

EAGLE EXPRESS

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and the Kennedy Home and School



Short Stops

Spelling help

Is your middle grader a poor speller? Try playing games like Boggle, Hangman, and Quiddler. His spelling muscles will get a workout, and the entire family can have fun on a dark winter's night.

DID YOU KNOW?

Skipping breakfast makes it harder for kids to remember facts and solve problems. Encourage your child to eat before school by offering foods that are out of the ordinary, such as bean tortillas or peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

Conference time

Attending parent-teacher conferences is helpful—even if your child is doing well. Why? Teachers can often tell you how your middle grader gets along with peers, as well as ways you can support learning at home.

Worth quoting

"Only I can change my life. No one can do it for me." Carol Burnett

Just for fun

Teacher: What can you tell me about the great artists of the sixteenth century?

Student: They're all dead!



Your *real* middle grader

When you look at your child, you may see a middle grader with blue hair and an attitude. But you might also see a healthy youngster in search of herself. The difference? A little perspective.

Truth is, the middle years are a time when kids adopt different styles and opinions to see if they "fit." Often such shifts in appearance and behavior are a normal part of growing up, rather than rebellion.

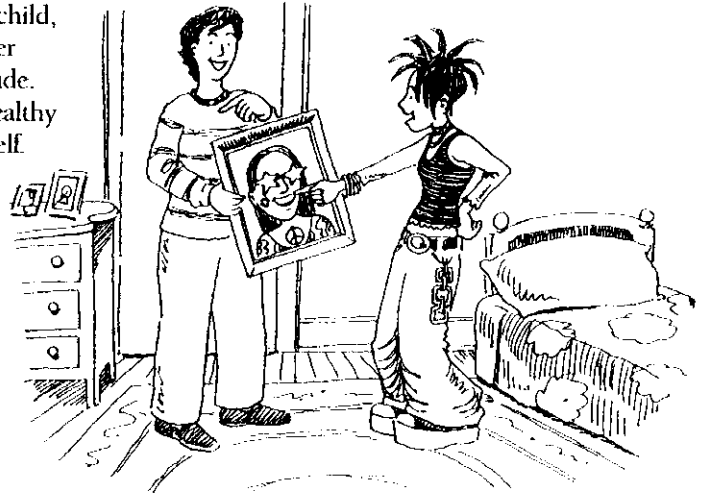
Here are some suggestions to help you and your child handle these changes.

Count to 10. As long as a new look doesn't endanger your middle grader, consider a low-key attitude. Take a deep breath and count to 10, if necessary. After all, a little hair dye will wash out in a few days. Don't let appearance spark an argument that keeps you both fuming for days.

Show support. If your child's grades are good, thank her for the hard work instead of lecturing her. Sure, her use of "cool" words might not impress an employer, but that high-powered interview is a few years away. Now is an important time for her to express her individuality.

Remember when...

Parents were middle graders once, too. Keep



in mind the phases you went through as a kid. You might even share a laugh about your antics to ease tension after a busy day—it's hard to be mad at each other when you're both laughing.

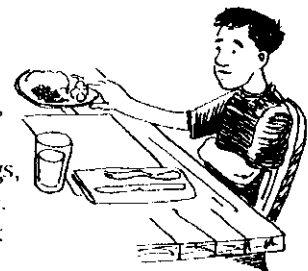
Spotting stress

Parents watch little ones for signs of sickness, such as fever. As kids get older, spotting signs of stress becomes important, too. Some studies indicate that stress is on the rise among young adolescents. In addition to normal growing pains, middle graders can feel added pressure from drugs, violence, and family strife.

Signs of stress include:

- frequent headaches
- dizziness
- upset stomach
- teeth grinding
- recurrent illness
- depression
- angry outbursts
- loss of appetite

If your middle grader often displays several of these symptoms, it may be time to seek help. Talk to the school counselor or your family doctor about ways to cope with stress.

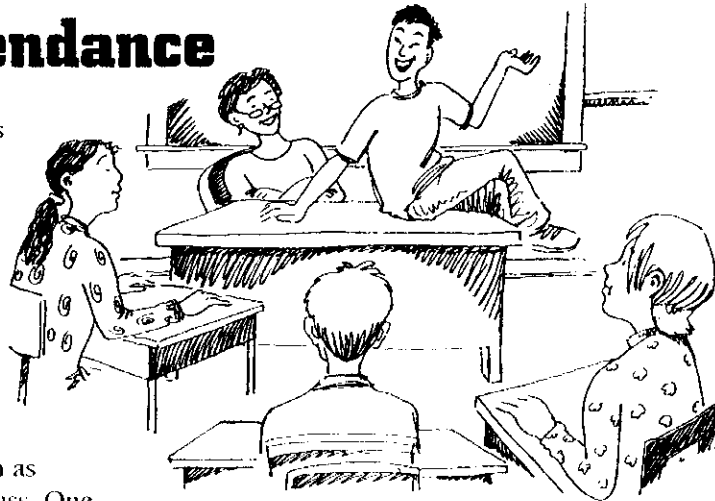


Active attendance

Attending school means more than just sitting in a classroom. To learn effectively, your middle grader must keep his mind active throughout the lesson. Share these tips.

■ Prepare


Being prepared means your child is ready to learn as soon as he sits down in class. One way he can arrive prepared is by reviewing each day's class notes as part of his evening studying. This reminds him of what was discussed in the last class and offers a preview of the upcoming lesson.



■ Pause

Have your youngster take a minute before class to gather her thoughts. What was her homework about? Based on her reading, what can she expect to learn today? Was anything unclear in her notes? Answering questions like these can focus her mind on classroom activities.

■ Participate

Encourage your middle grader to contribute to class discussions. He might comment on something he read for homework or on another student's opinion. Discussing the topic boosts your child's understanding. It's also a good way to show the teacher that he's paying attention. 

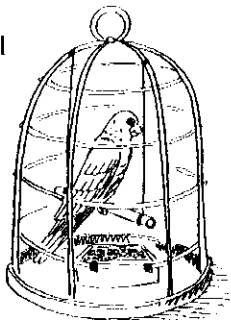


Sharing compassion


Learning to be compassionate is an important lesson for all kids. Here are some ways to help your middle grader become a more caring person.

Consider a pet.

Caring for an animal can teach your child to think about the needs of others. Start small (a hamster, fish, or bird), and see how he does.



Offer help. Do you extend a helping hand to others in need? Volunteering in a home for the elderly or reading to small children can demonstrate the importance of kind acts. *Tip:* Invite your middle grader to join you next time you help out.

Talk about loss. Discuss a family tragedy in the neighborhood, such as an unexpected death. Exploring such hardships can make your child more aware of others' suffering. 

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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Q & A Reading repairs


Q My middle grader gets frustrated by long reading assignments. How can I help make reading easier for him?

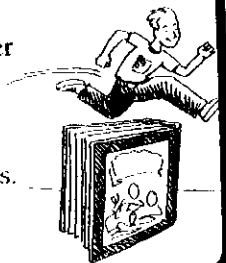
A There are several things you can do. Consider these suggestions.

If an assignment takes a long time because your child reads the same lines over and over, he could place a ruler under each line to keep track of what he's reading.

If comprehension is difficult, suggest that your middle grader take notes as he reads. He can use the notes to rephrase the assignment in his own words.

If your child stumbles on unfamiliar words, have him read with a dictionary close by so he can quickly look up definitions.

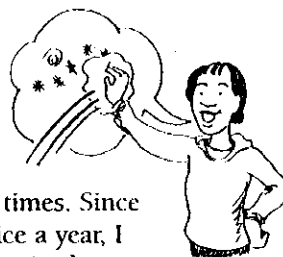
Note: Remember to give your son lots of encouragement as his reading skills improve. 




Parent to Parent Stop swearing

The first time I picked up my daughter from soccer practice and heard the language she used with her friends, I was shocked. I had no idea Mary spoke like that!

"You never tell Uncle Joe to stop cussing," she complained on the way home. My brother Joe could be outspoken at times. Since Mary only saw him twice a year, I didn't realize she had noticed.



When I told my husband, he said Mary was probably just trying to act tough around her friends. Together we explained to our daughter that cursing made her look negative. We told her that being in control means keeping her head instead of spouting off when something goes wrong.

I'm pleased to say that Mary listened to what we had to say. She may not always use acceptable language, but at least she knows where we stand. 

CLOSING OF SCHOOL AND/OR CHANGE IN BUS SERVICE

Naperville Community Unit School District 203 will use several radio stations to announce emergency school closings. Local stations are:

- WERV-FM (95.9)
- WONU-FM (89.7)
- WBIG-AM (1280)
- 1610-AM
(City of Naperville station)

These will be your primary sources of information.

Through a centralized system, we also hope to have our closings on certain Chicago stations:

- WGN-AM (720)
- WBBM-AM (780)
- CBS-TV (2)
- NBC-TV (5)
- ABC-TV (7)
- WGN-TV (9)
- FOX-TV (32)
- CLTV cable

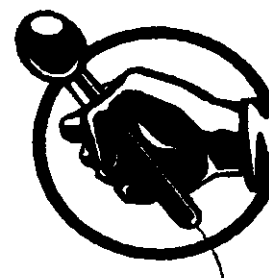
We cannot guarantee the closings will be carried by the Chicago stations. Information on school closings will also be broadcast on the TALK 203 interactive email system as well as on the School District web site www.ncusd203.org.

We will attempt to have the information on the air no later than 6:30a.m.

You may also call 420-6300 (Administrative Center) for a telephone message concerning school closings.

Announcements From The Assistant Principal...

by Wally Loague



The year is just flying by! Our first trimester has already ended and winter break is just around the corner. We have been really lucky with the warm weather over the last few weeks. As the days grow colder, please keep in mind the following school procedures. Students being dropped off at school in the morning will remain outside until 7:30 a.m. or until the temperature drops below 0 degrees.

Students must have a pass to enter the building. Passes must be given out by the teacher that is supervising the student. We hope that those students arriving early will alter their time schedule to avoid waiting outside during the cold weather.

Students riding bikes to school will find it difficult to lock up their bikes; we will be moving the bike racks away from the building to facilitate snow removal. At that time, we will be cutting off all locks left behind. Students will be discouraged from riding bikes when it is not safe to do so.

Our drop off situation in the morning will be getting worse during the winter months. Parents that drop off students that normally ride the bus will add more cars to the early morning rush. If you feel you must drive them, please be prepared to wait in longer lines. The goal of the new drop off procedure is to make drop off safer for students arriving at school. One alternative is to wait in your car at the bus stop until the bus arrives. You will miss the long line, the kids will be warm and you will be home quicker.

Please make sure your son/daughter bring home their gym clothes to wash. Also, no food or drink should be left in the lockers over the holidays.

I have a safe and happy holiday!

The Principal Note



by
Don Perry

In place of my usual article, we are inserting a copy of *Middle Years*. We find it to be a great source of information and we hope you like it. Please give us your feedback.
Thank you.

School Family Community Partnership

➤ The Technology Tour on November 15th was an enormous success! There was a great turn out and we all learned a lot about how Technology is integrated into so many aspects of our children's education.

Mr. Perry led the tour with stops that included:

- The *Technology Lab* where the technology committee demonstrated the Kennedy web site
- The *Life Room* where we saw a demonstration of the computer directed sewing machines and the electronic babies
- The *Music Room* where students are given the opportunity to play music with the assistance of a computer program.

Another highlight was Mrs. Donatelli's room where she and Mr. Shipman demonstrated the downloading of video clips that assist with teaching, the use of the data projectors, Elmo projectors, and how different web sites are available for teaching. Our last stop was the technology lab where Mr. Davis gave us an overview of the lab and different features available to students. He also gave parents time for hands-on experience.

The KJHS Technology Committee was an integral part of making this event take place. They put a lot of time and effort into demonstrating the KJHS website and showcasing different uses of technology in the school.

Thank you Mr. Perry, Mrs. Donatelli, Mrs. Ross, Mr. Shipman, Mr. Davis, Mrs. Janis, Mrs. Larramore, and The Kennedy Technology Committee.

➤ The SF&CP co-chairs and the H&S executive board were invited to the District 203 Data Retreat on October 21st and 22nd. The Kennedy team consisted of teachers, administrators, and parents. The day began with the distribution of Kennedy's ISAT and ITBS scores from 2004.

- We then broke into teams of two and conducted a broad analysis of results by grade level in the four curricular areas tested: math, social science, reading, and writing.
- Each team recorded the trends in scores and hypothesized why these trends occurred.
- We then developed plans of action to improve the scores that are below expectations.
- These plans are then incorporated into the School Improvement Plan for 2005-2006.

Look for the 2004-2005 school improvement plan (SIP) in your monthly team newsletter. One valuable lesson the parents took away from this retreat was to realize the overwhelming enthusiasm and hard work the teachers put in to improve our students learning above and beyond their jobs in the classroom!

Did you miss buying a magazine during the drive?

Do you want to give someone a gift subscription to a magazine? You can place an order for magazines anytime online at <http://www.qspstore.com>. Just follow the directions and credit is sent to Kennedy Junior High School. We also have order books to help you select magazines. Remember, we can earn fundraising monies for ordering on line!



CALLING ALL FORMER HIGHLANDS STUDENTS!

Highland's LRC Director, Ann Vitek, is retiring at the end of this school year. To honor her, we are putting together a cookbook of recipes from current and former students, teachers, and other personnel throughout the district who have been associated with Ann and have been touched by her wide-spread knowledge and love of books.



If you are interested in submitting recipes for this tribute to Ann, please email the recipe along with your name to Laura Collard at lcollrd@aol.com (or call 305-9399) or Amy VanderVeen at Veen001@aol.com (or call 527-8961) by December 17th. Our goal is to collect at least 500 recipes for this very special project for Ann. The cookbooks will be available for purchase in mid to late spring 2005.

Thank you for helping us in this project!

Home & School meetings

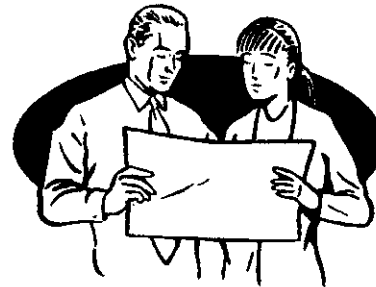
January 24th 9:00 a.m.
March 14th 7:00 p.m.
May 20th 9:00 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Kennedy 2004-2005 School Improvement Plan

School, Family, Community Partnership (SFCP) and Home and School (H&S) would like to make the Kennedy parents and students aware of the **Kennedy 2004-2005 School Improvement Plan (SIP)**. Teachers and administration determined this plan by analyzing data from the most recent ISAT tests and determining the need for improvement on written extended response scores. Every school in District 203 must have a SIP.

Goal: To help students better identify explicit and implicit information in text and increase their comprehension of text in all curricular areas. This improved comprehension will be measured in students written responses.



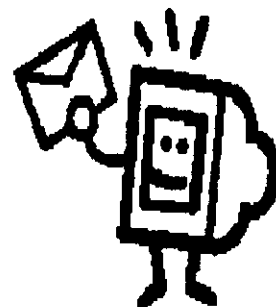
Objective: Teachers will employ strategies to increase student performance in the use of writing to learn. Some examples of the strategies used are:

- Giving students the opportunity to respond in writing to reading materials in all curricular areas
- Improving students' ability to make connections in their reading through analyzing, evaluating, or comparing and contrasting text.

The teachers, staff, and parents can all work together to help achieve this goal. Parents, please read your team newsletters to see how teachers are specifically targeting this goal through their instruction.

Team Email Lists

In an effort to improve communications at Kennedy, we are creating an email list for each team. The purpose is to allow each team to inform parents and students of events, reminders, deadlines, etc. This information will remain with the team at Kennedy. The lists will not be sold, rented, or given out. Please help us help you by sending the following information to the school in this very simple format.



To: kjhslist@earthlink.net

Subject: team name, child's last name, child's first name

Please enter parent's name in the body of the email.

Kennedy



Family Connections

Kennedy Family Connections is a new committee for Home & School this year. The concept is to build a base of Kennedy families who are willing to assist fellow students and their families during difficult times. As the school identifies a particular need, it will contact Family Connections who will, in turn, contact these families who have agreed to assist when a need arises. Donations might include money, food, clothing and school supplies.

Families are under no obligation to donate and all needs are kept confidential. All correspondence will be done via e-mail. If you are interested in participating in the Family Connection program, please e-mail Kennedyfamilyconnections@yahoo.com.

Interested in Old Yearbooks?

The Yearbook Committee is selling old books for \$3.00, but we do not have any extra from last year. If you'd like to purchase one, please contact me either by phone at 420-3219 or in person. You can also pick one up at Open House.

Rebecca Haeger
(Health Teacher & Yearbook Advisor)



Attention 7th Grade Parents

On January 27th, from 7 to 8 p. m. parents will be given an opportunity to preview a new movie titled *A Time to Wait for Sex* that will be shown in all 7th grade health classes.

Spiritwear

Are you looking for a Christmas present for your Junior High Schooler? How about a Kennedy Spiritwear sweatshirt or t-shirt? We have some extra spiritwear for sale including:

- Fannel shorts (\$16)
- Flannel pants (\$24)
- Hooded sweatshirts in gray and maroon (\$26)
- Crewneck sweatshirts in gray and maroon (\$19)
- Denim shirts (\$18)
- Hanes tagless t-shirt (\$10)
- Raglan girl's 3/4 length sleeve t shirt (\$15)
- Quilted jacket - 1 left in Medium (\$47)

We have a limited supply of sizes in each so just call Cindy Meyer at 961-0399 to see if we have the item and size you need. **Call today as we have a limited supply!** No additional items will be ordered.



News from Home & School



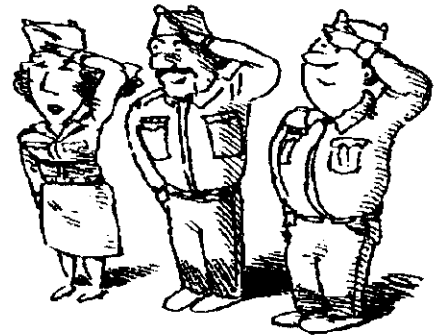
By Jeanine LaBelle
President of
Home & School

It is hard to believe we are almost finished with the year 2004! Where did this year fly by to? Many parent volunteers have been very busy at Kennedy to keep things running smoothly and I would like to thank them all for their hard work.

Thank you to *Tammy Kuppinger* and *Leslie Sorenson* for running our Spirit Club for the volleyball season. We could not have done it without their help. Also, a big thank you to *Laura Meath* and her group of mom helpers for treating the 6th graders to a GRIEAT dance!

GRACI, GRACI, GRACI! to the Hospitality Committee, *Judy Gordon, Firooza Mohideen, Sylvia Zimmerman, Anna Fattore, Susan Weber, and Gina Blume.* These ladies transformed the staff lounge into an Italian villa. They served the staff a "delizioso" lunch to show our staff how much we appreciate them. Thank you ladies for a wonderful job, as always!

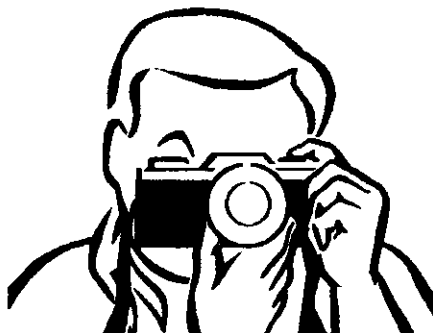
For those of you who haven't been to Kennedy lately, you will notice a new display in the front hall. This display is a **Military Recognition Board** for alumni from Kennedy currently serving in the military. A big thank you goes to *Bob Rechenmacher* the "idea man" behind the operation and *Tracey Cowart* the "creative force" of the duo. Make sure to stop and look at the board, it is AWESOME and it is a great way for our children at Kennedy to see some of the faces that are fighting for our freedom. Thank you again to Bob and Tracey!



I would like to wish you all a safe, happy and healthy holiday and new year! As always if you have any questions please feel free to call me.

We are working on a special project for our 8th graders. If you have any pictures (digital preferable, but will scan regular photos) of 8th graders being 8th graders, please email them to ***casey487@sbcglobal.net***.

Casey will accept photos up until the beginning of May, but please send them as you get them so he can get started on the project. These pictures can be ANY sport or activity, before, during or after school. They can be



**Wanted -
Pictures of
8th Graders!**

from the classroom, playground, lunchroom, locker room, field trip, play, band, orchestra.....just to name a few! We hope to have at least one photo of every 8th grader included, so please help us if you can. If you would like more information on this project you can contact Beth Ashley at 961-9443 or ***bashley@wideopenwest.com*** or email Casey Berner (8th grade student) at the email address above.

Thanks again for your help!