



# PRAIRIE EXPRESS

November, 2011

## Message from the Principal

For many of you this message may appear very similar to a prior message you received from me, but it is a message that I feel is worth repeating. I believe we should always take time to implement positive strategies for assessment success. No matter what your age, the thought of taking a test probably still makes your heart race and palms sweat. In the world of education today, assessment is more frequent and taken more seriously than ever before. It is being used more heavily as the "measuring stick" for school district effectiveness and success.

Providing your child with successful skills, tools, encouragement, and techniques to perform at a relaxed level during assessment situations may be that extra special opportunity that will benefit their performance. Parental intervention and support is essential during these assessment times. The following assessment preparation tips have been adapted from the NAESP *Report to Parents* for you and your child to use when preparing for an assessment (WKCE, MAP, Universal Assessments, Progress Monitoring, and classroom assessment).

**Know your child's strengths and weaknesses.** Stay in contact with your child's teacher throughout the year to see if there are any areas your child might need a little extra work on. Find out what you can do at home to help reinforce what students are learning in the classroom and help your child feel at the top of his or her game when assessment time comes.

**Get them moving.** Children know that assessment is a big deal at school. Whether they show it or not, most of them are feeling stressed about it. Participating in physical activities can help them let off steam.

**Bedtime is important.** Endless studies have shown that American schoolchildren get far too little sleep. You may be surprised to know that elementary children do the best after having 10 hours of sleep. Students who are not thoroughly rested do not perform as high as their "rested" peers. Going to bed early helps ensure proper rest.

**Give them the fuel they need.** Many families are so rushed in the mornings that breakfast is an afterthought. A toaster pastry and a bottle of water just isn't enough fuel for active minds and bodies. Cutting back on the high-sugar cereals and pastries are good initial steps. Finding time to make a healthier, more substantial breakfast is encouraged by nutrition experts.

**Help them relax.** People who are anxious about assessment performance do worse than those who are relaxed—anxiety will affect your child's performance. Teach them a few tricks to use during the test. Encourage them to take nice, slow, relaxing breaths and to smile for a few seconds instead of frowning on a question they don't know. Your body will automatically become less tense. It works!

**Let them know you believe in them.** They need to realize that it's important to try their hardest and do their best. No matter what the outcome is, they also need to know how much you love them. A positive attitude has positive results!

Thank you for your support and encouragement as we celebrate your child's success.

Sincerely,

Prairie Elementary  
700 North Madison Street  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
Office: 849-2200  
Attendance: 849-2235  
Fax: 849-2255  
Email: gbreunig@waunakee.k12.wi.us  
janicehenn@waunakee.k12.wi.us

### How to Reach Us

Principal	Dean Kaminski	849-2200
Admin. Assist.	Geri Breunig	849-2200
Attendance	Janice Henn	849-2235
Health Assistant	Tanya Stone	849-2203
Nurse	Katie Homar	209-9950
School Counselor	Jo Howard	849-2206
Psychologist	Lisa Kjos	849-2205
Social Worker	Kristin Meyer	849-2204
Lamers Bus Service		850-5253 Ext. 2
Taher Food Service		849-2185

### Information you will find inside:

- Prairie Spirit Days
- Fall Fun Night
- Halloween Parade
- Prairie Food Drive
- Early Release Days
- Looking Ahead Dates
- Birthday Sundaes
- From the Health Office
- Dress for the Weather
- From the Art Room
- Business Buddies
- Character Education Week Photos
- WKCE Testing Information
- October Pictures



### Prairie Spirit Days

- NOV 9 RED, WHITE AND BLUE  
VETERAN'S DAY ASSEMBLY
- NOV 22 STUFFED ANIMAL AND SLIPPER DAY
- DEC 9 MIX/MATCH CLOTHING, OR  
SCHOOL T-SHIRT DAY
- JAN 20 HAWAIIAN DAY
- FEB 3 SPORTS JERSEY DAY  
(WEAR A FAVORITE TEAM JERSEY OR  
YOUR TEAM JERSEY)
- MAR 2 READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY  
(WEAR RED AND WHITE AND HATS)
- APR 13 CAPS FOR A CURE  
(HAT DAY)
- MAY 18 SCHOOL T-SHIRT OR  
FAVORITE PRAIRIE T-SHIRT DAY

### Low/Negative Lunch Balance Update

In communication with Waunakee Schools district office, beginning **November 1st**, Food Service will return to the practice of not allowing lunch purchases for students with a negative balance. In order to avoid this from happening, courtesy messages will be sent via email (for low balances under \$10.00) and by telephone (for negative balances). Students with a negative balance will be offered an alternative meal (a sandwich and a milk) until the account is positive. In addition, families may complete the federal free/reduced meal application if this applies to your financial situation.

Please feel free to contact the Food Service Office at 849.2185 for account information or for payment instructions. You may also find this information by following the link:

<http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/onlinepayments.cfm>

### Yoplait Yogurt Pink Lids Needed

**The Waunakee  
High School  
Student Council  
is taking a step to  
trample breast  
cancer.**



**Yoplait yogurt will donate 10 cents to the  
Susan G. Komen fund for every PINK Yoplait  
lid that is sent to them from now until Decem-  
ber 31<sup>st</sup>. You can bring in your pink lids and  
drop them off in a box in the office. Thank you  
for helping the WHS student council trample  
breast cancer.**

### We Need Your Help!

If your child has a change in their normal routine for the day, we ask that you send a note or email in the morning explaining those changes (i.e. walking to grandma's house after school instead of riding the bus). If it is not possible to write a note, please call by 2:00 p.m. to ensure we get the message to your child(ren) and staff that need to know. The later we receive a call, the harder it is to ensure the message gets to the proper people. You can reach the main office by calling 849-2200 or 849-2235. Thanks for your help!

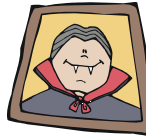


Interested in attending the next PTO meeting? It will be held at 6:30 p.m. on November 9 in the Prairie LMTC

Upcoming Meetings  
Dec. 14, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 14, April 11, May 9, June tbd



### Fall Family Fun Night (October 25)



We will be sponsoring our annual Family Fun Night on Oct. 25 from 6-7:30 p.m. This is always a fun event for families to come together to make crafts, have some munchies and maybe even get spooked by our witch. Hope to see you there.

We will provide cookies and Halloween cards to decorate.

Bring your own pumpkin and we will supply decorations for you to use.

You'll be able to drink a spooky drink and eat a spooky snack!

Create cool projects and much more!!



Watch for more information!  
BOO!

### Fall Fun Night Volunteer sheet

Fall Fun Night is October 25th<sup>t</sup>. If you are interested in volunteering please fill out the volunteer form. The link is now on our webpage.



### Halloween Parade (October 31)

The Halloween parade will be held on Monday, October 31st at 8:00. Children may wear costumes to school and bring a change of clothing for after the parade. Costumes do not need to be elaborate. If the costume includes a mask, please be sure your child is comfortable and able to see. A small amount of makeup is allowed if this will not bother your child's skin. Knives, guns, swords, or other weapon-like objects are NOT allowed. (If you do not want your son/daughter to participate in the parade, please send a note or call the school). Parents are invited to come and watch the parade.

### FROM THE ART ROOM

Many students at Prairie have started painting projects in the art room. Soon we will be working with clay, fabric paints, and lots of other messy materials. Please take note of the day your child has art class and remember to dress him / her appropriately. We have smocks, but accidents still happen, and I don't want new or favorite clothes and shoes to get damaged. :)

Students have art class once a week. We recently completed our SQUARE ONE project. This is a school-wide fund raiser that allows parents to order products (like coffee mugs and tote bags) that display their child's artwork. We also did "Prairie People" cartoon self portraits based on the Prairie t-shirt design which are now being displayed in the hallways of the school. Consequently, not much artwork has been sent home yet. Many pieces will also be saved for the spring art show!

Here is a list of some things we could use in the art room this year:

Magazines, Dixie Cups, Beads and buttons, Pipe Cleaners, Aluminum Foil, paper plates, Q-tips, Picture Calendars, etc.



Pa-

Thanks!  
Mary Wright  
Art Teacher



## Prairie Food Drive

(October 31-November 11)

The Waunakee Schools will be participating in a food drive to benefit the community. Children may bring canned goods, packaged items, but no perishables, to school and we will collect them. The items are then taken to the St. Andrew's food pantry and the Ecumenical Board to be distributed to local people in need.

The food drive will run from October 31-November 11. This would be an excellent opportunity for children to learn about sharing, caring and citizenship. Please consider donating items for the drive. Remember to check expiration dates.

## Early Release Days

Please note that school will be dismissed two hours early (at 12:40) on the following days:

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Tuesday, November 22, 2011

Friday, February 24, 2012

Friday, March 23, 2012

Friday, May 25, 2012



**No School**

October 21

**2 Hour Early Release**

October 26 (12:40)

**No school**

October 27 & 28

## Character Counts



$$12+12+4=28$$



$$9-1=8$$

## Looking Ahead

### OCTOBER

21 – No School for students

21 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (8:00 a.m-12:00)

25 - PTO Prairie Fall Family Fun Night

26 – **2 Hour Early Release** (12:40 release)

27-28 No School

31 Halloween Parade



### NOVEMBER

4 – First Quarter Ends

9 - Veteran's Day Assembly (8:00- 8:30 in the gym)

11 – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Veteran's Day Program

22 - **2 Hour Early Release** (12:40 release)

23-25 No School (Thanksgiving)

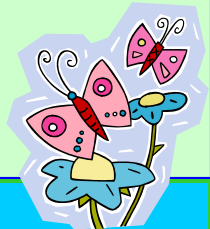
### UPCOMING TESTING DATES

Nov. 7-11 - WKCE Testing (Grade 3)

Nov. 4-11 – WKCE Testing (Grade 4)

### DECEMBER

16—K-4 Winter Program



$$12+8+16=36$$

## Manner of the Week

Each week Prairie Elementary stresses a Manner of the Week. Every day a student reads an announcement about the manner. We believe that manners need to be taught and modeled in order for students to learn appropriate social skills. So far this year, the manners we have covered include the following: treat others the way you want to be treated; tell the truth; kind words do not hurt people's hearts; be a good listener; raise your hand and wait to be called upon; introduce yourself to others; and no whining.

## Crazy Hair Day



PRAIRIE SCHOOL PRESENTS...

"CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD."

FRIDAY DECEMBER 16, 2011

8:15 A.M. - KINDERGARTEN

9:15 A.M. - FIRST

10:15 A.M. - SECOND

NOON - THIRD

1:15 P.M. FOURTH



\*\*\*THIS IS A DRESS UP DAY FOR STUDENTS.

## Business Buddies

Once again Prairie Elementary is partnering with businesses in our Adopt a Classroom Program. Our business buddies work with a classroom during the school year. Some buddies read to students, share about their career or business, explain what training or education is needed for that career, and also talk about how our character traits are important in the world of work. This partnership has been well received by both classrooms and businesses as we all learn about the world of work.

Our business buddies this year include the following:

Bernie Cleary's BarberShop	Mrs. Staeger's 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Class
Wauwaukee Furniture ETC	Ms. Sweno's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade & Ms. Truitt's Kindergarten Class
New Horizon Vision Therapy	Mr. Anderson's 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Class
State Bank of Cross Plains/Wauwaukee	Mrs. Zellner's 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Class
Creekwood Assisted Living	Mrs. Ehle's 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Classes
Uniek	Mrs. Frey's Kindergarten Class and Ms. Palmer's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Class
First Weber Reality	Mrs. Leder's 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Class
Uptdike Chiropractic	Mrs. Hottinger's 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Class
Wauwaukee Neighborhood Connection	Mrs. Chaimson's 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Class
Nord Gear and Ronald McDonald House	Mrs. Schadeber'g 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Class
Wauwaukee Tribune	Mrs. Farnworth and Mrs. Peters's 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Class

## Birthday Sundaes

Mr. Kaminski will be celebrating birthdays with ice cream sundaes on **Tuesday, November 29th**. Kindergarten through Grade 4 students will enjoy sundaes at 1:00 p.m. Summer birthdays are celebrated as follows: June in December, July in January and August in February. Parents are welcome to join your child for his/her birthday sundae. Mr. Kaminski will be having a separate birthday celebration for the Early Childhood students at a later date.

## Birthday Books

Student birthdays are included in morning announcements and the children are invited to the office to pick out a book provided by the Prairie PTO. Thanks to the PTO for providing such a great gift!

## From the Health Office...



At this time of year we are often asked about our guidelines for keeping kids home from school and when they can return to school. A fever (temperature of 100° or greater) indicates a child should stay home from school. Students need to be fever free without fever-lowering medications for 24 hours before returning to school. Children should stay home if they have an uncontrollable cough or runny nose that they cannot care for in a sanitary manner. If a child has had episodes of vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours and is not tolerating a regular diet, he/she should stay home. Other symptoms such as a severe rash or a severe sore throat (one that did not begin that morning) may also indicate illness and should be considered when deciding whether your child should attend school.

This is also the time of year when people are wondering about the flu. Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be the most common this year. It's not too late in the season to get a flu vaccine since flu season usually peaks in January or later. Flu vaccines are available at most clinics. They are also available at free immunization clinics through Public Health of Madison and Dane County. These clinics give free flu shots to children ages 6 months to 18 years old. Please call 246-4516 or go to [www.publichealthmdc.com](http://www.publichealthmdc.com) for times and locations. If you have any questions, please contact our school nurse, Katie Homar, at 209-9950.



## Dress Students for the Weather

Parents are reminded that students will be outdoors during the winter months. In the morning students may enter the building and put their bags away then proceed immediately outdoors. At lunch time and during the morning and afternoon recess children will also be outdoors.

Our general rule of thumb is when the temperature is 0° or below, OR -10° with the wind-chill, or if it is raining students will stay inside. At all other times we will expect that your child go outdoors to get the fresh air and exercise they need. Please have your child dress appropriately. If your son/daughter wants to play on the snow covered fields, they must wear boots, snow pants and an appropriate jacket. Students with medical concerns for illness will be allowed to stay indoors in the office area if they have a written doctor's excuse.

Winter is right around the corner bringing snow, cold temperatures and sometimes school cancellations. In the event of inclement weather, please listen to one of the announcements on cancellations.

WTSO (1070 AM)	WMGN (98 FM)
Q106 (106 FM)	WIBA (1310 AM)
WOLX (94.9)	WTDY (1480 AM)

You can also check any of the local TV stations who list school cancellations alphabetically during their newscast as well as on their website. This information is repeated throughout the morning. In the event school is closed early due to inclement weather, your child will be directed to go to the location listed on your child's "Coming Home Early Form" that was in your beginning of the year registration packet. Be sure to keep us informed if you have any changes during the school year.



# WKCE



# TESTING

All third and fourth grade students will be participating in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE). This is a standardized test given to third and fourth grade students in schools across the state. The guide below is designed to help you understand the nature of the test, what it asks your child to do, how to prepare your child for testing, and how to understand the results.

**Why test?** Testing is an important part of education. The fourth grade WKCE provides objective information about each child's progress in four areas: Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Third grade will be tested in Reading and Math only. When used in conjunction with other measures, such as classroom observation and teacher-made tests, the WKCE helps you and the teacher see your child's strengths and the areas needing improvement.

**What is the WKCE like?** This test is a standardized achievement test. It is always administered with similar questions, the same directions, the same time limits, and the same scoring criteria for all students. The results compare your child's performance with that of other students from across the country in about the same grades. It focuses on what students can do, not the speed. The test asks the child to apply basic skills, interpret, synthesize, and evaluate information. There are multiple-choice questions, short answers, write an essay or make a graph.

### What should I know about the scores?

Achievement scores are based on the overall pattern of correct responses. Each student's results are presented as a national percentile rank. A percentile rank is a comparison score within a particular grade level. If, for example, a student scores at the 65th percentile, this means he or she scored higher than 65 per cent of his or her peers in the national sample group. A percentile rank does not refer to the percentage of items answered correctly.

### How can I help my child prepare for the test?

While your child is the one who is responsible for his or her performance on the test, you can play an important role in helping your child prepare. The best way is to be open and honest: tell them what the test will be about, when it will be given, and how long it takes. Share the view that you want them to do their best, as the test will show what they have learned so far in school. Your child also needs extra sleep and eat a nourishing breakfast. Often snacks such as vegetables or fruit would be helpful too.

**Remember:** The test represents a snapshot of your child's achievement - it is only one measure of your child's progress. Ask your child to give his/her best effort and that you will be proud of his/her accomplishments. If at all possible, please avoid family trips during this time as we have a window where testing must be completed by the end of November.

#### Fall 2011 Testing Schedule

Nov. 4-11 - 4<sup>th</sup> grade WKCE testing

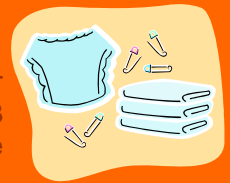
Nov. 7-10 - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade WKCE testing

If students missed the tests because they were absent they will begin to be tested on November 11th for 3rd grade and November 14th for the 4th grade.

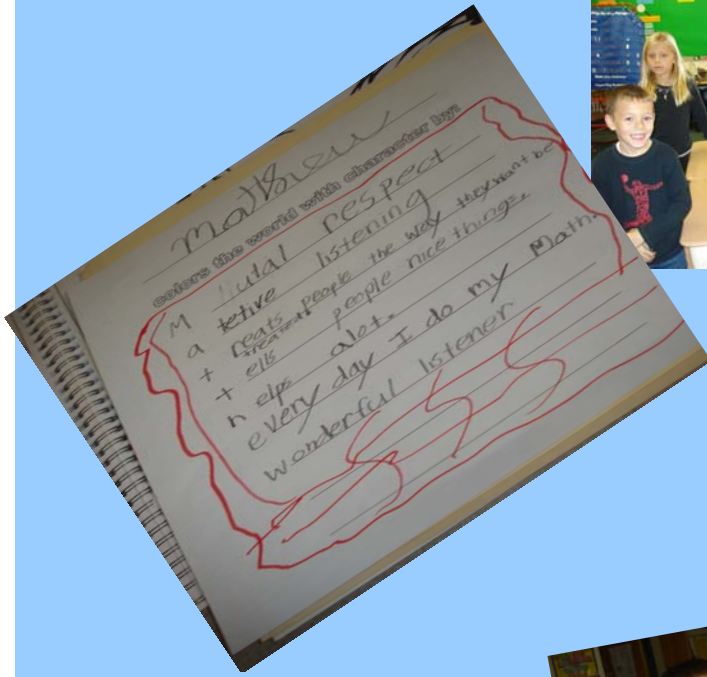


## Laundry and Diaper Drive

Thank you to everyone who supported the Laundry and Diaper Drive. Prairie families donated 48 containers of laundry soap and 53 packs of diapers. Way to Go! Your support will make the difference in the lives of Waunakee families. It's the Prairie Way.



# Color Our World with Character



Every day is an opportunity to let your character shine!



Our Touchstone  
 At Prairie Elementary through learning and laughter, we choose to have positive attitude, to work hard, to be honest and to be respectful.





**Hats off to**

**Character!**



**Showing off in Style!**

