

# MONTAGE



The Newsletter for Parents and Students of Carson, Ingomar and Marshall Middle Schools



**Back to School  
2009**

**WELCOME BACK!**

**Greetings  
from the  
Principals**

**Standardized  
Test Dates**

**New Technology**

**Middle School  
Calendar**

**First day for students . . . August 27<sup>th</sup>**

**"Great Expectations...The Best Is Yet To Come!"**

# Greetings from the Superintendent



**Dear Parents:**

**Welcome back to the 2009-2010 school year...a year when great things are happening!** Our Strategic Plan continues to focus our attention on the future and this is to be a year when we try some new things and test the waters on some innovation. We will need your support...we will need your input... **and most of all we will need YOU!** You are the folks who help make this District great and as we take steps in some new directions into the future, we need you to be with us as partners in some new endeavors. We are starting our seventh decade and our 61<sup>st</sup> year of excellence. It is up to all of us together not to rest on our laurels but to challenge ourselves to continue to seek new and innovative possibilities for our District and our students.

This year, we are equipping NAI with the same interactive technology that we phased in at NASH over the last two years. We have spent the summer expanding Promethean Boards into the core subject classrooms and we have escalated a two-year implementation into a one-year implementation to eliminate the digital divide between NASH and NAI. We hope to have the Social Studies, Science, Math and English classes finished by the end of the 2009 calendar year, if not sooner. These rooms will be turned into interactive, digital classrooms that contain a Promethean Board, a ceiling-mounted projector, a webcam, a printer, and speakers. We are also adding a series of laptop mobile labs, each containing 30 laptops to be shared through the building at NAI. Our goal is to continue technology integration into instruction and to expand student engagement in the classroom in a digital fashion. We hope to expand this technology to our other schools in the District over the next several years, as part of a continued phase-in implementation. I thank the School Board for their total support on this major undertaking.

**We** are also exploring other uses for distance learning, which is currently implemented to provide Mandarin Chinese I and II classes through a program at A.W. Beattie that our students can access at both NAI and NASH. Additionally, we are seriously looking into the possibilities of cyber education and studying the possibilities of a virtual academy, which the staff is currently exploring. The possibilities there are exciting. And, so many parents have asked us to provide an emergency telephone messenger service if schools are delayed, closed or have emergencies, and we will be operational with that as the school year begins. Parents will now be able to be notified by phone on snow days, if they want that option. We ask for your patience as we implement this program for the first time. If there are parents who do not want this type of notification, there will be an opt-out component available for them as well.

**Another** change is that at the middle school level this year, we are introducing a **new course for sixth graders**. As a result of the Business, Computer, and Information Technology Department Curriculum Review, keyboarding will be introduced this year as a nine-week course within the Unified Arts rotation.

**We** also want to welcome our new Assistant Principal at Carson Middle School, Mr. Michael Pasquinelli, who joined the NA Family in April. At the same time, we want to congratulate Mrs. Tammy Andreyko, Principal at Ingomar Middle School, who was selected as the Pennsylvania Principal of the Year at the middle level by the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals and now goes on to the national competition. For the first semester of this year, Mrs. Andreyko will be on a sabbatical as she continues to pursue her doctoral degree. Dr. Steve Duchi will be the Acting Principal until she returns for the second semester. We congratulate her and wish her well.

**As** we continue to hold great expectations for the future with the belief that the best is yet to come, the District's accomplishments continue to reflect excellence throughout our North Allegheny community. What an honor it was in January for the NA Marching Band to be invited to march down Pennsylvania Avenue as part of the 56<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inaugural Parade! What a banner year it was for the athletics program to win so many WPIAL and PIAA titles and to earn the MSA-Army Cup for the Best Overall Athletic Program Award for Western Pennsylvania for the sixth consecutive year! In the area of academic achievement, the District is the third highest-ranked School District in Western Pennsylvania and the District moved up at the state level to Number 7 out of 497 school districts. *Newsweek* and *US News & World Report* again named NASH as among the best high schools in the nation and NAI was again accredited by the Middle States Accreditation Association and commended for their excellent program. The list of achievements of North Allegheny goes on and on! Without the support of our parents none of this would be possible. **Thank you for your tremendous support.** As our journey continues in the 2009-2010 school year, let's continue to dream big dreams and use the power of possibility thinking to make those dreams into reality for our children, together.

*Patricia P. Green, Ph.D.*  
Superintendent of Schools

# A Message from the Assistant Superintendent



Dear Parents,

The North Allegheny Schools are highly acclaimed and recognized throughout the country for the excellence that defines all that we do. In the North Allegheny School District, we are committed to providing our students with a well-rounded and relevant educational experience. Our focus on high achievement permeates everything we do from academics to athletics.

As stated in the Strategic Plan, North Allegheny's mission is "to educate and develop all students to become confident, life-long learners and responsible citizens within a changing, global society by delivering an outstanding educational experience through a comprehensive array of opportunities in the pursuit of excellence." North Allegheny continues to be ranked as having one of the best academic programs in Pennsylvania. The North Allegheny curriculum ranges from courses designed to reinforce and nurture basic skills to courses that challenge even the most capable of students.

The North Allegheny School District continues to take pride in the opportunities it gives the students in the arts. In addition, the District also takes pride in the vast number of student accomplishments in the arts. The North Allegheny School District believes that these opportunities and accomplishments are vital to the well-rounded education of all students. As an example, North Allegheny has once again been recognized as being one of the "Best Communities in America for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation for the second consecutive year.

In addition to the academics and the arts, the District offers many athletic opportunities for its students. Students are able to participate in a wide variety of athletic programs beginning with intramurals in the elementary schools to the athletics offered at the varsity level. The District continues to encourage all students to participate in physical activities for competition, enjoyment, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. As a special note, the North Allegheny Athletic Department, for the sixth consecutive year, won the MSA Sports-U.S. Army Sports Cup for the 2008/2009 school year. This award is given to the best sports program for the school year from the WPIAL in each classification. The District is proud of the performance of its students as they compete throughout the WPIAL and State.

Our Vision, as stated in the Strategic Plan, is "to be a safe and student-centered community partnership marked by high expectations, a challenging curriculum, and a shared commitment to educational excellence through rich and varied learning experiences." As an educational community, students, parents, and staff share the responsibility with us of a quality education not only in the classroom, but in all activities surrounding the school community. We thank you for that!

Welcome to a new school year and best wishes!



- William P. Stropkaj, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent

# The Best is Yet to Come in 2009-2010



Ms. Katherine Jenkins  
Principal – CMS



Mr. Michael Pasquinelli  
Asst. Principal – CMS



Ms. Tammy Andreyko\*  
Principal – IMS



Ms. Kristen Silbaugh  
Asst. Principal – IMS



Dr. Cynthia Kainaroi  
Principal – MMS



Mrs. Tracie Michalowski  
Asst. Principal – MMS

Dear Middle School Parents/Guardians,

Middle School is an exciting time in your child's life. We are eager for school to begin and welcome your child to middle school. We look forward to working together with you to make this the most positive and rewarding educational experience in your child's life. **The Best is Yet to Come** in the 2009-2010 school year!

Our middle schools are dedicated to quality teaching, learning, and the development of the whole student – academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. We believe in building strong relationships between school and home. We understand that communication is key to a successful school experience. Teachers, counselors, and administrators welcome your questions and want to work in partnership with you.

Goals at each middle school include providing your son or daughter with a safe and caring learning environment, a balanced curriculum, and activities that will foster responsible decision-making, new friendships, and a positive self-image. Your child's success in academic areas, the arts, athletics, curricular, and co-curricular activities is important to us. Please encourage your child to get involved and set some personal goals. If you have not done so already, please visit our building websites with your son or daughter to view the various clubs, organizations, and other available opportunities. There is something in our middle schools for everyone! During the first month of school, each middle school will set aside a special day to draw attention to such things as team building, bully prevention, school rules, and expectations. Please ask your son or daughter to tell you about CMS's 'Someplace Special Day,' IMS's 'Proud to be Ingomar Day,' or MMS's 'Marshall Matters Day.'

We also want you to be involved in our school community. Each day at school, students hear morning announcements making them aware and reminding them of upcoming club meetings, special schedules, and special events or activities. Announcements are posted on each building's website for your convenience. Be sure to review the District calendar, so that you will be able to highlight important dates and times of events occurring at each building. Sixth Grade Coffees, the Volunteer Coffee, Open House, and Key Communicator meetings are among the important dates to note.

Together we can create an atmosphere of respect and success. We are looking forward to the 2009-2010 school year and greeting the middle school students on the first day of school, August 27th!

Respectfully,

*Your Middle School Administrators*

“Together we create  
an atmosphere of  
respect and success.”

\* For the first semester of this year, Mrs. Andreyko will be on a sabbatical as she continues to pursue her doctoral degree. Dr. Steve Duchi will be the acting Principal until she returns for the second semester.

2009- 2010

# Key Information for Middle School Students

- ✓ **ARRIVING AT MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
The middle schools are open to students each school day from **8:00am to 3:15pm**. Students arriving before 8:00am should report to designated areas where supervision is provided.
- ✓ **ARRIVAL 8:00am**  
Students report to their assigned homerooms. Those students who have obligations to fulfill in another section of the building must secure a hall pass from their homeroom teacher.
- ✓ **LATE BELL 8:10am**  
Students who arrive late should report to the office with a valid written excuse for their tardiness upon arrival.
- ✓ **TARDY POLICY**  
There are only three (3) reasons that are recognized as valid excuses for tardiness:
1. Severe weather conditions
  2. Bus transportation difficulties
  3. Personal accident or illness
- Tardy slips are issued for tardiness to school. Students who are late must obtain a tardy admission slip from the office. It must be presented to the class teacher of the period in which the tardiness occurs and, at the close of the session, is to be left with the homeroom teacher. For the third unexcused tardy to school, and every unexcused tardy thereafter, students will be assigned one detention.
- In addition, **students must provide a note each time** they are tardy. This note is to be signed by a parent/guardian and is to be submitted to the office upon arrival to school.
- ✓ **TARDY TO CLASS**  
When late for class, the student must have an admission slip. **Lateness is determined by the classroom teacher.** Students who are tardy to class without an admission slip may receive a warning, a misconduct card and/or a detention.
- ✓ **BUSES**  
Approximately 90% of our students ride the bus to school. The safety of all students is of prime importance. Safety procedures are maintained through organization and good citizenship. The responsibility for bus safety rests with all persons involved. **Students are to ride ONLY THEIR ASSIGNED BUS.** A request by parents for special permission for a student to ride an alternate bus **MUST** be submitted in writing to the main office for approval. Students who choose to walk home rather than ride their bus must submit a note from their parents which outlines the request and indicates the date for which the request is made. This rule does not apply to students playing intramurals.
- ✓ **HOMEWORK REQUESTS**  
At the middle school, students meet with between six and eight teachers a week/day. Collecting assignments is a complicated task. Students are often concerned and anxious over work missed during their absences. Therefore, systems are in place to help students get their assignments during short-term and long-term absences. If students are absent only one day, they should get the missed work directly from their teachers when they return. Parents should contact the school office for details.
- ✓ **MAKE-UP WORK**  
All make-up work for absences of one week or more must be completed within two weeks after returning to school. If the work is not completed, a failing grade will be recorded. **Make-up work is the student's responsibility.**
- ✓ **CELL PHONES**  
Cell phones are not permitted to be turned on during the school day. Cell phones will be confiscated from students who disregard this policy. Parents will be required to pick up a confiscated cell phone in the school office. Telephones are available for student use in each middle school. Repeated infractions of this rule will result in detention. Parents may contact their child through the school office. **Please do not text or call your child during the school day.**
- ✓ **EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORMS**  
Students will receive an Emergency Medical Form for the 2009-2010 school year. This information **must be reviewed, signed, and returned** to the school as soon as possible. It contains direct contact information to be referenced in the event of illness or injury. Be sure to:
- check cell phone numbers, as they frequently change
  - check the appropriate box in the lower left corner of the form for permission to receive medication for minor aches or illness
  - update medical information on the reverse side of the form that pertains to the student's health status

# Tips for Sixth Graders!

There is much to look forward to as a sixth grader beginning middle school. For example, there is the opportunity to meet so many more students your own age. There are also many opportunities to participate in classes and activities not available in elementary school. Sixth graders and their parents often have many questions about middle school life. Here is some information to help ensure a smooth start for school.

## A Glimpse of the Very First Day

On the first morning of school, you will report to a temporary room. During the first 20 minutes, the staff will welcome you. You will receive your schedule of classes and your permanent homeroom assignment. Your homeroom teacher, who may also be one of your academic team teachers, will explain the procedures at your new school and review the school rules. You will also be assigned a locker, which you may need to share with a classmate. Cafeteria procedures will be explained. There will be time to answer all your questions. Don't be afraid to ask any teacher if you need help finding a classroom or if you don't remember one of the new rules. No one expects you to know everything in the beginning. Remember, everyone goes through a similar experience and soon you will feel like an old pro!

## What Does a Sixth Grader's Schedule Look Like?

The middle school philosophy is one of exploration, so students take a wide variety of courses. All sixth graders take classes in reading, English, social studies, math and science. These classes fill five of the periods in the seven-period day. They also take classes in art, family and consumer sciences, keyboarding, and technology education, collectively called Unified Arts. Every other day, all students have a physical education class. On the first day, the physical education teacher will tell the students what clothing they need for class. On the alternating days, students take either band, orchestra, chorus, or general music.

## Students Are Part of a Team

Each sixth grader is assigned to an academic team, which may consist of three or four teachers. Students study all of their academic subjects with only the students on that team. That way, students only have to go across the hall or next door as they go from math to social studies to science class.

The academic teachers get to know the students on their team very well. Students must travel to other parts of the building for lunch, music, physical education, or unified arts - but when they return to their team area, it has the friendly feeling of a "home away from home."

Students are assigned to teams through a very thoughtful process. The team placement decision is reached only after the counselors and principals examine many important details from each child's profile. It is our goal to create balanced and heterogenous teams.

To every extent possible, each team is balanced in the number of boys and girls assigned. Each team reflects the range of abilities and talents found in our North Allegheny student population.

## New Experiences at Middle School

Some of the things that may be new to middle school students are:

- computer-printed report cards every nine weeks for academics and the unified arts; and every twelve weeks for music, physical education;
- computer-printed interim grade reports halfway through each nine- or twelve-week grading period;
- a specific counselor assigned alphabetically to each student to help with scheduling, test results and specific questions or concerns;
- a school-wide intramural program offering a variety of sports for each season;
- an annual talent show in addition to semi-annual band, orchestra and choral concerts;
- Interdisciplinary units planned by team teachers;
- building-wide community service projects.

✓ The Middle School cafeterias will be serving breakfast and lunch this year:

Breakfast - \$1.00

Student entrée lunch - \$2.15

# Some Changes for Seventh and Eighth Graders

For seventh and eighth graders, some things change while others stay the same as the students continue their middle school career. Seventh graders are still assigned to teams. Eighth grade students experience a departmentalized structure as they continue to prepare for their transition to high school.

There are changes in the curriculum in seventh and eighth grade. Seventh graders have only one semester of unified arts, giving them the opportunity to explore two languages during the other semester. Eighth graders choose the first year of a world language (Latin, German, Spanish, or French) to study for the entire school year.

Seventh and eighth graders have additional extracurricular opportunities. Interscholastic sports are now available. Students may also choose to become officers in Student Council or may be selected to train or serve as peer mediators.

## More information on the Middle School Checklist

### Middle Schools Have Much in Common

Although each middle school prides itself on being unique, the three middle schools have much in common. First and foremost, the curriculum is consistent from school to school, offering students the same strong foundation in preparation for high school. Many non-academic features are also similar. Each fall, all three schools participate in a magazine campaign, the only school-wide fundraiser held during the year. Money raised from the sale of magazines pays for many student activities, assemblies and special events.

All three schools have Mini-Course Day. Teachers, with the help of parent volunteers, introduce their students to a variety of experiences outside the regular curriculum ranging from drama, storytelling and artistic creations to fantasy football, gardening, martial arts, remote control car racing and roller skating, to name only a few.

All the middle schools feature winter and spring concerts, awards assemblies for academics and sports, athletic events and school dances, and an annual talent show. Students at CMS, IMS, and MMS have much in common!

### School Supplies

On the first day of school, your child only needs to bring a pencil and a few sheets of paper. Each team or individual teacher will share specific supply requests during the first week of school. Assignment books are provided by the District. They are free to all sixth graders, and available at a minimal cost to seventh and eighth graders.

General suggestions from the teachers at the three middle schools are that students have a large (2 or 3 inch) binder (not a Trapper), plenty of loose-leaf notebook paper, number two pencils, pens with blue or black ink, and a zippered pencil case that can be snapped into the binder.

If you are assembling a homework kit, you may also want to buy markers, colored pencils, scissors, a ruler, scotch tape,

hole reinforcers and hole puncher. Your child's teachers will let you know during the first few days of school what other supplies they may require, such as spiral notebooks, compasses or rulers.

### Inhalers and Asthma

Does your child have asthma? Does your child need to have access to an inhaler? If so, please complete the inhaler permission form found on the Health Services web page at:

<http://www.northallegheeny.org/academics/Health>

Students **are not permitted** to carry any type of medication. Exceptions are made when there is a signed inhaler permission form on record in the Health Office.

### Too Sick for School

As we all know, flu and cold season can occur at any time. Schools provide an environment where the transmission of illness from one child to another can occur rather easily. Children work very hard during the day at school. A child who is ill often does not have the energy to complete the day. Not only does this put your child at greater risk for prolonged illness, but it also puts other children around him/her at greater risk for becoming ill.

Please consider these general guidelines when making the decision as to whether or not your child should attend school:

- Fever or 100 degrees or higher.  
*Children should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.*
- Acute cold or persistent cough.  
*These indicators may signal the need for a child to remain home and rest. The symptoms can also make a child's illness contagious.*
- Nausea or vomiting.  
*Children should be free from vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.*

Help us make sure that your children are ready and able to learn.

# Key Communicators

## Parent Groups are “Key” to Home-School Communication

Parents who have been active in the PFA or the Principal/Parent Committee at an elementary school are often on the lookout for similar organizations when their children move to middle school. Key Communicators (KC) may be the answer for these parents.

Key Communicators, who are active at all secondary schools, are parents who meet regularly with building principals to share ideas and information. Topics of interest to parents are presented and discussed, including curriculum, testing, homework, discipline, extracurricular activities and technology. School news and upcoming events are reported. Parents are also updated on District-wide news by representatives of committees such as the Unified Boosters and the Superintendent/Parents Liaison Committee (SPLC). School Counselors sometimes report on special topics such as scheduling and Student Council representatives are often present to update parents on their activities. Parents have an opportunity to raise questions and concerns.

Key Communicator meetings are open and all parents are welcome to attend. Please take advantage of this excellent opportunity to enhance home-school communication at the secondary level. The Key Communicators meeting schedule for the 2009-2010 school year at the middle schools is as follows:

### Carson Middle School

9am  
October 9  
November 20  
January 15  
February 26  
March 12 \*\*  
April 30

### Ingomar Middle School

9:30am  
October 19  
November 16  
January 19  
February 22  
March 12 \*\*  
May 26

### Marshall Middle School

9:15am  
October 2  
November 6  
December 4  
January 8  
February 5  
March 12 \*\*  
April 9  
May 7

\*\* There will be a combined meeting of all three (3) Key Communicator groups at MMS on March 12, 2010, from 9:15am-11:00am.

### Another Choice

## Parent Volunteers are Needed

There are many opportunities for parents to be actively involved as volunteers at the middle schools. One avenue for involvement is Key Communicators (see above article). Parents are also needed for dozens of other activities, from library volunteer work to Tiger Shop, Mini-Course Day, Career Day and yearbook.

Each middle school invites parents to attend a Volunteer Coffee/Tea during the first weeks of school. The school librarian, who serves as hostess, will introduce

and explain the school activities in need of volunteers. Parents will have the opportunity to sign up for the activities of their choice.

A schedule of the Volunteer Coffees is provided below. Please take advantage of the opportunity to see old friends, establish new acquaintances and be an active participant in your child's school. If you are unable to attend, please stop by your school office to fill out a card indicating your volunteer interests.

### Volunteer Coffee/Tea Schedule

Carson Middle School	Thursday, September 17	9:30am
Ingomar Middle School	Friday, September 11	9:30am
Marshall Middle School	Wednesday, September 16	9:15am

## Mark Your Calendars Now . . .



### Open House

Open House for the three middle schools is scheduled for Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 7:00pm to 9:30pm. During this important evening, parents will experience middle school firsthand by following a condensed version of their child's daily schedule.

Teachers will review their routines and expectations, course objectives and requirements and homework procedures and policies.

Open House is an excellent opportunity for parents to establish positive communication with their child's teachers. This evening is designed for parents only. **Please do not bring your children.** Further information will be sent home with the students after school begins.

### Sixth Grade Team Coffees

Parents of sixth graders are invited to attend a coffee during the first few weeks of school to meet the teachers on their child's team. Students will find out which team they will be assigned to on the first day of school. At the parent coffee, the teachers on each team will review homework policies and procedures, curriculum, communication issues and a variety of other topics. School Counselors and administrators will also be on hand.

The schedule for this year's sixth grade team coffees is as follows:

Carson Middle School	
All Teams - Thursday, September 3	7:30am
Ingomar Middle School	
Wildcats Coffee - Wednesday, September 2	1:00pm
Top Cats Coffee - Thursday, September 3	1:00pm
Marshall Middle School	
Team I - Tuesday, September 8	7:30am
Team II - Wednesday, September 9	7:30am
Team III - Thursday, September 10	7:30am

## Middle School Picture Dates . . .



. . . are shown below. Students will receive a packet of information with package prices prior to the scheduled date.

Wednesday, September 23	Marshall Middle School
Friday, September 25	Carson Middle School
Tuesday, September 29	Ingomar Middle School

# Legal and Illegal Absences . . .

## Middle School Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance at school is important to a successful school career. Absences fall into one of two categories: LEGAL and ILLEGAL.

### Legal absences include:

1. Student illness
2. Death of an immediate family member
3. Absences approved by the Administration, including appropriately approved vacations

### Illegal absences include:

1. Truancy
2. Absence due to parental neglect
3. Illegal employment
4. Vacations not approved by the Administration



Students with legal absences may have the opportunity to complete any missed assignments upon returning to school. Students with illegal absences are not permitted to make up work. Additional consequences such as detentions, suspensions, and/or fines from the District Magistrate may occur.

There are three reasons recognized as valid excuses for tardiness:

1. Severe weather conditions
2. Bus transportation difficulties
3. Personal accident or illness

A tardy student must stop in the office to receive a late slip to enter class and must submit a signed tardy note from the parent/guardian at that time.

Working together to help our students attend school regularly and on time will lead to a successful school year!

## What is Perfect Attendance?

To qualify for perfect attendance, a middle school student must have no legal or illegal absences during the entire year. The following guidelines also apply:

1. Four excused tardies or four excused early dismissals or a combination of the two are permitted, not to exceed a total of four.
2. All-day school-related activities (out of the building) are always recorded as days attended in the student's records. They do not count as absences.
3. All-day absences (not school-related) disqualify students for perfect attendance recognition.
4. Religious holidays and religious retreats with educational components must, by state law, be counted as absences, even though excused. At North Allegheny, however, they will not disqualify a student from perfect attendance.
5. Other exceptions such as family funerals, court subpoena or extraordinary circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis by building administrators.

## Before you hit the malls . . .

### Middle School Dress Guidelines

#### PERSONAL CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE

We are proud of the way our students dress. A student's individual dress indicates both self-respect and respect for others. Well-groomed students reflect their maturity by how they dress; they also make a personal statement for others which reflects an understanding of the serious purposes for which students attend school. While the school accommodates a wide variety of individual tastes, inappropriate dress is not acceptable. We ask that good judgement be exercised.

#### GUIDELINES: Standards for Dress

1. Articles must be clean (not soiled with grease, oil, paint or dirt).
2. Clothing with slogans/emblems etc., are acceptable as long as they do not depict illegal substances, indecent writing, pictures, slogans, violence, gang behavior, advertisements and/or double meanings.
3. Summer clothing is appropriate with the following guidelines: shorts, skirts and dresses must be at least fingertip length, heads are not to be covered (this includes hats, bandanas, and kerchiefs.) Halters and tanktops (i.e. "spaghetti straps") which expose the midriff, belly button, shoulders or back, or immodest display of undergarments are not permitted. Torn, ragged or clothing with holes is not permitted. Items of dress that disrupt the educational process and climate are inappropriate.
4. Oversized trousers present problems regarding safety for both the individual student and fellow classmates. School personnel will insist pants are to be worn so that the waistline is tight enough for a student to maneuver with ease, particularly in an emergency situation. "Sagging" pants of excessive length are not permitted.
5. Clothing, jewelry or make-up that frightens others, that is contrary to the mission (philosophy) of the school or disrupts the educational program is inappropriate and will be addressed.
6. Articles which could be dangerous to students, faculty or property are not permitted (ex. decorative wallet chains).
7. Footwear must be worn by all students. No bare feet. It is recommended by the Western Pennsylvania Safety Council that flip-flops and sandals should not be worn because of the potential safety hazard. We strongly encourage you to make sure your child's feet are properly protected.
8. Sleepwear is not permitted to be worn in school.
9. Outerwear is not permitted to be worn during the instructional day.

Students not following the dress guidelines will be asked to change and may face additional consequences.



*Choice of dress can both exemplify respect and our students' outward expression for independence. While we respect individuality, we also require students to adhere to our Guidelines for Dress.*

*A student's dress indicates both self-respect and respect for others. Well-groomed students reflect not only their maturity by how they dress, they also make a personal statement for others, which reflects an understanding of the serious purposes for which the student attends school. While the school accommodates a wide variety of individual tastes, inappropriate dress is simply not acceptable.*

*We applaud the overwhelming majority of middle level female students regarding the choice of their dress for school; however, we are facing a growing challenge of female students attending school in clothing that is not appropriate. Some of the clothing is immodest, suggests promiscuity, and is provocative and disrespectful to the students themselves, as well as to other students. We realize that our young people are exposed to incredibly mixed messages delivered by the media, the music industry, the internet, TV, magazines, and the fashion industry regarding their dress. As parents and educators, it is our responsibility to set the expectations for all students and the example for making appropriate decisions about dress for school. Working together as school and community, we believe that we can provide a consistent message to all students.*

# Information, Please!

Parents often wonder whom to call when they have particular concerns. As a general rule, it is best to seek a solution at the building level with the individual(s) closest to the origin of the concern. Here are some frequently occurring examples:

<u>Concern . . .</u>	<u>Person to Call . . .</u>	<u>Concern . . .</u>	<u>Person to Call . . .</u>
Grade	Teacher who issued grade	Bus Discipline	Bus Monitor/ Asst. Principal/Principal
Detention	Teacher who issued detention (Asst. Principal if concern remains)	General Transportation	School Counseling Office/ Transportation Department
Placement	School Counseling Office at the beginning of the year; teacher/School Counselor at mid-year	Teacher Complaint	Teacher first, then Principal
Peer Problems	School Counselor Asst. Principal/Principal	Medical	Nurse
New Student	School Counseling Office	Tutoring/Homebound Instruction	School Counseling Office
At Risk Student	School Counselor/Principal/ Student Assistance Team	Vacation/ Educational Trip Requests	Secretary
Homework	Teacher/School Counselor	Program/Curriculum	Teacher/School Counselor/Principal
Homework Requests (illness)	Secretary at IMS and MMS; CMS Homework Hotline - 412-369-5454	Extracurricular Activities	Sponsor/Coach/ Asst. Principal/Principal/ Athletic Director, as necessary

## Standardized Test Dates

Students in the North Allegheny School District participate in several standardized exams over the course of their experience in the K-12 program. Each exam provides important information about a particular aspect of a student's academic growth and achievement.

Students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 will be tested in reading and mathematics with the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exams. That testing will occur in the spring and is mandated by federal law. Grades 5, 8, and 11 will also experience a writing assessment. The PSSA Science Test for grades 4, 8 and 11 will occur in late spring.

Parents are urged to have their children attend school on every testing day and refrain from scheduling appointments that interfere with attendance. The District believes that assessment is a vital part of the educational process. The insights provided by standardized tests are used to make critical decisions about curriculum and instruction. These decisions will provide the most benefit to your child if details about his/her academic performance are available for consideration.

### Following is the schedule of standardized exams for middle school students in the 2009-2010 school year:

- January 11 - 15 ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) – Grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- February 8 - 12 CogAt Test – Grades 2, 4, 7
- April 12 - 16 PSSA Math & Reading Tests Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11
- April 19 - 23 PSSA Writing Test – Grades 5, 8, 11
- April 26 - 30 PSSA Science Test – Grades 4, 8, 11
- May 3 - 7 PSSA Make-up dates for all subjects



*For information about any of these exams, calls may be directed to the Office of Special Education and Pupil Services at 412-635-4110.*

## Counselor's Top Ten List

# Helpful Hints on Raising a Healthy and Happy Child

1. Families should eat dinner together.
2. Plan family outings with your children.
3. Ask open-ended questions of your child.
4. Give your child opportunities to make choices. Part of growing up is making mistakes and learning from them.
5. Technology is not always a good thing. Most bullying behavior occurs over IM, text messaging, and email. Monitor your child's computer use.
6. Keep the computer that your child uses in a central and high traffic location. This makes it less likely for them to get on websites that could be potentially dangerous. Talk to your children about never giving out personal information over the internet!
7. Encourage your child to get involved in extra-curricular activities.
8. Your child should have a regular, structured homework time and area. If your child says they do not have homework, they should read during homework time.
9. Adolescence is the time to learn the meaning of consequences for inappropriate actions.
10. Your child needs to hear the word "no."

### School Counseling Offices

CMS - 412-369-5421

IMS - 412-348-1497

MMS - 724-934-6038

## New Student Registration

Parents wishing to register students who are new to the District may do so at each school office prior to the first day of school, Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

Please phone ahead to the individual buildings if you are planning to register so that arrangements can be made in advance. The phone numbers for each middle school office are as follows:

Carson Middle School  
412-369-5520

Ingomar Middle School  
412-348-1470

Marshall Middle School  
724-934-6060

Please note: Students must have official documentation that they have met the new immunization requirements to register.

## District-Wide Sign-in Procedures

The three middle school buildings will continue to utilize the visitor sign-in procedure. This system has provided us with a management tool that helps us further ensure the health and safety of our youngsters, staff and school community. Every school facility has a "captured vestibule" at the main entrance to facilitate traffic flow and reinforce school safety.

Please remember to stop at the main office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge every time you visit an NA school. Then, **return your badge and sign out when you leave.** Both aspects of the process are key to the success of the program and the safety of your child. We are looking for 100% cooperation/participation again this year.

Continuing Initiative**Bullying Prevention**

Five goals have been established for the Bullying Prevention Program. They are:

1. Raise the awareness of students, faculty, and parents of bully-related issues
2. Reduce existing bully/victim problems among middle school children
3. Prevent the development of new bully/victim problems
4. Improve peer relations
5. Improve school climate

Research clearly indicates that these goals cannot be accomplished without the cooperative efforts of students, school staff, and parents.

**What is Bullying?**

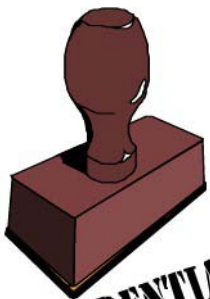
Bullying occurs when a person is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.

**Types of Bullying**

- |                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Physical Aggression | 5. Written Aggression           |
| 2. Verbal Aggression   | 6. Sexual Harassment            |
| 3. Social Aggression   | 7. Racial and Ethnic Harassment |
| 4. Intimidation        | 8. Electronic Harassment        |

**Consequences of Bullying**

Bullying is considered harassment and is a Level III offense in the North Allegheny Code of Conduct. Examples of consequences for bullying include, but are not limited to, removal from class or activities, detention or suspension.



The North Allegheny School District is committed to maintaining a safe, caring, and positive environment that fosters responsible decision-making and enables students to learn and grow to their full potential. This program will reinforce the daily expectation that respect for others must be demonstrated in all student interactions.

**Student Records are Confidential****Confidentiality of Student Records**

NASD protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information for all students in accordance with state and federal law and District's student records policy.

**Release of Information**

Your child's records cannot be released without your written consent except for directory information and incidents specified in the policy. Directory information may consist of name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, honors won and offices held, recognition for achievements, post high school endeavors, recognition of graduating seniors, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height (for members of athletic teams), dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received, and the last educational agency or institution attended by the student. If you do not want directory information about your child transferred, you may prevent release by contacting the District in writing within 30 days from receipt of this notice. Please address such requests to the building principal.

**Beware Of Bullying Behavior Online**

*Instances of bullying can also occur online. This is called 'cyberbullying' and is becoming more prevalent, especially among pre-teens who have grown up with technology as an integral part of their social life. In some instances, young people feel protected by the anonymity of cyberspace and say things they would never say in person. In many cases, it is possible for these situations to occur without consequences, since young victims are often hesitant to talk with their parents about them for fear of losing their computer privileges.*

*Parents are encouraged to become tech-savvy so they can closely monitor what their children are doing online. Experts suggest that parents establish rules to guide their children as they use the internet, addressing such things as the danger of giving personal information or talking to a stranger online. Monitoring computer use carefully and having regular conversations with children at this age can help to prevent hurtful situations.*

*If your child is a victim of cyberbullying, experts suggest several courses of action. First, the victim should not respond to the message. Responses can encourage and/or escalate these situations. Secondly, block the screen name or e-mail address of the bully from the computer your child is using. Then, change your child's screen name, e-mail address and password. Third, print a copy of the inappropriate message, making certain it includes a copy of the bully's email address and/or the URL of his/her blog.*

*The decision regarding whether or not to contact the bully or his/her parents is a difficult one. In some cases, this kind of intervention can be helpful. If the situation involves school-related issues, a parent may wish to ask a school counselor for help.*