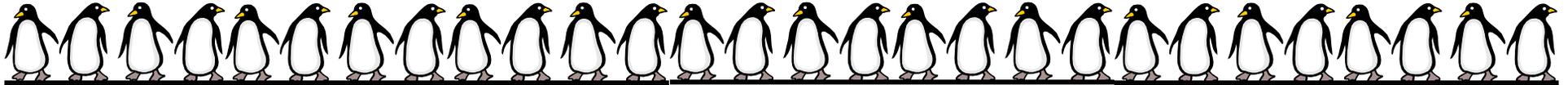


Burns Park Press



December 2006 - Calendar of Events

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Mark your Calendars: January 8: Back to school January 15: NO SCHOOL (MLK Jr. Day) | | | | | 1 Report Letters go home | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 BP Bucks Orders Sent Home | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 Holiday Staff Appreciation Luncheon | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 Winter Break begins at end of day | 23 Winter Break |
| 24 Winter Break | 25 Winter Break | 26 Winter Break | 27 Winter Break | 28 Winter Break | 29 Winter Break | 30 Winter Break |
| 31 Winter Break | Jan 1 Winter Break | 2 Winter Break | 3 Winter Break | 4 Winter Break | 5 Winter Break | 6 Winter Break |

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Burns Park Mission Statement:
 All of our children will become confident, secure, caring individuals of a diverse community who are lifelong learners and achieve personal success.

From our Principal

Dear Burns Park Families,

It's hard to believe that December is already here!

Every day there are activities that make our school exciting—activities that go beyond established routines. We see thoughtful children reaching out to one another and enjoying learning and playing together with both old and new friends. We see thoughtful teaching—with teachers facilitating discussions about the weather, helping young hands learn how to grasp a musical instrument, demonstrating how to mix paint, working with small groups to reinforce math concepts, convening a writers' workshop, listening to a child read or engaging the whole class in a picture walk or read-aloud. Lastly, we see thoughtful families who work with us each and every day to provide all our children with the best opportunities to grow and learn. As we approach 2007, we'd like to say thanks—thanks for sharing your family with us, for every act of kindness, and for supporting our school.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

It was great seeing everyone during fall Parent/Teacher Conferences. We hope that 100% of our families participate in these conversations about their children's achievement. A special thanks goes to Patricia Silverman, Carolyn Hayman and the PTO Teacher Appreciation Committee for the wonderful dinners you provided to get us through the evenings.

If you need to reschedule your appointment, please call the office. If you need special assistance, such as translation or transportation, let the office know and we will try to help.

Report letters have been sent. Each report letter is a mid-fall "snapshot" of your child's progress on a yearlong journey toward the district outcomes for his or her grade level. Each child should have achieved some of these outcomes but still be working on many others.

Media Center Changes

Beginning the week of November 13th, we revised our Media Center schedule to provide classroom teachers with more opportunities to send their students to the Media Center during open time.

Open time in the Media Center is a time for a student or a small group of students to research topics, check out additional books, seek the advice of our media specialist, work on a computer, meet for a book discussion, or to share interests and research with others. Our teachers find that it is easiest to send students to the media center for these learning opportunities during the middle of the day. To facilitate this change, Ms. Erdstein has graciously agreed to move her planning time to the beginning and end of each day.

There are some drawbacks to this plan. One is that parents often come to the media center to see Ms. Erdstein at the beginning of the day—a time when she now needs to do her planning.

Therefore, parents wishing to see Ms. Erdstein will not be able to do so immediately after the bell rings in the mornings, except on Fridays. You are welcome, however, to speak with her during the following times:

- ◆ Before the first bell in the morning (8:30 to 8:45) or after school (3:42 – 3:52)
- ◆ During Open Media Center time
- ◆ By email at erdstein@aaps.k12.mi.us
- ◆ By phone at 994-1919

We hope that this change in our schedule, which allows us to provide more services to our students, will not be a burden to you. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call.

Walking and/or Transporting Students to School

We are fortunate to reside in a neighborhood where nearly half our students walk to school. We ask parents who drive their children to school to take these safety precautions to insure that all our students are safe.

- ◆ Allow enough time to drive safely.
- ◆ Make sure you come to a complete stop at all stop signs and wait for children to completely cross the intersection.
- ◆ Pull all the way up to the curb before opening car doors.
- ◆ Insist that your riders exit on the curbside of the car.

- ◆ Don't block intersections by dropping children off at stop signs.
- ◆ Do not park along the curb behind the buses; parked cars on the west curb cause traffic jams!
- ◆ When you exit the parking lot please make a right hand turn. The few minutes it takes to go around the block are well worth the safety of our children.

The start and end of the school day are very congested times in our parking lot. Drivers must be continually alert to the presence and movements of children.

Cold and Flu Season

Please help us all stay healthy. If your child is ill, has had a fever or been nauseous within the last 24 hours, he or she should not be in school. Keeping children home an extra day after being ill allows time for their immune systems to recover and prepare to fight off the next group of germs. Please keep your telephone numbers current on our emergency cards so that you can be reached should your child become ill.

Dress for the Cold Weather

Please dress your children appropriately to go outside during the day for recess. They need a heavy jacket, hat, gloves, boots and scarf. When it snows they need snow pants. Fresh air during the day is good for children, but they need to be dressed properly to enjoy the experience.

More from our Principal

Lockdown Drills

This year the State of Michigan has instituted two new emergency response drills in addition to the fire and severe weather drills for all public school districts. These new emergency response drills are intended for schools to practice lockdown procedures in response to any exterior or interior threat and are addressed in our school crisis response plan.

We successfully completed our first drill this year on Tuesday, November 14th. We will conduct another later this year. Our intent is not to alarm our students but to prepare them to respond when we initiate a lockdown. Just as our students have learned how to properly respond to fire and severe weather alarms, they also need to be aware of this added incident response.

Before our first lockdown drill our teachers discussed the lockdown procedure. In an age appropriate way, they instructed their students in how to respond when we receive the lockdown code over the school's P.A. system. They stressed that occasions when schools need to be locked down are very rare and that their safety is our number one concern. We specifically discouraged discussion of past events. Instead, we shared that we do lockdown drills so that we know what to do to be safe when someone or something isn't safe in our neighborhood.

The district works very closely with our local law enforcement agencies. They advise us on our safety plans and help train us in our responses. Working together creates not only better responses but can in many instances successfully avert an incident before it happens. After our first drill we assessed our response and reviewed our procedures.

Reminders

- ◆ Does your child eat **hot** lunch? Please keep enough money in your child's lunch account to cover the cost.
- ◆ Please check the **lost and found** on a regular basis.
- ◆ **Gifts Policy** - During this holiday season, it is important to remind you of the Ann Arbor Board of Education's Gift Policy: Staff may not accept gifts beyond a token value. Thank you for your cooperation.

On behalf of the Burns Park staff, I want to wish each and every one of you a safe and enjoyable winter break full of family, friends and fun. May 2007 be a healthy, happy year for everyone.

Educationally yours,

Kathy Morhous
Principal

Where in the World Do People Speak Spanish?

To complement Spanish language instruction here at Burns Park, our PTO Multicultural Committee is focusing on the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. During the month of November, parents from the committee presented introductory lessons in all classrooms. Students learned about countries whose official language is Spanish and colored them on a map. Thank you to all the parents who presented these lessons:

Delphine Joseph-Stephens

Semra Koknar

Gianna Lete

Janice Lieberman

Fei Fei Metzler

Adriana Nichols

Helen Starman

Judy Wier

Additional Multicultural activities will be occurring throughout the year.

If you have personal experience related to our Spanish focus, we'd love to have you join the committee! Please contact Janice Lieberman at 761-7431 or liebermanjanice@yahoo.com.

¿En qué partes del mundo se habla español?

Para complementar la enseñanza de español en Burns Park, el comité multicultural del PTO se ha enfocado en la cultura de los países de habla hispana. Durante el mes de noviembre, algunos padres del comité presentaron lecciones introductorias en todas las clases. Los estudiantes aprendieron acerca de los países de habla hispana y los colorearon en un mapa. Agradecemos a todos los padres que presentaron las lecciones:

Delphine Joseph-Stephens

Semra Koknar

Gianna Lete

Janice Lieberman

Fei Fei Metzler

Adriana Nichols

Helen Starman

Judy Wier

Habrà más actividades multiculturales durante el año.

Si usted tiene alguna experiencia personal relacionada a la cultura hispana, ¡nos encantaría que se uniera a nuestro grupo! Por favor contacte a Andrea Rojo (andreaszk@sbcglobal.net, 213-0005)

Check out the **PTO websites:**

www.burnsparkpto.org and

Penguin Talk : www.burnsparkpto.org/confer/

Library Media Center Happenings

In addition to learning the routine of the library, **kindergarten** students are also hearing stories about autumn, monsters, and food.

First graders are also learning the parts of a book and the importance of copyright.

Second graders are learning important research skills through a series of activities that explain how the library is set up and how Melvil Dewey helped us organize and find books. They are on their way to becoming independent library users.

Third graders listened to [The Giving Tree](#) by Shel Silverstein and discussed the story. They created a third grade Giving Tree on the bulletin board outside the Media Center. Come in and check it out!

I'd like to congratulate each **fourth grader** on earning 100% on his/her encyclopedia test in November. They will be learning about a variety of reference resources throughout the year. We've already covered atlases. Ask your student to find your next vacation spot on a map.

Students in **fifth grade** have begun a project to write book recommendations. They typed them on the laptop computers and saved them to the server. Coming soon to the Media Center website! Check it out!

http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/burnspark.home/media_center

Parents and students might want to check the new Library Media Center schedule, which is posted outside the LMC door. The new schedule reflects recent changes designed to make Open Library time more convenient for classroom use.

Storyteller Elizabeth Ellis Visited Burns Park

Thanks to a PTO Golden Apple grant, Burns Park students had the opportunity to welcome nationally renowned storyteller, Elizabeth Ellis, to Burns Park on November 15. She performed two assemblies and really captured the imaginations of our students. Her stories included themes of kindness, loving to read, and had a multicultural focus. We were very lucky to have her as our guest.

Electronic Field Trips Come to Burns Park

Instead of students traveling to a field trip, these field trips come to the students! Thanks to a generous donation made by the Michigan Educational Credit Union, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and I collaborated to bring six virtual field trips to students throughout the Ann Arbor elementary schools. This program meets many of the Michigan state standards in history and technology and fits so well with the district's fifth grade curriculum.

An electronic field trip is a virtual visit to Colonial Williamsburg's town-sized living history museum. In October, fifth grade students saw live reenactments of the battle at Yorktown. A website of teacher resources and student activities is provided for each "trip". There is also an e-mail link for students to use during the week of the broadcast to contact Colonial Williamsburg with any questions they may have.

The second electronic field trip took place in November and covered the topic of 18th century map-making. This time, students had opportunities to call in and speak directly with Colonial Williamsburg historical figures and historians. They were also able to email their questions throughout the week. All of these questions will be answered by a historian.

The next electronic field trip will be on December 14th and can also be viewed from home on channel 12 or 24 at 10:00 or 1:00. Our subscription provides us with interactive online lessons, email access to Colonial Williamsburg historians, supplemental Internet resources, lesson plans, and more. If you'd like to access any of the online materials, please ask me or Mr. Cramer for the passwords.

This will be an unforgettable and valuable experience for our students.

-Rachel Erdstein

From our PTO Presidents

Thanks so much to all those who attended the PTO meeting this month! We had a great meeting where our PTO Chairs each spent a few minutes discussing their event or purpose, as well as any hurdles they face. It was interesting to hear from everyone and brainstorm on various issues. Thanks to those who brought desserts!

Your PTO has organized two great opportunities to share with others in our community this month. Mary Hampton has placed the collection box for the Salvation Army Canned Food Drive in the lobby near the office. Thanks to Mrs. Crankshaw's class for counting the items each week! Also, Sara Figueroa and Theresa Reid have begun organizing our own Family to Family Giving program. Watch for envelopes in your child's backpack if you wish to participate in this wonderful way to share.

Finally, remember that simple and painless scrip fundraiser as a good way to help us provide all the great programs we do. It costs you nothing, but your child benefits in so many ways. If you plan to buy any gift cards for holiday giving, take a look at the list of vendors on our scrip list (burnsparkpto.org/scrip/index.php)... you may be surprised!. Maybe you can give two gifts at the same time!

Kelly Bumgarner, President
761-5439
skbum@sbcglobal.net

Helen Starman, President-Elect
994-8553
hstarman@comcast.net

Hand Washing!

As a parent, you work hard to help your child stay healthy. You provide nutritious meals and try to get your children to eat them. You take your child to his or her doctor for regular physicals and to make sure that their immunizations are up to date. You dress them appropriately for our unpredictable Michigan weather. Helping your kids stay healthy is no simple task.

There is, however, one thing that you can do with your child that is simple and effective in keeping them healthy. **HAND WASHING.**

The most important thing you and your family can do to prevent the spread of most illnesses is to wash your hands thoroughly and often. A recent study by the US Food and Drug Administration showed that children who washed their hands more often were less likely to become sick. Washing hands can significantly reduce the number of illnesses that you and your children contract.

Be a good role model for your children by washing your hands, and teach your children how to wash their hands and encourage and remind them to do so often. Teach them to wet their hands with warm running water, soap up their hands - rubbing their hands together to make a lather. Make lots of bubbles! Make sure the bubbles cover their whole hand and in between those fingers! Then rinse the soap off and dry. After washing, try the "sniff test" with your children: sniff their hands for the scent of the soap. Let your children do the "sniff test" on your hands.

Every day, many times a day, it's time to wash your hands. That's true not only for your children, but for you too.

If you have any health related questions, feel free to contact me. You can page me at 817-3701. You can also leave me a message on my voice mail: 994-8292 ext. 52338 or email me: graham@aaps.k12.mi.us

In peace,

Debita K. Graham, RN School Nurse

Fall Walk & Talk

As the winter weather approaches, we say goodbye to another season of Walk and Talk. We had 233 kids participate this fall and walked/ran just under 2000 miles collectively! Way to go Burns Park Walk and Talkers!

A big thank you to all the incredible parent volunteers who make this activity happen for the students: Barbara Peitsch, Marla Williams, Mary Matossian, Suzanne Ross, Cara Metz, Katie Chosid, Raleigh Sadlier, Violet Souweidane and Dana Richardson. Thank you everyone for your enthusiasm especially with the crazy fall weather - I owe you a hot cup of tea!

We look forward to seeing all the kids (and more) this Spring as we prepare to participate in the Burns Park Run together.

Marci Ammerman

Burns Park Kids Care ...

... about minding their manners!

So, we'd like to take this opportunity to say a big THANK YOU to the many parents and teachers who have so generously provided suggestions, supplies, supervision and various other forms of support to our new Burns Park Kids Care Club.

We couldn't do it without you.

Thank you!

Holiday Staff Appreciation Luncheon: Monday, December 11

It's time to celebrate our wonderful teachers and staff with a holiday luncheon on Monday, December 11.

To make this special event a success, we ask for your help. Parent volunteers are needed to provide main dishes, side dishes, salads, and desserts.

If you've already returned the volunteer form that was in your child's backpack mail immediately after Thanksgiving, thank you! If not, we would still welcome your contribution.

Please send e-mail and phone responses to Kim Mass at nkhmass@selectivityinc.com or 213-5255, or send the volunteer form back to school with your child.

Thank you!

Kim Mass and Patricia Silverman

PTO Hospitality Committee

Graças Pilar's!

The Teacher Appreciation Committee would like to thank Pilar's Café on State Street for generously donating a Salvadorian dinner for our teachers to enjoy on one of the conference nights. They sent over a wonderful selection of tamales and a few different side dishes. It was a delicious meal and was enjoyed by all!

Thanks also to Kristy Demas and Beth Randall of the Teacher Appreciation Committee who provided the desserts!

Burns Park PTO Minutes- October 19, 2006

Minutes approved as written.

I. Reports:

A. Principal: Kathy Morhous

I. Safety issues with schools:

Thanks to all who abide with rules to come to office and get a name tag. Students have been informed to alert teachers when there is an adult in the building without such identification.

School safety is challenged by the layout of the building- office cannot view the visitors as they enter. There will be a sign that identifies where the office is so that the location is more visible to people who have never been in the building before.

Each classroom has an Emergency Policy Reference in the room. The State of Michigan has notified all school districts that they must practice two 'lock down' drills per year in addition to the tornado and fire drills. In this type of 'lock down' drill, Teachers lock doors and students go to a portion of the room where they cannot be seen from the door.

Teaching staff have requested blinds on the inside of the door window to further protect the classroom from hallway view.

Helen Starman asked how parents will be alerted to the lock down status, if it should occur. Kathy Morhous stated that there are two different levels of lock down: Level I: is someone has been seen; Level II: an intruder is in the building.

2. 'Purell' is now available to all students before lunch. The kids coming from the playground are also able to use the sanitizer once they reenter the building.

II. New Business:

A. Golden Apple Applications: Kelly Bumgarner

Kathy Morhous and the Teaching staff will decide how to best allocate funds assigned to them. The PTO will make recommendations for parent -generated applications.

See attached sheet for specific information on applications recommended for approval.

We are funding \$650 of total available \$1790 for parent generated ideas.

The Middle School Transition Team will put an application in for the winter round of funding. \$1140 is remaining in parent fund. Kelly Bumgarner reinforced that if there is any remainder, it could be shared with both teacher and parent applications. Janice Lieberman motioned to approve. Steve Norton seconded.

B. Academic Enrichment: Katie Chosid

Kelly Bumgarner and Katie Chosid visited with the Angell Enrichment teacher to get her ideas. The focus at Angell is academic games organized for each grade. She initiates the teaching and then the teachers continue with the teaching. She also makes a lot of use of the free of charge enrichment ideas that are available.

For example, Pfizer Science Outreach will come to the school and provide an activity. The third grade here utilizes that with the 'bacteria' science curriculum. Janice Lieberman stated that she knows of a similar program in Williamsburg, VA, where people are asked to come in and share knowledge from William and Mary.

Katie Chosid stated that we now need to see where parents think the interest of this school is. Do we want to focus on cultural, math games, etc.? Andy Thomas stated that there are limited opportunities for the students to experience the fine arts and thinks that is a good definition of 'enrichment'. Mike Bott stated that allowing the children choices is a great way to meet their individual interests. Helen Starman stated that Eberwhite has a website development club. They made a website for each teacher/classroom. Kelly Bumgarner stated that there was some interest in a public speaking group. Kathie Weinmann stated that her class used the 'Link' bus to go to the Farmer's Market. They caught the bus at Hill. It was convenient, free and FUN! Janice Lieberman raised the idea of 'Battle of the Books' that is utilized at Lawton and Eberwhite. Katie Chosid also brought up the idea that some athletic activities could be a focus.

Anyone with ideas or questions may contact Katie Chosid (kchosid@yahoo.com) or Kelly Bumgarner (skbum@sbcglobal.net).

III. Announcements

A. Penguin Talk: Steve Norton

Steve set up a pilot last June. We hope to get it off the ground this year. The school community can use this as an online discussion. All contributions, including school safety, will be welcomed. Additional topics available are Proposal Five and state funding of public schools.

Link at: burnsparkpto.org

B. Burns Park Bucks order: Linda Norton (chairperson), Steve Norton

presented We accept credit cards for payment. Hiller's, Busch's and Kroger's all have rechargeable cards. The merchants pay the credit card fee and we don't have to!

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Gracias Burns Park

What does it take to run a successful foreign language program at Burns Park elementary school?

One extraordinary, dedicated and talented instructor to plan and implement a Spanish curriculum interwoven with the curriculum in each classroom. We applaud Senora Alfonso for caring about Burns Park School and foreign language education.

One visionary and supportive Principal, Kathy Morhous, to advocate with the school district so that we could enrich our children's education, and eighteen teachers who care about learning and were willing to invest in this program.

The school district's support of elementary foreign language education as an important piece of a high quality curriculum in spite of state school budgets that are being cut.

Parents who believe in a mission to change our schools for the better.

396 children who come to school ready to learn all that is offered to them

Your financial vote of confidence in this program. We need your support, or the program cannot be funded.

Thank you to everyone who made a contribution or pledge to the Spanish enrichment program - to date we have raised \$29,128, approximately 81% of our goal. If you have not had a chance to contribute or pledge, please do so as soon as possible by visiting our website www.bpfli.org to send a contribution/pledge form electronically or to pay with a credit card.

Thanks a Million

A big thank you goes to **Kim Mass and Patrician Silverman** for organizing the food for our teachers and staff during parent-teacher conferences. Donations of dinners from La Shish (*27 meals!*) and a large fruit basket from The Produce Station ensured that everyone ate well. Let's be sure to thank these businesses with our patronage!

Carolynn Hayman and Kristen Freshley of our **Teacher Appreciation** committee organized a delicious spread with tamales, a rice and bean dish, and some sides, generously donated by **Pilar's Café**, for conferences. Committee members also baked some desserts, and even played a Latin music CD in the lounge for the enjoyment of our teachers. Muchas gracias to all who helped with this effort!

Marci Ammerman and her Walk and Talk helpers made a big difference in the lunch recess of many children this fall when they gave of their time to count laps and award toe tags. Thanks for encouraging our kids to be healthy!

We cannot do picture day or organize and distribute Sally Foster orders without your help, and we appreciate it! Many thanks to all those who volunteered their time!

Thanks to the **Playground Committee, especially Mike Bott and Jim Wallace** for working with the school district to get more mulch for under our play structures (especially the tether balls!) and new benches for our playground. Things are looking great!

We appreciate the efforts of **Andy Thomas**, our PTOC Representative. His hard work and dedication in keeping us informed is invaluable.

Our thanks to **Sue Burke** for ensuring that our first online Burns Park Press got out to those who opted for a paper copy as well as those who do not have access to email, as well as serving as our point person for collecting the names of those who opted in.

Kelly Bumgarner & Helen Starman

Burns Park Press Submissions

This newsletter is published monthly by the Burns Park PTO. Contributions from teachers, staff, parents, and students are welcomed. Articles can be sent via email (preferred) or placed in the BP Press box in the office.

Articles for the January 2007 issue are due no later than Thursday, December 14. Late submissions may not be included.

Any questions, comments or suggestions about the Press are welcome!

Anne Gilbert

PTO Executive Board

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Burns Park Press Advertising

Display Ads

We welcome ads for companies and services of interest to our Burns Park community. The BP Press ad size is a nominal 2.5 x 4.25 vertical or horizontal, roughly 1/8 of a page for \$35/ issue or 3 months for \$100. The ads may be enlarged to fit the available space, at no extra charge.

Classifieds

Classifieds are meant to be used by the families of the Burns Park area to sell/buy personal items and/or services. Classifieds will be included on a first come, first served basis as space permits. Rates are \$.20/word.

Electronic Submission, please!

Submit your ad to Anne Gilbert, BP Press Editor (agilbert@surovell.com).

Payment

Please place your check (made out to Burns Park PTO) in an envelope labeled "BP Press Ads, attn: Treasurer" in the PTO box in the school office. (They may also be mailed to the school at 1414 Wells, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.) Both the electronic ad copy and payment must be received by the published deadline for the issue in which the ad is placed.

Questions?

Contact Anne at 657-7121.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy

No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity available in any school on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic and language differences, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, height, weight, marital status, or disability. The Ann Arbor Public School District will provide reasonable aids and accommodations to individuals who desire information regarding the education of District students.