

Pella Middle School

Developing Stronger Relationships



November 2015

Dates to Remember:

- 12/2 Early Dismiss – Staff PD
- 12/7 School Board Meeting
- 12/9 Early Dismiss – Staff PD
- 12/11 MS Dance 7:30 - 9:30 @ Pella MS
- 12/16 Early Dismiss – Staff PD
- 12/21 School Board Meeting
- 12/23 No Class - Winter Break
- 1/4 Class Resumes
- 1/5 8th Grade Party Planning @ 6:30
- 1/6, 1/20, 1/27 Early Dismiss – Staff PD
- 1/14 End 1st Semester / 2nd Qtr
- 1/15 No Class – Teacher Work Day

November 2015 Newsletter

Why is it that so many adults have negative memories of middle school? We have 350 students at Pella Middle School, and it is my genuine hope that every single one of them leaves this building saying that middle school was a great experience. Continue to communicate with me and your student's teachers on how we can make that happen. Our staff understands that your kids are in a precious time of their development – discovering who you are and who you want to be is complicated. If your students are struggling socially, emotionally, or academically, let us know; we want to help them navigate through this time in their lives. Their stint at Pella Middle School is brief, but we truly want it to be a fantastic, instrumental two years of their development.

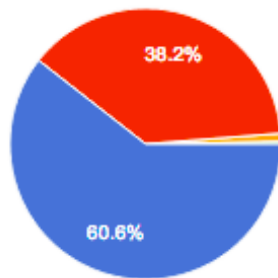
Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child

All Students

MS Building Goal - *Develop stronger relationships.*

A student climate survey was administered to 323 students (302 students last year) in November, and a more in depth analysis will take place over the next two weeks. We are pleased with the results, and we know there are still opportunities for growth. The results will guide short and long term building goals and plans in order to better support our students as they navigate the middle school stage of life. The results below tie directly to our building goal, and we will administer the survey again in the spring to determine areas of growth and continued improvements.

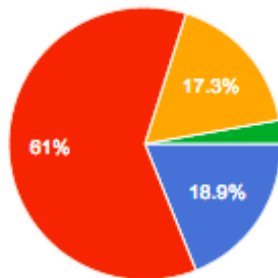
I like my school building.



strongly agree	195	60.6%
agree	123	38.2%
disagree	3	0.9%
strongly disagree	1	0.3%

*98.8% agree (4 students disagree) up from 93.3% (20 students did not agree last year)

My teachers notice if I have trouble learning something.

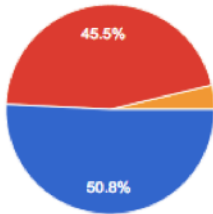


strongly agree	61	18.9%
agree	197	61%
disagree	56	17.3%
strongly disagree	9	2.8%

*79.9% agree (65 students disagree) up from 72% (84 students did not agree last year)

No Significant Learning Occurs without a Significant Relationship

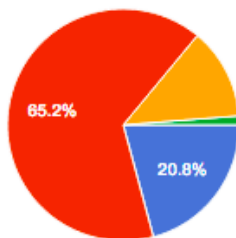
Staff at my school treat students with respect.



strongly agree	164	50.8%
agree	147	45.5%
disagree	12	3.7%
strongly disagree	0	0%

*96.3% agree (12 students disagree) up from 92.8% (21 students did not agree last)

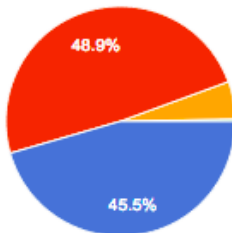
Students in my school treat staff with respect.



strongly agree	67	20.8%
agree	210	65.2%
disagree	41	12.7%
strongly disagree	4	1.2%

*86.1% agree (45 students disagree) up from 82.1% (51 students did not agree last year)

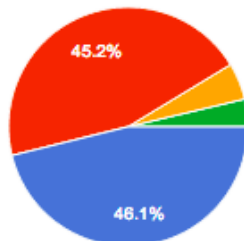
My teachers care about me.



strongly agree	147	45.5%
agree	158	48.9%
disagree	17	5.3%
strongly disagree	1	0.3%

*94.4% agree (18 students disagree) up from 91% (27 students did not agree last year)

I have an adult in the building I can go to if I have a question or a problem.



strongly agree	149	46.1%
agree	146	45.2%
disagree	16	5%
strongly disagree	12	3.7%

*91.3% agree (28 students disagree) up from 84.7% (46 students did not agree last year)

Once again, I need your help!

I have begun piloting a new tool I will use on a quarterly basis, and I am looking for parents to help me with my principal evaluation for quarter two. I want your feedback as well as students and teachers to assist me with this tool. I have five questions I would like your feedback on, and it should only take five to ten minutes. My hope is to improve in all capacities, and I believe many of you can help me do so. Please email me, and I will contact you to assist me with this new process. Thank you in advance for your willingness to assist!

Respectfully, Mr. Manning

Participate!

Winter activities are well under way, and we have many students participating in an extra or co-curricular activity. Involvement correlates with a sense of belonging, and it can also have a positive impact on a student's attendance and grades. Encourage your student to participate and be involved! There are relevant life lessons to be learned from these experiences and teaming opportunities!

Winter Participation - Scott Tjeerdsma, Middle School Activities Director

8th Boys Basketball:	30	8th Girls Basketball:	15
7th Boys Basketball:	38	7th Girls Basketball:	27
Cheerleading:	25	Wrestling:	15
Jazz Band:	36	7 th /8 th Show Choir:	92
7 th Grade Jazz:	18		
8 th Grade Jazz:	18		

All Students

2nd Quarter Celebration for Minimal or No Late Work

We are going to celebrate the 2nd Quarter with students not being on the Late List. In order to celebrate with us for the 2nd quarter:

- Students Must have all work completed and turned in by the completion date set by the building leadership team.
- Students will be allowed one late per class starting 11/9, and once again, they must be completely caught up by the end of the quarter
- Mr. Manning announced this plan on November 9th, and all students started with a clean slate on that date.
- 3rd & 4th quarter plan TBD

8th Grade Party (8GP)

*8GP planning meeting #1 is:
Tuesday, January 5, from 6:30-8:00 in the middle school cafeteria.

*Planning meetings will be held in the middle school commons or conference room if there are middle school activities going on in the gym.

*If you are unable to attend and would like to contribute, please feel free to contact the 8th grade party facilitator **Stephanie DeJong**:
dejongms@iowatelecom.net

2016 8th Grade Party Date
Saturday, April 16, from 6:30-10:00 PM @ the Pella Middle School

Opportunity is missed by most because it is dressed in overalls and it looks like work.

All Students

New Cup Stacking Guinness World Record Set

Under the seventh grade physical education teacher, Mrs. Tracey Murphy, seventh grade students set a new cup stacking world record of 617,944 cups stacked. Many of these students have been a part of this experience since 2008, so this is the 8th time they had the opportunity to set a world record.



*The only time success comes before work
is in the dictionary.*

What is a Service Dog?

The ADA defines “service animal” as any dog individually trained to do work or perform tasks that benefit an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, and intellectual or other

Why a Service Dog at Pella Middle School?

Nick Showman, our 7th grade student will use Harley, the service dog, to help build independence in school and at home. Harley is able to perform many tasks, and those that first come to mind are opening doors and retrieving items for Nick. Students and staff will learn that Harley will assist Nick in many other ways, and we believe Harley will also help other students along the way. So, who is Harley? Harley is a two-year-old English Cream Golden Retriever that is a trained and certified service animal, and he has been working with Nick since May of 2015. Harley moved into Nick’s home in November of 2015, and he is a dog with a job!



Service Dogs in Public Should:

- Talk to the handler, not the dog. The focus is on their handler at all times unless doing trained task work.
- Possess a stable, even temperament without anxiety, reactivity or aggression of any kind
- Walk nicely on a leash without pulling, straining, lunging, etc.
- Remain quietly by their handler’s side when their handler stops without wandering or losing focus
- Lay quietly under the table or beside their handler’s chair without getting up or moving around excessively
- Ignore distractions
- Service dogs should be seen and not heard.

Steps in Preparation for a Service Dog:

- Training for all building staff
- Training assembly for all students
- Integration Plan Communicated to Students, Staff, and Parents

What questions do you have?

Please email me josh.manning@pella.k12.ia.us or call us at 641.628.4784 with any questions. There will be more information coming soon in regards to our training and integration plan for Harley, the service dog.

8th Grade Party Continued (8GP)

As the 8th grade party planning lurks around the corner, it seems like an appropriate time to share general information about what the 8th grade party is in case you do not know. The 8th grade party is an annual tradition that continues to be a success because of such supportive parents. This year, the team will attempt to make it an event that once again focuses on the students in a less formal setting. Please consider being a part of the planning for this year. You, the parents, make nearly all the decisions about the 8th grade party and dictate what type of party it is, and I want to express my gratitude in advance for those willing to assist Stephanie DeJong with the planning and preparation of this annual tradition. It will once again be a great success and celebration for our students.

Stephanie DeJong: dejongms@iowatelecom.net



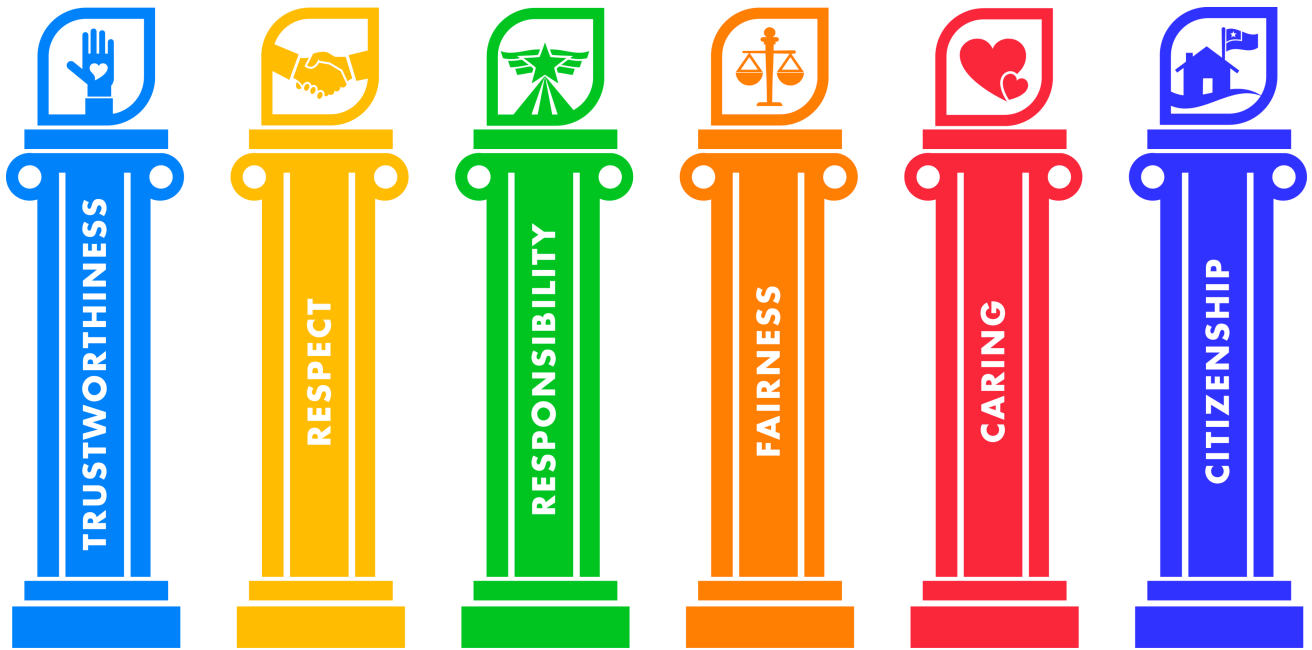
Sound System Upgrade Fundraiser

Do you need holiday gift ideas? The activities department and student council have a great resource for you! A web store selling Pella apparel will provide funds for a much-needed sound system improvement in our gymnasium. One-third of the proceeds will go to the student council to give back in some way of their choice, and the other two-thirds of the proceeds will go to the sound system upgrade fund. This may take a year, and it may take two or three years. Online orders are due by December 8th, and they will arrive back at the Middle School on December 22nd.

<http://stores.teamelitesports.com/pella>

*Nobody Cares How Much You Know...
Until They Know How Much You Care.*

Character Counts!



before you speak

think!!

- t + is it true?
- h + is it helpful?
- i + is it inspiring?
- n + is it necessary?
- k + is it kind?

The graphic features a black background with white text and icons. The word 'think!!' is written in a large, bold, white font. Below it, a list of five questions is presented, each preceded by a plus sign and a letter (t, h, i, n, k). The background is decorated with small white floral icons in the corners.

Counselor's

Mrs. Pentico can be reached by email at anne.pentico@pella.k12.ia.us or by telephone at [641.628.4784](tel:641.628.4784). Mrs. Anne Pentico

Need extra help? We have several before, during, and after school iStudy options.

1. Before School: 7:45 – 8:15 in Mr. Anderson's Room
2. During School: Every Period
3. Lunch Time: Students may stay in the cafeteria during recess.
4. After School: 3:15 – 4:00 MTRF and Wednesdays 1:45 – 2:30 in the Learning Street (Fish Bowl – room 207)

***Mrs. (Carrie) Blommers does a great job in iStudy helping students stay on top of their tasks. This year we are going to have any students with three late assignments in one subject or five late assignments in all subjects stay for after school iStudy.*

Thank you, Mrs. Pentico

2015 - 2016 Approved District Calendar:

<http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Final-2015-16-Pella-CSD-Calendar.pdf>

Activities/School Calendar - has ALL 2015 - 2016 district activities:

http://www.littlehawkeyeconference.com/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=206&school_id=4

Middle School Specific Site:

<http://www.pellaschools.org/schools/middle-school/>

Middle School Handbook:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11sbdnoekXycEhaCmud0jfVtG3MQLNqjrFWv29sFkJik/edit>

Pella 1:1 Handbook:

https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXl5SsjYh68yh9K8qZ6M5VM/edit

Middle School Band:

<https://sites.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/middle-school-band/>

Pella Digital Learning Environment (DLE) Link:

<http://pcsd-dle.blogspot.com/>