

October

2009

ABSENCES – Parents/Guardians may be required to provide excuses from a healthcare provider for additional absences if their child has received ten (10) or more days of absence (excused, unexcused and/or unlawful) during a school year. Absences previously excused through notification by a health care provider or approved family trips will not be included in this total.

UNITY WALK – This year's Unity Walk is scheduled for Sunday, October 11 at Boyertown Junior High West. Free pre-walk activities begin at 1:00 PM. There will be games and activities for children of all ages. Food will also be available. The walk will begin at 2:30 PM. Hope to see you there.



HARVEST PARTY – On Friday, October 30, our classes will have refreshments after 2:30 p.m. Kindergarten and first grade students will take time for dressing up in costumes. For our students in grades 2 to 6, we will depend on the community parades, the scout parties, and home parties for the traditional dressing up. Parents assisting with the parties should park on the playground after 1:45 p.m.

CHILD CUSTODY FORMS – These forms have been distributed to all families for the 2009-2010 school year. If the form pertains to your situation, you must complete this form each year. If your family situation changes over the course of the year, please let us know. **If this form does not pertain to you, simply disregard.**

BOOK IT! BEGINS – We are beginning another year of our Parents as Reading Partners (PARP)/Book It! Program at GES. Hundreds of children have enjoyed free personal pan pizzas from Pizza Hut as rewards for reading efforts in the past years. This year, Dairy Queen and Subway are also serving as sponsors. The students will get to choose their reward from one of the three restaurants.

The requirements are simple: children read for at least 15 minutes a day for 20 days each month, keeping track of the days on the calendar we provide. Parents may read *with* children at any age – make this an enjoyable time together! Return completed calendars to the classroom teacher with restaurant selection marked. The teacher will provide your child with a coupon to take to the restaurant selected. Each month a calendar will randomly be drawn from each grade level. The winning student will receive a \$5 gift certificate for the Book Fair or a free book from the library. The program runs from October through March. This is an excellent way for students to work towards completion of the district reading requirement and to develop a love for reading.



RED RIBBON WEEK – Gilbertsville Elementary will once again be coordinating “Red Ribbon Week” during the week of October 26, 2009. Teachers will remind our students about the importance of being drug free.

We certainly hope that all the parents use this week's activities as a springboard to discuss with their own children the dangers of drugs.

PARENT PICK-UP REMINDER – Parents must wait until 3:20 p.m. before entering the library for parent pick-up.

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS – Occasionally, we have a child who forgets homework, textbooks, etc. and must come back to school after hours. If this happens, parents of grades 1-3 students must enter the building with your child. Students in grades 4-6 may enter without parents. Please sign in on the clipboards in the office until 4:30 p.m. After 4:30, the clipboards are on the benches outside the office door. A custodian will direct you and your child to the appropriate room. A bell is located to the right of the front doors. Students are not to wear soccer or football shoes when entering the building. These shoes on a tile floor present a safety hazard for your child.

PARENT VISITATION – On Friday, October 16, parents are invited to visit Gilbertsville Elementary School. Your children will bring home their class schedule. We look forward to your classroom visit. Parents need to park in the rear parking lot of the Gilbertsville Fire Company. Buses will shuttle you back and forth to GES from 8:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for the morning visit and from 1:00 p.m. to 2:10 p.m. for the afternoon visit.

We are asking your cooperation in following these suggestions for Visitation Day:

- ✓ Limit your visit in one room to a maximum of 30 to 45 minutes.
- ✓ Enter the classroom without knocking.
- ✓ Since the daily schedules vary, confer with your child or children as to their schedule of classes that day.
- ✓ Please do not bring any preschool children into the classrooms.
- ✓ Limit your visits to the classrooms of your own child/children.
- ✓ No individual parent/teacher conferences will be held during these visits.
- ✓ Parents are to enter through the front doors near the office. You will need to sign in and receive a visitor's name tag in the lobby.



GREAT NEWS, PARENTS— We have 50% of our families in our parent e-mail group! All parents who provided e-mail addresses are receiving the October Principal's Notes via e-mail. Please let us know if you signed up but didn't receive your copy. If other parents would like to receive the newsletter and, at times, other e-mail, please submit your e-mail address to: jmiller3@boyertownasd.org. Our goal is to have 75% or more families receiving information via e-mail!

MUSIC LESSONS – All students playing orchestra or band instruments need to remember when their lessons are held. The lessons are held on the following days unless the instructor sends a note to rearrange practice:

String instruments Tuesday or Wednesday
Band Monday or Thursday

Put a reminder on your refrigerator or calendar to help your child remember the days for lessons.

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD – Children in 6th grade have an opportunity to receive the Presidential Academic Award. The two criteria are: scoring advanced in reading **and** math on the 5th grade PSSA test, and a 3.5 GPA for 4th, 5th, and the first two quarters of 6th grade.

A NOTE FROM MR. YENSER

One of the district's requirements for students to be able to participate in Wellness and Fitness class is proper footwear. I have noticed an increase in the number of students that are forgetting to wear sneakers on days that they have Wellness and Fitness class. I understand that the weather has been quite warm and sandals or flip-flops are cooler; however, due to safety reasons, students without sneakers are not allowed to participate in class. Parents, please check with your child(ren) to see when they have Wellness and Fitness and remind them to wear sneakers or to at least bring sneakers to school so they can change into them for class. Students in 4th, 5th, and 6th grades have a class preparation grade on the report card and will be penalized for lack of preparation. I have also been noticing a new trend of students wearing their shoes untied. Once again, I will need to have these students tie their shoes for safety reasons. Thank you, parents, for your support and help on these issues.

PSSA TESTING – The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) will be administered to our students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 to provide assessment in writing, reading, mathematics, and science.

Since these tests are a source of important information for you and our school, we urge you to plan accordingly so your child is in the right frame of mind. **We are asking that family trips not be scheduled on testing dates. Trip requests will not be approved during this time.** Because nutrition and plenty of rest are an essential part of your child's growth and development, it is important that he/she receives both, especially during the days of testing. Your child will be more alert and better able to concentrate.

The following is a schedule of when these tests will occur:

Grades 3-6 – Reading/Math

April 7 through April 16, 2010

Grade 5 – Writing

April 19 through April 23, 2010

Grade 4 – Science

April 26 through April 30, 2010

CHARACTER TRAITS – At GES, we are continuing to emphasize the character traits of respect and responsibility. Parents, we appreciate you helping to show your children what these traits look like and sound like in your home. Also, I encourage you to share how you feel when your children demonstrate respect and responsibility.

Also, we continue to emphasize being “bucket fillers” rather than “bucket dippers.” Children are making a concerted effort to share positive words about others rather than destructive words.

POP A TAB – From an idea that started with the Boyertown Area School District Diversity committee, community members have gathered together to collect 6 million pop tabs as a way to see what 6 million looks like. Why 6 million? Because there were 6 million Jews killed during the Holocaust due to racial and ethnic intolerance. The idea was spawned after several area leaders viewed the movie, *Paper Clips*, the true story of a Tennessee school that set out to collect 6 million paper clips. In Boyertown, it was decided to collect pop tabs because many local organizations and school groups already collect pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. When the goal of 6 million is met, all tabs will be donated to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House.

In order to complete this monumental task, every household is encouraged to start a container for collecting pop tabs. A container with the “Pop a Tab” label is in the GES lobby.

SOME BASIC REMINDERS ABOUT PARENT VOLUNTEER CLEARANCE CHECKS:

You will need a PA Child Abuse History Clearance AND a PA State Police Criminal Record Check if you plan to volunteer on a regular basis during your child's school years.

This includes chaperoning field trips, classroom parties, and school events such as Fun Fair, etc. Once you have filed your clearances with us in the office, you do **NOT** need to re-file as long as you actively volunteer at least once a year. If you are only going to volunteer for a single event, or less than five (5) times throughout your child's school years, you may complete a disclosure statement. However, please note: you **MUST** have clearance papers to travel with your child's class on field trips.

Clearance forms are available in the school office. Upon receiving the clearances back from the state, volunteers must provide the **original** to the school office and the secretary will make a copy for our files. The district will reimburse the cost of the clearances if the person so desires, please bring your receipts to our office and we will apply for the reimbursement.

FROM THE HEALTH ROOM

Physical & Dental Exams: All state-mandated Kindergarten and 3rd Grade private dental exam forms and all Kindergarten and 6th Grade private physical exam forms are due now; if you have an upcoming appointment, please notify the health room of the appointment and we will make note of the date. School physicals will be held at GES on Friday, October 16th, in the PM only by Dr. Harrison. The health room will contact parents/guardians of students that qualify for a school exam.

Head Lice: September was National Head Lice Prevention month. To effectively manage head lice infestations and prevent excessive absences in school, the Boyertown Area School District has a strict No-Nit policy. We request that parents routinely check their children for head lice. Information on head lice is available on the BASD website. If your child gets head lice, our policy asks parents to notify the health room: please help us prevent head lice by following the policy and checking your children often.

Cold weather: Please remind your children to dress appropriately for outdoor recess. Also, October is the official start of the cold and flu season. Please remind your children to wash their hands often to prevent the spread of colds/flu at home and in our classrooms.

Medication at school: Please see the BASD medication policy in the BASD handbook or on the BASD website to review the policy if your child needs to take any medications during school hours. Your child may receive medications in school daily or as needed during school if the medication policy as follows: Complete a Medication Authorization form to be signed by the parent/guardian and the prescribing physician; the medication is to be hand delivered by a parent/guardian or designated adult; the medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name, drug name, dosage, and time to be given in school. Medication forms are available on the BASD Web site at <http://www.boyertownasd.org/> via link Services - student services - health: medication or by request from the health room. Please contact the health room if you have any questions at 610.473.1770.

Mandated health screenings: GES students in grades 1-6 will have their annual mandated health screenings on Wednesday, October 21st. A team of school nurses will check each student's height, weight and vision; students in grades 1-3 will have hearing checks. "Health report cards" with the results of your child's screenings will be mailed to all parents once all the screenings and rechecks are completed and the report cards have been printed.

Reminder: Anytime you have phone number changes, either at home, work, or for an alternate, please notify the main office or health room in writing so we can keep your child's emergency contact information current.