs. However, if an application is not submitted, they cannot receive that service. To learn more about eligibility criteria or receive an application, contact the Food Service Office at (715) 232-2794 ext. 42194.

Do You Have Questions About How to Use "Skyward Family Access"?

If you have questions about how to use our Skyward grading data base "Family Access", you are not alone. Parents/guardians often have questions or difficulty when navigating this site. Do not hesitate to contact our front office for guidance when this occurs. We are ready and willing to assist you. To login to Family Access, go to the Parents & Community tab, go to Parent Tools and a drop down menu will come up with Skyward Family Access on it. Click on this option to access Family Access.





<u>2015-16 Core Value Poster Winner</u> <u>Announced!</u>

Congratulations to Deirdre Corr – this year's winner of our core value poster contest. Deirdre's poster was voted on by her peers and teachers. We had an amazing 24 entries this year! Thank you to all who submitted your posters. They were all great and represented our schools well.



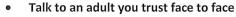
MMS Is Tree Nut / Peanut Allergy Aware

Severe allergies related to tree nuts and peanuts and other related food products are on the rise. To protect the health and safety of all students who experience this type of lifethreatening allergic reaction to tree nuts, peanuts, and/or products containing trace elements of these nuts- MMS is a tree nut / peanut free school zone. Students and families are reminded to refrain from the consumption or use of nuts at MMS. Your awareness and cooperation could save a human life!



MMS IS A BULLY FREE SCHOOL ZONE

Principals, teachers, counselors, and other staff members at Menomonie Middle School are always willing to listen to and consider the ideas, concerns, and needs of our students and parents/guardians. Several options for communication exist:



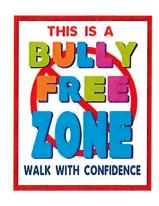
Choose an adult staff member you trust and talk! We like talking with students and parents/guardians! If the adult you trust seems busy, ask to set up an appointment to share later.

- Call an Adult You Trust
 - Using the telephone to communicate is perfectly OK!
- Write to an Adult You Trust

If talking face to face or on the telephone is too hard, write a message to an adult you trust. Written messages can be delivered to an office or classroom. We will respond to you in a timely manner.

- Use Our MMS Idea Box
 - Written messages can be dropped off in our Idea Boxes located in the middle school hallways. Paper forms are available next to each box.
- Send an Email to an Adult You Trust
 - Sending an email to an adult you trust is a safe and easy way to share. We will respond in a timely manner.

All students should feel safe at school! No concern is too small! "Stand up" for yourself and "stand up" for your friends and peers. Together, we can eliminate bullying in our school!





Lost and Found

Please encourage your child to check the *Lost and Found* tables in both the cafeteria hallway and the locker room. We have a collection of items that will go to a needy organization periodically if they are not claimed.

Yearbooks are on sale now!

Yes, you can still order a yearbook. The easiest way to order is to log onto Jostensyearbooks.com. The current price is \$21 for a standard yearbook. This price will go up to \$23 after November 24th. They will accept credit or debit cards and electronic checks online.

A second way is to pick up an order form in front of the office, or at the entrance of each pod, or from Mrs. Creviston in room 414. Then, return the form to Mrs. Creviston, or the office, with a check made out to Menomonie Middle School or send EXACT cash. Your child's yearbook order will be entered and your child will come home with a receipt.

Also, you can help build our school's yearbook and digital Time Capsule. Parents and students are invited to share and view Menomonie Middle School photos by going to ReplayIt.com or by downloading the free ReplayIt app available for iPhone and Android. This website is the home for all of the photos from our school year, check it out today! Go to www.ReplayIt.com or with the free ReplayIt app.

Wearhook Hill

Don't forget, when you purchase a yearbook, it now comes with access at the end of the year to the digital Time Capsule, where you will be able to see all the extra photos that were uploaded on ReplayIt.com for years to come.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Schemenauer at Oaklawn at 715-232-3798 or Mrs. Creviston at the Middle School at 715-232-1673.



Music Notes



Thank you to all who participated in and purchased items for our Magazine Fundraising Sale this fall. Music is an important part of your child's growth and development in the Middle School. With your continued support, we are able to provide educational experiences for our students that will impact them for years to come.

We are busy getting ready for our Veteran's Day program with the Winter Concerts right around the corner. Please see below for a current schedule of our upcoming events.

| Nov 11 | Veteran's Day Program | 9:45am | MMS Gym |
|--------|--|--------------|------------------------|
| Dec 7 | 6 th grade band/choir/orch concert | 7pm | MMS Gym |
| Dec 8 | 7 th grade band/choir/orch concert | 7pm | MMS Gym |
| Dec 15 | 8 th grade band/choir/orch concert | 7pm | MMS Gym |
| Dec 22 | Holiday Tour (Bel Canto & Holiday Groups) | 8am-3pm | Elementary Schools |
| Feb 12 | 8th Grade trip to see Newsies | 3pm-midnight | MOA & Orpheum Theater |
| Mar 9 | 6th Grade Trip to MN Orchestra | 8am-2:30pm | Orchestra Hall |
| Mar 4 | 7 th Grade trip to see Gypsy | 3pm-midnight | MOA & Pantages Theater |
| Apr 2 | Solo & Ensemble Festival | 9am-4pm | EC North |
| Apr 21 | 8 th Grade B/C/O Large group Festival | TBD | McDonnel HS |
| May 17 | 6-8 Band concert | 7pm | MMS Gym |
| May 16 | 6-8 Orch concert | 7pm | MMS Gym |
| May 19 | 6-8 Choir Concert | 7pm | MHS Auditorium |

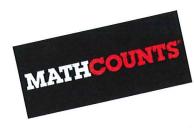




The Menomonie Middle School garden harvest celebrated a giant success. Throughout the month of September, students harvested 12 raised beds of produce: carrots, potatoes, onions, butternut squash and pumpkins. Students gobbled up their rewards served in school lunches throughout the month. A stew was created with carrots, onions and potatoes. Carrots were sliced into many meals and potatoes mashed for side dishes. Students spooned up roasted butternut squash and onions seasoned meals. The butternut squash harvest overwhelmed the kitchen and several luscious squash were donated to Stepping Stones. Twenty plus pumpkins became painted world globes in seventh grade social studies class.

A special thanks to Mrs. Boettcher and Mrs. Sabota for cleaning and preparing the fresh produce.

Students will continue eating healthy, fresh lettuce through the cold winter. Brooke Bistodeau and Tanner Steinlicht from Body Works donated a hydroponic Garden Tower. The six foot tower stands in the seventh grade pod. The care and harvesting of the lettuce matches with the seventh grade cell biology study.



The MathCounts season is upon us! Students that like math, problem solving and working as a team are encouraged to check it out! In MathCounts students work math problems individually and as a team. MathCounts is an activity open to students grades 6-8. Our first practice will be November 4th from 3-4:15pm in Ms. Dombrowski's room in the 7th grade silver pod. Practices will continue weekly on Wednesdays from 3-4:15pm in Ms. Dombrowski's room.

A large congratulations to Dyllen Brewer,
Christina Durrstein, Victoria Harmston,
Kib Lee, Anneka Rogers and Brianna
Thompson. They were all selected to read
their original creative fiction at the
Chippewa Valley Young Author
Chippewa Valley Young Author
Showcase. They read their writings on
October 18 at the Little Grand Theater in
Eau Claire.



Gymnastics Performance Night

* December 18 at 6:00 PM

The gymnastics team does not travel for competition so please join us as our gymnasts "show off" some of the skills they have learned. We have 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who will be performing on the floor exercise, balance beam, uneven parallel bars and vault. Our program is designed to prepare middle school students for competition at the high school level. We have all levels of ability. You will be impressed with the routines these students have put together and the skills they have acquired in such a short time. You will be entertained!

The performance night will be held in the large gyms at the Middle School on Dec. 18 at 6:00 pm.



The third annual Smart Girls Rock! Event was held at the Menomonie Middle School on October 22, 2015. Although this was the third time the event had been held, it was the first time it had been held for middle school aged students. Previous events had catered to high school freshmen and sophomores.

110, 6th thru 8th grade women were guests as well as 20 female mentors and 3 faculty. A special presentation given by Stout's Engineers without Borders Club talked about the work they do in foreign countries to provide safe drinking water to those populations. After their presentation, a speed mentoring portion was conducted with the girls moving station to station every few minutes to learn about different STEM careers. Some of the careers represented were Architecture, Dentistry, Medicine, Packaging, medical device design and a variety of manufacturing roles in different industries.







Local businesses represented were Andersen Windows, Phillips Medisize, 3M, Mayo Health Systems, Trimble Dental, Stout, and Cedar Corp. It is great to have so much talent in such a small radius to the school. The event was sponsored by a grant from the Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation.

A favorite stop for the students was the photo booth, where the young women were encouraged to dress up as an engineer and pose for a photo. Props included a very large wrench, hard hats, clip board, clean room suit and calipers.









At the conclusion of the speed mentoring portion of the event, the students tried their hand at making glow in the dark slime. Since it was close to Halloween, it only seemed fitting. Most of the slime turned out to be the correct consistency but some got something resembling colored water with globs.

We look forward to hosting another event in the spring for a larger group.

At the end of the event we ask the students to write a Thank You note to get feedback. Here are some of the comments from the students who attended the event.

- Thank you for coming, and telling us what you do for your jobs. I want to become an engineer like you guys. Math is one of my favorite subjects.
- Thank you for coming to our school and talking about your career. I had a really fun time and I hope you come back next year! Some of your careers you talked about really interested me and I might want to be some of these people when I'm older!
- Thank you mentors for teaching us about different careers. I think I want to be an engineer.
- Dear Smart Girls Rock- Thanks for teaching me so much about all the cool career possibilities for women! Before the event I didn't even consider the careers you talked about, but now I will. They were all very interesting!
- Thank you for coming and showing us about your jobs! We are so happy that you came! I can't wait til I get to do something like that for my career!
- Thank you for coming to our school and educating us on why smart girls rock!

Notes from the Health Office...

Protect your family this flu season (Health Partners Today – Fall 2007)

- Get a flu shot in Oct. or Nov., but even Dec. isn't too late. Flu season usually begins in Jan. and can last through May Contact your health care provider regarding flu shots
- Encourage family members to wash their hands often
- Do not share food, beverages, lip moisturizers or other oral products



Immunizations – Parents of students who are behind schedule or have no record on file should have received legal notice(s). This notice states a deadline to provide proof of immunization requirements or an "in process" status. Failure to provide proof of the requirements can result in exclusion from school. The new Tdap and varicella requirements affect all middle school students for the 2015-16 school year. Thank you to all the families who have already submitted proof of these new requirements.

"Vaccines have cut down the risk of many childhood illnesses by more than 95 percent," says Priya Sampathkumar, M.D., a Mayo Clinic infectious diseases specialist. When you vaccinate, you're not only keeping your own child safe, but also other people who won't be exposed." (Mayo Clinic Hometown Health – Summer 2013)

Emergency Cards

Several students still need to turn in a completed emergency card to the school office (names are posted in each grade level). Please ask your student to bring a card home so a parent can complete this important information. Please remember to notify the office of any changes in work or cell phone numbers throughout the school year (MMS 715-232-1673). If your child becomes ill or injured at school, contacting a parent can be very difficult if we do not have current or up-to-date contact numbers.

Get the facts about CONCUSSIONS

All concussions are serious.

Most concussions do not cause loss of consciousness.

Concussions are common on and off the playing field — any spill, bump or blow to the head can result in a concussion. They are particularly common in activities on wheels, including bicycling, skateboarding and in-line skating.

Doctors estimate that approximately one-half of all concussions are unreported and untreated, although increased education and awareness have improved recognition and treatment.

Children generally take longer to recover from a concussion.

The risk of returning to play too soon after a concussion is another, more serious, brain injury and possible long-term consequences.

Concussions are more prevalent in women than in men, though researchers aren't sure why.

Concussion symptoms evolve over time, so it's important to continue checking for symptoms for several days or weeks.

Helmets and mouth guards are important, but equipment alone doesn't prevent concussions.

There's no timetable or cookbook approach to treating a concussion. Treatment is individualized based on the patient's progress through gradual return to school and physical activity.

Michael Stuart, M.D.



After a concussion:

- Immediately remove the person from play for assessment (see concussion ABCs, right).
- Get evaluated by a health care provider with experience in treating concussions.
- Get ongoing follow-up care with a health care provider because concussion symptoms evolve over time.
- Rest the body and brain by limiting or avoiding physical activity, homework, texting and video games.
- After symptoms start to improve, work with your health care provider to add some light physical and brain activity until recovery is complete.

mayoclinichealthsystem.org



Know your concussion ABCs

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a simple formula to remember when you suspect a concussion: ABC.

A – Assess the situation.

Has there been a forceful blow to the head or a blow to the body that caused rapid movement of the head?

B – Be alert for signs and symptoms.

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These can include headache or pressure in the head, nausea or vomiting, balance problems or dizziness, double or blurry vision, sensitivity to light or noise, feeling sluggish, groggy or dazed, memory or attention problems, confusion, numbness or tingling, sleep problems and mood changes.

C - Contact a health care professional.

See someone with experience in treating concussions for a treatment plan.

5



COLLECTION CORNER!

All of these FUNDRAISERS are from items you ALREADY buy!

Coordinators: MaryAnn Hitz and Lynn Goss

Box Tops For Education



Found on almost every item in your refrigerator, freezer or pantry and much much more! Cut them out & bring them in!! A complete list can be found at www.boxtops4education.com. We can earn money from collecting Box Tops cut from participating products and from the Marketplace, where we can earn eBox Tops! See separate flyer for participating products and online companies! It is an easy way to give money to our school without spending any extra money! Any questions, contact www.lynn.goss@msd.k12.wi.us

Labels for Education



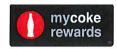
The item will state LABELS FOR EDUCATION. Some of the popular items are: Campbell's soups, Swanson, SpaghettiO's, V-8, Prego, Bic products, etc...... A complete list can be found at www.labelsforeducation.com

Milk Caps - MILK MOOLA



Kwik Trip has a 5¢ top or Proof of Purchase symbol of their milk products. Please collect MILK MOOLA caps and labels for our school. Rinse the milk caps (leave labels on milk caps) or cut out the whole 5¢ strip (make sure entire label is intact) and bring them in. So keep collecting the MILK MOOLA caps and strips!

Coke Rewards



The Coca Cola company has a program "Coke Rewards". Bring in the codes found in the caps and on the inside cardboard packs of Coke products. Some of the Coke products include Coke, Sprite, DaSani, Powerade, Barq's Root Beer, Fanta, Minute Maid, etc. A complete list of Coke products can be found at the website, www.mycokerewards/schools.

You may also enter the codes yourself and donate your points to Menomonie Middle School.

Our Family UPC Codes



With the Our Family® program, you can raise money for education — for your Menomonie Middle School. It's easy to do — just save the UPC barcodes from Our Family products. For product information go to http://ourfamilyfoods.com/labels-for-learning.

If you have any questions regarding any of these fundraising projects, feel free to contact either Lynn Goss or Mary Ann Hitz.

Thank You Lynn Goss lynn_goss @msd.k12.wi.us

Mary Ann Hitz maryann_hitz@msd.k12.wi.us

Redosand Retakes Done Right

Allowing students to redo assignments and assessments is the best way to prepare them for adult life.

Rick Wormeli

arrel plagiarized one paragraph in his health class essay on the dangers of secondhand smoke. Carla came to after-school review sessions and followed every direction, but she only scored a *D* on her English exam. Marco was distracted by other things when he did his history homework: It's full of incomplete thoughts and careless errors that he doesn't normally make.

All three students would like to redo their assignment or assessment properly, and they would like to receive full credit for the new versions they submit. All three cases put our instructional mind-set to the test.

Many teachers reason that they are building moral fiber and preparing

students for the working world by denying them the opportunity to redo assignments and assessments—or if they do allow retakes, by giving only partial credit for redone assessments even when students have demonstrated full mastery of the content. These are the same teachers who set a deadline for submitting work and then give students who do not meet the deadline a zero, thinking that the devastating score will teach them responsibility.

In reality, these practices have the opposite effect: They retard student achievement and maturation. As hope wanes, resentment builds. Without hope—especially hope that teachers see the moral, competent, and responsible self inside them, waiting to shed its immature shell—students disengage from the school's mission and the adults

who care for them. Our education enterprise is lost.

One Speed for All?

Schools that acquiesce to the factory model of schooling perpetuate an ineffective, age-based curriculum: "Eleven-year-olds learn this topic; 12-year-olds learn that topic"; "No, Shadnoosh, you can't learn that until next year"; "Mike, why didn't you learn this last month like the rest of your class?" When learning doesn't happen on schedule, these schools tend to blame students or circumstances.

Teachers do need schematics for moving students through the established curriculum. But as we apply sound pedagogy and respond to real students' individual needs, blind adherence to pacing mandates makes little sense.

The goal is that *all* students learn the content, not just the ones who can learn on the uniform time line. Curriculum goals don't require that every individual reaches the same level of proficiency on the same day, only that every student achieves the goal. Appointing next Friday as the official test date is an arbitrary decision made for clerical convenience. Teachers do this out of survival, of course; because we teach large groups of students, we sometimes subordinate effective practices because that appears to be the only realistic way to move students through the system.

Although we can't do it 100 percent of the time, allowing students to redo both assignments and assessments for particularly important standards and outcomes *most* of the time is highly effective. This approach reflects what we know about successful learning, and it better prepares students for the world beyond school.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Consider the Olympic runner poised to begin the race for the gold medal in the final heat. The pistol goes off, and the runners push their bodies to the breaking point, all of them dashing across the finish line within seconds of one another. Our runner comes in fourth, however, so there's no medal for him.

Does he get a "do-over" of that race? No—and that's proper at this level of competition. Remember, he's not in the *learning-to-run* stage of development; he's in the *proficient-runner* stage.

How did our runner become so competent at racing this event that he was found worthy of representing his country in the Olympics? He ran it dozens or even hundreds of times prior to today's race. And each time he ran it, his time was not an aggregated compilation

Irresponsible, forgetful, and inattentive students need us to be in their face more, not less.

of all his digressions (bad times) woven together with his more successful times. Can you imagine telling a runner that his earlier 68.74 seconds from two years ago would be averaged with his new and improved 51.03 seconds, and that this time mash-up would be his official label as a runner—that he would be evaluated as nothing more than the composite of his digressions and successes?

True competence that stands the test of time comes with reiterative learning. We carry forward concepts and skills we encounter repeatedly, and we get better at retrieving them the more we experience them. Why, then, would we impose on schools a policy that prohibits such an effective practice? Doing one successful compare-and-contrast essay in 8th grade does not mean we can do one in 10th grade, especially if we never practice writing such

write a lot of essays in order to become proficient in essay writing. We become adept at analyzing politics by analyzing a lot of politics, and we get better at playing the guitar by playing the guitar a lot, not by playing it for a week and putting it aside.

It's only sensible, then, to expect different things of students during the learning process than we expect of them when it's time to demonstrate final proficiency or become fully certified. Applying expectations for a high level of competency to students who are in the process of coming to know content is counterproductive, even harmful.

Conveyer-Belt Learning

The problem, of course, is that teachers don't feel they have the luxury of revisiting content and skills to create that proficiency. We may believe the

best we can do is to accept a superficial and fragile demonstration on



a single, snapshot test and convince ourselves that the score earned is an accurate measure of the student's longterm capacity.

By some estimates, it would take to grade 22 to teach the curriculum currently listed for grades K–12 in the United States. Anxious about this curriculum overload, we run our classes by alternating between admonishments: "Here's a bunch of stuff you have to learn; now take a test. Here's the next bunch of stuff you have to learn; now take the next test." When students fail to learn content on this conveyor belt, we tell them, "We don't have time to go back and teach it to you. Take the low grade and move on." This is no way

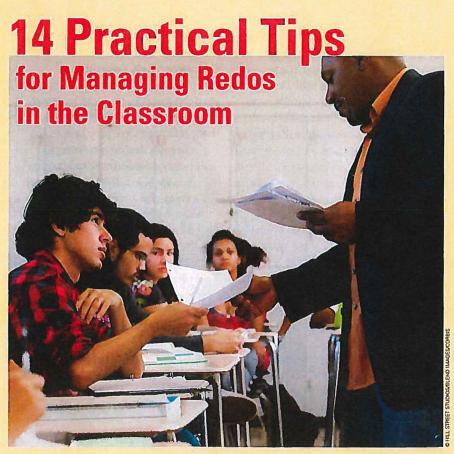
to treat a child's future or conduct our profession.

Preparing Students for the Real Adult World

The teacher who claims to be preparing students for the working world by disallowing all redos forgets that adult professionals actually flourish through redos, retakes, and dovers. Surgeons practice on cadavers before doing surgeries on live patients. Architects redesign building plans until they meet all the specifications listed. Pilots rehearse landings and take-offs hundreds of times in simulators and in solo flights before flying with real passengers. Lawyers practice debate and

analysis of arguments before litigating real cases. Teachers become much more competent and effective by teaching the same content multiple times, reflecting on what worked and what didn't work each time.

LSAT. MCAT. Praxis. SAT. Bar exam. CPA exam. Driver's licensure. Pilot's licensure. Auto mechanic certification exam. Every one of these assessments reflects the adult-level, working-world responsibilities our students will one day face. Many of them are high stakes: People's lives depend on these tests' validity as accurate measures of individual competence. All of them can be redone over and over *for full credit*. Lawyers who finally pass the bar exam



- 1. Ask students who redo assignments to submit the original attempt with the new one and to write a brief letter comparing the two. What is different, and what did they learn as a result of redoing the work?
- 2. Reserve the right to give alternative versions of the assessment if you think students will simply memorize a correct answer pattern or set of math answers. Don't be afraid to make the redone versions more demanding.
- **3.** Announce to students and parents that redos are permitted at teacher discretion. This means that students and parents may not take the redo option for granted.
- 4. Require students to submit a plan of relearning and to provide evidence of that relearning before work can be redone. This includes creating a calendar in which students list day-by-day what they will do to prepare.
- 5. If a student doesn't follow through on the relearning steps he or she promises

on their second or third attempt are not limited to practicing law only on Tuesdays or only under the watchful eye of a seasoned partner for the duration of their careers. If an assessment of competence is valid, achieving its passing scores grants the assessed individual full rights and privileges thereof.

How pompous is it for a teacher, then, to declare to students, "This quiz/ writing assignment/project/test cannot be redone for full credit because such a policy prepares you best for the working world." This teacher doesn't have a pedagogical leg to stand on. The best preparation for the world beyond school is to learn essential content and skills well.



Students hope that teachers see the moral, competent, and responsible self inside them, waiting to shed its immature shell.

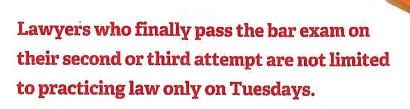
The recursive nature of successful learning shouldn't be discarded because it's inconvenient or we haven't figured out how to do it logistically. (For suggestions on tackling the logistics, see "14 Practical Tips for Managing Redos in the Classroom.") It's too important to our society: We improve with practice. descriptive feedback, and revising our practices in light of that feedback, followed by more practice, feedback, and revision. It's the way authors write great books; it's the way scientists discover: it's the way machinists solve problems. Why would we deny these opportunities to the next generation? Providing feedback and asking students to redo assignments until those assignments

to do, ask the student to write a letter of apology to you and to his or her family for breaking the trust.

- 6. Require parents to sign the original, poorly done versions of assignments so they're aware that their children have required multiple attempts to achieve the standard. (If there is neglect or abuse in the home, of course, remove this requirement.)
- 7. After two or three redo attempts, consider shelving the push for mastery of this content for a few weeks. Either the student is not ready to reach the standard, or we're not creative enough to figure out how to teach him or her. Take a break and pursue this content in a later unit of study.
- 8. If the same student repeatedly asks for redos, something's wrong. The content is not developmentally appropriate, there are unseen issues at home, or perhaps there's an undiagnosed learning disability. Investigate.

- **9.** Choose your battles. Push hard for students to redo anything associated with the most important curriculum standards and less so with work associated with less important standards.
- **10.** Allow students who get *C*s and *B*s to redo work just as much as students who earn *D*s and *F*s. Why stand in the way of a student who wants to achieve excellence?
- 11. If report cards are coming up and there's no time to redo something to change the grade, report the lower grade and assure the student that he or she can learn the material the next marking period. If the student demonstrates improved mastery, submit a grade change report reflecting the new, more accurate grade.
- 12. For the sake of personal survival, you may choose not to allow any retakes or redos the last week of the marking period as you're closing down the grade book and doing report cards. For eight weeks, you're Mr. or Ms. Hopeful, but

- for that one week, it's OK to protect your sanity and personal life. You can allow students to learn the material and have their grade changed later.
- **13.** Replace the previous grade or mark with the most recent one; don't average the two attempts together. The A that a student earns on his fifth attempt at mastery is just as legitimate as the A earned by his classmate on the first attempt.
- 14. Unless an assessment is complex and interwoven, allow students to redo just the portions on which they performed poorly, not the entire assessment. (To assist with this, consider standards-based grading on your assessments; record the standards or outcomes being assessed at the top of the assessment and provide a separate score for each standard.) Separating standards in this way saves time for both the teacher and the students. Some redos can be a 10-minute interview at the teacher's desk while the rest of the class works on something else.



match the standards set for them are not optional luxuries saved for when we have time; they're the keys to thriving classrooms.

Not Soft, but Tough

When we graduate from school, we gravitate toward those things we are good at doing. When we're hired, we have a skill set that matches a job's skill needs. We don't have to be good at everything the company does. To be considered successful in school, however, we have to be just as good at all subjects and skills as everyone else is, and on the same schedule. We have to be good at graphing inequalities, conjugating irregular verbs, setting up websites using HTML, identifying literary devices in Dante, playing the concerto with the right timing, determining valence, recognizing nuance between artists, offering pithy insights in the cafeteria, and dealing with hormonal issues while navigating the hallwaysand that's all by lunch on Tuesday.

It's no wonder that, in order to meet the needs of increasingly diverse students and the demands of an overloaded curriculum, teachers sometimes need to adjust the pacing of lessons and allow students to make repeated attempts at mastery. It makes sense to grade students according to their performance on standards, not the routes they take to achieve those standards. Some students need more time building background knowledge before they learn new material, and others need a graphic organizer to help them make sense of text, but

all grades at the end of the unit should be based on whether they understand oxidation, for example, not on how they learned about oxidation.

Suppose a teacher allows retakes frequently. Will colleagues, students, and parents consider that teacher soft in some way? No—quite the opposite. In the hallway just outside my own classroom years ago, one of my students, unaware that I was nearby, announced to a classmate, "Mr. Wormeli makes you do it over and over again until you learn it. It sucks!" (Pardon the vernacular.) My reputation was not one of being soft, but one of "Slackers, beware."

Making students redo their learning until it meets high expectations demands far more of both students and teachers than letting them take a failing grade—but it also results in far more learning. Maturation occurs in the fully credited recovery from unsuccessful attempts, not by labeling those attempts as failures. If our mission is to teach so that students learn, we don't let their immaturity dictate their destiny. Irresponsible, forgetful, and inattentive students need us to be in their face more, not less.

The Supreme Goal

When it comes to deciding whether to allow a student to redo an assignment or assessment, consider the alternative—to let the student settle for work done poorly, ensuring that he or she doesn't learn the content. Is this really the life lesson we want to teach? Is it really academically better for the student to remain ignorant?

This practice is not acceptable. To be adequately prepared for college and career, students need to learn the content and skills that society identifies as important. Whether a student was initially irresponsible or responsible, moral or immoral, cognitively ready or not is irrelevant to the supreme goal: learning.

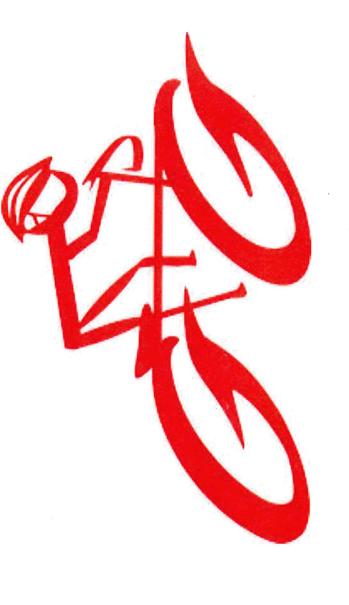
There are far more effective strategies for teaching responsibility than to simply label a student as immature and deny that student learning. We can honor Carla's effort by giving her the extra time and attention she needs to master the content. We can handle Marco's sloppy homework and Jarrel's plagiarism wisely by demanding that both of them redo their work properly. These students will then realize that they get more of what they want in life if they pay attention, keep up with the work, and do the assignments well the first time around. Scholarship dawns; there's hope.

Florian, J. (1999). Teacher survey of standards-based instruction: Addressing time. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement; Kendall, J. S., & Marzano, R. J. (1998). Awash in a sea of standards. Denver, CO: McREL.

Rick Wormeli, a 30-year teaching veteran, resides in Herndon, Virginia, and trains teachers and principals around the world in a variety of education topics; rwormeli@cox.net. Further thinking on redoing assignments and assessments can be found in his book, Fair Isn't Always Equal: Assessment and Grading in the Differentiated Classroom (Stenhouse, 2006) and at its accompanying website, www.stenhouse.com/fiae.

The Bike Analogy

A Guide to Proficiency Grading



An Analogy:

Learning to Ride a Bike

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Standards-Based Proficiency Grading

MINIMAL

- Looking at the bike
- Feeling the bike
- Didn't get on the bike yet
- Didn't understand the bike enough

EXAMPLE GRADE MARKS:

J

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This is comparable to a "D" on a traditional report card.

BASIC

- Got on the bike
- Needs training wheels or someone running along side
 - Riding is a bit wobbly, but is coming along
- Needs more practice

EXAMPLE GRADE MARKS:

1.5- Comparable to a C-

2 — Comparable to a B- or a C

2.5 — Comparable to a B or B+

This is comparable to a "C "or "D" on a traditional report card.

PROFICIENT

- Getting on the bike and riding is natura
- Rides bike with ease and without support
- Consistent, smooth riding

EXAMPLE GRADE MARKS

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This is comparable to an "A" on a traditional report card.

ADVANCED

- Riding remains consistent and smooth
- Learning how to do tricks
- Continuing to show growth beyond expectation

EXAMPLE GRADE MARKS:

3.5

4

This is comparable to an "A+" on a traditional report card.

INCOMPLETE

- Won't consider looking or feeling the bike
- Won't consider getting on the bike

EXAMPLE GRADE MARK:

INC - Incomplete

LE – Lacks Evidence

LE is comparable to an "F" on a traditional report card.

NA - Not Assessed at this time