



WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL

Arrow—A Newsletter for Parents
December 2009/January 2010

Points of Interests and Upcoming Events

Board of Education Meetings:

December 14th
at 7:00 p.m.
Kolb Elem.

January 11th
at 7:00 p.m.
Mackensen Elem

February 8th
at 7:00 p.m.
Central High School

March 8th
at 7:00 p.m.
Lindsay Elem.

**There will be no school
for students on
December 21, 2009
through
January 1, 2010
Classes will resume
January 4, 2010**

**The offices will be
closed on these days
as well.**

**WHS Athletic
schedules are now
available on-line at
www.highschoolsports.net**

A Note to All Parents

There will be no school for students -

Monday, December 21, 2009 through January 1, 2010

Classes resume Monday, January 4, 2010

The offices at Western High School will be closed on these dates as well.

Please note that the **Western complex closes at 4:00 p.m. each day.** Students need to collect all items from their lockers prior to attending a practice or other school sanctioned event. If students are not involved in an extra-curricular activity, they are to leave the complex at the end of the day at 2:30 p.m. Therefore, students are not allowed to remain in or at the school unless they are participating in a sporting event, practice or other school sanctioned event supervised by an adult. **Please help us in our efforts to keep your child safe!**

Mark your Calendar! The Winter Parent/Teacher Conference is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2010 from 4—7pm in the gym.

MICHIGAN MERIT EXAM

JUNIOR PARENT MEETING

January 27th, 6-7:00p.m. in the Commons

The Michigan Merit Exam is a combination of the ACT test and Michigan Department of Education State requirement for all Junior status students. Taking this exam is also a graduation requirement for the Bay City Public Schools.

Michigan Merit Exam schedule: Tuesday, March 9 - Thursday March 11, 2010.

From the Principal's Desk...

Newsletter

As a cost savings initiative, we will be sending out our monthly newsletter every other month for the remainder of the school year. Our next scheduled newsletter will be in February during our winter trimester. School updates and information can be found on the school's website and also on Edline. If you haven't signed up for Edline and you have internet access at home, you can contact Mrs. Clark at clarki@bcschools.net and request an access code.

Trimesters

Our transition from fall to winter trimester was very smooth for our first time. Thanks to the students, teachers and parents for their support and positive attitude with this change. As a reminder, changing student schedules once the trimester begins is only permitted in situations where there is a conflict or an academic reason to do so. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding of this process. If you have questions regarding your child's classes or academic plan, please contact his/her counselor.

As always, call anytime with your questions and have a joyous holiday season!

It is the policy of the Bay City Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of religion, race, sexual orientation, color, national origin, age or handicap in educational programs, activities or services.

Counselor's Corner

Attention Parents: If you have an 8th grade student please plan on attending our 8th Grade Student/Parent High School Orientation Night. It will be held on March 2nd in the evening (Time to be determined). Please watch for more information in the February Arrow.

One scholarship that came out recently and that we're really excited about is the Bay Commitment Scholarship. This scholarship was established in August 2007 by the Bay Area Community Foundation. It was inspired by the belief that having access to continuing education is an investment in our children--our future. In May 2010, the Bay Area Community Foundation will award 100, \$2,000.00 scholarships to 2009-2010 graduates of Bay County Public Schools to be used for tuition to pursue an associate's degree from Delta or a bachelor's degree from Saginaw Valley State University. Western students are currently allotted at least 26 out of the 100 scholarships.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- *Have been a resident of bay County for 6 years
- *Neither parent/legal guardian completed a 4-year college degree, making the applicant "First Generation in the Family."
- *Have attended a Bay County Public school for 4 years
- *Meet all high school graduation requirement and receive a diploma from a Bay County public school by June 2010

Applications are on-line and are due by March 1, 2010

This year, the State of Michigan will be giving all juniors the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) which includes the ACT test on March 9-11, 2010. This test is of no cost to the student and ACT scores are reportable to colleges and universities. ALL juniors must take the MME as part of the Bay City Public Schools graduation requirement.

PSAT results will be available in early December for all students who tested.

Sophomores will be taking the PLAN test at no cost to the student in December. They will receive their test results most likely in February.

There will be a Senior Parent Meeting January 12th at 6:00- 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium. Important information will be discussed about scholarships, caps and gowns, commencement tickets, and much more.

COLLEGE PREP SERVICES

Attention Parents & Students – Grades 8 to 12! Mark your calendars and plan to attend "*College Bound: It's Not All About the Money!*" hosted by BCPS College Preparation Services. Here are the details:

Tuesday, January 12, 2010, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m., Western High School or

Tuesday, January 19, 2010, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m., Central High School

This event focuses on college and career preparation and planning – the earlier you plan, the better! Informational sessions for grades 8 – 12 will be offered, so whether you want help completing your FAFSA, or you're worried about how you'll pay for college, or you want to talk to recent H.S. graduates about their college experience, plan to attend either one of these events. For more information: (989) 671-8180; or murphys@bcschools.net; or www.bcpscollegeprep.com.

College Goal "Saturday"

Senior students and Parents: College Goal "Saturday" is Saturday, February 13, 2010 at Delta College, 1:00 - 4:00 PM. On this day students and their parents can get free assistance on completing the FAFSA, etc. In years past, 100's of parents/students attended; computer labs are staffed with financial aid officials from many colleges in our region. This is a regional event; other locations are listed on the website. More information is available at www.micollegegoal.org.

Co-op News:

Co-op students elected Courtney Grocholski as the 2009-2010 Co-op President. Other officers will be elected at the December 16th meetings. Currently there are around 60 co-ops in educational opportunities throughout the tri-county area.

Juniors interested in **applying for Co-op next year** should sign up in the counseling center and pick up an application. This does not obligate a student to be on co-op. It helps with matching students to available opportunities

that come through the co-op office. Ms. Oberlies will be coming around to the English classes winter term to briefly discuss the co-op process, opportunities and pass out applications. Students may also find their own co-op job. If parents or students have any questions, please feel free to call 662-4481 extension 6415 or stop by the co-op office.

Career Center News

Sophomores interested in the Career Center for 2009-2010 will have the opportunity to hear the Career Center staff give a presentation on their course offerings sometime in December or January. Parent permission slips will be handed out for those students who want to visit the Career Center on Friday, February 5, 2010. The first 200 students who hand in their permission slips to the Counseling Center secretary will **visit three classes of their choice at the Career Center on Friday morning February 5.** For questions, see Ms. Oberlies in the Counseling Center.

Juniors interested in the Career Center for 2009-2010 will also have the opportunity to hear about the Career Center course offerings for the fall of 2010. Diane Oberlies, Co-op Coordinator and Career Center Liaison, along with staff from the Career Center will give the presentation.

For juniors currently enrolled in the Career Center - If your son or daughter is currently attending the Career Center as a Junior and would like to return to the Center as a Senior in the same program they are in now, he/she will automatically have a slot **IF** he/she fills out an application, signed by a parent and turns it into Ms. Oberlies **BEFORE February 5, 2010.** If your child wants to attend the Center as a returning student but in a DIFFERENT program, he/she must follow the regular Career Center application process. Any questions, call Ms. Oberlies 662-4481 extension 6415.

February 8th – All sophomores and juniors, who want a class at the Career Center in the fall of 2009-2010, must turn in their applications to the Counseling Center beginning February 8. Western receives a limited number of slots for each Career Center program. Slots are primarily filled on a lottery basis. GPA and attendance are considered for the medical courses. However for the Health Technology Program, There is one Career Center class that is an exception to this policy: the Health Technology Program. For this class only, students can sign up at any time from now through February 8. Career Center staff will interview interested students in these classes, and students will be selected for the program based on their attendance, grade point average, and career goals. Students may still sign up for classes after February 8, but they will have to pick from whatever slots are still available

From the Athletic Department.

Family Athletic Passes are now being sold for a discounted rate of \$50 and can be purchased in the Athletic Office. These passes are good for all sporting events at Western, Bay City Central, and Handy Middle School. The family passes may also be used for entry at home hockey games at the Bay County Civic Arena.

Remember to check out www.highschoolsports.net to view the latest Winter Athletic Schedules. If you would like to receive automatic e-mail notifications whenever games are canceled or postponed then please follow the directions below:

1. Go to www.highschoolsports.net
2. Click on My Account, located at the top of the page
3. After clicking My Account, you may select Join Today
4. Pick a username and password
5. Give member information and submit

Attention Warrior Wednesday Raffle Ticket sellers and buyers

Thank you very much for your support. Without your support, we would not be able to afford Post Prom or the Senior Party. Anyone who has ticket stubs, money, or unsold tickets, please return them no later than February 1. This way, we will still have time to sell unsold tickets before the first drawing on March 3. You can return tickets to I.V. Clark in the main office or send them to:

Janet Peterson
5050 Reinhardt Lane
Bay City, MI, 48706

Anyone interested in buying a ticket, we still have tickets available. Also, we will be having another fundraiser all day on Wednesday, January 27 at Buffalo Wild Wings in Bay City. 20% of your bill will be donated to Post Prom and the Senior Party if you bring in a coupon from school which will be distributed a week prior to the event. Or you can pick up a form in the main office. Thank you, Janet Peterson, Parent Advisory Member (Call me at 684-8136 with any questions).

Top Three FAQ About School Attendance

The Attendance Office at Western has been receiving a few calls recently regarding student attendance. This has been due in large part to the recent flu outbreak and attendance letters distributed in November. The BCPS Attendance Policy can be found on page 22 of the WHS Student Handbook. Here are some frequently asked questions that we have been receiving about attendance procedures at Western High School...

If my child is absent from school and I call in to report the absence, does this excuse the absence?

It is very important that you notify the school when your child does not attend. You, the parent or someone on your child's emergency contact list, must make the phone call to the Attendance Office to report the absence. If you do call in to report your child's absence from school, it is still reported as an absence from school. This is coded as a "PC" for parent contact on your child's attendance record indicating that your child was absent from school, and that the school was informed. An "A" would mean that no contact was made by a parent regarding the absence. If your child is ill and is absent over several days (ex. flu) and has a doctors appointment, or is absent for another reason and has other appointments scheduled (ex. court appearance, funeral, etc.) that could not be avoided, please send documentation to school with your child to our Attendance Office (ie. doctors appointment card, court appearance documentation, etc.) so that the absence can be reported as an "extenuating circumstance." In this case the absence, or all absences related to the documentation are officially "excused" for record keeping purposes and will be excluded from the attendance policy.

Why did I receive an attendance letter when I called in to report my child's absences?

The letter is generated for informational purposes and outlines the attendance policy. Even if you call in to excuse your child (PC), it is still recorded as an absence from school. The number of absences your child accumulates will generate an attendance letter. Absences where documentation is provided (extenuating circumstances) are exempt, and would not be included in the letter. Depending on how many absences your child has accumulated, a counselor would meet with your child early on and may even contact you to ensure we are aware of anything that would hinder your child's education as a result of their absences. School and district staff will be in contact with you regarding your child's absences (non-extenuating circumstances) should they become excessive. Please remember to provide any documentation (doctors appointment, etc.) to the attendance office.

I know my child has been absent without my permission, but I am not getting the automated attendance messages. How can I be informed about my child's absences?

You can always contact the High School Attendance Office at anytime to receive information about your child's attendance. The number is 662-4481, ext. 6433 or e-mail at moreaud@bcschools.net. Our automated attendance message system contacts parents who have not called in to excuse their child's absences for the day. The system begins calling the primary phone number between 6 and 9p.m. each school day. We can set up our automated message system to contact your cell phone or work phone rather than your home phone. To adjust your contact information for the automated phone system, please call 662-4481, ext. 6437 or e-mail herbers@bcschools.net.

If you have any questions regarding your child's attendance, or have reviewed the attendance policy in the WHS Student Handbook and have further questions, please contact our Attendance Office at 662-4481, ext. 6433 or 662-0411.

The Caring Tree Collection December 4th - 14th

WHS will be adopting local families again this year and we need your help to make this project a success! Specific items being requested will be on display in the main hallway, located across from the office by December 3rd. You or your student may **select and sign up for the item(s)** you wish to purchase for our families in need. We can always use the following items: socks, hats, glove, scarves (all sizes), children's games, books, school supplies, laundry baskets, hygiene products, towel, and kitchen supplies. Please send all new items **unwrapped to the main office by December 14th**. Please call Mrs. Riffel with any questions at 662-4481 ext. 6127 or e-mail riffela@bcschools.net Donations to Western High School will be cheerfully accepted and used to purchase food and goods that are essential for our selected families.

Happy Holidays!

The Leadership Class and All WHS Students and Staff

All it takes is a little PRIDE

Pride has many meanings, most are positive, like "self-respect", and "satisfaction", others like "arrogance" and "conceit" are not so positive. We all know that Western students and staff have a great deal pride, and in a school this large, of course it's going to be reflected in a variety of ways. This year "pride" took on a new meaning here at Western. It doesn't really fit any dictionary definition, but it fits Western. PRIDE stands for Promoting Respect, Independence, Dignity and Education, and we have a group of students doing just that!

Over the summer a little idea grew into a really cool plan, which then took on a life of its own. A group of students from the Leadership Connections class began working as mentors for students with special needs in our building. This mentoring involves a variety of things. Mentors spend time in the students' classroom assisting with lessons, organizational skills, and reading assignments. Mentors also act as positive role models and offer encouragement.

By all accounts the students enjoy their time together, look forward to spending time together and even get upset when they *aren't* able to work together. When asked about her mentor, Megan stated, "I really enjoyed the support and friendship of my mentor." Other students mentioned that they were able to get their assignments completed, "thanks to their mentor." The whole goal is to help students through these somewhat tough years of high school. While that support is mainly with academics, it can also come in the form of social skills. Let's face it, it's tough being a teenager. It's not always easy to fit in. It's hard to concentrate on the academic stuff, when the social stuff gets in the way. The PRIDE students offer friendship and guidance using a safe and fun approach; from a teenaged peer perspective.

We're happy to report that the program is growing! We had 10 PRIDE mentors for the fall trimester; we will have approximately 22 mentors for the winter trimester. Needless to say, we're quite proud of PRIDE!

From the Music Department

Come and hear the beautiful sounds of December as our Concert Choir and Select Choir combine for a performance on Thursday December 10th at 7:30 PM in Western's Bryant Auditorium.

Preschool

The Western High School Preschool program will run from January 18th—May 14th of this school year. Applications are available for download on our webpage at www.baycitywestern.com. Enrollment is limited to 25 and registrations will be accepted on first come first served basis. The cost will be \$100 for this program and class sessions will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-11am. If you have any questions or need more information, you can Email Mrs. Piotrowski at piotrowskid@bcschools.net or call her at 662-4481 ext. 6249.

United Bay City Credit Union "Warrior Branch"

Starting your child off with a good financial education background is important. Statistics show that most kids today don't learn nearly enough about effectively managing money. By starting the education process early, your child will be better equipped to make wise financial decisions in the future. United Bay Community Credit Union is prepared to help your student. Staff members are at Western on Tuesdays and Fridays during student lunch periods in the Corner Store and are available to provide services and/or answer questions. From now until January 15, if your student opens an account, their name will be placed into a drawing for \$75.00.

Fire Safety / Grant Opportunity

The Bay City Fire Department has asked for our help to secure a grant through Liberty Mutual for \$10,000. In order to be successful, it requires completion of a 10-question quiz related to fire safety and then crediting the Bay City Fire Rescue. **Entry is limited to one completed per email address** - so an email address is required to participate.

- 1) Go to: www.BeFireSmart.com
- 2) (You can skip the video if you wish.)
- 3) Select "Help Your Fire Department Earn \$10,000 "
- 4) Select "Get Started"
- 5) Complete the 10-question quiz
- 6) After, "Congratulations - you completed the quiz, hit "continue"
- 7) Enter the requested information (including email address to receive the confirmation email)
- 8) Upon receipt of the confirmation email, you'll be provided a link to select the Bay City Fire Rescue
- 9) Connect to the link and credit the Bay City Fire Rescue

Any questions, you may contact Ann at the Bay City Fire Department at 892-8601.

Fire Safety Pledge Program Learning how to protect your home from fire hazards is smart. What's even smarter? Using your Fire Safety IQ to earn a \$10,000 Fire Safety Award for your local fire department. The Fire Safety Pledge program is an interactive fire safety resource for families from Liberty Mutual. Now through December 21st, 2009, learn more about home fire hazards and take the quiz to test your Fire Safety IQ. Then credit your quiz to your local fire department. If your community rallies the most support, your local fire department could earn one of ten \$10,000 Awards!

YEARBOOK REMINDERS!

REMEMBER---SENIOR PHOTO'S ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 15th-

- **Front head and shoulders only**
 - **Plain backgrounds, no fades or outdoor scenes**
- jpeg digital image or paper wallet-no emailed images please**

LOST YOUR OLD YEARBOOK?
Chances are good that we've got it!
Call Amy Schmidt yearbook advisor to purchase your copy today!
662-4481 ext. 6243

TIME IS RUNNING OUT!!!

Purchase your yearbook, parent page, or business ad
Make credit card purchases at: www.yearbookforever.com (\$2 surcharge)

YES! I want to buy a Parent Page for my son or daughter!

I would like to purchase a:

- _____ **1/8 Page Full Color Ad for \$65 (1 Picture)**
- _____ **1/4 Page Color Ad for \$100 (1-2 Pictures)**
- _____ **1/2 Page Color Ad for \$200 (1-4 Pictures)**
- _____ **Full Page Color Ad for \$350 (1-10 Pictures)**

_____ *******2009/2010 Yearbook for \$55**
Yearbook Price goes to \$65 after Dec. 15, 2009

Please enclose a self-addressed envelope large enough to mail back the pictures when printing is completed. Be sure to include enough postage to cover the weight of the photos. You may also want to write on the envelope that **PHOTOS** are enclosed!

Please do not exceed the picture limit! If more pictures are enclosed, it will be at the WHS Business Manager's discretion to decide which pictures will be used.

Student's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Please mail checks or money orders by Tuesday, December 15, 2009
We will mail you back a receipt for your yearbook purchase

Western High School Yearbook
Attn: Parent Pages
500 West Midland Road
Auburn, MI 48611

December 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students and Friends of Bay City Public Schools,

December brings us into colder weather and that time of year when the snowflakes start to fly. Please be aware of our school buses on the roads and tune into your local news station if you have any questions on potential school closings.

Inclement Weather: As our staff is always trying to find ways to share information faster and more often with parents, we will be contacting parents about school closings due to weather using our school messenger automatic calling system this year in addition to announcements made on the local news. When a school closing occurs this year, if for some reason you do not receive a call, please contact our student services department at 671-8128 so that we can assist you.

H1N1 Update: We continue to encourage students and staff to maintain healthy habits of frequent hand washing, etc. School surfaces are being disinfected on a nightly basis and daily we monitor any health concerns in our schools as well as maintain communications with our local health department.

Michigan Cyber Safety Initiative: The Michigan Cyber Safety Initiative (Michigan CSI) is an Internet safety education program for students in K-8 and also for adults which launched statewide in September 2007. It has since been presented to more than 420,000 students throughout the state and has been recognized at both the state and national level as one of the most comprehensive programs on Internet safety education in the nation. The program has been made free to academic institutions through the Attorney General's office. We will share this opportunity with our elementary principals; look for more on this in the future.

Budget News: Our state school aid funding is still very much in flux. Michigan school districts have received notice of a \$292 per student cut - for this already budgeted school year. Additional reductions could occur yet this year. We are being told to expect a funding reduction for next year of between \$600 and \$1,000 per student. Our legislators have told us that they will not act to add revenues or stabilize school funding until schools cut support services such as school busing and athletics, and consolidate school districts and services. The bottom line is there is a lack of agreement and motivation in Lansing to fix this problem because of the influence of special interest groups and upcoming election concerns. We will be reducing our budget yet this year because of the mid-year funding cut. It is important to remember that school districts have made many reductions in the last 8 years – in Bay City this has amounted to over \$23 million!!! **We will have more facts and information on our website in December about our budget situation and the severe public education funding issue. Please visit www.bcschools.net.**

Kudos: The Board of Education recognized the achievements of our Western High School yearbook staff at the November Board meeting for a regional award given to them for the 2008-09 year book. Congratulations go to Amy Schmidt, yearbook coordinator, and those students who comprised the yearbook team.

Central's Choirs – Holiday CD: Several of Central's choirs (Varsity Choir; Resounding Harmony; 6 A.M.; The Guys and The Girls) are recording a holiday CD, "A Peaceful Holiday In Harmony" which will be available the first week of December, just in time to give as a stocking stuffer. The CD will feature many traditional Christmas carols as well as some new ones and should have a little something for everyone. The cost is \$16.00 and will help support the choral program at Central. If you are interested in purchasing one, you may email Mrs. Hughes at hughesa@bcschools.net or leave a message at 893-9541, ext. 1106.

I hope that you and your loved ones enjoy a safe and happy winter break, beginning Monday, December 21 with staff and students returning on Monday, January 4.

If you have comments or questions, I can be reached at newcombed@bcschools.net or 671-8165. As always, thank you for your interest and support of the Bay City Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Douglas L. Newcombe

Interim Superintendent