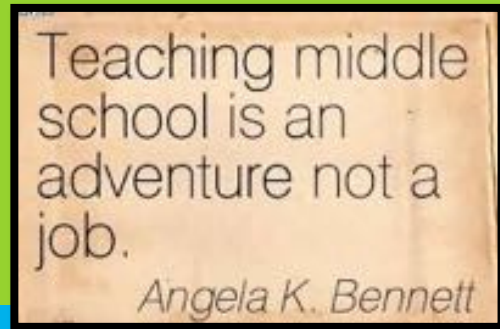


# Pella Middle School



## November - 2017

Giving thanks! Pella Middle School is working hard to remind students to give thanks this month, even in times of difficulty and tragedy. It is important to our staff to model for our students the value of giving thanks, even during the trying times in our lives. We want to thank all parents, students, and community members for their unmatched support for all the endeavors, learning, trials, and successes our building endures. We are a blessed group of educators who get the privilege to serve your children and our community. Please know during this season of thanksgiving that we are grateful. Enjoy the upcoming Thanksgiving break, and from our family at Pella Middle School to yours, thank you!

On the last few pages of this newsletter, you will find some ideas of how to support your sons/daughters if they might be struggling with the loss of our treasured classmate.

### Dates to Remember:

- 11/15 90 Minute Early Dismiss PD
- 11/22 90 Minute Early Dismissal
- 11/23 Thanksgiving - No School
- 11/24 No School
- 11/27 School Board Meeting @ 4:30

*Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child*

# Respecting and Developing Every Child's Potential



A group of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students supervised by Mr. Nick Fynaardt and Mrs. Megan Ferguson traveled to Indian Hills Community College last month to see firsthand the variety of programs they have to offer. Those programs included but are not limited to: Automotive Collision & Tech, Aviation, Computer Software Development, Dental, Diesel Tech, Electronic Engineering, EMS/Paramedic, Laser Tech, Medical Lab Tech, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Radiologic Tech, Robotics/Automation, Welding Tech.



*Ability is what you have; skill is what you learn.*

# Become a Person of Integrity and Personal Balance

Pella Community School District Superintendent, Greg Ebeling,  
named Iowa superintendent of the Year!



Congratulations to Mr. Greg Ebeling who has been named Iowa Superintendent of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa. Greg started his position at the Pella Community School District in 2011 and has shown extraordinary dedication to our schools. After being nominated by his peers, Greg was selected for the award by a committee of superintendents from Iowa schools. This is a tremendous recognition, and we are proud to have him leading our district!

A big part of being successful is being prepared.



# Exhibiting Global Awareness

Pella Middle School Students supported Maggie Leach's efforts to provide laundry supplies to low-income families.



Maggie Leach launched Operation Share the Load to help low-income families who can't afford to do laundry regularly when she was 8 years old, and she continues to help those families six years later. The pictures represent her efforts this year.



*You can be the best, you can do the best, or you can give it your best shot.*

# Pursuing Excellence



Science students experiment with Kinetic Energy and Mass using a ramp and tennis ball.



## Door Decorating

Students worked together in small groups to design October-themed doors for Middle School classrooms.

Teachers and staff enjoyed observing as students used their communication, organization, and problem-solving skills to plan and create.



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



# Exhibiting Global Awareness The

## Coffee Cart Delivers Again

The Middle School coffee cart raised \$81.00, and the students donated their earnings to purchasing three bags of 2T and 3T clothes for Crossroads in Pella. Way to go students,

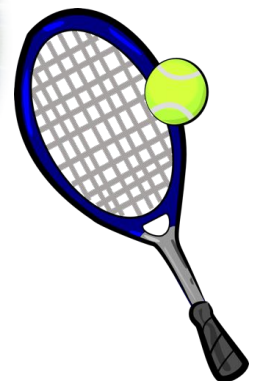
and thank  
you staff  
for  
drinking  
coffee!



## Students

## Vs.

## Staff



No significant learning happens without a significant relationship.

# Pursuing Excellence

## **Will Simpson, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, named Iowa PGA 12-13 year old Player of the Year**

From June 5 - August 11, Will Simpson, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and his parents drove him 3,812 miles and walked 113 miles on the golf course. In mid October, all the travel paid off as Will was named the Iowa PGA 12-13 year old Player of the Year! Will delivered a speech on October 17 at the Riverside Resort after receiving his reward.



## **Alex Vande Voort, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, is on a mission to be the best!**

The 13 year old box-stock dirt kart driver is well on his way up the ladder, putting up astounding numbers in what has become a career year for the young man. Vande Voort won 16 of the 37 races he entered this year, including 25 top three finishes, and 33 top fives. Click the link below for the full story. <https://ids.uni.edu/speedyside/2017/10/24/driver-spotlight-alex-vandevoort/vandevoort/>



*Attitude determines preparation; preparation determines outcome.*

# Pursuing Excellence



## South Central Iowa Band Association (SCIBA)

Last month, Middle School band students auditioned for the opportunity to participate in the SCIBA Honors Band Concert. The following students were selected and performed in the concert on Tuesday, November 7: *Kylie Tauke, Zack Neumann, Sam Beukelman, Hannah Nedder, Alexa Gaylor, Lucas Schakel, Callie Carlstone, Riley Sorheim, and Dora Roorda.*

Congratulations and thank you for sharing your talent and representing Pella Middle School at SCIBA! A special congratulations goes to Callie Carlstone for earning a spot in the All-Iowa 8th Grade Honor Band that will take place in May.

## 2017 ICDA OPUS Honor Choir Festival

Middle School students auditioned for OPUS Honor Choir earlier this Fall. There were close to 3,000 applicants to fill 720 spots, and Pella Middle School had five students accepted. Congratulations to *Elijah Burrows, Cooper Vos, Gavin Norton, Jake Rietveld, and Giovy Eekhoff* on being accepted to perform at the OPUS Honor Choir Festival on Thursday, November 16.





# Respecting and Developing Every Child's Potential

After spending the first and last week of the quarter learning about the various clusters and future career options, groups chose a different cluster and had to make a cupcake that represented a career within that cluster. Cupcake Wars is a fun and competitive learning opportunity for students to practice the food preparation and kitchen safety skills they learned throughout the quarter.

FCS



Cupcake

**THEME:**

**Career Clusters**

## MOST CREATIVE

Law, Public safety, Corrections & Security

From Left: George Insigne, Jasmine Namminga, Leyton Bethards, Cam Schulte (not pictured Kaylee VanPolen)



## BEST APPEARANCE

Arts, A/V Technology & Communications

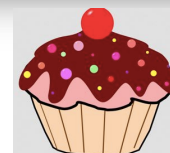
From Left: Bailey Culver, Maria Pronina, Isaac Kalkwarf, Max Kendall and Caleb Turner



## BEST FLAVOR

Ag, Food & Natural Resources

From left: Caden Morgan, Isaac Humphrey, Quintan Kocour, Carter Nguyen, and not pictured Cooper Van Donselaar.



# Building Caring Relationships

## How can you support your son or daughter if they are grieving?

### Six Basic Principles of Teen Grief

*Adapted from: Helping Teens Cope with Death (2004) by The Dougy Center for Grieving Children*

#### 1. Grieving is the teen's natural reaction to a death.

Grief is a natural reaction to death and other losses. However, grieving does not feel natural because it can be difficult to control emotions, thoughts or physical feelings associated with a death. The sense of being out of control that is often a part of grief, may overwhelm or frighten some teens. Grieving is normal and healthy, yet may be an experience teens resist and reject. Helping teens accept the reality that they are grievers allows them to do their work and progress in their grief journey.

#### 2. Each teen's grieving experience is unique.

Grieving is a different experience for each person. Teens grieve for different lengths of time and express a wide spectrum of emotions. Grief is best understood as a process in which bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts and behaviors surface in response to the death, its circumstances, the past relationship with the deceased and the realization of the future without the person. For example, sadness and crying may be an expression of grief for one teen, which another may respond with humor and laughter.

While many theories and models of the grieving process provide a helpful framework, the path itself is individual, and often lonely. No book or grief therapist can predict or prescribe exactly what a teen will or should go through on the grief journey. Adults can best assist grieving teenagers by accompanying them on their journey in the role of listener and learner, and by allowing the teen to function as the teacher.

#### 3. There are no "right" and "wrong" ways to grieve.

Sometimes, adults express strong opinions about "right" or "wrong" ways to grieve. But there is no correct way to grieve. Coping with a death does not follow a simple pattern or set of rules, nor is it a course to be evaluated or graded.

There are, however, "helpful" and "unhelpful" choices and behaviors associated with the grieving process. Some behaviors are constructive and encourage facing grief, such as talking with trusted friends, journaling, creating art and expressing emotion, rather than holding it inside. Other grief responses are destructive and can cause long-term complications and consequences. For example, some teens attempt to escape their pain through many of the same escape routes adults choose: alcohol and substance abuse, reckless sexual activity, antisocial behaviors, withdrawal from social activities, excessive sleeping, high risk-taking behaviors, and other methods that temporarily numb the pain of their loss.



# Building Caring Relationships

## 4. Every death is unique and is experienced differently.

The ways teens grieve differs according to their personality and the particular relationship they had with the deceased. They typically react in different ways to the death of a parent, sibling, grandparent, child or friend. For many teens, peer relationships are primary. The death or loss of a boyfriend or girlfriend may seem to affect them more than the death of a sibling or grandparent.

Within a family, each person may mourn differently at different times. One may be talkative, another may tend to cry often, and a third may withdraw. This can generate a great deal of tension and misunderstanding within the already-stressed family. Each person's responses to death should be honored as their way of coping in that moment. Keep in mind that responses may change from day to day or even hour to hour.

## 5. The grieving process is influenced by many issues.

The impact of a death on a teen relates to a combination of factors, including:

- Social support systems available for the teen (family, friends and/or community)
- Circumstances of the death; how, where and when the person died
- Whether the young person unexpectedly found the body
- The nature of the relationship with the person who died – harmonious, abusive, conflictual, unfinished, communicative
- The teen's involvement in the dying process
- The emotional and developmental age of the teen
- The teen's previous experiences with death

## 6. Grief is ongoing.

Grief never ends, but it does change in character and intensity. Many griever's have compared their grieving to the constantly shifting tides of the ocean; ranging from calm, low tides to raging high tides that change with the seasons and the years.

The "never-ending, but changing" aspect of grief may be one of the least understood. Most people are anxious for teens to have closure and "put the death behind them" so they can move on. But death leaves a vacuum in the lives of those left behind. Life is never the same again. This does not mean that life can never be joyful again, nor that the experience of loss cannot be transformed into something positive. But grief does not have a magical closure. People report pangs of grief 40, 50, even 60 years after a death. Grief is not a disease that can be cured, but rather a process we learn to incorporate into our lives.





# Character Counts



## Calendars and Helpful Links

### **2017-2018 Approved District Calendar:**

<http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/FINAL-of-2017-18-approved-2-13-17.pdf>

### **Middle School Specific Site:**

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

### **Middle School Handbook:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rUWOmkYWFolz2wtEzKRP25fo86sENvXtpd-mDCAIU-4/edit>

### **Middle School Band:**

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

### **Pella I:I Handbook:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lwkAUBESJbVmRgTpaU2ijBq4tpCo-Z\\_VFNmf-gfe6Ag/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lwkAUBESJbVmRgTpaU2ijBq4tpCo-Z_VFNmf-gfe6Ag/edit)

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

<http://www.pellaschools.org/calendar/>