

# PRAIRIE EXPRESS

September 2011

## Welcome Back!

September, 2011  
Principal's Message

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! I hope you and your family had the opportunity to take advantage of the fantastic summer with some fun and relaxation. Those precious memories are treasures that will last forever!

It was exciting running into many of our Prairie students this summer and having them share their progress with the "Reading Rocks Summer" program. The benefits of engaging in summer reading will hopefully continue to aid your child to maintain the same reading level they were at last spring. Regardless, the joy of reading provides adventures that one may never be able to take! We will be coordinating the Root Beer Float celebration soon with the help of our fantastic PTO.

You may want to consider joining our wonderful PTO. This year our PTO meetings will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 6:30-7:30 p.m. here at Prairie Elementary School. All are welcome to attend!

As we start a new school year, I would like to also take this opportunity to share the importance of **regular and timely** school attendance. Regular attendance in elementary school establishes a good pattern for your child's entire school experience. By demonstrating practices that show your child that school comes first and that being on time is essential, you will be providing a great path for important life-long traits. Minimizing the days off of school for illness and family emergencies models the importance of

prioritizing attendance. This can be modeled by scheduling routine doctor and dentist appointments after school or during breaks.

At Prairie Elementary, we demonstrate the importance of making good character choices; positive attitude, hard work, honesty, and respect. As the old adage states, "It takes a village to raise a child." I am sure you would agree with me that one of the greatest responsibilities a parent has is to help shape their children's character. What we say and do and how we live our lives models character for our children to imitate. Please speak with your child and let them know life is not always easy, and that they will experience challenging choices. Every day different opportunities will present choices, and every choice they encounter in life, good or bad, will be a character building opportunity. The choice is yours!

We are confident that many new and exciting opportunities await your child here with the start of a new school year. I am confident that your child will be provided continuous opportunities to grow socially, emotionally, and academically. Through consistent parental support and collaborative efforts with your child's teacher, your child will have the tools for a successful educational career.

We believe that mutual respect and trust are key benefits towards a successful educational experience for your child. Coupled with continuous communication between home and school, we believe that we have the key ingredients to achieve educational excellence.

Thanks for making this the best year yet!



Prairie Elementary  
700 North Madison Street  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
Office: 849-2200  
Fax: 849-2235

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
Taher Food Service		849-2185

### Information you will find inside:

- Attendance Information
- School Hours
- School Safety
- Short Term Parking
- After School Arrangements
- Staff Information
- PTO BBQ Kick Off
- Open House
- Birthday Sundaes
- Recess and Lunch Information
- Early Release Days
- Upcoming Dates
- Pet Policy
- Lunch Information
- Taher Food Service

## Attendance Line - 849-2235



A reminder to parents to please call the attendance line at 849-2035 before 8:30 AM if your child will be absent or tardy to school. Please

provide your name, child's name, teacher's name, reason for absence and if you would like homework collected. Parents may pick up homework at the end of the day on the homework counter in the main entrance. The attendance line is available 24 hours a day. Board Policy 430-Rule (1) requires that students bring a written statement from home upon their return to school. The note is to be signed by the parent/guardian, dated and state the reason for the absence. Without a written note, the absence will be unexcused until clarified. Please help us by providing the required information as stated in the Board policy. Pre-printed Parent Notes are available for FREE in the school office.



## School Hours

Students should not arrive at school before 7:15 AM. The first bell rings at 7:35 AM and school begins at 7:40 AM. Shuttle busers are dismissed at 2:30 PM and regular busers and walkers are dismissed at 2:40 PM.

If your child is late for school he/she must stop in the office to get a pass before going to class.



### School Safety

**Please sign in at the office.**

It is very important for all visitors, volunteers and parents to sign in at the office and obtain a visitor sticker during the school day. This applies to all visits, even brief ones to drop off extra clothes or a forgotten lunch.



### Volunteers

In accordance with Waunakee Community School District Board of Education policy, all volunteers will need to have a criminal background check completed every three school years by the district's central office administration in order to volunteer in the classroom or on field trips. Copies of this form were included in registration packets and are also available your school's main office and online at <http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/pr/forms/Volunteer%20Form%2011-2-2010.pdf>

## Safety in the Unloading Zone



The following situations have been creating an unsafe environment for our students in the unloading zone. Please consider the safety of our students.

- ⇒ Cars are not allowed to be unattended in the student unloading zone during school hours.
- ⇒ **Parents are to park in a parking stall** and not in the parent loop. In the past cars have even double parked in the parent loop creating extremely dangerous conditions.
- ⇒ Please remember to drive slowly.
- ⇒ Cars zooming into and out of the parking lot create dangerous situations.
- ⇒ Younger siblings should not be left unattended with the cars running while parents are inside the school. Let's make our school as safe as possible!

## Changes in After School

### Arrangements

Please make and review arrangements for after school activities with your child *prior to* the beginning of the school day. Please remember that we must have a *signed note* from a parent if your child's after school arrangements will be different (example: you will pick them up instead of them riding the bus home that day).

Last minute changes or emergencies should be called into the office at least one hour before school is dismissed. Teachers may not have time to check their e-mail, so please do not e-mail teachers of any last minute changes. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

### 2011-2012 Staff Changes

Mandi Cwiklinski - Third Grade

Deanna Schadeberg - Third Grade

Allie Shuda -Elementary Spanish Teacher (Grades 1-3)

Amie Zellner is returning to First Grade

Julie Block - Early Childhood Assistant

Emily Bordeleau - New Elementary Spanish Teacher (Grade 4)

Anna Koll - New Music Teacher

Molly Grupe - New Speech and Language Teacher

### Student Teachers

Mary Beth Nakkula - UW Platteville- Amie Zellner

Melissa Lucille Diffenderfer - UW Platteville - Sue Truitt and Sheri Wideen

Kristin Presser - UW Platteville - Jen Schmalz

## PTO BBQ Kick Off and Raffle

The PTO is hosting a BBQ Kick Off at Heritage/Intermediate on Wednesday, September 7th, 2011 from 4:00-7:00 pm. This is a great opportunity for all families to get together.

In addition to the meals, PTO is also sponsoring a raffle. Each ticket costs \$1.00 (or 6 for \$5) and the prizes are terrific! *Among the prizes you can win are 4 VIP Passes to Inside the Huddle in Green Bay; a one night stay at Wilderness Resort; "Mia" the American Girl Doll; 20 Music Lessons from Arboretum Music School... and many more great items. Be sure to get your tickets so you have a chance to win some great prizes!*

## PTO BBQ Kick Off Raffle

The PTO is also sponsoring a raffle on September 10. Raffle tickets will be sold for \$1 each or six for \$5. Raffle tickets and information were mailed in August. If you sold tickets, please be sure to turn in ticket stubs and money collected prior to the 4 PM drawing on September 10. Please turn in any unsold tickets as well. Winners need not be present to win.



## Prairie Picnic September 2

An all school picnic is planned for Friday, September 2. Anyone who participates in the hot lunch program will be served a picnic style lunch consisting of hotdogs or hamburgers grilled by Mr. Kaminski, Mrs. Howard and Mr. Dean Fredrick. Students who do not participate in the hot lunch program may bring a sack lunch for this event. The picnic will be served outdoors, weather permitting.

## Thursday Folders

In an effort to regularly communicate student progress and school events to parents/guardians, staff will be sending home information in a Thursday folder. Be sure to review student work samples and classroom announcements. Informational handouts will be given to the youngest student of each family in Thursday folders. Families who opted to receive paper copies of school correspondence will receive this information in Thursday folders. Families who opted for electronic copies will receive information



## Birthday Sundae Party

Mr. Kaminski will be celebrating September birthdays with ice cream sundaes on Tuesday, September 27. 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 all Early Childhood students at a later date.

October 25      November 29      December 13  
January 31      February 28      March 20  
April 24      May 29

## 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!



## Picture Retake Day (September 28)

If your child missed the picture day at registration please give a picture package, with payment enclosed, to your child's teacher on retake day.

If your child needs to have their pictures retaken please send you child's picture package to their teacher on retake day.

Extra picture packages are available in the information rack outside of the main office.



## Recess and Lunch Information

Students are expected to go outside unless the weather does not permit.

The recess and lunch schedules are as follows:

Before school: 7:15-7:40 a.m.

Kdg, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade recess: 9:30-10:00 a.m.

4<sup>th</sup> grade lunch/recess: 10:45-11:28 a.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> grade lunch/recess: 10:58-11:41 a.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> grade lunch/recess: 11:11-11:54 a.m.

1<sup>st</sup> grade lunch/recess: 11:24 a.m.-12:07 p.m.

Kindergarten lunch/recess: 11:37 a.m. -12:20 p.m.

3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade recess: 1:00-1:30 p.m.

Kindergarten recess: 2:20-2:30 p.m.

## Taher Food Service Payment Information

Please send all food service payments and semester milk payments to Food Service at 101 School Drive during the school year. Payments are no longer to be sent to each individual school. The preferred method of payment is to pay online at [www.waunakee.k12.wi.us](http://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us) and go to the Food Service tab for further instruction. The online pay system can be accessed thru Infinite Campus and the pay system is Vanco. The system works as a pre-paid lunch account. The system works with individual student accounts not family accounts . All payments will now be made as a payment to an individual student not a family account. All payments other than online payments are encouraged to be either sent to the Food Service office at 101 School Dr. or dropped off at that location. Please be reminded that your student will be offered semester morning milk only if we have your payment for first semester milk when school starts on September 1st. This payment now is also available as an online pay option. Your milk payment is separate from your lunch account and the semester milk amount is \$31.50 per semester.



### Taher Food Service Lunch Information

Food Service continues to work with local farmers to bring farm fresh produce to the students. Students again will be offered 3 choices at each elementary school each day. Your students will have the choice of an entrée, a salad choice or a sandwich choice as well as the other components that determine a USDA reimbursable meal. The student can pick fresh fruits and vegetables from the food bar as well. The food service department recognizes that good nutrition has a positive effect on learning and good health. It is our mission to provide nutritious meals to students, staff and the community, in a caring and customer-friendly environment. Our menu's consist of freshly prepared foods, no trans fats, more whole grains and legumes, fresh fruit and vegetables and foods that are minimally processed and decrease use of foods containing high-fructose corn syrup.

Food Service Office 849-2185 for lunch account questions Kelly Regali.

Free/Reduced information at 849-2327 Carie Abarca

Food Service Director 849-2197 Vicki Hoyer

Assistant Food Service Director 849-4137 Ami Shimanek

Note: Prairie office staff do not have access to food service account information (balance or identification numbers). Please contact Taher with any food service related questions.



## **Correct Email Addresses**

### **(We need your help!)**

Please help us by keeping us informed of your correct e-mail address. Messages will be sent in this fashion more and more through School Messenger our message system by Infinite Campus.

There are so many ways to get free e-mail addresses and you can check these often at the public library or other public computer access areas.

We are not quite at the point to send important messages out in this manner exclusively yet – but will be very soon.

## **Early Release Days**

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

Friday, September 16, 2011

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Tuesday, November 22, 2011

Friday, February 24, 2012

Friday, March 23, 2012

Friday, May 25, 2012

## **Upcoming Dates to Remember**

Thurs.	Sept. 1	Students Report
Fri.	Sept. 2	Prairie Picnic (Hot Dogs and Hamburgers for Lunch)
Mon.	Sept. 5	NO SCHOOL: Labor Day
Wed.	Sept. 7	PTO BBQ Kick-Off
Fri.	Sept. 15	<b>Early Release - 12:40 dismissal</b>
Tues.	Sept. 27	Birthday Sundaes 1:30 PM
Wed.	Sept. 28	Student Retakes/Staff Pictures
Mon.	Oct. 17	Parent/Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:30 PM
Fri.	Oct. 21	NO SCHOOL
Fri.	Oct. 21	Parent/Teacher Conferences 8AM-Noon
Tues.	Oct. 25	Birthday Sundaes 1:30 PM
Tues.	Oct. 25	Fall Family Fun Night (6:00-7:30)
Wed.	Oct. 26	<b>Early Release - 12:40 dismissal</b>
Th-Fr.	Oct. 27, 28	NO SCHOOL <i>WEAC Convention</i>



## Artist in Residence

**Skip Jones** Skip Jones has been working in schools across the Midwest for over 30 years. He delivers his message of respect and tolerance through songs, stories and a little bit of grandfathers' wisdom in a variety of programs that are focused on respect, anti-bullying, the environment, diversity, culture, exploration, and of course music. He also shares his **HERO (Helping Everyone Respect Others)** program by establishing Bully-Free Schools that promote respect, character development, and safe school environments for everyone. Skip Jones will be working with our staff and students on September 29 and 30.



Skip Jones (Helping Everyone Respect Others)

## *Prairie Elementary Mission*

*Prairie Elementary is a school that believes all children can learn. Our entire staff is passionate about personalized student instruction and development. We are dedicated to meeting the needs of the whole child on an individual level. Through our collaborative and innovative efforts, we strive to motivate all children to achieve their full potential and develop a love of learning through our example. We believe a safe and positive environment that emphasizes respect and tolerance is integral to this goal. It's the Prairie Way.*

Interested in attending the next PTO meeting? It will be held at 6:00 p.m. on September 29th In the Prairie LMTC

## Pet Policy Reminder

### PETS VISITING SCHOOL

1. Pets will be allowed to visit classrooms with Principal's approval.
2. A copy of the pet's current immunization records should be submitted to the Principal along with request to bring pet to school.
3. Information about children's allergies should be reviewed prior to pet visiting classroom.
4. Students/parents should be informed when the pet will be in the classroom.
5. The pet must be appropriately caged or on a leash no longer than five (5) feet in length.
6. Student handling of the pet will be optional and dogs/cats must be muzzled if handling is anticipated within the classroom for safety reasons.



These guidelines were developed in consultation with a variety of people knowledgeable about the subject, including public health officials. The guidelines will be reviewed after implementation and modified as necessary. BOE Policy #833

## From the Health Office...

As a parent/guardian, you often have to make the decision of whether or not to send your child to school if he/she has symptoms of an illness.

Sometimes it's hard to know if the symptoms will go away after a couple of hours, or progressively get worse throughout the day.

As a guideline, fever (temperature of 100 or greater), vomiting, and diarrhea are considered signs of illness and



are reasons to keep your child home to prevent exposing well children to illness. 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. Some children at school have immune systems that are fragile. So what may seem a minor illness for one child could be very detrimental to another child.

According to state law H49.01, any teacher, principal, or nurse serving a school may send home for the purpose of diagnosis and treatment, any pupil suspected of having a communicable disease. Some examples are: lice, strep throat, and impetigo. Contact our school nurse, Katie Homar at 209-9950 or the Dane County Public Health Department at 242-6520 if you would like more information.

## **Medications**



Just a reminder that the medication consent forms are in the parent handbook, on the school district website, and in the school office. The consent form needs to be used and signed by the doctor any time prescribed medication is to be given at school. If it is an over-the-counter medication, only the parent has to sign the consent form. All medication needs to come to school in the original container.

## **Immunizations**



All schools in the state of Wisconsin are required early in every school year to document that each student is up-to-date with immunizations that protect against childhood illnesses. In order to make schools safe and healthy places for children to learn, we request your assistance in this task.

We are obligated to send parents letters on official forms notifying them if all appropriate immunizations for their child have not been reported to the school. It may be that your child has received the immunizations but we do not have that information on file. Please call the office to share that information with us (849-2203 or 849-2235). It may be necessary for you to call a clinic or health department locally or in a previous hometown to get needed information if you do not have a record.

If immunizations are lacking, your child may need to be immunized by your own health care provider or through the Dane County Public Health Department's free immunization clinics (242-6520). Please call the school office (849-2203 or 849-2235) as soon as the new immunizations are received. We will need to continue to send official notices if we do not have the necessary information at school.

If for personal, health, or religious reasons your child will not be receiving all required immunizations at this time, please read the Waiver section on the back of the yellow immunization card and sign accordingly. A doctor's signature is required for a health waiver to be accepted.

Please return this health information to the school office as soon as possible. We want to insure that all children are adequately protected against illness and have a successful year at school.

Thank you!

Katie Homar, School Nurse

## **MAP Testing**

In September, we will be conducting the MAP testing for grades 3-4. The Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) is a computer test where students and teachers learn what students know. The MAP testing offers us immediate feedback as well as helping students become familiar with standardized testing. We will be testing reading, language and math. One test will be given one day each week. Testing will occur between September 12-30. You can prepare your child by making sure they get plenty of rest and that they eat a healthy breakfast.

## **Standardized tests**

Choose to do well

True or false: standardized tests are tough. The answer depends on how prepared your youngster is. Here are four ways to help him/her handle tests:

1. Explain that the tests will show how much he has learned. Encourage him/her to try his/her best, but don't put so much emphasis on them that they feel stressed.
2. Practice the test format. For example, your child might have to read a paragraph and answer questions. Using one of his/hers textbooks, have him/her look at the questions at the end of a section first and then read the passage. That will help him to know what to read for and how to find the answers.
3. Limit activities the night before tests. You may want to avoid having guests for dinner or skip his/hers brothers baseball game if it means being out late. Be sure your child gets to bed on time and sets an alarm for the next morning.
4. On test day, give him an energy-boosting breakfast. Try to include both protein (eggs, yogurt, milk) and carbohydrates (fruit oatmeal, toast).
5. Remember to tell them to do their best and you are going to be proud of them. :)

## **Story Time**

*Want to spend time with your youngster, build her/his reading skills, and help her learn to love books? You can do all three when you read aloud to her/him. Here are some suggestions.*

### **Read regularly.**

*Try to read to your child every day. You might aim for 10-15 minutes of bedtime reading for a peaceful end to the day. Tuck read-alouds into the time when dinner is in the oven. Or curl up together with a book when you get home from work.*



**Take turns** choosing books. *Your youngster may want to hear old favorites again and again. Use your turn for new titles and variety (nonfiction, poetry).*

**Let her/him participate.** *Ask your child to turn the pages while you read. Also, she/he can finish sentences that rhyme or fill in the words she/he knows. Go slowly so she/he has time to understand the story and look at the illustrations. She/he will enjoy read-aloud time more if she plays an active role.*

**Be Playful.** *You can use different voices for different characters (a high, squeaky voice for a chicken or a deep voice for a horse.) Substitute your youngster's name for the main character's name, and use family members' names for other characters. Note:: you don't have to be an expert reader—your child will love when you read aloud because it's you.*



# PTO & PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

We are looking forward to continuing our tremendous volunteer program at Prairie Elementary School. The PTO goes a long way toward bringing so many great activities and programs to our school.

**President:** Amy Kuhnle [kuhnle@tds.net](mailto:kuhnle@tds.net)

**Principal:** Dean Kaminski [dkaminski@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:dkaminski@waunakee.k12.wi.us)

**Vice President:** Liz Carr [decarr@tds.net](mailto:decarr@tds.net)

**Treasurers:** Susan Brown [susanebbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:susanebbrown@yahoo.com),  
Amy Reisdorf [amy.reisdorf@fisglobal.com](mailto:amy.reisdorf@fisglobal.com)

**Secretary:** Cindy Kobza [clkobza@tds.net](mailto:clkobza@tds.net)

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Chanesta Acker [chanesta@charter.net](mailto:chanesta@charter.net)

**Publicity Manager:** Heidi Horn [heidibhorn4@gmail.com](mailto:heidibhorn4@gmail.com)

**Newsletter Manager:** Shawn Smith [shawn\\_smith@charter.net](mailto:shawn_smith@charter.net)

**Website Manager:** Amie Zellner [azellner@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:azellner@waunakee.k12.wi.us)

**PSAC Representatives:** Heidi Horn [heidibhorn4@gmail.com](mailto:heidibhorn4@gmail.com)  
Jen Grabarski [jen.grabarski@gmail.com](mailto:jen.grabarski@gmail.com)

**Square One Representative:** Patti Kvalo [pkvalo@centurytel.net](mailto:pkvalo@centurytel.net)

**Fundraiser Coordinators:** Elaine Jones [ejonesrt@yahoo.com](mailto:ejonesrt@yahoo.com)  
Shawn Schmitt [shawnschmitt@charter.net](mailto:shawnschmitt@charter.net)

**Clothing Sale Coordinator:** Amy Reisdorf [amy.reisdorf@fisglobal.com](mailto:amy.reisdorf@fisglobal.com)

**Teacher Representatives:** Amie Zellner [azellner@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:azellner@waunakee.k12.wi.us)  
Jay Guelker [jguelker@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:jguelker@waunakee.k12.wi.us)

**Parent Representatives:** Susan Brown [susanebbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:susanebbrown@yahoo.com)  
Jen Schmalz [jschmalz@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:jschmalz@waunakee.k12.wi.us)

## Committee Chairs:

**Art Show:** Liz Carr & Chanesta Acker

**Bake Sale:** Liz Carr & Amy Kuhnle

**Basket Bonanza:** Amie Zellner & Amy Kuhnle

**Box Tops:** Liz Carr & Amy Kuhnle

**Family Fun Night:** Amie Zellner & Jen Schmalz

**Family Learning Night:** Amie Zellner & Jen Schmalz

**Ice Cream Social:** Elaine Jones & Shawn Schmitt

Research shows that kids with involved parents get better grades, have fewer discipline problems, and are more likely to pass their classes and go on to higher education!

As advocates for our children, we sponsor fund-raising projects that generate money for enrichment activities, equipment and academic needs that otherwise might not be available. We strive to foster a sense of community spirit so that all students at Prairie Elementary may experience success. We invite and welcome new ideas from our Prairie Parents.