

MANHATTAN JR HIGH NEWSLETTER
DECEMBER 20, 2017
RON PACHECO, PRINCIPAL WWW.MANHATTAN114.ORG

REMINDER

Just a reminder winter break begins December 25, 2017 through January 7, 2018. School resumes on Monday, January 8, 2018. No school on January 15, 2018 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Early dismissal day on January 24, Jr. High is 12:00 PM, Anna McDonald 12:45, and Wilson Creek 1:00 PM.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Call your child's school phone number (Manhattan Jr. High - 815-478-6090), or the district phone number (815-478-6093). Then, press 5 to hear updated information about school closings. Parents have other options to receive information on whether our school will follow PLAN A: School is closed or PLAN B: School will begin one hour later than usual. These options are as follows:

1. Listen to WJOL Radio (1340 AM), WGN Radio (720 AM), WBBM Radio (780 AM), CBS Channel 2, NBC Channel 5, ABC Channel 7, WGN Channel 9, Fox Channel 32 and CLTV Cable.
2. By touch-tone phone call 312-222-SNOW. You will be prompted to enter our main phone number 815-478-4527.
3. Access the website www.emergencyclosings.com. Once connected, search for Wilson Creek School for information. Parents can sign-up to receive an e-mail notification through this website.

EARLY DISMISSAL: If it becomes necessary to close school during the day, an announcement will be made on WJOL (1340 AM) radio. Our school will attempt to contact Wilson Creek, Anna McDonald, and requested Manhattan Junior High parents, only in the event of an early dismissal. Make sure your child has proper instructions as to what to do!

PARENTS

If your email address has changed, please send an email to: gjohnston@manhattan114.org with the new information.

GRADUATION PICTURES

8th grade graduation pictures are on February 6, 2018.

PROGRESS REPORTS

The second trimester progress reports will be ready on January 19, 2018.

BOX TOPS AND SOUP LABELS

We want to thank you for your continued participation and support of our Box Tops. Our school has purchased additional resources to benefit our classes. **We will have another Box Top collection after Winter break.** Students will turn in box tops to their seventh hour teacher. Please keep collecting them and send them with your child in January. Thanks again for your continued support.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAMS

8th: Bella Been, Hunter Brough, Cate Cosgrove, Meaghan Fitzpatrick, Maggie Gonzalez, Haidyn Haglund, Sara McCormack, Rachel Mitchell, Gianna Naselli, Sydney Robinson-Girard, Yanelle Saldana, Taylor Szutenbach.

7th: Marley Been, Caitlyn Burgess, Nora Cosgrove, Alexa Flores, Kaitlynn Kelderhouse, Ashlynn Lindsay, Jenna Marshall, Ava Murphy, Kylie Murphy, Emma Ronaldson, Kaylie Wereski, Kailey White.

NURSE NEWS

DENTAL EXAMINATION REMINDER FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE

All Illinois children in Sixth Grade are required to have an oral health examination.

A licensed dentist must complete and sign the examination. Each child shall present proof of the dental examination by May 15, 2018.

The examination must have been completed within 18 months prior to the May 15th deadline (anytime after 11/15/2016 is acceptable).

Please turn in the completed dental examination to the nurse's office as soon as possible. If your child has an appointment to have his/her dental examination completed after May 15, 2018, please contact the nurse with that appointment date.

SPORTS PHYSICALS

Any student **trying** out for a sport must have a current sports physical on file. These are good for one year. Any questions about this please contact the nurse's office.

BAND NEWS

- Jan. 20 Southwest Community Concert Band Winter Band Day for any interested 6-8 grade band students. Money & forms due by Friday, Dec. 8
- Jan. 25 5th gr. Beginning Band, Orchestra & Choir Concert at 7pm at MJHS.
- Feb. 10 Solo & Ensemble Contest @ Troy Middle School in Shorewood. All entries due by Dec. 15.
- Feb. 24 Band Education Day for all 6-8 grade band students @ MJHS.
- Mar. 7 Symphonic Band performs with LWW Bands at LWWHS.
- Mar. 17 IGSMA Band Contest for Concert & Symphonic Band at MJHS.

Please contact Mrs. Pedziwater with any questions at cpedziwater@manhattan114.org.

ORCHESTRA NEWS

Thank you to everyone who supported our only fundraiser! Solo & Ensemble contest is at Troy Middle School, in Shorewood on February 10th. Please check the website for updated.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council is so proud to announce that almost \$1,400.00 was raised by our wonderful MJH students to support the Angel Tree Network this past month. The money raised by our fantastic MJH students made for a very busy shopping trip as Student Council headed out to Kohls and Meijer to purchase presents for children in families facing financial challenges this year. 7th graders led the school in the most money raised and won a Dodgeball tournament for their grade. Thank you everyone for such an overwhelming response.

In January, Student Council will be raffling off items purchased from the Kohl's and Meijer cash we earned from our shopping trip. Students will be able to buy raffle tickets for \$1.00 for a variety of merchandise. Proceeds will go back to Student Council to purchase gift cards and other items for MJH students throughout the year. This is the one and only fundraiser that Student Council sponsors where money is returned to Student Council to benefit other MJH students.

ERIN'S LAW PRESENTATION: Manhattan Junior High students will be hearing a presentation from Guardian Angel Home on the subject of child sexual abuse prevention. This Illinois mandated training will take place on January 30, 2018. Guardian Angel Home, a leader in the field of sexual abuse prevention, has presented to MJH in the past on this topic. The main focus of their presentation will be on developing and maintaining healthy relationships.

ASSET FOR JANUARY: As we begin 2018, Manhattan Junior High will focus on a very important character trait to possess in order to achieve both school and life success and that trait is EFFORT. This month teachers will be honoring those students for Student of the Month who put forth effort in their work. We will be looking for students who continuously try to do their best. Effort will be defined by working hard each and every day to one's fullest potential. It means asking for help when needed, not giving up when faced with challenges, and most importantly, having a goal in mind and continuously striving to reach that goal.

Motivation plays a huge role in whether students put forth or not put forth effort. As parents, and as teachers, we sometimes feel that our children/students are not motivated. We look at their behaviors and come to the conclusion that all children want to do these days is to be on their phone or play video games. We think, "Why don't they put more effort into their schoolwork? Why don't they care?" Sometimes we may even believe they may be "lazy."

Children are not lazy. They may be frustrated and discouraged, anxious or angry; they may have become disillusioned or defiant, self-critical or pessimistic, and they may lack confidence in their ability. But this is not laziness. Children may feel that putting effort into schoolwork is not "worth it" and it is easier for them to pretend that they don't care. They may mask their discouragement with defiance or blame others (especially teachers) for their lack of effort. Often, children will seek relief in activities that require little sustained effort and that offer, instead, some immediate feeling of success. The misconception that children are lazy is one of the most common, and most destructive, misunderstandings

To solve this problem, we need to realize and accept certain beliefs: First, children, when they are not angry or discouraged, want to do well. They want to feel good about themselves and

about others. They want to earn our praise and approval, and they want us to be proud of them. Children say that they don't care, but they *do* care.

Sustained effort is a different matter. Our ability to work hard, to sustain effort at any task, requires a feeling of accomplishment or progress along the way, and some confidence in our eventual success. All constructive activity involves moments of anxiety, frustration, and discouragement. Children who are "not motivated" too readily give in to these feelings; they do not bounce back.

Children often hide their anxiety and discouragement behind defiant and rebellious attitudes. "What is the point of studying history or math anyway, I'm never going to use it." A demoralized child is unlikely to find relevance in what is taught in school. When criticized repeatedly for his lack of effort, it is likely that a child will become more rebellious and will look elsewhere for feelings of acceptance and pride.

How often do we understand the problem of our children's motivation in this way? How often do we see a child's lack of effort not as a problem of demoralization but as a "behavior" problem? How often do we blame the influence of peers or social media? How often do we become frustrated and angry, and then, in our frustration, tell him that he just has to work harder? When we understand our children's lack of motivation as a problem of demoralization, we will be able to look for the real causes of their lack of enthusiasm and effort, and we will be more likely to find helpful solutions. It is important to note here that undiagnosed attention and learning disorders are the most common source of discouragement and lack of sustained effort ("motivation") in children. For these children, doing schoolwork or homework is like running with a sprained ankle—it is possible, although painful—and they will look for ways to avoid or postpone it. Or they may run ten steps and then find a reason to stop.

So how can we as parents and teachers help motivate our children and instill in them the importance of effort?

1. Promoting children's motivation begins with our enthusiastic interest in their interests even if these are not the interests we would choose. If we look hard enough, we will find in our children some interest and a desire to do well. When talking with "unmotivated" students, it is easy to find that they are interested in many things (although not in their schoolwork) and eager to talk about them. They may watch the History or Discovery channels, but they will not read a history or science book. Some read graphic novels, but they do not read a required text for class. Many of these children spend hours searching Web sites when they should be studying. Even more have become addicted to video and computer games. Although we may disapprove, these are their interests. Our children are usually willing, and often eager, to hear our point of view if we are respectful and not dismissive about their interests. They want to know what we think. Too often, in our understandable effort to help our children "improve," we neglect this vital aspect of children's motivation.

2. Find the source of their frustration and discouragement. When children are discouraged, they often say that they hate school or hate homework. Or that it is "pointless" and irrelevant. We will rarely be able to talk them out of this no matter how hard we try. Again, undiagnosed attention and learning disorders are the most common source of discouragement and lack of sustained effort. It is essential for both parents and teachers to understand the impact of these difficulties. Even mild or moderate attention and learning problems can be a source of

anxiety and frustration for children, leading to discouragement and giving up. As parents and educators we need to acknowledge their frustration, discouragement, and disappointment. We need to let know that we understand their feelings. It may also be helpful to let them know that we have also been frustrated and discouraged.

3. Encouragement, encouragement, encouragement. Acknowledge every increment of effort and improvement, even when his effort falls far short of our goal, and express confidence in their eventual success. Take note of a child's improvement and his progress toward goals, not his mistakes. Remind them, when they are ready to hear it, of the good things they have done and will be able to do, and that no one succeeds all the time. Help them put this failure—whether it is a social rejection, an academic disappointment, an athletic defeat, or a disappointment in any area of endeavor—in perspective. There will be a next time.

Our role model should be Dorothy Delay, teacher of Itzak Perlman and other great violinists at the Julliard School. (Delay's teaching method is described in Carol Dweck's excellent book, *Mindset*.) One of Delay's students recalled a time when he was working to improve his sound. Delay listened patiently until he played a note particularly well. She then commented, "Now that's a beautiful sound." She then explained how every note has to have a beautiful beginning, middle and end, leading into the next note. And the student thought, "Wow! If I can do it there, I can do it everywhere."

4. Focus on their strengths. Help them develop a different picture of themselves. Their strengths should be in the center of the picture; their difficulties and frustrations should be in the corner. In school, we teach children that it is important to do well in all their classes. In life, however, our success depends much more on doing one thing well. Even children with significant learning problems demonstrate areas of competence, or qualities of character, that should be a source of inner pride and a foundation for their future success. These strengths need to be recognized and supported.

5. Give our children time. Solving the problem of motivation will take time. Their demoralization has developed over time; it will take time for our children to learn to overcome pessimism and self-doubt and to let go of cynical and defiant attitudes. Over time, the unmotivated child has become sensitized to disappointments and stuck in moments of frustration. The more that his demoralization has spread, the more that his pessimism and rebellion have become habitual, the more time he will need. Don't give up!

PARENT DIGITAL CORNER: Are you looking for a great resource to help you instill character traits such as perseverance, kindness, humor, etc. in your children? Look no further than this website: www.letitriple.org/character-day. It is filled with videos/discussion materials/resource hub (including apps for your phone). Ten daily attitude practices from this site are included here and are a great way to start a new year (for both your children and for yourself).

1. Every night before bed, think of three moments or people you are grateful for. #Gratitude
2. Identify your top three strengths and find ways to bring them into your life in new ways. #Character
3. Identify one strength you want to develop and make a list of practices you can do each day to strengthen it. #Perspective #Perseverance

4. Think of people you see everyday but don't know personally – find out their name and something about them. Put yourself in someone else's shoes. #Empathy #Curiosity
5. Next time you're in a group setting, if you're a shy person, try to raise your hand or speak first; if you're a vocal person, let others speak first. #Humility #Courage
6. Recognize character strengths in others and compliment them regularly. #gratitude #Perspective #Empathy
7. Think of one of your heroes and identify the strengths you admire in them. #Leadership
8. If you have an email that is stressing you out, sleep on it before you send. #Self-control
9. Recognize teachable moments in real life and on screen and identify what strengths they exercise. #SocialIntelligence
10. Ask people for permission to post (PTP) before sharing their photo online. #Kindness #Self-Control

IMPORTANT DATES

Dec. 25–Jan 7, 2018 Winter Break

Jan.

- 9 BBB(7&8) vs. Summit Hill 4pm
BBB(6) @ WC vs. Hilda Walker 4:15pm
- 11 BBB(7&8) @ Troy 4pm
BBB(6) @ Orenic 4pm
- 15 No School – Martin Luther King Day
- 16 BBB (7&8) @ Homer 4pm
BBB(6) @ Hadley 4pm
GVB @ Morris 4:30pm
- 17 BBB(7&8) vs. Coal City 4:30pm
- 18 BBB(7&8) vs. Kelvin Grove 4pm
GVB @ Homer 4pm
- 19 2nd Trimester progress reports available
BBB(6) Conf. @ Hickory Creek
- 20 BBB(7) Regional
BBB(6) Conf. @ Hickory Creek
- 22 GVB @ Bourbonnais 4:30 pm
- 23 GVB @ Hickory Creek 4pm
- 24 Early Release 12:00pm
- 25 GVB @ Mokena 4pm
- 29 BBB(8) Regional
GVB vs. Peotone 4:15pm
- 30 GVB vs. Troy 4pm
Erin's Law Assembly 8:10am
- 31 BBB(7) Sectional

Feb.

- 1 GVB vs. Liberty @ LWW 4pm
- 15 Early Release 12:00pm
- 16 No School – Teacher Institute
- 19 No School – Presidents' Day
- 23 End of 2nd Trimester