

THE BULLDOG GAZETTE

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HELPING YOUNG ADOLESCENTS LEARN RESPONSIBILITY

One of the greatest challenges faced by parents of middle school students lies in helping their children learn to be responsible. Like any other life skill, responsibility must be taught before children can be reasonably expected to demonstrate it.

Listed below are four parenting tips for helping adolescents learn to become responsible:

1. Model the responsibility you want to see. If you want your young adolescent to do the chores you assign, it often helps to work alongside your youngster so she sees what you expect. Not only is the modeling important, but you both have more fun doing it this way.

2. Make choices. You can't do it all and neither can your 12-year-old.

While he would like to take the lead in the play, go to all soccer practices and games, and participate in the spelling bee, sometimes that just isn't possible. Learning to weigh options, recognize consequences, and plan ahead before making choices is what responsibility is all about.

3. Think ahead. We don't do our kids any favors when we bail them out of situations they have responsibility for. Parents who run to school everyday to deliver forgotten items - lunch, backpack, sneakers, or their flute - don't help teach them to plan ahead and be responsible for their belongings. Young adolescents need to be shown how to plan ahead - and then allowed to deal with the consequences of doing so, or

not.

4. Of course, it is a process. Don't forget that the most critical aspect of developing responsibility for a young adolescent is that it is a process and not an event. It takes time. Sometimes they will be more responsible than others, so parents need to remember to be consistent and positive when irresponsibility is evident. No hammering, no lectures. Instead, simply explain what happened and why, and the result of an irresponsible choice. And most importantly, how will you avoid this problem in the future?

Taken from National Middle School Association's "Family Connections", Volume 6, Number 1, www.nmsa.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

12 December— Winter Dance for grades 7 and 8

17 December— Winter Music Concert

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

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

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WINTER INTRAMURALS UNDERWAY



Winter Intramurals has begun! There are 3 mini-seasons: free throw contests, "10" and Knockdown. Intramurals begins immediately after school at the Youth Service Center. Participants, courtesy of YS have a snack and play. This past week Middle School participants were instructed on how to shoot free throws and participated in a variety of modified basketball games. Beginning on Tuesday, December 9th

students will participate in physical fitness and basketball stations, then will participate in a free throw shooting contest. There are 4 scheduled competition days to be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Each competition day there will be a declared winner. Winners will receive an Intramural Champion tee-shirt provided by the Booster Club.

There are still openings for any 5th or 6th grade student

wishing to attend the winter season of intramurals. Parents should contact Youth Services for information about how to join.

This program is part of an exciting partnership between our school and FMWR's CCYS, wherein the school provides staffing for all sports programs and the CCYS provides logistical support.

WINTER DANCE IS NEXT FRIDAY



The Winter Dance is a semi-formal occasion. It will be held on December 12. Girl's attire may include cocktail dresses or a blouse and a nice skirt. Guy's attire may include button-down shirts, slacks or khakis. You do not have to dress up but it would be nice. Please attend this fun event, we plan on it being the best winter semi-formal yet! Put on your dancing shoes

and come to the Winter Semi-Formal dance!

Parents, please note the time change on the dance. Also, we would love to have some snack donations for the special occasions. Anything homemade or store-bought would be wonderful.

School dance attendance is limited to enrolled students in grades seven and eight. Dance

attendees are required to sign in and out of the dance, and there is no re-entry.

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.



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

The PTO can not give enough thanks to all of the volunteers that come in and help in the classroom, library, office, or at any of our special events. Volunteers have put in over 1,000 hours so far this year!

Remember if you come in to the elementary or the middle school to help, please sign in as a volunteer. Thanks again

for all you do!!

Keep sending in those Box-Tops, Campbell's labels, Tyson labels, and used ink cartridges!

Collection boxes are at the main office at both schools.



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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

- Roof Work Underway: The middle school roof replacement project has begun. The work schedule will not conflict with recess, and all efforts will be made to minimize the noise during the instructional day. Parents and students are urged to proceed cautiously when walking by the construction area, as there may be vehicles moving around on campus. All contracted roof workers will wear a yellow USMA contractor badge while on site.
- Student Surveys Completed: Just about every enrolled student has completed the DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey. Parents are now asked to do the same! The survey can be found on the DoDEA web site, www.dodea.edu. The results will be posted in March of 2009.
- Holiday Celebrations: Classroom and grade-level holiday celebrations may take place during Seminar on 18 December. Teachers may plan additional, curriculum-based holiday activities. Teaching and learning will take place right up to 19 December, so students are encouraged to attend school!
- Locker Replacement: DDESS has funded the locker replacement project. The work will hopefully take place over winter recess. Students will be asked to empty their lockers if the work can be scheduled over the break. More information will follow on this exciting news!

HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR TEACHERS

As the holiday season approaches, it is a good time to provide parents with information about appropriate holiday gifts for teachers.

In addition to the ethics rules that apply to all Federal employees, DoDEA also has special standards when teachers (school-level educator who is in a position in which he or she grades students) may accept gifts from students or parents. The Special Standards policy may be found at the DoDEA website. Parents are encouraged to contact the principal with any questions.

Special Standards for Gifts to a Teacher from a Student or Parent:

1. Teachers may accept non-cash gifts with a fair market value of \$20 or less per occasion, not to exceed \$50 in a school year, from an individual student or parent.

• Individual gifts may be accepted only on occasions when gifts are customarily provided, such as the celebration of a holiday or the end of the school year, or for special, infrequent occasions, such as marriage, illness, birth or adoption of a child, retirement, resignation, or

transfer.

• Non-cash gifts include gift cards that are redeemable for merchandise.

2. Teachers may accept a non-cash gift from a group of parents or students that does not exceed \$150 for special, infrequent occasions.

• Group gifts may not be accepted on other occasions such as holidays and at the end of the school year.

• Solicitations and contributions for group gifts must be voluntary.

