

August/September 2011

Bluffs School Community Connection



“A New Fill-osophy”

This year’s theme at Bluffs is “A New Fill-osophy” organized around a simple metaphor of a dipper and a bucket. The Theory of the Dipper and the Bucket: “Each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us. When our bucket is full, we feel great. When it’s empty, we feel awful. Each of us also has an invisible dipper. When we use that dipper to fill other people’s buckets—be less congested and safer for all students, staff, and by saying or doing things to increase their positive emotions—we also fill our own bucket. But when we use that dipper to dip from others’ buckets—by saying or doing things that decrease their positive emotions— we diminish ourselves. Like the cup that runneth over, a full bucket gives us a positive outlook and renewed energy. Every drop in that bucket makes us stronger and more optimistic. But an empty bucket poisons our outlook, saps our energy, and undermines our will. That’s why every time someone dips from our bucket, it hurts us. So we face a choice every moment of every day: We can fill one another’s buckets, or we can dip from them. It’s an important choice—one that profoundly influences our relationships, productivity, health, and happiness.” (exerpt from How Full is Your Bucket?, Rath and Clifton)

We will discuss the dipper and the bucket concepts with students. Many students may not have thought much about what fills their buckets or the impact they have on other people. Through discussion they will begin to use a common language to process classroom conflicts (bucket dipping) and to encourage one another (bucket filling). Teachers of younger students will read the award winning book, Have You Filled a Bucket Today? to their students and will engage them in discussion and activities to develop these concepts.

We encourage parents and the community to read the book and use the common language of bucket filling and bucket dipping to create more positive environments in which to live and work.

Gallup Research: 9 out of 10 people say they are more productive when they are around positive people.



Bus Riders Dismissed Earlier!



NEW THIS YEAR! Bus riders will be dismissed 5 minutes earlier than the students who are being picked up or are walking home. This will allow our bus students to load and our buses to depart prior to other students exiting the building. With our buses

on the way to take students home for the day traffic will be less congested and safer for all students, staff, and parents.

Medal Pride



Medal Pride is a system of recognition and reward for students of grades 7-12. The criteria for the rewards and privileges are based on the student’s behavior and academic performance from the previous cycle. There are eight cycles in a school year. The GPA is based on the average of the student’s grade points earned in the previous cycle only. It is not cumulative.

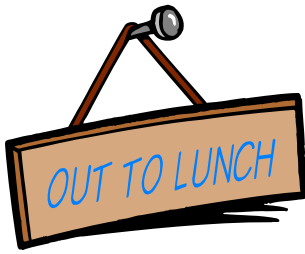
New for 2011-2012:

Four (4) levels of rewards

Students must be on a level to have off campus lunch privileges.

Junior & Senior High Lunch

Junior or Senior High students who are on level may leave campus for lunch. Junior High students may only leave campus to eat lunch at home and MUST sign out in the main office. Senior High students who are on level



and are leaving campus do not need to sign out. Students who remain on campus for lunch are to immediately proceed to the cafeteria and remain in the cafeteria / vending machine area for the remainder of the lunch period.

Students who leave campus for lunch but return prior to the bell, shall report to the cafeteria until the bell rings. No student who is off campus for lunch may be in a vehicle that is driven by anyone other than the student's parent.

Students must be passing all of their classes in order to leave campus during the lunch period. Students who are failing one of more of their classes will have their off-campus lunch privileges suspended for one week following the Thursday grade check that a failing grade is reported.

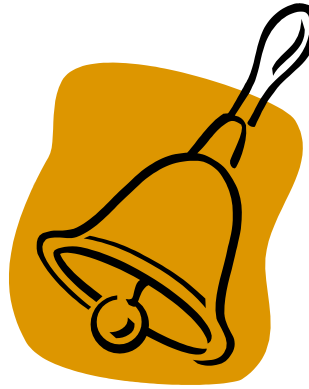
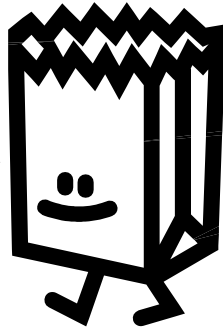
The First Day of School

The first day of school for students is Thursday, August 18, 2011 from 8:05-10:30. Please do not enter the building prior to 7:40. All of us at Bluffs School are excited about our first day back and are eager to greet students and parents prepared.

Breakfast will not be served. Meals will begin on Friday, August 19. All students are to report to the gym by 8:05 on the 18th for introductions and instructions. The school dress code will be in force as well as all other student expectations.

Office assistance will be available after the meeting at approximately 8:30. Jr. and Sr. High students will receive their locker assignments in their class meetings held immediately after the assembly. Students will need few, if any, school supplies on this first day. Please do not send more supplies with your child than he or she can manage independently. Student planners will be sent home with students on this day for review and parent signature.

Students are to have and carry their school planner with them each day to use as a hall pass and to utilize their medal pride privileges.



Early Dismissal

School will be dismissed at 2:05 Friday, August 19, 2011 until after the Labor Day holiday. School will be dismissed at 3:05 thereafter unless otherwise indicated on the school calendar or official school notice has been given.

New Staff Members

Please take time to welcome and fill the buckets of several new employees. We are pleased to have them as part of our staff!

Ms. Amy Holder—High School Business & Technology Coordinator

Ms. Maggie Murray—High School Math

Mr. Jeremy Wood—High School Science

Ms. Andrea Schreiber—First Grade

Mr. Jon Zang—Health & PE

Hired at semester 10-11: **Mr. Jeremy Farrell**—Junior High Math

Moving to 4th Grade for 11-12: **Ms. Jennifer Taylor**

Grandparents Breakfast

Save the Date!

Our traditional Grandparent's Breakfast will be held on Monday, September 12, 2011. More information will be sent home at a later date.



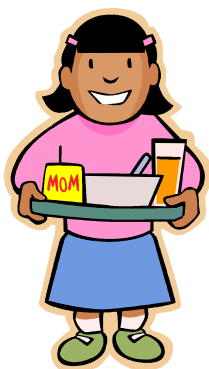
Free and Reduced Meals

You may receive a letter at registration that automatically approves your child(ren) for free meals. If you receive this letter, **no other documentation** for your child(ren) to receive free meals will be required.

If your household currently receives assistance from SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) or TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and **you do not receive a letter at registration automatically approving** your child(ren) for free meals, you will need documentation that includes a valid SNAP or

TANF case number with you when you register your child(ren) to qualify your child(ren) for free meals.

Household Eligibility Applications will be available at registration for completion to qualify your child(ren) for free or reduced price meals based on 2010-2011 income guidelines. Income Eligibility Guidelines may be viewed on the Bluffs School website, www.bluff-school.com. The Social Security Number of the person completing the application and the Gross Income for each member of the household will need to be provided on the application in order for it to be processed.



If you would like to become involved with your child's school by being a member of one of our teams, please contact Mrs. Filson.

Illinois PTA

Everychild.onevoice.

The Illinois PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and the Illinois State Board of Education have released a **Parents' Guide to Success** which includes a series of brochures for each grade level designed especially for parents. View the brochures at www.pta.org

Another great parent resource website: Illinois Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC): www.colum.edu/ilpirc

Lunch and Breakfast Costs

Breakfast costs \$1.25 for all students. Lunch prices are as follows:

- Grades K-5: \$1.50
- Grades 6-12: \$1.75
- Adults: \$2.00
- Extra Milk: \$.35



The first Bluffs PTO meeting will be held at 4:00 PM in Mrs. Sleeman's classroom on September 14, 2011. Please join us!

Bluffs PTO

Health Requirements

Please bring completed health requirement forms with you to registration. All students entering **Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, Sixth, and Ninth grades** are required to have a physical examination including required immunizations. Students enrolling who are new to Bluffs School District must have a current physical examination and immunizations. An eye exam is required for children entering kindergarten or enrolling for the first time in an Illinois school beyond kindergarten (i.e., grades 1-12).

Dental examinations are also required for students in **grades K, 2, and 6**. All forms were sent home with students currently enrolled in Bluffs School at the end of the previous school year. The required forms for all of these are available at the school. **Any student not in compliance by the fourth Friday in September will be excluded from school.**



The parent/guardian of any student with a food allergy/allergies is required to notify the school nurse before the beginning of school of such allergies. It is urgent that we have your cooperation in this matter so that we can prevent exposure to known allergens and respond promptly to any allergic reactions that may occur at school.

Parent Team

Members

Parents of Bluffs students are wanted to be members of school-based teams that analyze school processes and develop policies and

practices. Parents are wanted for teams such as: Parent Involvement Analysis Team, PBIS Team, Event Planning Team, Handbook Review Team, and more.

In 2008, the Gates Foundation and Civic Enterprises released a report of parent involvement that stated, "Regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and scores, have better social skills, graduate from high school, attend college and find productive work."

It is our belief that parents are the child's first teachers. Parents and families partnered with their child's school promotes a shared responsibility for student learning and reinforces that learning begins at birth and takes place in the home, school, and community.

