



THE CHÁVEZ COURIER

A newsletter of César Chávez Elementary School

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Home of the Chávez Cheetahs!



January/February 2007

Dear Chávez Families;

Happy New Year! We are excited about this new year and what it will bring.

This is going to be a very busy year for the district and for Chávez Elementary with the possible budgetary and boundary changes.

As we start to look at plans for the 2007– 2008 school year, please keep an eye on the MMSD Long Range Planning Committee. Their website will keep us all informed about the possible changes that could be coming our way. Please visit the district website at www.madison.k12.wi.us.

The PTO will also keep you informed of any changes that will affect Chávez Elementary. George Grays will lead up a sub committee to discuss best options for our school community to be presented to the school board. His email is ggrays22@excite.com. The options will definitely impact some of the Chávez students in where they will attend school in the future.

Dealing with change is never easy. We need to be clearly focused on making sure that our school is a place where successful teaching and learning is found. It is imperative that we make sure that all of our children are learning in a safe and welcoming environment.

We will continue to work together for the best interest of our children.

Sincerely,

Linda Allen –Principal
Pam Emmerich –Assistant Principal

“We are continually faced by great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insolvable problems.” (Anonymous)

Overcrowding at Chávez

The Board of Education is currently reviewing ideas for dealing with potential overcrowding at Chávez in the 2007-2008 school year. The new school at Linden Park will open in the fall of 2008 which will then relieve the overcrowding at Chávez. If you have comments or ideas that you would like to share, please e-mail them to comments@mmsd.org or directly to mqulbrandsen@madison.k12.wi.us or send a note to Linda Allen, principal of Chávez Elementary School and she will get them to Mary Gulbrandsen, Chief of Staff. The ideas that were shared at the meeting at Chávez on January 18th are available in the Chávez office.

Math Website

We recently purchased a math resource that is also available to parents in both English and Spanish. (<http://www.mathstories.com/>). To access this program, go to members log in. Choose the area you would like to enter and click. At the prompt enter the following:
username: mathworks
Password:x (Use all small letters).

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THANKS AND APPRECIATION

On January 12 we participated in an all school assembly featuring the Figureheads. The Figureheads is an alternative Hip Hop group with a positive message for kids. They emphasize community and accepting each other with all our many differences. Thanks to our great PTO for providing Chávez students with a very fun assembly.

When Schools are Closed

Madison Metropolitan School District has procedures for deciding if school will be open when the weather is bad.

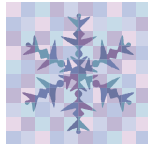
First Priority: You Decide



We encourage and strongly support you in making the decision that is best for your child. You are always the best judge of your child's health and safety. The District must make one decision that is the best for 25,000 students combined. This decision may not fit with your individual circumstances.

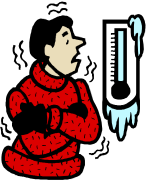
When Schools Are Closed Because of Snow and/or ice

District staff members review the weather conditions beginning early in the morning. They talk with the City Streets Department, Police Department, bus companies and the National Weather Service to see if buses will be able to travel safely to and from school. This is the primary factor in making our decision. The Building Services staff let us know if all buildings are adequately heated and accessible for students. We make the decision to close schools by 6:30 a.m. and let the radio and television stations know. On days when the weather is bad, listen to a local radio or television station for information on school closing.



When Schools Are Closed Because of Extreme Cold

Our policy is to close schools if the National Weather Service issues a wind chill warning of 50 degrees below zero for the length of the entire school day. If the forecast is for improving conditions during the day, we would not close school.



Why Schools Are Not Dismissed Early on Days When the Weather Is Bad

In many of our families, adults work outside the home and there are no child care arrangements possible before the end of the school day. You can pick your child up before the end of the school day if you feel he or she would be safer at home. If you do, always inform the office and the teacher before you leave.

Safety Patrol Update:

On Wednesday, January 10, the Chávez Safety Patrol honored our wonderful crossing guard, Mr. Smith, for Crossing Guard Appreciation Week. We presented Mr. Smith with a card, a cake and a gift certificate to Victor Allens. Thank you for keeping the children of Chavez safe Mr. Smith!

Also, it is that time again to select 2 students to represent the Chávez Safety Patrol at the annual Safety Patrol conference in Washington D.C. Many outstanding Safety Patrol members wrote essays to be considered for selection on this trip. Also taken into consideration were classroom work ethic, classroom behavior, safety patrol service and behavior and work ethic in specials classes. Thank you to the students that applied! The 2 students that will represent Chávez at the Safety Patrol Conference from April 26-30 will be **KATIE ALLEY** and **CASSIDY SLINGER!** Congratulations. I know you will make us proud! A huge thank you goes out to the Chávez PTO. They made it possible for Chávez to send 2 students to D.C. instead of just one.



WHAT DO SCHOOL NURSES DO?



Every MMSD school has a student services team that supports the social, emotional and learning needs of students. Teams include social workers, psychologists, nurses and school counselors. This month's focus is on school nurses. Frequently asked questions about these school professionals include the following:

What do school nurses do?

- Assist with access to medical, dental, or eye care for students who need it, including sports physicals and well-child check-ups
- Care for ill or injured students
- Help with management of chronic illnesses (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder)
- Administer medications or procedures during the school day
- Communicate with the student's physician as needed regarding medications or procedures
- Screen for hearing, vision, or other health problems
- Review student health and immunization records and make recommendations as needed
- Teach students about health lifestyles and disease prevention
- Provide counseling to individuals and groups

Why might I need to call the school nurse?

- Concerns about an acute or chronic illness
- Need to find a health care provider, dentist or eye care specialist
- Need for a student to take medication during the school day
- For immediate care of an illness or injury
- To inform the health office of the diagnosis of a communicable illness
- To arrange for any needed treatments or procedures to be done at school
- To report any immunizations received, or for help locating immunization records
- For help obtaining a sports physical or well-child check-up
- For help with health-related barriers to learning and school attendance

Who are Chávez' school nurse and nurse's assistant and how do I reach them?

- School Nurse is Stephanie Gramann 442-2008
- School Nurse Assistant Karen Cuccia 442-2010

Talented and Gifted Corner

Please join us for the first three 2007 Madison United for Academic Excellence (MUAE) parent meetings. They will be held in the Doyle Administration Building, Room 209, from 7pm-8:30pm on the following dates:

Tues., Jan 23: High School Topics

Wed., Feb. 21: Summer School Programs

Thurs., Mar. 22: Board of Education Candidate Forum

Contests & Competitions Visit our MMSD TAG website: www.madison.k12.wi.us

Programs and departments

All programs and departments

Talented and Gifted Education

Contests

Workshops

Classes & Camps

Other Opportunities

Mentors Needed!

Would you be willing to serve as an academic mentor for a highly able student who needs the expertise of a trained adult? Mentorships may provide a student with an opportunity to independently research a topic in depth or to explore and experiment within an academic area of passionate interest. We have needs for mentors in math, visual and performing arts, science, social studies, technology and writing. We would work with the student's classroom teachers to find a time each week for you and the student to meet.



If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please email Kerry Berns, TAG Resource Teacher, at: kberns@madison.k12.wi.us

Chávez Elementary Endowment Update



Do you know that Chávez has its own Endowment Fund?

The Foundation for Madison's Public Schools recently announced the tremendously successful completion of Phase I of its unique Individual School Endowment Initiative (ISEI) with a total of more than \$960,000 being raised specifically for this initiative.

In 2003 the Foundation began the program, the first of its kind in the country, with the goal of building an endowment for each of the 47 schools in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Currently, each school in the district has exceeded the \$10,000 fundraising milestone needed to establish their endowment fund, with 13 of these schools having endowments over \$25,000. Chávez Endowment Fund balance is currently \$13,985 and the PTO, along with staff, is working to increase the balance.

With an endowment fund, each school uses only the interest while the principal amount remains untouched and continues building through long-term investments and fundraising. The endowments are held at the Madison Community Foundation. The endowment is a permanent fund that generates income year after year. The larger the endowment, the more income it generates for grants to the schools for creative and innovative programs and projects that might not otherwise be possible. Next fall, Chávez will have approximately \$675 available to use to make grants.

Currently, 20 of the 47 schools have active grants committees that have begun directing their endowment income to support enhancements like multi-cultural literature for guided reading groups, audio-visual club equipment, awards for high-achieving students of color, school prairie upgrades, school-wide yoga programs, and take-home books for family literacy programs. A grants committee generally consists of staff, teachers and parents who supervise disbursement of the funds which are

available through an annual grant process. All ISEI grants are approved by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

The ability to establish the ISEI came from a challenge gift to the Foundation from John and Leslie Taylor and the Madison-based Clay-Price Fund. This extraordinary gift has been providing \$5,000 in matching endowment funds to each school that raises that much on its own as well as \$500 to each school to offset the expenses associated with raising funds.

Phase II of the initiative involves working with each school to reach a \$50,000 endowment balance which will generate approximately \$2,500 in income annually.

Planning for Phase III of the initiative resulted in the establishment of the Foundation's Adopt-A-School Program which is considered to be the logical extension of the Individual School Endowment Initiative.

If you have questions about the Individual School Endowment Initiative or would like to contribute to the Chávez Endowment please contact Mary Bartzen at the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools at 608-232-7820 or mbartzen@mailbag.com.

Save the Date

The MMSD, Division of Special Education, Madison Partners and Disability Rights Wisconsin are joining together to present information to parents. Topics include *How Parents Can be More Involved in Their Child's Special Education Program*, *Student Self-Advocacy Skills* and *Changes in the IEP Process Due to IDEA-2004 Reauthorization*. Food and childcare will be provided. Transportation is available upon request. The following dates and times have been reserved:



Wednesday, February 21, 2007 5:00-8:00
Cherokee Middle School

The focus will be on changes in the IEP Process due to IDEA Reauthorization

Saturday, March 10, 2007 9:00-12:30

East High School

The focus will be on how parents can be more involved in their child's special education program and changes in the IEP process due to IDEA -2004 Reauthorization

Monday, March 19, 2007 4:30-8:00

Harambee Center

The focus will be on how parents can be more involved in their child's special education program and changes in the IEP process due to IDEA -2004 Reauthorization. There will be a special session for students. Peers will discuss the importance of self-advocacy skills and provide tips and strategies when advocating for themselves.

RSVP requested, particularly for special accommodations. To RSVP contact Sara Halberg at 241-1689 or shalberg@madison.k12.wi.us

Integrated Pest Management Program



The Madison Metropolitan School District makes every effort to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students and staff. Occasionally it becomes necessary to use chemical means to control pests. The use of these products is done in compliance with state laws and our Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM). A copy of the IPM follows:

MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDING SERVICES INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The Building Services Department and District's Administration recognize the potentially serious risks inherent in using chemical pesticides in the school

environment and therefore authorize a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management program for all school buildings and grounds.

Integrated Pest Management will be defined as the coordinated use of physical, biological and cultural controls, least toxic pest control products and techniques to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economic means with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment.

I.P.M. will involve monitoring pest populations, modifying habitats (eliminating sources of food, water, harborage and entry), using the least toxic controls, keeping records and evaluating performance on an ongoing basis. A pesticide will be defined as an insecticide, rodenticide, herbicide, disinfectant or other chemical used to kill or repel pests.

The School District is specifically charged with the following tasks:

- Eliminating all routine pesticide spraying and fogging.
- Eliminating the use of all organophosphate and carbonate pesticides.
- Using the least toxic pest control products and techniques available.
- Posting notices in advance of any pesticide application.
- Maintaining the use of any chemical pesticide for purely aesthetic purposes.

PESTICIDE MATERIALS:

Only those materials that are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Wisconsin will be utilized in the program. Product labels and Material Safety Data Sheets will be approved and maintained in the I.P.M. file. This file will be updated as necessary. If the application of materials with exception of baits become necessary, the applications will be made at a time when children are not present.

PRODUCTS TO BE USED:

- Pheromones (Indian Meal Moth Control)
- Advance Dual Choice
- PT 565 Plus Maxforce Ant Bait
- Demand CS
- Niban Bait
- Generation
- Demize EC
- Avert Bait
- Gentrol
- Glue Traps
- PT CY-Kick Aerosol

PESTICIDE APPLICATORS:

If pesticide use is necessary, the district contracts with a Pest Control Operator who must be trained and knowledgeable in the principles and practices of IPM. Building Services must approve any use of pesticides. Applicators must follow state regulations and label precautions. Applicators must comply with the School IPM policy and Pest Management Plan.

NOTIFICATION:

Some students, staff and parents may want to know when pesticides will be applied at the school for a variety of reasons. A notice will be provided to school staff, students and parents at the beginning of each school year briefly explaining the schools pesticide policy. It will indicate that pesticides may be used both indoors and outdoors, as needed. The school will provide, to the extent possible, notification of pending pesticide use to persons requesting the information.

RECORDKEEPING:

Keeping records of pest sightings and pesticide use will help locate problem areas of the school and keep track of what, where and when pesticides are used. These records can help in periodic evaluation of the pest management plan and development of any necessary modifications.

A site log will be maintained in the custodial office. The pest control operator will complete records on the day of the pesticide use. In addition, pest

surveillance records will be maintained to help verify the need for pesticide treatments.

EDUCATION:

For an IPM program to be successful, all people from administration to teachers to custodial staff must be made aware of the schools policy and procedures, and their respective roles in achieving the desired pest control objectives.

ABOUT PRINCIPALS January, 2007

By Superintendent Art Rainwater

Over 20 years ago Dr. Ron Edmonds, a Harvard researcher, first reported the critical role that a school principal's



instructional leadership plays in creating successful learning opportunities for all students. That fundamental proposition has borne the test of further research and time and is now included in almost all school reform measures.

While there is general acceptance of the critical nature of instructional leadership by the school principal, the demanding nature of that role for a lone individual who bears that responsibility is not often described. The principal of a school, whether a large urban high school or a small rural elementary school, shares the responsibility for the future of every student in his/her building.

To perform their duties successfully principals must be all things to all people. Every principal is caught among many competing forces, each force with an agenda and the ability to influence the principal's decision making. The School Board and District Administration, concerned with the education of all children, demand adherence to a District Vision and Standards that may only bear a peripheral relationship to the day-to-day world in which the principal works. Parents, concerned with the education of their own children, may demand a completely different vision of education for their child.

The broader community demands a principal who is an active leader in community organizations and issues. The students require a principal who knows and understands them and is committed to ensuring their individual welfare. The teachers require a principal who knows their instructional strategies, their individual personal needs and can serve as both instructional coach and a source of personal and professional support. The organization demands a principal who can manage finances, ensure safety, be sure the building is clean, deal effectively with the media, solve both student and adult conflict, supervise and evaluate staff, analyze student data and function as a strategic planner. The School Community demands a principal who ensures that extracurricular, co-curricular and athletic events occur and he or she attends every event.

The principal makes hundreds of decisions each day that have the potential to affect someone's life either positively or negatively. What a responsibility.

Every principal is also a person with a personal life, a family, and personal hopes and dreams. Balancing these demands requires intelligence, integrity and commitment. But it is a balance accomplished by principals every day all over the country.

Despite the pressures and demands of the job, the rewards are also great. The ability to positively affect the lives of children every day and see them grow to become worthwhile contributing adults is one of the most rewarding events in education. All of us who have done the job hold close to our hearts the communications that we receive from those children who as adults that say – “what you did for me made me what I am today”. These messages make it all worthwhile.

We as a community need to take the time to say thank you to each of our principals who are on the frontline helping to create the future for our children. They are critical to our success.

News from the PTO FROM THE PTO PRESIDENT

Dear Families,

Have you ever thought about the amount of time it would take to change your life forever?



It could happen in less than a second.

Much like the good choice or bad choice options our children have at school with the “Above the Line” behavior program, we as parents or guardians are faced with the same decision every day when we drop off and pick up our children from school.

“Do I let my child dart across the road because he/she is late for school and it'll take too long to walk to the crossing guard?”

“Do I take a U-turn in front of the school because it'll be quicker to get to work?”

“Do I let my child walk through the busy parking lot to my car because no one has gotten hurt yet?”

“Do I park in front of a fire hydrant because I am late picking my child up and what are the chances?”

There are good choices and bad choices for these situations. I'm sure we all know what the good choices are. The question is do you choose it?

What happens if someone has his/her child dart across Maple Grove Drive just as someone else does a U-turn? Lives change in less than a second.

It is obvious that whoever designed Chávez could have done a better job when designing the traffic flow. But he/she didn't. And right now we have to live with it.

Linda Allen has started the processes of having our traffic issue looked at by the district. As you can guess, it's a long process.

Please take a little extra thought as you drop off and pick up your child:

- Consider coming to school a little earlier for drop off and a little later for pick up if your

child is old enough to be unattended for a short time.

- Consider parking a little further away and enjoying the fresh air as you and your child walk a short distance to school.
- Please remember the importance of teaching your child to cross at the crosswalk.
- Teach your child to be a defensive pedestrian. A driver may not be able to see him/her for many reasons: weather, blinding sun, inattentiveness.

Your child is learning how to behave in the real world. He/she is learning by example. You are the example.

Please make a good choice.

Angie Hubbard
Chávez PTO President
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

angiechavezpto@gmail.com or 848-7262

PTO Website Up and Running



The PTO has a new website with **lots** of information (and links) on what's happening at Chávez. Ongoing fundraising efforts and school news information is updated regularly. Prior editions of the Chavez Courier are available as well. There is a Blog. We hope to add information on specific classrooms or specials soon.

Please visit us at www.chavezschool.com.

Sign up for the PTO email list if you do not already receive it or haven't received it for awhile (some of the emails come back as undeliverable.)

Book Bowl



Do you enjoy reading and talking about good books? Do you like hanging out with friends, sharing ideas and a good laugh? If you answered yes, you are a great candidate for this year's Book Bowl, the annual program that introduces 4th and 5th graders to quality literature in a variety of reading levels and genres. Students form teams of four people with each person responsible

for reading some of the books on a 15 book list. (Students don't need to read all of the books but the more they read the better prepared the team will be.) Team members talk about the books – plot, author, setting, characters – and practice asking each other questions about each book. There will be a few practice times scheduled at school. At competition time, teams will be asked a series of questions about the books with points being given for correct author and book title. All book bowl books may be checked out of the Chavez LMC. Ms. Gregory can answer any questions you might have.
READ BOOKS and HAVE FUN!!!

OVERCROWDING ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED AT NEXT PTO MEETING



Please join us on Tuesday, February 13 at 6:30pm in the LMC for a discussion on options we want the school board to consider in alleviating overcrowding at Chávez next school year.

A sub-committee has been formed to look more closely on how the various options presented at the Thursday, January 18 MMSD administration meeting may effect our school and children. George Grays, PTO district liaison, will be there to inform us of this committee's progress.

Transportation is available and babysitting is provided.

If you are in need of translation, please contact the ESL office.

3rd Annual PTO International Fair

Everyone will have a great time learning about and celebrating our many cultural traditions, foods, music, dances, native dress and more on Friday, March 9th. Families will tour country booths and displays to learn about featured countries. Please plan on attending! If you have questions or would like to volunteer please contact Joanne Gabriel at 845-1602.

