

Gator Gazette

OCTOBER 2017 Mt. Horeb School PTO Newsletter

From the Principal, Mr. Cook....

Dear Mt. Horeb Families,

I am hopeful that our first edition of this newsletter finds you all settling into the new school year nicely. Kids have asked me, "Why does this school year feel so different Mr. Cook?" That question was quickly followed by, "Why is your school spirit shirt pink Mr. Cook?" The answer to latter question will come out in a later edition! The kids are correct; in many ways, this school year does feel different. The kids now have P.E. three times in 6 days; we are acclimating to the new 6 day schedule; dismissal feels (and sounds!) different; some have new bus drivers; preschool is in the middle of the building; kindergarten is where preschool was. The list goes on. In my typically optimistic but humble opinion, Mt. Horeb has taken strides in the right direction with all of these changes. However, change is not an event, it is a process; so we are keeping a close eye on all of the above and making adjustments as necessary.

One of the changes that I am most excited about is a thought that came from a Mt. Horeb alum named Alexa. Although it took a few years to come to fruition, Alexa approached me fervently while in 5th grade and shared the value of having what she called a Principal's Council. She wanted to give the students a greater and more "heard" voice in the building. Her suggestion was that I host a student luncheon each month where all kids voluntarily have the option to eat lunch with the principal. My eyes lit up. Not just because of her impressively articulate sales pitch, but also, because my "kid time" was going to increase! My only worry is that no one will show! Assuming I have a few customers, my hope is to have both fun and serious conversations about their experience at Mt. Horeb. Perhaps we'll laugh....correction....there will be laughing, but it is also a venue for me to develop connections with our students and hear them talk about what's going on. Our first Principal's Council is this Friday(9/22). I don't know about the kids, but I am very excited!

A Note from the School Nurse.....

As the new school year begins, I would like to review some guidelines when determining whether to keep your child home. Please keep your child home if he/she has a fever of 100 or greater. Children may return when fever free without the need for Tylenol and Advil after 24 hours. In addition, if the child has a continuous cough and runny nose (yellow or green nasal discharge), please keep him/her home. Also, if your child has had vomiting or several episodes of diarrhea in the last 24 hours, keeping your child home will help keep a healthier school environment.

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease that requires antibiotics, the child may return after being on antibiotics for 24 hours and fever free. PLEASE notify the health office so that notices can be sent out to the classroom. Please go to the District Webpage under Health Office Home and refer to Illness Guidelines for further information.

When calling in an absence or lateness, PLEASE DO NOT email the teacher, instead call the absence line and leave a message by 9:15 a.m. Homework requests can be made at the Main Office.

For all school wide/classroom celebrations (total of 5 parties/classroom/yr.) please refer to the District Approved Food List. This list DOES NOT apply to individual student snacks during class time. My only request is that NO nuts or peanuts be eaten in the classroom, but rather save those foods for the lunch room. Please include ingredient labels on all foods purchased or made from scratch, and drop off to Main Office by 10 a.m.

Thank you and I look forward to caring for your children this year.

Doris Zanchelli RN, CSN

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone back to Mt. Horeb. We hope you enjoyed your summer vacation. The PTO has been working hard to get everything ready for the upcoming school year. As always, if you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering please consider doing so. There are many opportunities and ways in which you can help. All of the programs and events at Mt. Horeb are made possible by your donations and by the volunteers who help organize and run our events. We cannot stress this enough...without our parent volunteers we will no longer be able to run our programs. So please consider helping out however you can!

As we kick off another school year, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the following PTO members:

Thanks to Jen Connolly for taking care of all the food day contracts...twice!! We appreciate your taking the time over vacation to make the changes to the contracts that were necessary as a result of the change in hours of the school day.

We would like to thank Stacie Mandel for working on the volunteer calendar for food days over the summer vacation.

We would like to thank Jac-lyn Gibson and the garden committee who volunteered to keep the garden up and running over the summer months.

A huge thank you to Linda Draper for overseeing the Kidstuff Coupon books, which is a very big fundraiser for our PTO and to Jackie Polyakov for managing the School Kidz Orders. Great job ladies! And a shout out to our Executive Board who stepped in last minute to sort and distribute all of the supplies to the classrooms.

Thank you to Jane Cerwinski for making sure our school looked perfect for the first day of school. It looked amazing!

We would also like to thank Sushama Sekhar and Mia Downing for the adorable "Back to School" display in our lobby. You continue to outdo yourselves ladies! Thanks to Jen Armao for volunteering this year to make sure we celebrate our students and staff on the monthly bulletin boards.

The Kindergarten Get Together was well attended and the children had a wonderful time. Thanks to Shannon Battiste and Lisa Bash for organizing this event.

The teachers were treated to a "Welcome Back Luncheon" on September 15th. We would like to thank Alexandra Kerner for making this possible. The teachers and staff loved it!

Ice Cream Days

The PTO will be selling ice cream again this year. Ice cream days will be held on alternating Fridays. The upcoming dates are September 22nd, October 6th and October 20th. Ice cream can be purchased for \$1.00. Cash or snack cards can be used. Snack cards are a convenient alternative to cash, and are available for \$5. You can send in your payment with your child's lunch and they can purchase a card at the snack table. Checks can be made out to Mt. Horeb PTO, or cash is accepted.

Family Fun Night...Outdoor Movie Night

A big thank you goes out to Linda Draper and to all of those who stepped in last minute to help make our outdoor movie night a success. Everyone who attended had a great time!

Halloween parades will take place on Tuesday, October 31st at 1:45 p.m. and all families are invited to attend. Weather permitting this event will take place outside on the blacktop.



Family Fun Night...Trunk or Treat

Mark your calendars! Our Halloween party will be held on Friday, October 27th.

This is a fun-filled night of games, trunk or treating, music and much more.

More information to follow.

Box Tops For Education

Box tops are a great way for us to raise money for various school activities. Box tops are collected throughout the school year, so continue to save them. Thank you to Deanna Chin for volunteering to oversee this again this year.

After School Activities

Thank you to everyone participating in On The Court and Gotta Dance; the PTO receives a percentage of the proceeds from these after school programs.

We are also excited that Mt. Horeb is a new location for the Girls on the Run program!

PTO Donation Campaign

The Donation Campaign will remain open until October 15th. Please consider donating if you haven't already done so. The PTO relies on these generous donations to plan such events as: school assemblies, International Day, Field Day, Trunk or Treat, just to name a few. Also, if you haven't signed up to volunteer, there are many opportunities to get involved. **We need your help!!!!**

Superintendent's Corner

The Warren Township School District kicked off the 2017-2018 school year on September 7, 2017. Schools opened with 1746 students and over 30 new staff members after an incredibly busy summer of work in the district. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the buildings and grounds and technology departments, the buildings were gleaming and ready for students upon their arrival with a few key changes: reconfiguration of entrances at Angelo L. Tomaso and Mt. Horeb schools to increase safety and security, new water bottle filling stations in all five schools, the installation of pilot active learning space classrooms throughout the district, the replacement of every light bulb in the elementary schools as part of a state program to increase energy efficiency, and the implementation of a new visitor management system at all schools that dramatically improves our ability to control access to the buildings while schools are in session.

On the curriculum and instruction front, students are experiencing adjusted master schedules that increased time for health and physical education in grades K-5 and time for core academic instruction and the arts in grade 6. The curricula for all elementary science classes were updated to reflect changes in state requirements and world languages curricula were amended to reflect an instructional philosophy that focuses on conversation and consistent practice with the target language.

Of course, all of this is done within the framework of a whole child approach to education where we strive to ensure that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged in our schools. I look forward to a wonderful 2017-2018 school year and working with the entire Warren Township Schools community to continue *shining brighter every day!*

Matthew A. Mingle, Ed.D.

OCTOBER 2017	CALENDAR
2-6	WEEK OF RESPECT
6	ICE CREAM DAY
9 & 10	SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED
13	FIRE PREVENTION DAY SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY
16-20	WEEK OF MAKING GOOD CHOICES
16	CULTURAL ARTS
20	ICE CREAM DAY
27	TRUNK OR TREAT SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY
31	HALLOWEEN PARADE