

The Green Connection

The newsletter that connects the parents, students and school.

Edition 19, Volume 1

Osage Community Schools Newsletter

August 2011

<http://www.osage.k12.ia.us>

Dear Parents,

Wow, the summer days sure go by more quickly as I get older! I hope you all have had a wonderful summer and are looking forward to a great new school year. The beginning of school is an exciting time for lots of people: the students get to rekindle friendships, the teachers get to facilitate new learning opportunities, and parents get some quiet time again.

It also gives everyone a fresh start. It's a time we can turn our wishes into realities. It's a time where everyone can let go of the past and make this year better than any other. Of course, it begins with an attitude that is positive and focuses on "what can be." People who get stuck thinking of only current realities find that their world changes little. But people who tend to focus on a preferred future usually end up creating, then living, that new and better life.

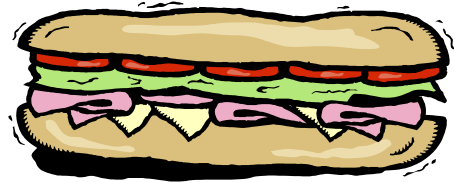
While the school district still has its challenges, it is my goal to keep our patrons focused on the good things we have going for us here in Osage. We have so much to be grateful for.

Welcome back students and staff! Thank you, parents, for allowing us to teach your children. It's by working closely together that we can sustain and enhance a caring community to produce enthusiasm for life-long learning. Let's make it a great year!

Steve L. Bass
Superintendent of Schools

Change in Lunch Prices

The Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition has required schools to raise their lunch prices to meet the state guidelines. Last years our lunch prices were on the low end of the state guidelines. We are asked to raise them by \$.05 for this coming school year. Breakfast and milk prices will not be affected.



The price for elementary school lunch this school year will be \$1.85. The price for middle/high school lunch will be \$1.90 and an adult lunch will be \$2.30. Each of these meals have been increased by \$.05

Ala carte goes up or down according to the price of each grocery item. This \$.05 increase has no affect on ala carte prices.

In the past year, we have changed a few things in school lunches. More fruit and vegetables have been added to our daily meals. We are providing two fruits per day; one fresh and one canned or frozen. We are serving 100% whole wheat bread for our sandwiches and we have gone to offering only skim milk at all of our schools.

Our biggest challenge in nutrition right now is sodium, which our distributors are working with companies to lower. Many meat products provide too much sodium for the state guidelines. The fat content in products is another challenge and needs to be lowered. Saturated fat and trans fat fall into the same issues. As you can see, healthier meals are a work in progress.

Jolene Hemann
Food Service Director

Understanding the Middle School Years: What to Expect

The middle school years are synonymous with change. More transformation occurs between the ages of 10 and 14 than at any other period of life except the first several years after birth. Middle school students are changing dramatically—physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Early adolescent students are beginning puberty and developing secondary sex characteristics. Dramatic changes in height and weight occur during this time period. Parents notice the change through raging appetites, new strength and clothes that are quickly outgrown. There is no such thing as a typical early adolescent child—they vary so much physically that they may as easily resemble an elementary school child as a high school student.

During the middle school years, children really begin figuring out who they are. They try out adult roles regularly and are quite passionate about each one. The role of peers becomes extremely important as students test their social skills. Middle school students are highly emotional and display a wide range of highs and lows related to hormone development. A fragile self-image goes along with social and emotional development. Students may be devastated by a critical remark or even by something seemingly as trivial as an odd look from a friend.

Middle school children have a great need for structure, yet also need the opportunity to try out independence and decision-making within safe boundaries. These students question almost everything and believe no one else at their age has any rules or responsibilities with which to comply. Early adolescence is also a time when children begin identifying their skill areas. Team activities generate greater interest because of the socialization opportunities.

It has been said that the way in which children experience their “terrible twos” directly influences how students tackle early adolescence. By the same token, their experiences during these middle school years will affect their ability to handle the teen and early adult years. Students at this age need the continued support of their families, the school and the community. I have been asked many times over the years—“what happened to my sweet, innocent elementary student who used to talk to me regularly and tell me everything”. The old adage, “Love me most when I am most unlovable,” applies perfectly to the needs of middle school children. Understanding the changes your middle school child is going through is big. Parents can make this period a positive and enjoyable time of change with a little effort and a lot of love.

*Submitted by Ross Grafft
Osage Middle School Principal*

Cell Phones

Middle School—No cell phones may be used by MS students from 8:25 to 3:15.

High School—Cell phones are not permitted in classrooms or study halls. They may be used during student’s lunch shift in the cafeteria and before 8:25 and after 3:10. They should not create any disruption of school operations.



School Supply Lists

School supply lists are available on the District’s website and will also be available at school registration.

<https://sites.google.com/a/osage.k12.ia.us/>

Smile For the Camera

School pictures will be taken in all buildings on Friday, August 26.



Welcome Back to School

High School Communication



The start of the school year is right around the corner and with that comes the perfect opportunity for families and teachers to communicate at the before school conference. In the high school this year, conferences for the 10th and 12th graders will be business as usual. However, the 9th and 11th grade students will have a little twist on their conferences.

The freshmen and their parents will focus on a valuable program entitled "High School Success." This brief orientation will share advice about getting involved in different activities, planning for the future, achieving higher grades, being responsible, studying, earning money, taking challenging classes, and having fun.

The juniors and their parents will be attending an informational session on college planning. This presentation helps prepare students and their parents for a variety of postsecondary education options and shares a ton of very important information.

Each program will be presented multiple times during the day to accommodate the schedules of all families. Following each program, families will receive the normal school materials and information to complete.

We are excited about this change and the opportunity to share information with students and parents and continue building relationships.

Booster Club

Booster Club Memberships will be available at registration. We encourage all families to help support the Booster Club Program!

Activity Tickets

Activity tickets can be purchased at registration or during the school year at the high school office.

- ◇ Student Activity tickets are available for \$20. Tickets allow students to attend 10 events.
- ◇ Adult Activity tickets for 6 events are \$20

Please note that students must pay to get into activities that they are not participating in.

Middle School Orientation

Tuesday, August 16, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. is the **Middle School New Student Orientation**. All 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who will be new to the Osage Middle School this fall should report to the Middle School gym at this time.

This year the Middle School theme will be

"OMS - The Middle Matters"

Physicals & Immunizations

All students entering preschool and kindergarten must have a current physical along with the state required immunizations. All students entering 9th grade are required to have a physical. Additionally, students in grades 7-12 are required to have an athletic physical prior to participating in extra-curricular sports. Junior high age students often require immunization boosters, so please check with your doctor.

All kindergartners entering school must have the Varicella (chickenpox) immunization or documented history of having the disease. If your child has had the chickenpox, then the vaccine is not needed. However, the year they had the disease will need to be placed in the space for the Varicella on the immunization form.

Additionally: The 1977 session of the Iowa Legislature passed a law requiring all children enrolled in school to have begun or completed immunization for the following: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) tetanus, poliomyelitis, rubeola, and rubella. Only those children who have a written medical statement that for health reasons cannot have immunizations, or those who asked for exception to this requirement due to religious reasons, are exempt. The immunization law is strictly enforced. An amendment was adopted by the Iowa Board of Health on November 4, 1998, which requires "at least three doses of hepatitis B vaccine if born on or after July 1, 1994, prior to enrollment in school."

Sign up to Receive E-mail or Text Message Alerts About School Delays, Cancellations or Early Releases

Here's how you can take advantage of this free service & sign up for e-mail alerts:

1. Click on "Sign Up!" in the Main Menu at <https://schoolalerts.iowa.gov>. This will take you to the "Enterprise A&A" screen for the State of Iowa.
2. Follow the on-screen instructions to enter your name and e-mail address, and create secret questions and your password. This step involves obtaining a code from an e-mail sent to you to confirm your registration.
3. Once you have created and confirmed your account registration, you will be taken back to the School Alerts site where you can click on "My Subscriptions" to add the school districts/buildings you would like to receive notices for. Once you've selected a school, you are asked to enter the e-mail addresses or cell phone addresses where you would like notifications sent. You can add as many e-mail addresses as you'd like! (Please note that some wireless services providers may charge you for receiving e-mails or text messages. You are responsible for those charges.)

We will still make sure that local media outlets are notified when there's a change in our classes so notices will still be made on the television and radio, but we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to be directly notified as well!

If you have any questions about signing up for Iowa School Alerts, please contact the school's administration office or e-mail schoolalertsinfo@iowa.gov

You can also check the following TV and radio stations for school delays or cancellations.

FM Radio Stations

KLSS 106.1	KISS 98.7
KYTC 102.7	KJCY 95.5
KAUS 100	KCHA 95.9
KLKK 103.7	KCZE 95.1
KIA 93.9	

TV Stations

KIMT—channel 3
KWWL—channel 7
KAAL—channel 6
KTTC—channel 10

AM Radio Stations

KGLO 1300
KRIB 1490
KAUS 1480

Internet Sites

www.klssradio.com
www.kimt.com
www.kribradio.com

Teacher Qualifications

Parents and guardians of students in the Osage Community School District have the right to learn about the following qualifications of their child's teachers:

- state licensure requirements for the grade level and content areas taught
- current licensing status and baccalaureate/graduate certification/degree

The information is available online at www.state.ia.us/boee, or by contacting your building principal.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Osage Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of age (for employment), race, religion, creed, color, sex/gender, marital status, socio-economic status, national origin, geographical location, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treated in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), 504 or Iowa Code 280.3 is directed to contact the High School Counselor, Osage Community Schools, at 641-732-3102.

Dental Screening

Beginning in 2008, Iowa law requires that children entering kindergarten, ninth grade and out-of-state transfer students receive a screening for dental disease. Proof of the dental screening must be documented on specific forms available from your school nurse.

No child will be prevented from attending school without proof of dental screening. If families have difficulty meeting the requirements, IDPH and local public health will provide assistance to children and schools to ensure that the necessary dental screenings are obtained. IDPH encourages parents of children entering kindergarten or ninth grade to contact their health provider to check their child's records and make appointments for check-ups if necessary. For more information on dental screenings, contact your school nurse

Bus Students Drop Off and Pick-Up at Middle/High School

School buses will drop off and pick up students at the Middle School/High School in the front of the building. Parents can drop off and pick up their students at either the 7th Street doors or in the high school parking lot. (Please note that you can only pick up students on the EAST side of 7th Street. There is no parking or picking up students on the west side of 7th Street.)



Busing of In-Town Students

For a fee, the school district does offer busing for students that live in town. The charge for any family that lives within one mile of the center of town will be:

1 student	\$180 per year
2 students	\$270 per year
3 students or more	\$315 per year

If interested in In-Town Busing, you can fill out a form at registration. If you have any questions, please call the superintendent's office 732-5381.

High School Hot Lunch Deposits

- ◆ From 7:30-8:30 hot lunch money may be deposited in the High School cafeteria.
- ◆ From 8:30-10:00 hot lunch money may be deposited in the Superintendents Office with Mrs. Hemann.
- ◆ Money must be deposited before 10:00 in order for it to show up in your lunch account for that day. Any money brought in after 10:00 will be deposited the following day.
- ◆ High School students with a negative lunch account balance will not be allowed to take a lunch tray until their account has a positive balance.

On-Line Access to Lunch Account

All families can sign up to access their family lunch account on-line. You will receive e-mail notifications when your family lunch account is running low, you can put money into your family lunch account and you can check and see what items were purchased at lunch. E-mail Judy at jmayer@osage.k12.ia.us to sign up for on-line access.

Bullying and Harassment

Harassment, bullying and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules and regulations and, in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials.

Child Abuse

All certified school personnel are Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters according to state law. Suspected child abuse must always be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Tobacco Free Policy

In an effort to provide a healthy, safe and productive environment in which to work and learn, the following board policies have been adopted:

- All district buildings and vehicles are tobacco free. This includes the school campus. No smoking is allowed inside or outside of the buildings.
- Employees of the district are prohibited from the possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs.

Home School/Dual Enrollment

Parents who will be home schooling and/or dual enrolling their child(ren) during the 2011-12 school year are reminded that state law requires that you annually complete Competent Private Instruction forms. These forms are available in the District Office and are to be completed and returned by August 26, 2011. Please call 641-732-5381 if you have any questions.

Student Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance is available to all students. Brochures which list coverage and costs are distributed at registration. Insurance is optional.

Testing for Home Schooled Children

If a child is home schooled or home schooled and dual enrolled, s/he is required to complete an annual assessment (via standardized test or portfolio evaluation) to show s/he is making adequate progress, unless the child is working with a licensed instructor or is in the HSAP (Home School Assistance Program) of the district of residence. By October 1, the local public school district must provide notification to parents/guardians of a home schooled child who is at least 7 years of age and has not yet reached 16 by September 15, regarding the school's testing dates and times.

Most home schooled or home schooled/dual enrolled children complete the annual assessment requirement in the local public school. For those home schooled children whose parents desire testing at a site other than in the public school district, AEA 267 makes arrangements for off school site testing in the spring. For more information, contact Jane Boyle at AEA 267 1-800-735-1539 or Steve Bass, Osage Community Schools 732-5381.

At-Risk

The Osage Community School District has established the following definition of "At-Risk": To the Osage Community School District, an "At-Risk student" is any student who needs additional support and who is not meeting the established goals of our educational system (academic, personal/social, career/vocational). At-risk students include, but are not limited to students in the following groups: homeless, lack of effort/low commitment, poor attendance, low achievement, low socioeconomic status, potential dropout/dropout, misbehavior, parenthood, and/or has a learning disability or emotional disturbance.

Open Enrollment

Parents/Guardians considering the use of open enrollment option to enroll their children in another public school district in the state of Iowa should be aware of the following dates: March 1, 2011—last date for regular open enrollment requests for the 2011-12 school year. September 1, 2011—last date for open enrollment requests for entering kindergarten students and those students falling under "good cause" definition for the 2011-12 school year. Students who open enroll and participate in sports may have to sit out for 90 school days. Contact Judy Mayer at 641-732-5381 or jmayer@osage.k12.ia.us with any questions.

Abuse of Students by District Employees

Recent legislation has specific guidelines pertaining to what will be considered acts of physical or sexual abuse by school employees, including inappropriate as well as intentional sexual behavior towards students. All such activities are clearly in violation of the policies of the Osage Community School District.

To ensure compliance, each building administrator has been appointed as the district's Level I investigators, with a designated Level II as their alternate. If the complaint is found to be without grounds, the Level I investigators can cause the complaint to be dropped. If legal action is required, or the incident comes under the auspices of the Department of Human Services, then the appropriate agency is notified. The investigators may also refer the case to the Level II investigator, as can another person if they disagree with the Level I findings.

Asbestos

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has guidelines for schools to use in identifying asbestos within buildings. The EPA has designed a system for determining relative risks and suggesting appropriate safety responses. Friable and non-friable asbestos containing materials will be maintained in good condition and appropriate precautions will be followed when the material is disturbed. If there is a need to replace asbestos, it will be replaced with non-asbestos containing materials.

Osage school facilities are inspected twice each year. All inspections are done by a certified asbestos inspector, as required. A copy of the district's asbestos management plan is available for your inspection in our administrative offices. Please direct any questions to Asbestos Program Manager, Tracy Mullenbach, at 732-5381.

Homeless Children

Each state educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

The definition of homelessness as covered by the McKinney-Vento Act is any child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence is considered "homeless" under the law. This includes students who are:

- Living with a friend, relative or someone else because they lost their home or their family is having temporary financial problems
- Staying in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or campground because they have nowhere else to go
- Living in a shelter, including emergency or transitional shelters, domestic violence shelters, and runaway and homeless youth shelters
- Staying in substandard housing
- Living in places not ordinarily used for sleeping, including cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, or bus or train stations
- Awaiting foster care placement
- Abandoned in a hospital

School districts must make sure students who are homeless can enroll and succeed in school. School districts must make sure these young people receive appropriate services, including transportation, preschool, special education, English language learner services, and vocational education. The school must also make referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, or other care providers.

Resources can be accessed through the homeless liaison. Please contact Michelle Dohlman with questions or concerns at mdohlman@osage.k12.ia.us or call 732-3102.

Notification to School—Sex Offenders Registry

The 2009 Iowa Legislature adopted new laws related to Iowa's Sex Offender Registry (SOR). This bill makes a number of changes to Iowa's sex offender statute and moves Iowa toward compliance with the federal Adam Walsh Act. While there are some new details about who has to register, etc., generally the law prevents those on the sex offender registry from being present on school grounds. Anyone on the SOR Registry wishing to be on school grounds must get permission from the superintendent of schools who has the authority to determine whether to grant access to registrants who have committed a sex offense against a minor. Questions regarding this legislation should be directed to Superintendent Steve Bass at 641-732-5381.

Education Records—The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent or guardian the right to:

- ◆ inspect and review his/her child's educational records
- ◆ make copies of these records
- ◆ receive a list of the individuals having access to the child's records
- ◆ ask for an explanation of any item in the records
- ◆ ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights
- ◆ have a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment

Contact superintendent Steve Bass for more information, or the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Dept. of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

General Education Intervention (GEI)

The General Education Intervention (GEI) process is available to all students. This process is interactive and ongoing. It involves teams of individuals collaborating with one another to create academic/behavioral intervention designed to meet the diverse needs of individual students. Members of GEI teams include parents, educators, caregivers, administrators, AEA 267 support staff, and others who are knowledgeable about the educational needs of a student.

The purpose of our GEI process is to identify and implement academic/behavioral intervention strategies that address individual student needs in general education classroom settings. The GEI process involves direct and frequent monitoring of student progress in the area of concern. It is also part of the assessment process that is used to determine whether or not a student needs to be considered for special education services.

Information for Families That Receive Food Assistance

Children from Food Assistance and FIP households, as well as foster children, do not have to fill out paper work to receive free lunches. The superintendent's office will receive from the state, information on families that qualify for food stamps. We will send out letters to families that are automatically qualified saying you are approved for free lunch. If you do not get a letter from the school and you are on Food Assistance, please call Judy at the superintendent's office 732-5381.

Book Fee Waivers

If you want to get free book fees you must fill out the Fee Waiver Request in the gray box on the back side of the enclosed Iowa Eligibility Application and bring it to registration, or drop it off at the Superintendent's Office.

If you do receive a letter from the DHS, please bring it to registration, or drop it off at the Superintendent's Office, along with the signed Fee Waiver.

School Registration

High School Cafeteria

Friday, August 5th 8:00-4:00

Monday, August 8th 10:00-6:00

Conferences for ALL students and parents are on
Thursday, August 18.

Sign up at registration for a
20 minute time slot.

Classes begin on Monday,
August 22 at 8:35

Do You Need Help Paying for Hot Lunch or Book Fees???

Enclosed with this newsletter is a Free & Reduced Lunch Application. We encourage you to look it over and see if your family will qualify for assistance. Besides helping you pay for school meals, the district may also qualify for government grants based on the number of families that are approved for free or reduced lunch. It is to our benefit to have you apply. You can drop off the completed application on registration day.

Families that qualify for free or reduced meals can also apply for a Book Fee Waiver. You must sign up for this book fee waiver in the gray box on the BACK of the lunch application form.

Non-discrimination Statement Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Osage Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of age (except students), race, religion, creed, sex, marital status, socio-economic status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treated in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), 504 or Iowa Code 280.3 is directed to contact the High School Counselor, Osage Community Schools, at 641-732-3102.

Return service requested

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Osage, IA 50461
PERMIT NO. 6

Osage Community Schools
820 Sawyer Drive
Osage, IA 50461-1464