

Pella Middle School

Acclimating For the Future

October 2016



Dates to Remember:

- 10/28 First Quarter Ended
- 10/31 Second Quarter Began
- 11/2 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 11/2 Club Day
- 11/2 HS Musical - "The Music Man"
11:30 - 1:30
- 11/4 First Quarter / Semester One
Midterm grades published
- 11/4 - 11/8 Book Fair
- 11/7 Parent Teacher Conferences
3:30 – 7:00
- 11/9 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 11/18 Vision Screening – 8th Grade
- 11/22 Vision Screening – 8th Grade
- 11/24 No School – THANKSGIVING
- 11/25 No School

October 2016

As middle school staff, we have to remember more development takes place during early adolescence than at any other time outside of the first year of life. Middle school kids are growing and changing in a multitude of different ways, all at the same time: physically, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. However, this development occurs unevenly within individuals, and this is what makes parenting (and teaching) middle school students such an interesting adventure. Find out from the link below what you can do to help and partner with school in supporting your students during this “quirky” time of life.

<http://inallthings.org/how-to-help-your-kid-survive-middle-school/>

~http://inallthings.org~

Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child

Parent Teacher Conferences

Monday, November 7 from 3:30-7:00

First Quarter is complete, and conferences are a great time for you to come in and ask questions, to get to know your child's teachers better, to clear up misconceptions, and to partner with us in your child's education. We encourage you all to join us on Monday, and we thank you for your support of Pella Middle School. Below you will find the letter I sent.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We welcome and encourage all middle school students and parents to join us for conferences on Monday, November 7 from 3:30 PM to 7:00 PM. Each teacher will personally invite certain students and/or parents via phone, email, or hard copy. Please respond to your invitation at your earliest convenience. If you or your student does not get a personal invitation for conferences, please know we welcome and encourage all to attend.

Schedules will be posted on all teachers' doors. You may sign up during the days of conferences on a vacant time slot, or feel free to email any teacher with whom you wish to meet. This is an opportunity to understand and support your student's needs and for teachers to answer questions you may have. We appreciate your participation and partnership in your student's education.

Schedule:

November 7 - Full school day *Conferences 3:30 - 7:00 PM

Book Fair – Pella Middle School Library

The [book fair](#) is starting on Thursday afternoon, November 3rd, in the Fishbowl! It will also be all day on Friday, November 4th, and Monday, November 7th, (and during conferences), and on Tuesday morning, November 8th.

We hope to see you!

Mrs. Roberts and Mrs. Bentzinger

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

Accomplishments

Mock Trial Team Travels to Marshalltown

Mr. Jerod Garland, 8th Grade History, sponsored 13 Pella Middle School Students at a regional mock trial event hosted at Marshalltown Community College on Friday, October 28. The students put up a great fight in both of their contests, and he felt the students made great strides in last couple of weeks as they prepared for the event. Public speaking in front of age-alike peers is a huge accomplishment for our students no matter the venue, and he felt the students did a tremendous job digging deeper into their case and presenting their findings.



Special Olympics Bowling

Students competed in Special Olympic bowling on Thursday, October 20th at Plaza Lanes in Des Moines. Caden Verhoef and Mallory Pflzgraf both received blue ribbons (1st place) and will continue on to the state competition on November 19th. Kaelie DeHeer got a red ribbon (2nd place) and Nick Nardini got a green ribbon. Way to go!



You can be the Best, You can do the Best, or you can give it your Best Shot.

All Students

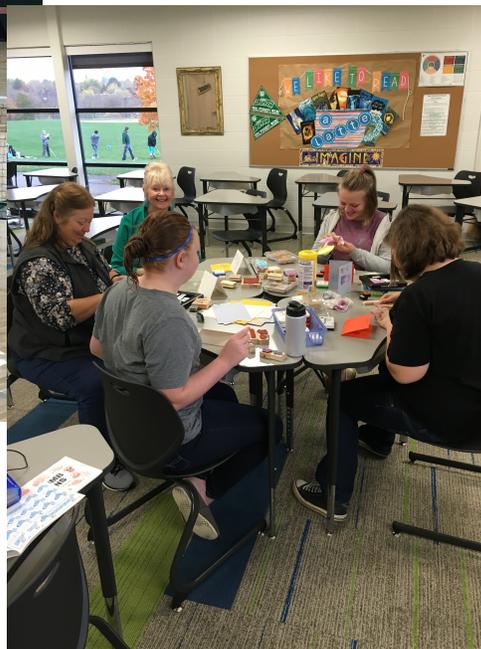
Club Day

As the first quarter neared its end, our Building Leadership Team (BLT) believed it would be a good idea to build a day full of activities devoted to connecting more personally with our students, enjoying them in a way we are unable to do during the rigorous school day, and celebrating the first quarter successes and efforts of our students and staff. The clubs we generated are listed to



the right as well as some pictures below. Ask your child what they did

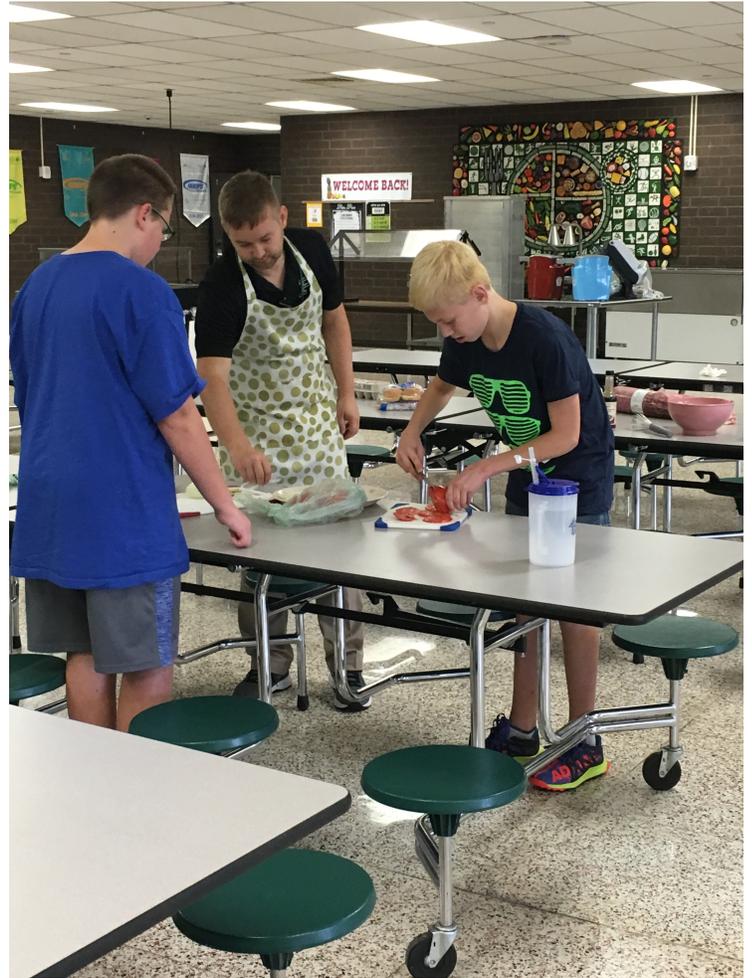
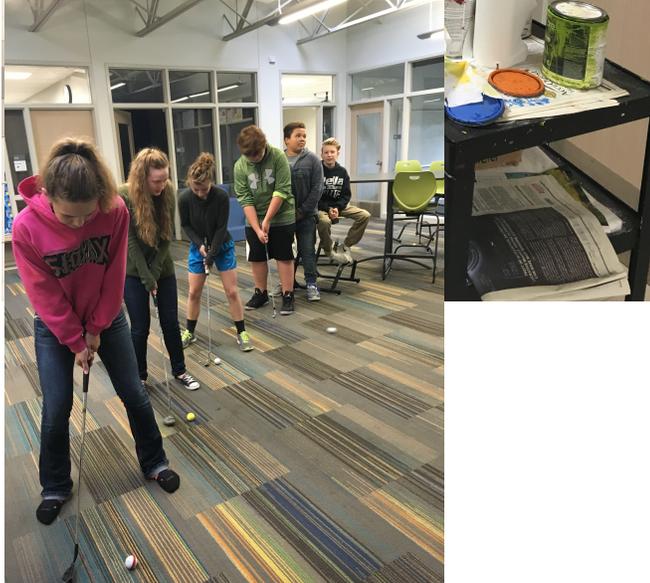
during their club this morning. We had a great time!



Card Club
View "Twilight Zone" episodes
WSOPP (World Series of Poker Pella)
Puzzles
Board Gaming
Pickle Ball
Cookies for Good
Men Can Cook
Golfing
Coloring Calm/Brain Puzzles
Stamping/Card Making
Music Appreciation/Name That Tune
Make A Difference - Complete service projects in our community.
Dance/Choreography
Science Experiment Club
Mural Workers
Drama Games
Dessert Baking/Decorating
Dodge Ball

There are no victories at discount prices.

Club Day



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

§ Gymnasium Sound System Fundraiser §

We are **\$6,700** closer to our \$14,000 goal for a much needed gymnasium sound system upgrade. To our surprise, we received another anonymous donation of **\$1500**, and we raised a little over **\$1300** from our Middle School apparel sales. We continue to move closer and closer to our goal, and we are excited about the possibility of our upgrade being installed this upcoming summer. We know an improvement will allow us to provide improved sound quality for our spectators, students, and athletes.

There are no victories at discount prices.

8th Grade Party (8GP) Facilitator

Thank you, Rhonda Showman, for stepping up and offering to oversee this year's 8th Grade Party! As you now know, the 8th grade party is an annual tradition that continues to be a success because of such supportive parents' attempt to make it an event focusing on the students in a less formal setting. Please consider playing a role this year, and I wish to express my appreciation now for those willing to assist Rhonda with the planning and preparation of this annual tradition. If you would like to assist with the planning process, please contact Rhonda via email. We will let you know the date of the first planning meeting in next month's newsletter.

Rhonda Showman: showmanrk@gmail.com



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

Smarter Lunchroom Pilot

Pella Middle School has volunteered and is excited about collaborating with the University of Iowa and the Iowa Department of Education to pilot the Smarter Lunchroom's Project in Iowa. The research team is led by, Dr. Natoshia Askelson, University of Iowa, College of Public Health and Public Policy Center. We will take the following steps:

1. Analysis of school meals participation, sales, and production data
2. Interviews following the project with food service staff and school administrators
3. An online or paper pre and post test for all middle school students
4. An online or paper pre and post test for all parents of middle school students

Daily Breakfast Reminder:

Breakfast is served daily in our school. If your child misses breakfast at home, remind him/her to get the most important meal of the day in our building's cafeteria.

Monthly Parent/Guardian Challenge

POP ? QUIZ

I've got your number...?

Ask your student(s) if they know your phone number without using their cell phone to look it up. We rely heavily on our phones today, and we are curious how many students would know their guardian's and/or emergency contacts' phone numbers if they could not look them up on their phones.



*Attitude determines preparation,
preparation determines outcome.*

Character Counts!



Character is what you show when no one is watching.

before you speak

think!!

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

Laptop Reminders

Tips for Parents - Social Media

- Set parameters on laptop usage at home.
- Avoid having your student use his/her laptop in his/her room.
- Have a “charging station” in the kitchen, so it does not have to go to student’s room for charging.
- When your students are using their devices, have them sit with their backs to you, so you can see their screens.
- Anytime your students create a new account, sit next to them, so you know the usernames, passwords, and abilities of the site.
 - Then check their usage once in a while to hold them accountable.
- Have your students explain the purpose of the site they are using/accessing.

Avoid laptop screen breakage - speak with your student about ways to avoid spending \$200-350 to replace an LCD projector/screen.

- Avoid leaving the charger tip on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving headphones on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving pens/pencils on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving papers with paper clips or staples on them when shutting the lid.

These simple steps can help students reduce the likelihood of replacing their screens.

Academic and Eligibility Policy

The faculty and administration of Pella Middle School have developed the following policy for students who are failing classes. A list with any student failing a class will be compiled by the iStudy Supervisor through Infinite Campus software, and the list will be compiled approximately every four weeks. See schedule below. Students failing any class will be placed on the Academic and Ineligibility List. Students not participating in extracurricular activities will be required to stay after school on Wednesdays from 1:45 to 3:15 for two weeks. Students participating in extracurricular activities will be rendered ineligible under this policy to represent Pella Middle School in any public extracurricular performance, as well as required to stay after school on Wednesdays from 1:45 to 3:15 for two weeks. Once a student is placed on the Academic and Ineligibility List, he/she will not be removed until the end of the second week (i.e. Wednesday morning through Tuesday end of day for two weeks in a row).

- The academic list will be compiled on Monday at 3:15.
- Student on the academic list who is failing a class will call home on Tuesday to communicate their grade with parents or guardian.
- The ineligibility period will start Wednesday and will run through the end of the day Tuesday two weeks later.
- Each student on the list will be required to stay after school both Wednesdays during the two weeks in an after school study hall from 1:45 - 3:15. Students may also be required to stay after school at any time during those two weeks in order to receive additional academic support.
- A list of all eligible students will be provided to the athletic director, the principal, and each coach as soon as the list is compiled.
- Extracurricular activities covered by this policy, but are not limited to: football, volleyball, cross-country, wrestling, basketball, track, shooting team, softball, cheerleading, jazz band, and show choir.
- Students will participate in any co-curricular events if it is required as part of a class grade.
- Being on the academic ineligibility list does not prohibit the student from practicing with the team.
- The administration will have the final say if there are any discrepancies.
- This list is confidential and will not be posted or made public.

Middle Schoolers and the Importance of Sleep

by Anne Pentico, Pella Middle School Counselor

As we approach the end of daylight savings time and the significant adjustment that accompanies the time change, it seems appropriate to talk about the importance of sleep for adolescents. Adolescents need between 9 and 9 1/2 hours of sleep each night; however they are notorious for not getting near enough, with most averaging around 7 hours of sleep per night.

Sleep deprivation impacts many aspects of your adolescent's functioning including mood, behavior, cognitive ability, and academic performance. Below are ways you might help your teenager get enough sleep:

- * Maintain a regular sleep schedule. Try to go to bed and wake up around the same time each day.
- * Avoid oversleeping on the weekends. While this may be a way they catch up on sleep, it will make it hard to get back on the school schedule Sunday night.
- * Take afternoon naps. 15-20 minute naps early in the afternoon can be helpful.
- * Turn off the television, cell phones, and computers. Screen time is stimulating and will cause difficulties falling asleep. Instead, incorporate activities such as reading or listening to music to wind down.
- * Avoid caffeine.
- * Contact your adolescent's doctor if he or she has difficulties falling asleep, snores, or seems excessively sleepy during the day.

Adapted from: Mindell JA & Owens JA (2003). A Clinical Guide to Pediatric Sleep: Diagnosis and

Thank you, Mrs. Pentico

2016-2017 Approved District Calendar:

http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17_SchoolCalendar.pdf

Middle School Specific Site:

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

Middle School Handbook:

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

Middle School Band:

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

Pella 1:1 Handbook:

https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXl5SsjYh68y-h9K8qZ6M5VM/edit

Pella Digital Learning Environment (DLE) Link:

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

Activities/School Calendar - has ALL 2016 - 2017 district activities:

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

Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child