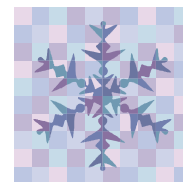


Nathan Hale Middle School



Nathan Hale Middle School - 5220 W. 135th Street - Crestwood, IL 60445

From the Principal's Desk

by Mr. John Dudzik

A busy and successful first semester has come to an end. We enter the second half of the school year with a focus of continuing our efforts to implement new teaching strategies and initiatives to help students be more successful in math and reading. I'd like to take this time to highlight some important information regarding MAP scores, school improvement, ISATs and the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant.

Winter MAP Scores

Winter MAP testing was completed before Winter Break. You will receive your child's scores with their second quarter report card. Overall, each grade level showed growth in the areas of math and reading. Students recently set goals for improving their scores on the spring test in April. Please see our website for more information on the winter MAP test results.

School Improvement Plan

Our goal is to improve the percentage of students who are meeting/exceeding state standards on the ISATs in math and reading to 92.5%. Last year, 79% of our students met or exceeded standards in reading and 86.9% met or exceeded standards in math. If we achieve our goal, we will have made adequate yearly progress (AYP). Our goal is a lofty one, but we have been committed to achieve it since the first day of school. Our school improvement plan will be posted on our website in February. It will contain the strategies and action plan that we have implemented in an effort to reach our achievement goals. I will also be presenting the plan at the School Board meeting on February 16, 2012.

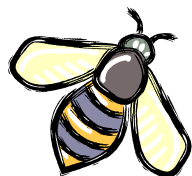
Illinois State Achievement Tests (ISATs)

Beginning on March 6th and continuing through March 16th, students will be taking the ISATs. Students in grade 7 will be tested in math, reading and science. Students in grades 6 and 8 will be tested in reading and math only. The tests are an important indicator of your child's academic achievement in reading, math and science. The test results will indicate if we have achieved the goals set forth in the School Improvement Plan. We will use the results along with other information to help us continue to improve our school.

21st Century Community Learning Center

As part of the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, Hale Middle will be offering additional after school programs concentrating on academics, health and life skills. After school activities will run Monday through Thursday from 2:30—5:30. We have established a partnership with Metropolitan Family Services in order to provide high quality programs for students and families. Please contact our Resource Coordinator, Trina Thornton-Franklin, at 708-385-6690, extension 7390 if you are interested in signing your child up for these programs.

The 2nd Quarter Newsletter focuses on our 6th Grade Team. Please read on to learn about exciting news and happenings occurring in our sixth grade classrooms.



Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Alyssa Riley, who took first place in the District 130 Spelling Bee on January 20th. She will represent District 130 at the ISC 2nd Annual and Regional SCRIPPS Spelling Bee on February 7th in Chicago Heights. We would also like to congratulate Brianna McDonald and Michael Clark who came in fourth and fifth place at the District 130 Spelling Bee.

6th Grade News.....

Science Class—Ms. Mulhausen

In 6th grade science, the students just finished working extremely hard on their Scientific Method Projects! With these projects, students had the opportunity to research a science topic which they would then turn into an experiment. Students learned the six steps of the scientific method and implemented their new found knowledge through their projects. There were some very interesting ideas and parents will have an opportunity to see what their child came up with at the upcoming Science Fair.



Later in the year, students will have the chance to put together a presentation board and will be encouraged to participate in the fair. For the third quarter, students can look forward to learning about topics such as, plate tectonics, elements and much more!

Math Class—Mr. Canan

The 6th grade students and staff continue to make strides. Math curriculum is being supplemented with an online program called ALEKS Math. This program allows students to work independently at school or home. Advancement through the program is predicated on the individual's personal effort and understanding of each mathematical concept. This program has helped many of our students' scores on our progress monitoring tests. The AIMS/Web and MAP-Math scores have shown marked improvement. Improvements first must be attributed to those students who have taken advantage of this opportunity and have shown a consistent, daily effort to work diligently. Effort, after all, will dictate success in all endeavors and is the primary factor in positive results!



Social Studies—Mrs. Venhuizen

Our sixth grade students are continuing to research Ancient Civilizations in Social Studies. They are learning how to use Power Point and will make presentations within their classes.

On January 23rd, the students celebrated Chinese New Years. They learned a few words in Mandarin and ate with chopsticks!



Reading—Mr. Norvell

In reading, students have been working on identifying theme in fiction, making predictions, analyzing the point of view, fact and opinion, and comparing fiction and nonfiction text. We have also been focusing on using a reading strategy, "Think-Alouds", which really helps the students gain a deeper understanding of the text. As with most things, the more you practice, the better you'll become. So continue to encourage your child to practice and share these strategies that they're learning with you. Students will also continue working with literary elements, as we continue preparing for the state test in March.



Language Arts—Mrs. Cesaro

Our six grade students are continuing to perfect formatted five paragraph persuasive and expository essays while finishing a unit on nouns. They are also learning how to use the new Microsoft Word 2010.

Earlier in the year, students wrote thank you letters to our veterans. In response to some of these, Captain Anthony Cesaro, Marine navigator on a Prowler/EA6B jet who recently returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan, provided a presentation to our students while he was in town. Students responded to the program with additional thank you letters to Captain Cesaro who resides with his family in New Bern, NC.



Ms. Brady's Class



Ms. Brady's class has just completed a major Social Studies unit on the Ancient Egyptians. They learned about everything from life on the Nile River to the creation of the pyramids. For the upcoming History Night they created a replica of King Tut's tomb. The class said their favorite thing to learn about was how mummies were created. On January 27th we are going to the Field Museum to tour the Egypt exhibit.

Dates to Remember

February 6	Band Fundraiser 5:00—8:00 at McDonald's Restaurant in Crestwood
February 8	PTO Meeting 6:30 Beginning Band Concert 7:00
February 13	No School
February 15	History Night/ Black History Museum Viewing 6:30—7:30 p.m.
February 16	School Board Meeting at Veterans Memorial School 6:30 p.m.
February 17	3rd Quarter Progress Report Distribution
February 23	Solo & Ensemble Clinic 2:30 – 6:00 p.m.
February 28	Market Day Pick-up 2:35—3:45 NJHS Induction 6:30 p.m.
March 5	No School
March 6—16	ISAT Testing
March 14	PTO Meeting 6:30 p.m.
March 15	School Board Meeting at Eisenhower Coop—6:30 p.m.
March 20	No School
March 21	End of third quarter
March 26—30	Spring Break
April 2	Classes Resume
April 6	No School
April 11	PTO Meeting 6:30
April 13	3rd Quarter Report Card Distribution
April 18	Science Night 6:30 –7:30 p.m.
April 19	School Board Meeting at Veterans Memorial School- 6:30 p.m.
April 24	Spring Pictures