

HILLTOPPER

WESTERN HILLS ELEMENTARY
633-5900
www.wdm.k12.ia.us/whills

BETH THORNTON, PRINCIPAL
October 19, 2009

CHARACTER EDUCATION QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Character, like embroidery, is made stitch by stitch." American proverb

Dear Parents,

It is that time of the month again when children are excited about Halloween and choosing their Halloween costumes. The Western Hills costume parade will also add to their excitement. Please talk to your children about choosing a costume that is respectful to everyone. Please eliminate weapons as part of their costumes. We would like to encourage them to wear a costume that portrays a positive image like:

- Friendly monsters
- Animals
- Food
- Things (pencils, crayons, flowers)
- Costumes of different time periods (50's or 80's)
- Famous people

Kindergarten through third grades will parade along with any grades that wish to participate. Your child's classroom teachers will send home additional information. The fall celebration and parade will be held **Oct. 30**. The parade will begin at 2:45 p.m. Parents are welcome to watch the parade. The best place to observe the parade is in the classroom hallways. Please stop by the office and sign in prior to the parade.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are scheduled for November 17 and 19 at Western Hills. Teachers will be sending home notes soon to ask for your available time. Teachers will sign you up for conferences again this year; so you do not have to come to the school to sign up.

SEPTEMBER STUDENTS OF GOOD CHARACTER

The following students were chosen to either have a Hy-Vee pizza lunch with Mrs. Thornton or to go to Hy-Vee for the monthly Good Character Lunch. The students who are invited to the pizza lunch with the principal have their names drawn out of their classroom's good character box during the end of the month assembly. The students who go to lunch at Hy-Vee are chosen based upon their good character writing they do each month. This month the students wrote about how they would want their students to behave if they were the teacher.



Pizza Lunch: Mary Yelick KA, Ashlee Sanders KB, Sarah Hochberger KC, Anna Bernhard 1A, Kirsten Johnson 1B, Jacob Brown 1C, Elise Carver 1D, Avni Mahatme 2A, Alison Friedrich 2B, Carson Tow 2C, Sarah Mang 2D, Taylor Mathis 3A, Evan Obia 3B, Austin Ellingson 3C, Hannah Taylor 4A, Ben Spence 4B, Abby Andreini 5A, Lindy Jones 5B, Holly David 5C, Abbey Bierma 6A, Joshua Miksch 6B, Izzy Koeppel 6C, Dylan Daniel B1 and Jeremy Bailey B2.

Hy-Vee Lunch: Ana Welge 1A, Payne Blazeovich 1B, Amina Dzanic 1C, Alison Wyatt 1D, Holly Robinson 2A, Kaitlynn Eide 2B, Jill Caranci 2C, Caitlyn Potter 3A, Jizet Vazquez 3B, Katie Wyatt 3C, Adrienne Dean 4A, Ethan Curry 4B, Erica Lack 5A, Jackson Gallentine 5B, Helai Desai 5C, Derek Lutt 6A, Matthew Hrdlicka 6B, Daniel Gomez 6C and Trevor Daughenbaugh B2

Thank you to the Hy-Vee on Mills Civic Parkway for supporting these lunches for good character!

Dear Western Hills Fifth and Sixth Graders and Parents:

An exciting opportunity is on the horizon for Western Hills fifth and sixth graders! This year we would like to begin utilizing students as Safety Patrol members. The Safety Patrol will assist teachers who currently serve before and after school to assure that our school is a safe and welcoming place when students arrive in the morning and are going home in the afternoon.

AAA information states, "Desirable qualities to keep in mind when selecting members of the Safety Patrol are: leadership, reliability, punctuality, interest in traffic safety, obedience to rules, will not exceed authority, good attendance record, courtesy, respect of classmates and attitude of service." If your child possesses some or all of these qualities and they are interested in serving on the Western Hills Safety Patrol, please watch for a Safety Patrol letter and application for membership that will be coming home with your student this week.

Please keep in mind other commitments both before and after school when considering your participation. Students would serve from 8:35-8:55 a.m. AND/OR 3:50-4:10 p.m. (Wednesday would be 3:05-3:25 p.m.). The number of times a student would serve depends on the number of Safety Patrol members. The application should be returned to Mrs. Pals, fourth grade teacher, no later than October 28. Any questions can be emailed to Mrs. Pals at palsl@wdmcs.org or Julie David at kjhnmdavid@gmail.com.

BUS TRANSPORTATION FOR SECOND QUARTER



Bus transportation for those who have already registered is now available to purchase for the second period. **Fees for the second quarter are due Tuesday, Oct. 20.** If your child will not be riding the school bus the second quarter, please call 633-4900 to inform transportation office.

Please send your payment in an envelope marked with your child's name and bus number or pay online at www.wdmcs.org by clicking on the PaySchools graphic.

PTA NEWS

THANK YOU FOR A SUCCESSFUL BOOK FAIR

Thank you for your overwhelming support of our PTA Sponsored Scholastic Book Fair! It was a HUGE success! We made over \$12,200 in sales. In addition, we collected \$1,818 in donations for our media center during our classroom challenges! With our record profits, we were able to give \$2,000 in books to our media center, \$2,900 in books to classrooms and teachers, \$1,000 to The Book Room and \$1,800.00 to PTA!

Without help from wonderful parent volunteers, our success would not have been possible. A BIG THANK YOU to the following committee chairs: Treasurer **Lisa Thomas**; Volunteer Coordinator **Patrica DeFrancisco**; Teacher Liaisons **Barbara Kazma and Angie Walker**; Wish List **Julie David, Barb Spence and Shana Tow**; Decorations **Tammy Burmester and Katie Ferren**; Publicity **Catherine Drummond**; and last but not least Classroom Challenges **Jenny Hochberger and Tammy Cline** who helped raise a record level of donations to enhance our Media Center! Thank you!

WESTERN HILLS PTA FIRST ANNUAL COMMUNITY TRUNK OR TREAT

Please join us for our first annual Western Hills PTA Community Trunk or Treat Oct. 26 from 6:30-8 p.m. in the Western Hills west parking lot.

Trunk or Treat is an event where people decorate the trunks of their cars and hand out treats from a single parking lot. The kids (dressed in their costumes) get wristbands and go from car to car to trick or treat. Refreshments can be purchased. Some cars have simple games and there is a contest to see which decorated car has the most tricked out trunk.

Trunk or Treat is a fun, safe environment for the kids and has an almost festival feel to it. Here is a website with some pictures:<http://trunkortreat.homestead.com/>

If you are interested in entering your trunk in our Tricked Out Trunk Contest or would like to help with our Trunk or Treat event please contact Carly Stahn at stahnc@wdmcs.org, Carey Buchanan at buchananc@wdmcs.org or Andi Lipman at jlipman@mchsi.com.



BARBECUE DINNER THANK YOU

A huge thank you to the Etzel family from KC Barbecue! We had a wonderful evening and due to their generosity, made well over \$1,000 for Western Hills PTA. A big thank you to all of our volunteers, parents, staff and students alike, who made the evening run so smoothly. We tried something new and, as always, Western Hills stepped up and made it AWESOME!

CARING AND SHARING

Make A Difference Week is October 19-23, 2009

Make a Difference Day, the nation's largest single day of volunteering, is October 24. More than three million people turn out to perform thousands of charitable acts for others. This year, the West Des Moines Community School District's students and staff will be collecting personal hygiene items for West Des Moines Human Services, which currently serves over 325 families a month. Western Hills will collect toilet tissue and Kleenex boxes. The district will also collect donations for Koins for Kids, a scholarship fund to help low-income families participate in local programs. Last year WDM Human Services provided 3,777 orders of personal care products to households in need. Over the last few months WDM Human Services has seen an increase in households in need and, unfortunately, they have not been able to keep up.

During the week of Oct. 19-23, we will collect toilet tissue and Kleenex boxes. The WDM Community Education staff will collect the items from each school Oct. 23 to deliver and stock the personal care product shelves at the WDM Human Services center.

Thank you for your support of this great cause! Any questions please contact Libby Blazevich or Carey Buchanan

RED RIBBON WEEK and CHARACTER COUNTS WEEK at WESTERN HILLS OCTOBER 19-23



National Red Ribbon Week is Oct. 23-31. Western Hills will be involved in activities the week of Oct. 19-23 to recognize the need to live a drug-free healthy life style. National Red Ribbon Week was first started in 1980 by the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth. The goal of this campaign is to present a unified and visible commitment toward the creation of a drug free America. This is also Character Counts Week throughout the United States. Western Hills believes strongly in the need for character education.

Please discuss the activities that we will be doing at school with your family and show your spirit during Red Ribbon and Character Counts Week. The Western Hills Student Council has helped to decide the activities for each day. Please review these ideas with your student(s).

- **Monday:** Stop Drugs, Start Books
The whole school will stop and read books for 15 minutes.
- **Tuesday:** Walk Away From Drugs
Each class will take a walk around the school grounds.
- **Wednesday:** Sock It To Drugs
Wear fun and crazy socks.
- **Thursday:** Pick Up Trash, Not Drugs
Walk around the school and playground and pick up trash.
- **Friday:** Pride in Our Good Character
Wear clothes that are the colors of the 6 pillars.

Thank you to P.T.A. for purchasing the Color My World Drug Free pencils that change color with the heat from your hands and also for the Let's Show Good Character by Being Drug Free badges that each child will be given.

Please contact Sue Cross, counselor, with any questions.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged and welcomed to visit their child's classroom. All visitors are expected to check in at the office and pick up a visitor badge. Please call your child's teacher to arrange a time. Schedules may occasionally change and it is helpful to arrange a time to visit. Please enter the building through the front door (39th Street side) during the school day. There is post with a speaker and button to push. Please push the button and you will be buzzed in. Students and staff are told not to open doors at the other entrances.

If parents need to drop off a cold lunch or school materials necessary for a student, please stop by the office. We want to try to avoid disruptions to a class in session.

CHARACTER REMINDERS AND SCHOOL RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Western Hills dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs which provides a guide for dealing with student discipline. These core beliefs guide our attempts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequences. When a student chooses an inappropriate behavior a character reminder slip is given.

All staff members, including KIDS WEST, are responsible for monitoring student behavior. Any staff member may administer a character reminder slip to any student who chooses to break a school rule. Character reminder slips are sent home with the student for their parent to sign. There are some minor changes to the slip this year students and parents need to be aware of. These changes have been made to support the school's Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) program that has been implemented the last few years. The changes help with documentation so the staff can further support a student if inappropriate behaviors reoccur and enable more teaching of appropriate behaviors with students if needed.

- When the character reminder slip comes home, it will have at the top the words major and minor. The staff member who gives the slip will circle one of these. A minor might include excessive talking, blurting out, arguing and so forth. A major would include fighting, bullying, vandalism, verbal threats, etc. A minor could become a major depending upon the frequency and intensity of an inappropriate behavior.
- The slip will also have a place for the time of the infraction and also the location.

The teacher will usually handle a minor but the principal or counselor might be invited to participate if the staff member feels it is important. The principal and counselor will handle the major infractions. This process includes the filling out of an action plan that encourages the student to look at what they have done, who it has affected and how they are going to improve their behavior. This action plan comes home for parents to sign and needs to be returned.

Western Hills believes character reminder slips enable a learning experience for each child and encourages the child to take responsibility for their behavior and to learn from their mistakes. Please contact Beth Thornton, principal, or Sue Cross, counselor, with any questions.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

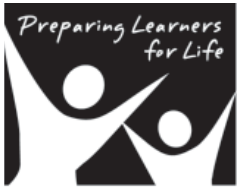
OCTOBER

30 Fall Parties

NOVEMBER

2-6 Iowa Test of Basic Skills Grades 3-6
12 WH PTA Meeting Media Center, 7 p.m.
13 Fine Arts Day
17 WH Parent-Teacher Conference
19 WH Parent-Teacher Conference
25-27 NO SCHOOL
30 School Resumes





WEST DES MOINES
COMMUNITY
S C H O O L S

informal

For the Parents of the West Des Moines Community Schools
Office of School/Community Relations

October 19, 2009
www.wdmcs.org

Board Highlights

At the meeting Oct. 12, the Board of Education:

- Heard a report from Valley students who serve on the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council
- Approved a trip request for the Valley Thespian Troupe to travel to New York City in June 2010
- Heard a report on 2008-09 activities and accomplishments from Community Education Director Shahna Janssen
- Approved the 2009-10 Community Education Advisory Council roster
- Conducted a hearing and awarded bids on the Crestview Elementary north addition project
- Reviewed the June 2009 year-end financial reports
- Authorized the district to request modified allowable growth and a supplemental aid payment for the negative special education balance for the 2008-09 school year
- Approved change orders on the Crestview and Indian Hills projects
- Appointed System Works LLC to perform commissioning services for the Crossroads Park project
- Approved the agreement with RDG for design services for the Crossroads Park remodel
- Approved the agreement with Polk County Empowerment for the Project Shine program
- Authorized the renewal of the agreement with Four Oaks to provide a program to serve suspended and expelled students in the district
- Approved the agreement with the Iowa Department of Public Health to provide federal funding to expand nutrition and physical activity education programs that serve food assistance-eligible students in the district
- Approved the contract with the Renaissance Chicago Hotel for lodging for the Valley High School debate team
- Authorized the agreement with Marzano Research Laboratory to provide a speaker to present the Art and Science of Teaching to district junior high and high school staff

Next meeting: Mon, Oct. 26, 2009
7 p.m.
Learning Resource Center



Online Survey about the Calendar

You have the opportunity to offer your opinion on options for the 2010-11 school year schedule. A survey will be posted on the district web site (www.wdmcs.org) Mon., Oct. 26. Three choices will be offered, reflecting differing start dates, winter break dates and the last day of school (without weather cancellations). The survey will close Fri., Nov. 6 at 4 p.m.

The district Calendar Committee – staff members and parents – has been meeting for several months to develop the calendar options. The survey of district staff and parents will be used by the committee to develop a recommendation to the Board of Education. The 2010-11 school year calendar will be presented to the Board for approval in early 2010, along with a tentative schedule for 2011-12.

Make a Difference Week



**MAKE A
DIFFERENCE DAY**
NATIONAL DAY OF DOING GOOD

Make a Difference Day, the nation's largest single day of volunteering, is Oct. 24. More than three million people turn out to perform thousands of charitable acts for others. In honor of this event, West Des Moines Community School District's students and staff will be collecting personal hygiene items this week for West Des Moines

Human Services, which currently serves over 325 families a month. The district is also collecting donations for Koins for Kids, a scholarship fund to help low-income families participate in local programs.

Last year WDM Human Services provided 3,777 orders of personal care products to households in need. Over the last few months WDM Human Services has seen an increase in households in need and, unfortunately, they have not been able to keep up.

This week, each building throughout the district will be collecting personal hygiene items. Each building has been assigned a specific item to collect, so contact your school to find out what they are collecting. You can also contact your school to find out where to drop off donations to Koins for Kids. The WDM Community Education staff will pick up the items from each school Oct. 23, deliver them to the WDM Human Services center and stock the personal care product shelves. Thank you for your support of this great cause!