



Higgins Happenings

L'ANSE CREUSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 210

Phone 586-493-5210 WOW Channel 15

www.lc-ps.org

OCTOBER 2011

Important Dates

- 11/8 No School
- 11/22 12:10 dismissal
No lunch served
- 11/23 - 11/25
No School
- 11/30 and 12/1
Parent-Teacher
Conferences
- 12/1 12:10 dismissal
No lunch served
- 12/2 No School
- 12/23/11 - 1/8/12
No School
Winter Break

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PTC	2
Picture Re-take	2
Homework Tips	2
Hawk Walk	3
Halloween Parade	3
Student Council	3
Absences & Attendance	4
Spanish Teachers	5
Garden News	6
Trimester	7
Election	8
Hawk Walk Sponsors	9

Welcome from Mrs. Trebilcock

On behalf of the staff at Francis A. Higgins Elementary School, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new and returning families! The staff at Higgins elementary is deeply committed to the academic, social, and emotional growth of *all* children. We have high expectations for our students, as well as for ourselves as educators. We are planning many exciting experiences this year and welcome your involvement. Together, we can help your child have a positive and successful experience at Higgins.

New Arrival and Dismissal Routines

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As the principal at Higgins Elementary, I take the safety and well-being of every student very seriously. While observing arrival and dismissal procedures during these first few weeks of school, I have become quite concerned about several safety issues. To ensure the safety of the children at Higgins, there will be several changes in the arrival/dismissal procedures beginning on Monday, November 7th. Your patience will be most appreciated as changes are sometimes difficult in the initial stages. Please see the changes below.

MORNING ARRIVAL

(no earlier than 8:40 please)

The following procedures are intended for parents who are dropping students off at school in the morning:

- Please pull all the way forward in the drop-off circle to make room for as many cars as possible to pull up along the circle.
- DO NOT allow students to get out of the car unless you are pulled up to the curb. Students should NEVER be permitted to walk across the parking lot or between cars without a parent.
- If you must get out of the car to open the doors for your children, please park in a space and walk your child to the sidewalk.
- Please **DO NOT** park in the drop-off circle.



AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Students being PICKED UP

- Parents must park in a parking space (no parking near the curb please).
- Parents will need to enter the office, to sign their child out.
- Parents may wait in the front hallway area for their child to meet them (kindergarten parents will wait in the media center).

Students who WALK HOME

- Only students with walking buttons will be permitted to leave the school grounds by bike or foot.
- Walkers **MUST** have their "walking button" attached to their backpack each day.

Students who RIDE THE BUS

- Bus riders will be dismissed to the bus circle.

Annual Report

The Annual Report can be found on the Higgins Web page under the Annual Report tab.

School Closing Information

Tune in to WWJ News Radio 950, or any of the local TV stations, or log on to: www.lc-ps.org.

Please note to defray costs and minimize waste, we will continue to issue all school correspondence to ONLY THE OLDEST CHILD IN THE FAMILY as opposed to providing correspondence two to three times per family.



Higgins PTC

We are very pleased to introduce our 2011-12 Parent /Teacher Advisory Board members: Jenny Cassani, Tracy Harrison, Dave Jacobson, Tracie McCauley and Amy Patrus.

Our PTC has several exciting events planned for students and families this year. Some of these events include Harvest Fest, Santa Shoppe, Doughnuts with Dad and Muffins with Mom. We encourage all parents to get involved.

The following are the PTC meeting dates for this year:

September 20

October 18

November 15

January 24

February 21

March 20

April 17

May 15

Picture Re-take Day



Picture re-take day will be on Thursday, November 3. If you want your child's picture retaken, please bring back the picture packet on re-take day. Forms are available in the office for students who were absent and would like to purchase pictures. Any questions, please contact the office at 586.493.5210.

Homework Tips from Mrs. Wrubel

Tips for Ending Homework Hassels!

After a long summer vacation, it is hard to get children back into the routines of school. Listed below are some time-tested tips for helping your child with homework:

- **Help only as long as there is no frustration or anger.** When homework becomes associated with negative emotions, it is no surprise that children start to view learning as a negative.

- **Help only as long as your child is working harder than you are.** Say, "I'll be happy to help you as long as you're working harder than I am."
- **Avoid sitting with your child when they are about to "get it".** Say to your child, "Part of my job as your Mom/Dad is to help you see that you can learn without me. So, there will be times when I let you work by yourself."

5th Annual Higgins Hawk Walk

A great **big thank you** to all our students, sponsors, volunteers and faculty as we had another successful Hawk Walk! We collected a total of \$12,300.00 and anticipate expenses to be approximately \$2,000.00 leaving a net profit of \$10,300.00.

HAWK WALK GRAND PRIZE WINNERS

1st place Meghan W.

2nd place Mackenzie S.

3rd place Carmen B.

Top Family
The Skoney Family

Top Class – Mrs. Geibel
Pizza Party

Halloween Parade Grand Marshall

Dylan R.

Limo Ride to Red Robins for Lunch with Mrs. Trebilcock

Mackenzie S.

Sean C.

Kyra P.

Zoie W.

Meghan W.

Tyler P.

School Read-n-Feed for Reaching school goal of \$10,000 Entire school



Halloween Costume Parade

As always in the past, we are suggesting that children choose their costumes from positive role models. We recommend book characters, cartoon characters, great people in history, period costumes, folk heroes, children of other countries, traditional Halloween characters and similar ideas. The staff at Higgins work diligently to teach children how to solve problems in a non-violent way. We would rather not see our children dressed as perpetrators of violence. Halloween should be an exciting and fun time for our children.

Our Halloween parade is scheduled to take place on Monday, October 31st at 2:15 p.m.

PARENTS ARE INVITED TO JOIN IN THE PARADE IN COSTUME

Higgins Student Council

Miss Hendricks is our Student Council Sponsor. The following students have been selected by their peers to represent their class and report to a lower elementary class.

Third grade representatives are Riley S., Lane J., Sulena G., Michael S., Christina T., Bianca K., Tim B., Elle M. and Kaden B.

Fourth grade representatives are Jordan B., Alexis K., Breanna K., Olivia K., Mackenna B., Madellyn M., Kristian G., Melanie M. and Rachel J.

Fifth grade representatives are Jack H., Denise M., Madison M., Hunter B., Dorian B., Emma V., Jarrett B., Shannon B., Nathan S. and Joshua H.



The first project for the year was a Spare Change Drive for the Macomb County Meals on Wheels program. As usual, the Higgins community was very generous. We will share the final total when it is counted. Thank you for your support!



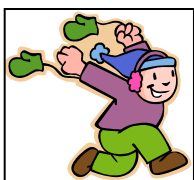
Absences and Attendance

When a child is absent from school, parents are required to notify the school office. Our absence line is available 24 hours to leave your message regarding your child's absence. **Please call in a student's absence by 9:00 a.m.** The phone number is 493.5210, option 5. Office personnel will notify the teacher. Cases of irregular attendance will be reported to the Macomb Intermediate School District's Attendance Office. Any absence due to a communicable disease should be reported to the school office immediately and these children should have a doctor's approval before returning to school.

Each student is expected to be in school on time. Tardiness due to a late bus will be excused. Recognizing the importance of punctuality is a good habit; parents should acquaint themselves with the school schedules and see that their children arrive at school at the hour they are expected. Children arriving too early can create problems since there is no one to supervise them. Students shouldn't arrive before 8:40 a.m. Crossing guards are not on duty until 8:30 a.m. each day.

Good attendance is very important to a child's success in school, and it is hoped that a child will not be kept out of school for such reasons as babysitting or appointments that could be made at other hours.

Dress For The Weather



With the colder days approaching, it is important that the children are dressed properly for the weather. Boots, hats, gloves and scarves are considered as essential clothing items. Our students will continue to go outside for recess and need appropriate clothing.

School Age Child Care (SACC)

Reminder to Parents and Guardians: School Age Child Care service is available for upcoming half days for your child. If you are in need of child care services, your child must be registered in the SACC program. Registration packets are available online at www.lc-ps.org. Look under departments and then SACC to print off the materials. They are also available at the office or in the SACC room. Half day use requires a reservation. Call the SACC office at 586.493.5660 for more information.

Media Center Volunteers Needed



If you have a love of books and have some free time during the day, I would love some help in the library. Duties would include organizing books in numerical order, shelving books and assisting students with locating books. Email Mrs. Castle in the Higgins Media Center for more information at castljl@lc-ps.org.

Thank You!



Me llamo Brenda Schnarrs, and this is my 13th year of teaching in L'Anse Creuse. I am a graduate of Wayne State University for my Bachelor's, Master's, and Teaching Degree. I have traveled to many countries over the years, including China, France, Spain and England. I speak Spanish and French (and English of course). I am married with 2 daughters, both of whom attend Yacks, and we have 3 cats and 2 fish.

Me llamo Dan Francis and this is my eleventh year as a Spanish teacher in L'Anse Creuse. My wife Beth is also a teacher in the district (1st Grade at Atwood) and we are expecting our first child in January! I'm a huge sports fan, especially Notre Dame football, and can often be found at Comerica Park in the summer. I also enjoy my iPod filled with good music and have 3 cats, Chunky, White Sox and Disco.

Me llamo Sara Cymbalski, and this is my first year in the district. I graduated in 2009 from Oakland University with a degree in Spanish Language and Literature. I studied abroad in Spain for 2 months. I lived with a Spanish family that had a mom, 2 sisters, and a little brother. They also had a dog, Nelly, that would (obviously) only respond to Spanish commands! (Students normally think it is funny that my dog in Spain only knew Spanish.) My little brother is a French major at Oakland University. (So, we like languages in my family.) My favorite season is otoño because my favorite holiday is Halloween. I like to go on walks with my daschund, Wendy.

Support Our 3rd Grade Classrooms!

We have applied for a grant of \$300 so that we can receive a program called the Native American Experience. It will provide each class with a separate presentation to explore Michigan history, artifacts and a fun hands-on experience. Please go to the website and vote for us to win the grant.

Thanks to the Michigan Schools & Government Credit Union, our project could be awarded a grant, but we need your help! We need you to vote for our project online. **Voting will take place from Nov. 1-11.** You can vote one time per day.

Mrs. Kellstrom's 4th grade class

After reading Bartholomew and the Oobleck by Dr. Seuss, to investigate the states of matter, they made Oobleck.



It's Easy to Vote!

1. Visit classroomcash.org.
2. Search for our classroom project by typing the name of the teacher (VanBael, Marin, or Graff), school, or project in the search bar.
3. Select our project and click "Vote."
4. Share with your friends and family through sites like Facebook and Twitter by clicking "ShareThis."

The Bonnie Plant Cabbage Program

Students in last year's 3rd grade were given a cabbage plant to grow over the summer months. When they came back as 4th graders, they presented their cabbage in hopes of winning a top 3 placing at Higgins!!! Cabbages were scored on weight, height as well as a photo. The program is one way to engage the children in the joy of gardening where they can discover the cycles of life and develop an understanding of our environment. Seeing students excited about learning and the art of gardening is what we at Higgins strive for.

And the winner is

First: Selina N.
Second: Marissa & Miranda G.
Third: Madellyn M.



Junior Master Gardeners

The Junior Master Gardeners had their fall clean-up in the garden. Parents and Master Gardeners meet to prepare the soil and harvest the vegetables to make salsa.



2nd Graders

My 2nd grade class worked hard in the gardens for Fall Clean-up. They harvested corn and peppers as well as collected the seeds from the sunflowers. The 2nd graders prepared the garden beds for next spring.



As part of L'Anse Creuse Public Schools' District Goals, Higgins is implementing various opportunities for the students to help make Higgins a Green School! We have been certified by the State of Michigan for the last 3 years as an "Evergreen School," which is the highest level possible for a school to earn. Various recycling programs, planting of school gardens, learning about endangered animals, waste-free lunch programs and other lessons have been addressed in the classrooms to help students understand that all of us need to take better care of our world.

District News



DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

September, 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2011-12 school year! Hopefully the summer has afforded you and your family the opportunity to rest and rejuvenate for the new school year.

This summer, our school district has been preparing for your child's return and we would like to make you aware of a change that will be occurring. In order to better align with our assessment timelines, we will be moving to a trimester schedule at the elementary level this year.

As you are aware, each year, there have been four marking periods, three report cards, and one student led conference period. Instead of four marking periods, there will be three, spaced evenly throughout the year, and ending on November 22nd, March 9th and June 8th respectively.

You will continue to receive three report cards throughout the school year, following the end of each marking period. Student led conferences will be held each Spring as they have in the past. The only difference will be that the new timelines better coincide with our assessment process so that we can provide you with a more up to date and accurate picture of your child's progress with each report card.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new process, please contact either your building principal or Lisa McFee in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at 586-783-6300.

Again, welcome back! We look forward to an exciting and productive school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa M. McFee".

Lisa McFee
Director for Academic Accountability



Q&A

Our kids...
our future

Here are the answers to the most common questions regarding the **November 8, 2011 Special Education Enhancement Ballot Proposal:**

Q. Why has this 1.2 mill property tax proposal been placed on the Tuesday, November 8, ballot?

A. If approved, the \$27 million from the proposal would offset about one-fourth of the \$103 million local districts and the Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD) are losing annually compared to 2008. This loss amounts to \$785 per student. It results from cuts in state and federal funding and local property taxes. The situation has forced local school districts to increase class sizes as well as reduce programs and services for all students.

Q. Who will benefit if this proposal passes?

A. The education of all 131,000 public school students will be significantly protected. The proceeds will first help finance programs for 20,000 special education students—now up to one in every seven students! These funds will in turn relieve the county's 21 districts from having to use some general education funds for special education services. The relieved funds can then be used to significantly preserve general education programs of local districts.

Q. What have our schools already done to adjust to funding cuts and property tax reductions?

A. Teachers and other education staff members have taken wage cuts, wage freezes, and reductions in benefits to help control costs. Money is also being saved by sharing career prep and special education programs, and using common student information systems, financial, personnel and payroll services, and bulk purchasing programs.

Q. How much will the proposal raise for the education of students?

A. If passed, 1.2 mills would raise approximately \$27 million, or \$206 per pupil countywide. This is about one-fourth of the \$785 per student that our schools are losing annually as compared to 2008 funding.

Q. Will all of the proceeds from the proposal go only to Macomb County students?

A. Yes. Every cent of the proceeds raised will be used only by the county's 21 districts and the MISD for local education programs.

Q. Who suggested this election proposal?

A. The Macomb County School Superintendents Association unanimously endorsed this proposal. Then, all 21 district Boards of Education requested it to the MISD Board of Education. They approved it unanimously August 4, 2011.

Q. How much will the election proposal cost?

A. The 1.2 mill proposal cost would be \$71.56 annually, or about 20 cents per day, for the average homeowner. Home owning voters can calculate their cost with an Internet software program located at www.mytaxcalc.com/MacombISD.



2011 HIGGINS HAWK WALK

made possible by:

The Original O2 Ear Buddies – www.o2earbuddies.com - 877-796-2327
You Walk Bail Bond Agency – You Call...You Walk – 877-YOU-WALK
International Express Services – Jennifer Barnes – 248-244-8470
James F. Skoney, D.D.S., P.C. – Family Dentistry – 586-775-7080
Hammons Mechanical Inc. – HVAC Contractor – 586-703-2722
Dr. Robert Patrus – Foot and Ankle Specialist – 586-775-1910
EZ Moving & Storage – Greg Thompson II – 586-296-2247
Normandy Optical – Dr. Jay Blazius – 586-737-4733
Parks Services – Darrin Llewellyn – 248-953-5638
Embroidery Arts – Walt Lashley – 586-948-7600
Chainsaw Charlie – Tree Service – 586-419-5432
Cheep Cuts – Family Hair Center – 586-949-3955
Advantage Realty, Inc. – David Jacobson – 586-822-1955
One-A-Chord Music – Lessons & Instruments – 586-949-6030
Accurate Answering Service – St. Clair Shores – 800-400-7575
Pradko, Gallagher & Slanec – Family Dentistry – 586-727-3815
Georgio's Fine Jewelry – Gold & Diamond Buyers – 586-421-9995
St. Clair Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram – Mike Paparelli – 810-329-2100
Drop Everything & Dance Studio – Owner, Pam Kraft – 586-948-3440
EnviroMax Services – Mold & Water Damage Specialist – 586-749-5510
Satisfaction Limousine Service – Committed to Excellence – 586-725-7799