

THE BULLDOG GAZETTE

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ADOLESCENTS AND ONLINE CHATTING

It used to be easy, but with the advent of MySpace and other "online communities", often called social networking sites, parents must work even harder to know their children's relationships and connections with others. What can parents do to stay informed about their children's online connections? Here are several suggestions for keeping your young adolescent safe and socially connected.

First, have an honest and frank conversation with your child about online social networks—the good and the bad. Whether you like it or not, these communities are a part of your child's life, so it is important to accept that and move forward. Your child will be safer if she knows she can come to you with any concerns about her MySpace presence and communications she receives.

Second, look at her MySpace page together regularly. Make sure that your child understands that although it is her space, the information on her page and

in her profile is out there for *everyone*. Read messages together, look at pictures. Have your child give you a MySpace "tutorial".

Third, with your child, go to the privacy setting on the MySpace page and make sure that she allows only her friends to see her page—on the "profile viewable by" section, click "My friends only." This is very important! An online social network can be a fun way for your child to communicate and share information with friends, but it should be limited to people she knows. This is not a good way for a young adolescent to *make* friends she does not know.

Fourth, realize that MySpace, although it is the most popular online network, is not the only online network. Talk with your child about other online social communities such as Facebook. The same boundaries should apply to all such communities.

Finally, make sure that your child's primary social connections are real and face-

to-face. Have a study area for the family laptop or desktop computer in a public place in your home. Just as you might limit telephone time, limit the amount of time your child spends online. As with any other family rules, have regular discussions about what is working and what is not, changes that need to happen, privileges that come with age and responsible behavior, and the importance of honesty and caring.

Taken from National Middle School Association's "Family Connections", Volume 12, Number 3, www.nmsa.org

Online Chat Translator

There are many web sites that list online slang definitions, but one actually translates "IDK," "LOL," "POS," and all the other acronyms for you.

Check out www.noslang.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

22 December-4 January—*Winter Recess (no school for students)*

5 January— *Classes resume*

16 January— *End Quarter 2— no school for students*

19 January— *MLK Jr. Day— no school for students*

22 January— *Signs of Suicide Parent Meeting*

23 January— *Parent-Teacher Conferences, half-day for students.*

29 January— *7th/8th Grades Awards Ceremony*

4 February— *School Board Meeting*

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WINTER MUSIC CONCERT HELD

West Point Middle School band and chorus students treated their peers and parents with two holiday concerts this week. The first performance took place during Seminar class on Tuesday before the entire student body. The second concert was held for parents and community member early Wednesday evening.

The Junior Chorus, comprised of students in grades 5

and 6, started us off with four songs, "Mary, Mary," "Sing and Dance, It's Hanukkah," "Lullaby on a silent Night," and "Il Est Ne, le Divin Enfant."

Intermediate Band then took the stage and treated the audience to, "The Good King Rocks," "Songs for Hanukkah," "Christmas Espanol," and, "Winterscape."

The Senior Chorus, 40 stu-

dents strong, added an international flair to the show, singing, "Gloria Festiva," "Two Catalon Carols," "Hanerot Halalu," and a compilation of popular tunes entitled, "Sleigh Bells!"

The Advanced Band played a stirring rendition of parts of the Nutcracker Suite, "Jingle Bell Jazz," "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch," and ended with the compilation, "Santa's Classical Christmas."



ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT CONTINUES

The middle school roof replacement project will continue over winter recess. The resurfacing of the "1987 addition" is complete, and workers are now turning their attention to the main building, which was constructed in 1934.

During the course of this work, asbestos-containing materials will be removed

from the project site in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations. Personal and environmental safety will be foremost throughout this project, in accordance with New York State Code ICR 56.

The material to be abated is 1,300 square feet of non-friable roofing material. It will be removed during win-

ter recess, beginning December 20th 2008 and finishing no later than January 2, 2009.

While there is no immediate danger to students, parents, or staff, everyone is advised to observe and avoid all areas and equipment identified or isolated by warning signs and tape.



SOS TRAINING FOR GRADES 7 AND 8

In January the school psychologist and the school counselor will introduce the SOS (signs of suicides) program to the seventh and eighth graders. This is a DoDEA sponsored program which includes teacher, parent and student training. The goal of the program is to help students identify signs of depression, self-injury, and suicide in them-

selves and others and will teach the students how to respond to this signs effectively, as a medical emergency. There will be an after school parent meeting to fully explain this program on, Thursday, January 22, 2009. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in the same training as the students and will allow a follow up

question and answer session. If parents are not interested in having their child participate in this program, please contact the Middle School counselor at 938-2923.



DoDEA CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) will administer its biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) from November 1, 2008 through February 28, 2009. The CSS provides valuable feedback to DoDEA from its most important customers – students and parents - about the quality of education it provides and areas needing improvement. The 2008 DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey represents a departure from tradition in that the survey will be administered to students in grades 4-12 and sponsors for each child enrolled in DoD schools from Pre-kindergarten/ SureStart through 12th grade. As with prior Customer Satisfaction Surveys, participation remains voluntary and maximum participation is encouraged in order to obtain reliable and valid data. Historically, teachers, educational support staff, students in grades 4-12, and sponsors for each child enrolled in

DoD schools from Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade were asked to complete the CSS. This year, parents and students will participate in the CSS while DoDEA Administrators, teachers, and educational support staff will participate in a separate survey, the DoDEA Employee Satisfaction Survey, to be administered during March 2009. As with the CSS, participation in the DoDEA Employee Satisfaction Survey is voluntary and maximum participation is encouraged in order to obtain reliable and valid data.

The surveys were developed through a review process of various groups... Area offices, superintendents, principals, Education Directorate staff members at the DoDEA headquarters, and external sources such as DMDC. Some questions were adapted from the *Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward Schools* with additional DoDEA-specific questions.

The 2008 CSS contains more parent/student specific questions, particularly with regard to guidance and counseling. The surveys take approximately 20 minutes to complete and are available online at www.dodea.edu (click on the CSS graphic link). Parents who do not have access to the Internet should contact their child's school to determine other alternatives – such as using the school's computers. The Customer Satisfaction Survey is part of DoDEA's continual efforts to improve the quality of education provided to DoD military and civilian dependents. The CSS provides a forum for parents and students to have their opinions heard and to communicate their level of satisfaction with issues related to DoD schools. The focus of the 2008 CSS is to concentrate on how parents and students of DoDEA schools feel about instruction, curriculum, programs, and services, among other topics.



PTO NEWS

Keep sending in those box-tops. We have broken the \$1,000 mark and we are well on our way to our \$3,000 end of the year goal. Remember, the student that sends in the most box-tops each quarter will receive a \$10 gift certificate for the coffee/ice cream shop.

Also remember to send in

your used ink cartridges for recycling! Collection boxes are at the main office at both schools.

The WPS PTO would like to inform the West Point School community that it has recently been informed of a backlog of IRS paperwork filing discrepancies. Please be assured that we are doing

everything possible to rectify the situation so that we remain in good standing in the eyes of the IRS, the Garrison Commander's office, and our WPS community. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we go through the process of amending this situation.



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BOOKMARK OUR WEB SITE

HTTP://
WWW.AM.DODEA.EDU/
NY_VA/WESTPOINT/
MIDDLE/INDEX.HTM

MISSION STATEMENT

WPMS STRIVES TO PROVIDE ALL
LEARNERS WITH EXEMPLARY
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS THAT
INSPIRE LIFE-LONG LEARNING IN

QUICK NOTES

- Printing School Assignments: Students are asked to print computer-generated school work such as reports prior to coming to school. Printing in class takes the student away from precious instructional time and can disturb the learning of others.
- Locker Replacement Update: DDESS has funded the locker replacement project. The work is presently scheduled to take place over spring recess. More information will be provided as the time draws near.
- Lost and Found: Looking for that missing hoodie or mittens? The middle school lost and found is overflowing once again with unclaimed articles of clothing.
- Student Council Service Project a Success: The student council's first service project went very well. The donated pet supplies were delivered to the grateful animal shelter manager, and the clothing articles for the men's homeless shelter were much appreciated as well. Kudos to our student council members and all who participated in this worthwhile endeavor!
- Seventh Grade DARE Ending, 5th Grade DARE Beginning: The School Resource Officer will deliver the final 7th grade DARE lesson during the first week in January. 5th Grade DARE will start the following week, delivered to all students during Seminar class.
- No Parking in Fire Lane: Parents are reminded that parking in the fire lane in front of the school is prohibited at all times.

PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS (MATH & SCIENCE) NOMINEES SOUGHT

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is encouraging principals, students, parents, teachers, community members as well as the general public to nominate science or mathematics teachers in grades 7-12 for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching (PAEMST).

Since the PAEMST program began in 1983 more than 3,900 teachers have been recognized for their dedication to teaching math and science education. The PAEMST program is administered by the National Sci-

ence Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

The PAEMST is the highest recognition that a teacher can receive for excellence in teaching in the United States. Teachers that receive the award are recognized for their contributions to instructing, learning, and their ability to help students progress in math and science.

Award recipients receive a citation signed by the President of the United States, a paid trip for two to Washington, D.C. to attend recogni-

tion events and professional development opportunities, gifts from sponsors of the program from around the country, as well as a \$10,000 award from the NSF.

In order to be nominated, teachers must have taught science and/or math at the secondary level (grades 7-12) for at least five years.

Individuals interested in nominating a teacher must fill out the nomination form at www.paemst.org and submit this form to the principal before January 7, 2009.

