

THE BULLDOG GAZETTE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6 31 OCTOBER 2008

ADOLESCENTS AND SLEEP

Many 10- to 15-year-olds find it hard to get to sleep at night. Research isn't definitive yet as to why, but it seems to have a lot to do with the changing hormones in a young adolescent's body. It isn't that they aren't tired; it's just that they can't shut down their minds.

Some kids this age like to sleep with the radio on, with their earphones on, or in a room with something that makes "white noise" like a fan or humidifier or air conditioning unit. They use these devices to help shut out the noise in their

heads so that they can get to sleep. Others simply stay up. They read, watch TV, play games on their computers and talk on the phone, e-mail their friends, or surf the Internet.

While understanding that it takes a while to get sleepy, a good rule is no phone or computer after, say, 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. Communicating with friends or searching the Internet does not make kids drowsy or help them sleep. Instead, they stimulate the already-overloaded mind and make sleep even harder to come by.

No matter what time a child falls asleep, each must answer the morning wake up call for school. This is particularly painful after a short night. If your child has trouble falling asleep at night, let them know that this is normal for the age. Work with your child to find out what actually makes them sleepy (Hot shower? Warm milk? Being read to? Soft music playing?), and try to accommodate.

Taken from Nat'l Middle School Assn's "Family Connections", October 2008, www.nmsa.org

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES HELD

Parent-teacher conferences were conducted on 30 and 31 October at West Point Schools. Teams of middle school teachers met with parents and students to discuss academic progress and next steps.

Some parents were not able to be seen because they did not have an appointment. "Walk-ins" were accommodated when possible, but

the schedule was pretty full at all grade levels.

It is important to teachers that they meet with as many parents as possible, so that we can all work together to ensure the success of every student. Parents unable to meet with teachers last week are encouraged to contact the school and set up a conference in the next week or two.

In addition to parent-teacher conferences, the Gradespeed Parent Connection provides a great way for parents to keep informed about their students' progress. It allows parents to check grades, assignments, and attendance over the internet. Login instructions are located on the school web site.

UPCOMING EVENTS

5 November— School Board Meeting (4:30)

6 November— Veteran's Day Assembly

6 November— Cross Country Awards

11 November— Veterans' Day (no school for students)

17 November— Math Olympiads for grades 5 & 6

26-28 November— Thanksgiving Recess (no school for students)

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

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VETERAN'S DAY ASSEMBLY



The Annual Veterans' Day Assembly will take place on Thursday November 6th. Members of the community are invited to attend. The assembly honors all veterans. We are in our third year of honoring our nation's veterans in this way. Two years ago, veterans of World War II were treated to new, music, and images of the era, all presented by students. Last year's assembly featured a tribute to Korean War veter-

ans, including a great Bob Hope impersonation! The PTO has kindly offered to once again provide reception refreshments. Please contact a member of the PTO if you are interested in helping out with the set-up or clean-up.

This year we will particularly honor those who served in Vietnam. Music of the 1960s will be featured. Vietnam veterans are invited to a reception prior to the assembly at 12 noon. Please notify the

school if you are a veteran planning to attend the reception.

PERSONAL SAFETY AWARENESS



October is a good time to have that safety chat with your child. Remind children that with the sun setting earlier each day and twilight coming on, drivers may not see as well and pedestrians need to pay attention to traffic. If children are participating in Halloween activities, costumes should be bright or be made of reflective material. Carrying a flash light, or

glow stick, when going from house to house and crossing the streets makes trick-or-treaters easier to spot.

This might be a good time to review your family safety plan. Does your child know when and how to call for emergency assistance? Has your child committed to memory all important phone numbers? We are finding that

more and more students are relying on cell phone to contain the important contact numbers. Without the cell phones, students may not know parents' work numbers, emergency contact numbers, and in some cases, not even home phone numbers.

MODIFIED SPORTS



A successful fall modified sports season has drawn to a close for West Point Middle School seventh and eighth-grade students. About forty student-athletes participated in cross country, competing against local schools at meets all around Orange county. Our school hosted our home event at Bear Mountain State Park once again this year, an

invitational that drew a total of nineteen teams. Many students reached personal best records.

The winter sports season is right around the corner. Once again, WPMS is able to offer girls and boys basketball through a unique partnership with FWMR's Child and Youth School Services. Stu-

dents interested in registering for basketball should stop by the Youth Center on Washington Road to sign up. Due to league rules that limit team size, tryouts may need to be held. Students must meet academic eligibility requirements to practice or play with the team.

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.



WEATHER DELAYS AND CLOSURES

On days the West Point Schools will be closed due to inclement weather, the news media will make appropriate announcements. Sources include: local radio stations; channel 23; the special phone number, 938-7000

Please do not call the school.
The decision to close school is

made independent of other school districts, i.e., Highland Falls. School authorities in the surrounding communities may or may not close their schools. On days when weather is inclement, parents are urged to insure that school will be in session prior to dropping their children off at school.

West Point children who attend off-post schools will follow that districts schedule when on a delay or closing. This information will be provided to the post TV cable Channel 23.



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BOOKMARK OUR WEB SITE

HTTP://
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NY_VA/WESTPOINT/
MIDDLE/INDEX.HTM

MISSION STATEMENT

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

QUICK NOTES

- Construction Near School Entrance: DPW is performing a stream restoration project on the Sinclair Pond Brook, next to the Youth Activity Center. The project is limited to the area between the Merritt Road Bridge and the Washington Road Bridge.
- Roof Work Starting Soon: Workers will set up a work zone on campus in the coming days to repair the badly leaking roof, beginning with the 1987 annex.
- Cooler Weather Is Here!: As fall temperatures start to become the norm, students are reminded to dress accordingly. Outside activities such as recess and morning arrival will only be moved inside if the temperature dips below freezing.
- Lost and Found: The lost and found is filling up with hoodies and other items. Students are reminded to check the lost and found periodically for missing items. Parents are encouraged to label all clothing.
- School Board Meeting: There will be a School Board meeting on 5 November at 4:30. All meetings are open to the public.
- Basketball Season Approaching: Sign-ups for Boys and Girls Modified Basketball are underway at CYSS. West Point MS students enrolled in grades 7 & 8 are eligible to participate. Try-outs may be necessary to keep the team at the league-mandated maximum.

PTO NEWS

**PTO General Member-
ship Meeting**

**Thursday, November 13
at 3 pm**

Middle School Auditorium

**Parents are welcome to
bring their children.**

The PTO would like to thank all of the volunteers that come in and make a difference! Most recently, thank you to all of the great volunteers who helped with the Bookfair. So far this year, volunteers have logged

in 783 hours helping at the schools.

Send in your used ink cartridges for recycling! We have a collection box at both schools. We're in the process of researching a new recycling program so watch the newsletter for more info!

Parents are still invited to join the PTO. Membership applications are available at the school office. The West Point Schols PTO provides a great deal of support and assistance so that our schools can provide every student with an outstanding educa-

tion. Support our efforts by joining the PTO today!

