

VIKING VOYAGER

March 2014

**POTTERVILLE
SCHOOLS**
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Potterville,
Michigan 48876

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Middle School
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Elementary
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**We're on the
Web!**

See us at:
www.pps.k12.mi.us

LONGER SCHOOL YEAR... GREATER PROGRESS

As we reach the near end of a very challenging winter season, I look forward to our continued growth and progress for Potterville Public Schools, with the arrival of spring and the remaining months of the 2013-2014 school year. Please see the updated school calendar that is published in this edition of our newsletter, on page 3. Due to current state law, and the excessively high number of snow days we have had thus far, we anticipate extending the school year until Friday, June 13th.



*Mr. Donahue
Superintendent*

In recent months, our teachers at all buildings have been undergoing technology integration training by experts from the One-to-One Institute, based locally here in Mason, Michigan. This group of state and regional educators is dedicated to re-imagining education delivery systems by integrating technology and transforming teaching and learning practices so our students engage with content in innovative ways—using a variety of tech devices and platforms—so they collaborate, communicate, create, and produce curriculum products that demonstrate their learning. During a first session in January of this year, and a recent PD day on March 4th, teachers worked on their curriculum standards and technology platforms that could support new and transformational change to how our students engage with material, how teachers deliver classroom content, and how students demonstrate mastery of standards in a variety of innovative ways. Teachers are currently working on a technology-based lesson plan that will be delivered in the final quarter of this school year or the first quarter of the 2014-2015 school year.

Our work with technology training now and in the coming months aligns with our planning to roll out additional classrooms devices in our schools for the 2014-2015 school year. Since the passage of our bond proposal for security and technology in 2012, we have worked to develop our K-12 one-to-one access program for Potterville students.

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A significant part of that planning is to roll out the implementation of devices in a staggered yearly roll out so the program is more sustainable over time: buying devices over several years means that the replacement plan for further years out is more affordable. When the time comes, we will be looking at replacing 1/3 of the devices that were rolled out in a previous year, instead of nearly 1000 devices for the entire school and staff population possibly at one time.

In other school improvement work, our building principals and teacher leaders continue to strive toward implementation of PLC's and systemic interventions that help students meet learning goals or enrich curriculum experiences for students achieving beyond the standards. Teachers have participated in Eaton RESA trainings with Anita Archer and her Explicit Instruction model; others are attending MACUL (Michigan Association of Computer Users in Learning) conferences too. Our district has sent teachers to this annual instructional technology event for many years now. Our MTSS system continues in the planning for K-12 systems of support for students, while the elementary staff have been working to implement PBIS for our K-5 students. This program will have clear behavior expectations for the school that are constantly reinforced and communicated to students and staff in a positive way. This initiative can and will later expand to all of our K-12 classrooms because of the research-supported assertion that behavior and academics are correlated for successful student achievement gains.

As we gear up for the spring, we are looking toward new improvements to our facilities and grounds this summer: we will complete the third phase of our parking area asphaltting work; thus all parking areas will be completely redone and maintained for safer surfaces and cleaner appearance. Also, we are planning to paint the interior hallways and the lockers in the elementary school, so then each hallway in all the buildings will have the consistent appearance with our school colors. Looking beyond those facilities improvements, we are looking at a new district informational sign at the front of the property this summer, while also beginning to plan for athletic grounds and bleacher structure replacement work for the summer of 2015. I would also like to introduce Ken Kleinfelt as our new Director of Buildings and Grounds. Ken has been a longstanding employee of the district, has done work in facilities management, and is working on his certification as a facilities manager through the Michigan School Business Officials organization. Ken now takes on the supervisory role and the management of our facilities and grounds. We have spent the last few years on many upgrades to our facilities in the district, so it is important that we expend similar energy to clean and maintain them for our students, staff, and community to use with pride. Part of Ken's charge is to assess our current levels of maintenance and cleanliness in our buildings and then implement a plan to increase our stakeholders' perceptions of our facilities. All of this work is part of our vision to create a learning environment and district facilities that demonstrate our collective pride and our stewardship of the investment the community members make in Potterville Public Schools.

Lastly, I am pleased to report that our district enrollment remains very stable. I firmly believe that we offer a high quality instructional program with integrated technology for teaching and learning—all in a secure, attentive learning environment in each of our schools. I am proud of the progress we are making in the improvement of our programs, services, and student security—we are leading the county as other districts follow our example for increased technology in classrooms and for increased security in buildings, evidenced by bond projects and elections that have happened in the last year in Eaton Rapids and that are slated to occur this spring for Grand Ledge and Maple Valley Schools.

I thank you for your support of our district thus far, and I seek your continued investment and collaboration with our district's improvement efforts. I look forward to our collaboration to make PPS a stronger and more successful school district. To continue that progress, I welcome your input as students, parents, staff members, and community stakeholders.

Best regards,
Tim Donahue

THE ELEMENTARY ELEMENTS

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER



March is a wonderful month to have a newsletter out to our community because this month we plan extra activities throughout the building to celebrate reading. The school kicked off the month with a special morning announcement and then joined students across the county by reading during the Reading Across America program. Reading expands our knowledge, engages the imagination and practices literacy skills necessary in all walks of life. Our students are working very hard to become life-long learners and to create of love of reading. I would like to welcome all of the members of our community to join them in this quest. By encouraging reading with our youngsters, you are doing just that.



*Mr. Dufresne
Elementary Principal*

MARCH IS READING MONTH

Our focus on reading instruction is coming through in our DIBELS test scores. Following our second round of testing in January, we saw some really nice improvement across the grade levels.

Our School Improvement Team continues it's work with two main focuses. One is our transition to School Wide Title 1 and the other is Positive Behavior Inventions and Supports or PBIS. PBIS will be a cultural change for how we teach behavior and how we understand the connection between behavior and academics. The teachers who have begun the training are very excited to bring this way of teaching behavior to our school. We will continue this training as the school year continues on with full implementation coming in the fall.

Once again this year we have worked with our students to be recognized by the Michigan Green Schools. This year we have exceeded the "Green" level standard from last year and have met the "Emerald" level standard. It is pretty fun to watch the students using what they are learning and applying it to real world application.

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Over the last few weeks our students have been participating in a program, called Jump Rope for Heart. Along with a small fundraiser for our Physical Education program our students have been learning the importance of being active and how it can prevent heart disease. The students also learned the value of jumping rope as an activity that can promote a lifetime of wellness and physical activity. As a school, we were able to raise \$3,165.65 lead by Mrs. Wolfe's second grade classroom. Great job!!



Our technology roll out continues and our teachers and students are continuing to find new ways to implement the devices into everyday instruction and learning. Fourth grader Delany Anthony is shown here scanning QR codes to identify common or proper nouns. It is amazing to see the excitement level of the students when they are able to use the devices to enhance the learning in their classrooms.

As you can see, the elementary building is a very busy place!
Thank you for your support of Potterville Public Schools!

Potterville Public Schools Calendar for 2013 - 2014

End of Third Marking Period	March 28
Parent Conferences.....	April 1
Parent Conferences.....	April 2
Half Day for All Students: EL, MS, HS & CAP.....	April 3
No School for All Students: EL, MS, HS & CAP.....	April 4
Spring Break	April 7-11
School Resumes.....	April 14
Memorial Day Break-No School.....	May 23-26
Half Day for All Students: EL, MS, HS & CAP.....	June 12
Half Day for All Students: EL, MS, HS & CAP.....	June 13

Parent- Teacher Conferences

Evening Conferences K-12.....	April 1-2
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MIDDLE SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

NEWS FROM THE MIDDLE

There are great things going on at Potterville Middle School! Potterville has adopted an educational approach that seeks to provide an educational learning environment with a level of instruction that gives all students opportunities to reach their individual potential and to develop the skills essential for success in life and work. To reach these goals, Potterville Middle School is working to incorporate technology tools and skills in the classroom that will prepare students for the workplace, further education, and to be successful members of the community.



Mr. Thomasma
Middle School Principal

The Middle School has embraced the district technology initiative. In an effort to support the use of technology, the teachers have been working on the 22i Trig Program. This program works to give teachers the knowledge and tools necessary to transfer learning to professional practice by ensuring Potterville teachers are improving technology proficiency and district readiness for online assessments. We are preparing students of today for the careers of tomorrow by giving them the tools needed.

In addition to 22i Trig technology training, the Middle School teachers have been working on professional development that focuses on the district 1:1 technology initiative by taking part in technology professional development through the 1:1 Institute. Staff attended several sessions that outline different technology teaching techniques and tools that are now being utilized in the classroom. In addition, several staff members will be attending and presenting at the annual Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning (MACUL) conference. The MACUL conference seeks to share knowledge about ways computers and technology can support students and educators to ensure student success. With the help of technology, the educators at Potterville Middle School are working to ensure that the students of Potterville are college, career and community ready.



The Middle School is excited to be celebrating “March is Reading” month. In March, we highlight reading and literacy in the school and work to excite students to love and cherish reading. One of the highlights planned for this month is a visit to PMS by Jonathan Rand, author of the *Michigan Chillers* and *American Chillers* books. Mr. Rand will be visiting the Middle School and meeting with the students to discuss his writings and what being a published author is all about. This is a great opportunity for students to get excited about reading. At home, parents can work to have students read and continuously improve student reading and comprehension.

Finally, there have been several students who were recognized for their work in school and the community. Emma Gorbe has been nominated as a Spartan Star. Spartan Stars are students who show leadership within their school and class, are recommended by a teacher, have good grades and good academic habits, and show community initiative through community service. In addition, Thomas Vue, McKenna Noldy, Allison Gilliam, and Zachary Reynolds were recognized with the Youth Appreciation Award the Charlotte Optimist Club by outstanding young people in their community. Great work!



Spartan Star



Optimist Award Winners

Thank you for the support that you give our students!

POTTERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

NEWS & INFORMATION

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

I have been accused of being a "PollyAnna." You know, the character from the children's book who is often illogically optimistic, always finding the best in every situation. I guess I am sort of PollyAnna-ish, but I don't know any other way to be; it's just who I am. I know there are horrific violent events in our world and that the economic decline in our country has resulted in many of our citizens living jobless, and oftentimes homeless and hungry. I know many of our students are balancing jobs and school to help make ends meet. I realize our kids face challenges today that have never been seen in previous generations. But, my optimism leads me to believe that we can create a community inside and outside of our school buildings which is built upon a shared desire to become the best at what we do as teachers, administrators, students, parents, social workers, business leaders and all other stakeholders who share our work of preparing our students for an ever-changing world. This is a world in which traditional school structures and teaching methods no longer suffice and the need to reinvent how we do business is critical to the future success of our students.



*Mrs. Klomp
High School Principal*



Along with schools around the country, at PHS we are active participants in this tidalwave of change; an educational revolution which is technology-based and information driven. Here, we are so fortunate that our community passed a bond that allows our students and staff to dive into this work (or tippy-toe for some). Our teachers are learning how to incorporate technology in ways that transform their instruction. Our students are encouraged to use technology for research, collaboration and writing. We, students and staff, are experimenting and changing together, as a learning community.

It is my desire, as a leader, to embrace this change and to provide the example, the encouragement and the positive reinforcement that all folks need when they are trying something new. My goal is to bring along parents and all stakeholders as we begin changing the way we do business. This means asking more from myself, the staff, our students, and our community. It will most likely mean experimenting with new methods, schedules, and philosophies. Currently at PHS, we regularly examine our curriculum and our practice and strive to improve. One of my goals is to increase student engagement in every classroom by making teaching practices and learning goals relevant to our students. We are striving to push our students to ever increasing levels of critical thinking and problem solving so they will be prepared when they tackle complex issues in the workplace. But, we are aware that some students will need additional support and we are working to incorporate interventions. We are asking all staff and students to set goals and to reflect upon their progress because it is this reflective process that spurs growth and personal insight.

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In addition to attending to the academic needs of our students, we are providing support for the social/emotional needs of our students during the transition from middle school to high school and then throughout these four years and into the next stage of their lives. We have implemented the OK program for ninth graders, which teaches our students to feel good about themselves so they can avoid the pull of drugs and alcohol. We have created a Student Care Committee whose members identify struggling students and problem-solve with a whole-child approach. We have created independent study learning opportunities for students who need more advanced academic experiences.

As I reflect upon the work that is going on in my building, I experience a number of feelings. First, I feel anxious about all the work we still need to do. But, I also feel proud of what has already been accomplished and of the work that is ongoing. I feel lucky to be part of a community, both inside and outside of our school, which embraces change and looks forward to the challenges ahead. And, finally, I am amazed to see the level of commitment and the diligent work ethic demonstrated by each staff member.

Yes, we are immersed in change, living this educational revolution. We realize it will take time to create the kind of school we envision, but we also understand that we don't have a lot of time. Our students are counting on us to prepare them for an information- and technology-driven world. We ask our community for your support and patience as we strive to implement true and lasting change.

WINTER



HOMECOMING

CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE News & Views

TRANSFORMING TEACHING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

As we move forward with our district technology initiative, we each must ask ourselves if the way we teach is best for our students, if we are giving them the skills they will need for the future and how we are pushing their thinking about the world. It is no longer acceptable to stand in front of a classroom and lecture at students, hand out worksheets printed from a textbook and give pen and paper tests. Teaching must be a collaborative effort where teachers and students learn, question, and create side by side.



Cat Weaver
CAP Coordinator

The CAP staff is wholeheartedly working to transform their teaching through the use of technology. With the help of Matinga Ragatz, from the Eaton RESA, we've begun envisioning education in ways we hadn't just two months ago. To begin this process, we've created a main landing page for our program (www.pottervillecap.weebly.com) and each teacher is actively building pages for their content area courses that are easily accessible to both students and parents. I asked each teacher to share with you how they envision technology transforming their teaching.

"I believe different technological aides are key in helping students deepen their understanding of new material. Students in every class can benefit from using technology to review content, complete homework and improve skills. Students are currently deepening their understanding of physical concepts by completing interactive simulations. The website PhET is an interactive website that allows my students to visually comprehend concepts in a fun and interactive way. I am currently working on a website that will connect my students with more of these interactive websites. In science class, using technological aids helps the learner acquire new knowledge and transforms teaching in a more meaningful way."



Mary explains the Newsela website to John, Bonnie and Matinga.

John Ley, Science Teacher

"In the Alternative program, I am always wondering how to reach all of the students at their level and still challenge them to move forward with or without the rest of the class. In an effort to juggle many needs at once, the idea of creating a website that students can access and collect any missing assignments has been my goal for awhile. Until recently, I didn't know where to begin. Fortunately, with the help of Matinga, I have started to create my website, teach the students to maneuver through their Gmail account, send out assignments and forms for each of the students to complete work, and submit their final projects. While working on my website, I am learning more about making individual movies with the students to engage them on a different level. I am learning more every day, and am excited to learn more from Matinga, and from the students."

-Mary Sherwood, Language Arts Teacher

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“Many of our students have gaps in their mathematical knowledge as well as having gaps in the credits that they have earned. My goal is to make it more accessible for students to make up credits and close their individual learning gaps. I am using technology to help individualize my lessons. Currently, all of my students are enrolled in Khan Academy. This free resource allows me to pick the areas a student is weak in and assign interactive tasks and videos to complete. I am also using our school website as a place to break down the courses into quarters. I am in the process of posting standards, resources, and tasks that need to be completed for each quarter. Eventually, I see it as a way for students who are behind to work independently to make up missed credits.”

-Bonnie Anderson, Math Teacher

ADULT EDUCATION...

10 Things You Might Not Know...

1. The Adult Education program has graduated over 300 students in the past 4 years.
2. This means 300 people can now find better jobs, read to their kids, and be proud of a life-changing accomplishment
3. This means brighter futures for the families and communities touched by these graduates.
4. The oldest student to graduate from this program was 82.
5. It is never too late to build a better life.
6. Adult Education students have many barriers to success. Staff are skilled at helping to problem solve in order to overcome barriers and meet outcome expectations.
7. Attitudes, fear, motivation, lack of problem-solving skills, low academic achievement, and social/family pressures are examples of challenges faced by a typical student.
8. At graduation, the level of gratitude, pride and hope for the future keeps staff driven to serve this population.
9. Anyone who has doubts about the value of Adult Education has probably never attended a graduation.
10. Some of the best advocates and promoters of Adult Education are the students. They are the clear answer to the question “why do we do it?”

We are proud of our staff and students for working together to build one of the most successful Adult Education programs in Michigan. We are committed to changing the future of families and communities one student at a time.

2014 SPRING SPORTS

VARSITY BOYS BASEBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
4/2	Morrice High School	Home	4:00PM
4/15	Everett High School	Home	4:00PM
4/17	Bath High School	Away	4:00PM
4/19	Viking Invitational	Home	10:00AM
4/21	Dansville Schools	Home	4:00PM
4/24	Fulton High School	Away	4:00PM
4/28	Pewamo-Westphalia HS	Home	4:00PM
5/1	St. Patricks Schools	Home	4:00PM
5/3	Eaton Rapids High School	Away	TBA
5/8	Fowler Schools	Away	4:00PM
5/10	Webberville Invitational	Away	TBA
5/12	Saranac HS	Away	4:00PM
5/15	Laingsburg High School	Home	4:00PM
5/21	Eastern High School	Away	4:00PM

VARSITY GIRLS SOFTBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
4/1	Quincy High School	Home	4:00PM
4/2	Morrice High School	Home	4:00PM
4/15	Everett High School	Home	4:00PM
4/17	Bath High School	Away	4:00PM
4/19	Viking Invitational	Home	10:00AM
4/21	Dansville Schools	Home	4:00PM
4/24	Fulton High School	Away	4:00PM
4/28	Pewamo-Westphalia HS	Home	4:00PM
5/1	St. Patricks Schools	Home	4:00PM
5/8	Fowler Schools	Away	4:00PM
5/10	Webberville Invitational	Away	TBA
5/12	Saranac HS	Away	4:00PM
5/15	Laingsburg High School	Home	4:00PM
5/21	Eastern High School	Away	4:00PM

VARSITY SOCCER

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
3/31	Laingsburg High School	Away	5:30PM
4/2	Bath High School	Away	5:30PM
4/16	Stockbridge Schools	Away	5:30PM
4/17	Lakewood High School	Home	5:30PM
4/23	Northwest High School	Away	5:30PM
4/24	Maple Valley Schools	Away	6:00PM
4/28	Dansville Schools	Home	5:30PM
4/30	Laingsburg High School	Away	5:30PM
5/1	Olivet Schools	Home	5:30PM
5/12	Charlotte Schools	Away	6:30PM
5/19	Bath High School	Home	5:30PM
5/21	Dansville Schools	Away	5:30PM

VARSITY TRACK

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
3/26	MSU Team Invitational	Away	3:30PM
4/15	Jamboree @ Dansville	Away	4:30PM
4/18	Dansville Invitational	Away	3:30PM
4/23	CMAC Jamboree Bath/PW	Home	4:30PM
4/25	Webberville Invitational	Away	4:00PM
4/30	Jamboree St. Pats/Laingsburg	Home	4:30PM
5/2	Bluejay Invitational	Away	2:30PM
5/7	Jamboree @ Fowler	Away	4:30PM
5/10	Litchfield Invitational	Away	TBA
5/13	Jamboree @ Fulton	Away	4:30PM
5/16	Regionals	Away	TBA
5/21	League Meet @ Bath HS	Away	3:00PM

MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME
4/16	Jamboree Dansville/Fowler	Away	4:30PM
4/24	Jamboree @ Fulton	Away	4:30PM
4/29	Jamboree @ Laingsburg	Away	4:30PM
5/6	Jamboree Bath/PW	Home	4:30PM
5/14	Jamboree St Pats/Saranac	Home	4:30PM
5/20	League Meet @ PW	Away	3:00PM

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BOARD ACTIONS

- Recognized Conference Grant Recipients: Mary McClellan, Ashley Wood, Angie Cheritt, and Jeff Wonch, who were awarded funds by MEEMIC Insurance to attend teacher conferences of their choice.
- Heard presentations by: Eaton RESA Superintendent Dr. Christine Beardsley on the full range of education services and programs offered to Potterville Public Schools by E-RESA; Gracon Services and PPS teachers reviewed our progress on technology implementation programs for our technology bond work; D'Lynn Smith and Lissa Sell provided an overview of the inclusion model for GSRP programs and early childhood special education students
- Adopted a resolution to ensure compliance with Michigan law for teacher and administrator evaluation tools, incorporating student growth as required for the 2013-2014 school year
- Amended the fiscal year budget for 2013-2014, maintaining a balanced budget in an era of reduced funding for public schools in Michigan
- Adopted Best Practices funding resolution to receive additional per pupil funding of \$52 per student
- Welcomed new science teacher Kelsey Shoemaker to Potterville High School; approved the new position for Ken Kleinfelt: Director of Buildings and Grounds

CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Potterville's CAP Program offers free high school classes to adults and out-of-school youth without a high school diploma! CAP is located beside the Potterville administration building and offers programs using an alternative learning approach, flexible scheduling options, and a caring teaching staff.

Morning, Afternoon and Evening classes!

PROGRAMS AVAILABLE:

- Adult Basic Education (20+)
- High School Completion
- Youth Alternative (15-19)
- GED Preparation
- Workforce Investment Act Youth Program

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 645-4792 TODAY!

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SPORTS PHYSICALS FOR SCHOOL SPORTS:

Every year there is some confusion regarding sports physicals for school sports, so hopefully the information in this section will help parents understand what their athlete needs. **If you have a student who may participate in a school sponsored sport during the 2014-15 school year, they must have a sports physical completed by a doctor on or after April 15th, 2014.** The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) requires that all athletes have a sports physical on file in the school's athletic office to participate in school sports and that it must be dated on or after April 15th. We will be offering sports physicals at the high school this spring for all students who will be in grades 5-12 during the 2014-15 school year. Sports physicals will be scheduled on a day in early June before school gets out. The cost for these physicals will be \$10.00 per student. Your student will need to bring a signed and completed physical card (these can be found on the school website) and \$10.00 in cash (no checks accepted) with them to have their physical done. If you have any questions, please contact the athletic office at vikingad@pps.k12.mi.us or 645-4542.

“Bear in mind that the wonderful things you learn in your schools are the work of many generations. All of this is put in your hands as your inheritance in order that you may receive it, honor it, add to it, and one day faithfully hand it on to your children.” -Albert Einstein



Potterville Public Schools Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the Potterville Public Schools to provide an educational learning environment with a level of instruction that gives all students opportunities to reach their individual potential and to develop the skills essential for success in life and work.

Potterville Schools

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2013-2014 School Year

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**POTTERVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETINGS - 6:00 PM
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING BOARD ROOM**

Mark your calendars—we urge the community to attend

July 15, 2013

August 26, 2013

September 16, 2013

October 21, 2013

November 18, 2013

December 16, 2013

January 20, 2014

February 18, 2014

March 17, 2014

April 21, 2014

May 19, 2014

June 16, 2014

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