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## **CHAVEZ COURIER OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2006**



Dear Chavez Families,

I am so delighted to be the principal at Chávez Elementary School! I want to thank the parents, staff and students for their support and gestures that were made to make me feel welcome.

As you know, we started the year with a few challenges. Please note that Chávez is a place where learning and respect for others are our main goals.

The Chávez staff is very dedicated to our students and to the Chávez Community. We are fortunate to have these exceptional people on our team.

I hope to see you throughout the year. The building is an exciting place to be.

Be sure to come in to see the beautiful new Mission Statement sign that was purchased by our wonderful PTO.

I will continue to keep you informed of what's happening at Chávez and I hope you will enjoy and contribute to your child's school experience.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Linda Allen, Principal

### **CHANGES OF ADDRESS**

If at any time during the school year a student moves to a different address within the city, the change must be reported to the school office. Any change in a telephone number at home or work should also be reported. Students who move out of the Chavez attendance area during the year must have approved transfer to continue attending Chavez.

## CROSSING GUARD HOURS



Maple Grove/Keswick –  
Lloyd Smith  
Mon. – Fri. a.m. 7:45 – 8:45  
Mon. p.m. 1:30 – 2:30;  
Tues. – Fri. 3:00 -4:00

## IS YOUR CHILD WELL ENOUGH TO GO TO SCHOOL?

It is not always easy to decide if your child is sick enough to stay home, or well enough to be in school. Children who come to school are expected, with few exceptions, to participate fully in school activities.

Here are some guidelines that might help in a parent's decision-making:



**Fever:** A fever of 100 or more signals an illness that is probably going to make a student uncomfortable and unable to function well in class. Your child should stay home until he/she is feeling better.

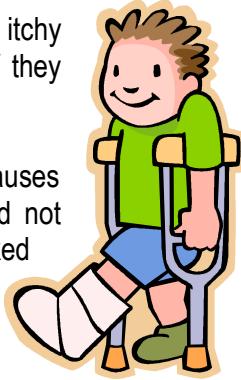
**Vomiting, Diarrhea or Severe Nausea:** These are symptoms that require a student to remain at home until a normal diet is tolerated the night before and the morning of school.

**Infectious Diseases:** Diseases such as impetigo, pink eye with thick drainage, and strep throat require a doctor's examination and prescription for medication. Contacting the doctor and using the medicine as directed for the full recommended length of time are necessary. Once medication has been started and the child is feeling well, he/she may return to school.

Students with chicken pox may return to school when all the scabs are completely dried and no new lesions are developing (usually 5-7 days).

**Rashes:** Rashes or patches of broken, itchy skin need to be examined by a doctor if they appear to be spreading or not improving.

**Injuries:** If a student has an injury that causes continuous discomfort, the student should not attend school until the condition is checked by a doctor or it improves. Injuries that interfere with class participation need a medical evaluation. If participation in physical education classes is not recommended, a doctor's excuse is required.



## EXCUSE OF PLANNED ABSENCES

Parents/Guardians who want to have their child miss school for any reason other than medical (i.e. family trips, tournaments, or competitions) must submit a **Request for Excuse of Planned Absence Form** (available from the office). This form must be submitted to the principal for approval prior to the absences. There will not be approved absences if similar requests have exceeded 10 days over the course of the year. Classroom teachers can not approve absence requests.

## WELLNESS POLICY SET FOR SCHOOLS

Many parents have questions about the new broad, wide-ranging wellness policy now in place for all Madison schools and school-related events. The policy, passed this summer by the Board of Education, is a federal requirement for all school districts with federally-funded breakfast and lunch programs.

A committee of students, parents, staff and community health professionals helped develop the policy. The policy and related information

are available on the district's Web site [www.mmsd.org](http://www.mmsd.org) under "Hot Topics." Some of the policy's key components include:

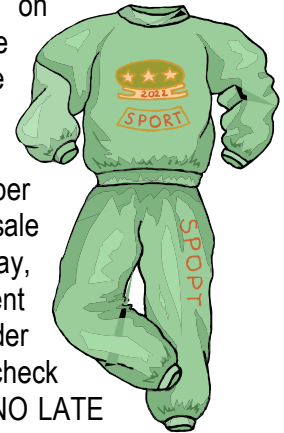
- There will be no vending machines in elementary and middle schools. All machines in high school common areas will only serve milk, water, 100% fruit juices and some sports drinks. All soda will be removed from machines, including diet soda.
- No candy will be sold in vending machines.
- No foods — including candy — will be used as rewards.
- Snack items sold in vending machines, at school "stores" and carts will be limited to items from an approved list developed annually by the Wellness Committee. (The initial list will be available by the end of September.)
- Candy will be permitted as a fundraising item for the 2006-07 school year, but after September 1, 2008 will not be offered for sale as part of any school-related activity. During the time while candy sales are still allowed, sales during the school day on school grounds will not be permitted.
- Staff and parents will be encouraged to consider non-food alternatives for birthday parties and other celebrations, during which candy and soda will not be allowed. The goal is to decrease the frequency of celebrations that involve food.
- Schools will still be able to host events that include food (potlucks, food fairs, cultural nights). A School Potluck Food Safety brochure is available with guidelines on foods to avoid due to allergy concerns (peanuts, shellfish, etc.).
- Bake sales offering home-produced food will be allowed after lunch, but should be an infrequent event, and

adhere to the Potluck Food Safety brochure.

"The evidence is clear that we have a serious problem with obesity in our country," said Lucy Chaffin, chairperson of the district's Wellness Committee and director of Madison School & Community Recreation. "While schools cannot solve this problem, schools are integral to the solution. The food policy developed by students, parents, staff and community members is a good start. We'll continue to assess and evaluate the policy's implementation; the policy is just the beginning of our ongoing efforts to have healthy students and a healthy school environment.

### **HEY EVERYBODY! GET IN THE SPIRIT!!** **THE CHAVEZ CHEETAHS SPIRIT!**

Your child recently brought home a form to order **OFFICIAL Cheetah Apparel!** Don't miss out! Clothing has been on display in the case outside the school office and will be displayed at the Open House/Ice Cream Social, held on Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. Don't delay. The sale officially runs through Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. Payment should accompany your order in the form of cash or check payable to Chavez PTO. **NO LATE FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**



**Students, Parents, Teachers,  
Grandparents—Get in the Spirit!**

## TALENTED & GIFTED CORNER

The Madison Metropolitan School District provides Talented and Gifted (TAG) programming that assures Next Level Challenge (NLC) instruction for students who are performing significantly above grade level.



Most TAG programming occurs in the regular classroom through differentiated instruction. TAG resource staff is available to support classroom teachers in differentiation.

If parents or guardians have questions about their child receiving NLC, they should have a conversation with the classroom teacher first. They may email or call their TAG resource teacher with further questions.

For more information about MMSD's TAG programming, visit the TAG website at <http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/tag/> or call your school's **TAG Resource Teacher**: Barbie Klawikowski, 663-5230, or email: [bklawikowski@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:bklawikowski@madison.k12.wi.us)

For interested parents:

- Join the MMSD **TAG Parent Group**: Madison United For Academic Excellence (MUAE) at [tagparents.org](http://tagparents.org)
- The 2006 meetings held in the Doyle Administration Building, Room 209 from 7:00-8:30 pm on the following dates:

**September 27** (Wednesday) –  
Topic: "The Midwest Academic Talent Search"

**October 17** (Tuesday)

**November 29** (Wednesday) –  
Guest Speaker: Art Rainwater/  
"Conversations with the Superintendent"

**December 12** (Tuesday)

## THE MIDWEST ACADEMIC TALENT SEARCH

Each year, The Center for Talent Development (CTD) at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL conducts the Midwest Academic Talent Search (MATS). Participating in this activity is voluntary and at parent/guardian discretion. Students in grades 3-6 may take the EXPLORE test, a test designed for 8th grade students. Students who are in grades 6-9 may choose between the ACT and SAT tests, which are designed for high school juniors or seniors. MMSD students may take the tests in Madison.

Why might a student participate in this testing opportunity? Reasons include:

- The testing process offers an out-of-level testing opportunity for students who typically perform at the "ceiling" (or top) of grade-level standards. This may be the first testing experience a student has in which s/he does not know all of the answers, or is even able to complete the entire test. Therefore, information is gained regarding a student's relative strengths.
- Students will gain information about other academic opportunities around the state and nation (Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth [WCATY], Northwestern University, etc.)



We recommend you register on-line at: <http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/mats/index.html>

If you cannot register on-line, you may call your TAG Resource Teacher to request a mail-in registration form. Some fee waivers are available from Northwestern; however, it is important to apply early in order to qualify. Applications for MATS must be

postmarked by OCTOBER 30, 2006\*. Fifth grade students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches may qualify for a MMSD scholarship (contact your TAG resource teacher).

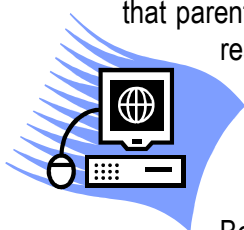
If you have any questions, contact your school's TAG Resource Teacher.

**\*LATE REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED ON-LINE ONLY\***

### **"INFINITE CAMPUS" WILL HELP PARENTS TRACK STUDENT PROGRESS**

"Infinite Campus" is the new student information system that Madison School District staff will be learning to use in the first semester of this school year. A student information system is the computer system that stores all student records and data for students enrolled in a school district.

One of the many benefits of Infinite Campus is that parents will be able to access nearly real-time information about their children, including such things as attendance, schedules and grades.



Because it is critical that teachers and other staff members are trained and comfortable with the use of Infinite Campus prior to making the system available for parents and students, entrance to the new system for parents and students will be rolled out sometime in the second semester.

There will be more information coming to parents and students prior to the time that they can use Infinite Campus.

If you wish to know more about Infinite Campus, go to [www.mmsd.org](http://www.mmsd.org), click on Hot Topics, and then click on Infinite Campus Information Site.

### **NEW FORMAT FOR PTO MEETINGS**

We are going to try something new this year! PTO meetings will now be more information based. Meetings will focus on special topics with guest speakers.

The executive board of the PTO will meet on a separate day to discuss the business of the school. This includes how our money is spent, what activities should be added/removed, which topics to discuss at our open session meetings, etc.



At the Open Session meetings (3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of the month, 6:30pm, LMC) we will let you know any decisions we made and any that are still open for discussion.

We will not have a general discussion of the Board topics at the PTO meetings. Instead, you will be welcome to email us your opinions and/or will hopefully soon be able to express yourself on our PTO blog. If you feel you want to be present at the discussion, please join our PTO board. Positions are still open!



### **COMING SOON!**



We are in the process of developing our own PTO website for Chavez! Please look for additional information coming soon!



## PTO NEWS

My kindergartener came home from her second day of school and set her lunchbox down on the kitchen counter. “Mom, you forgot to pack me an ‘unhealthy’ snack today,” she informed me. “You mean a ‘healthy’ snack,” I corrected her. “No, Mom, an unhealthy snack. Everybody is supposed to get a cookie or candy or both in their lunchbox.”

Well, at least she knows cookies and candy are unhealthy! But, unfortunately, she doesn't realize that kids don't need to have “unhealthy snacks” everyday in their lunchbox.

The Madison Metropolitan School District has recently adopted a new, federally mandated “Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition”

([www.madison.k12.wi.us/policies/4610.htm](http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/policies/4610.htm)) with the objective of helping us teach our children to be healthy individuals. When it comes to food, the district feels children should learn that sweets and “unhealthy snacks” are “sometimes” foods. This is something I should probably relearn as well! I think it's great that my kids will have this reinforced at school. What do you think?

Topics like this are an example of what we hope to be covering at this year's PTO meetings. Our first meeting discussed the new “Above the Line” behavior program that is being implemented across the district. At Chavez this program will complement the “Stop and Think” program of the past few years. Linda Allen and Kathy Hellenbrand were our guest speakers on the topic. Having successfully worked with this program at Thoreau, Linda was able to explain how it works and answer questions. Kathy has been the administrator of the “Stop and Think” program at Chavez and will continue to implement these philosophies along with the new “Above the Line” program.

In October we will have two guest speakers, Marisue Horton and Rich Rubasch of Communities and Schools Together (CAST) to inform us on the upcoming school referendum in November.

Other possible topics this year include food allergies, antibiotic overuse, fundraising and the school endowment plan, the Talented and Gifted Program, and how to help your child with math homework.

Let us know if these interest you or if there are any other topics you'd like to hear about.

The school year is off to a great start! Thanks for being involved in making a difference for your child's education. Let's keep it up. Now, let me see, what's for hot lunch tomorrow . . .

Angie Hubbard ([angiechavezpto@gmail.com](mailto:angiechavezpto@gmail.com))  
Toni Coles ([tonichavezpto@gmail.com](mailto:tonichavezpto@gmail.com))

## MORE PTO NEWS...

We are still trying to promote a new way of raising money for Chavez that is easy and done by simply buying items you buy everyday such as gas, food and clothing. The best part is you can do this at the same places you already shop. **This is not a typical “fundraiser” – you will not be spending money that you don't already spend!**



### Our Program:

We are offering a Chavez Simplified Scrip gift card program through School Times (our former newsletter company). When you buy gift cards, a percentage of that gift card is given back to our school. (Amounts will vary.) You can buy cards for your own personal use or for use as gifts for birthdays, holidays, thank-yous, etc. Your neighbors, friends and family can purchase cards if they wish as well. Order forms can be found at [www.schooltimesnet.com](http://www.schooltimesnet.com).

### Example of how money can add up:



A family might normally buy \$300 +/- worth of groceries from Woodman's each month. If that family were to buy \$300 worth of Woodman's gift cards through this program to buy those groceries, \$9.00 would automatically be donated to our school at the 3% donation rate. If 100 families and/or staff members did this each month, Chavez would raise \$900 per month. Over the course of 12 months our school would earn \$10,800. That is great money for shopping at a place you already shop! Imagine the possibilities if families did this with gas stations (cards can be used at the pump!), restaurants, clothing stores etc. Pizza Hut has a GREAT return – do you buy even one pizza a month???

### How does it work:

Just choose which gift cards you would like to buy from the order form. Make out a check for the amount of all the gift cards you are buying and add the shipping charge (one nominal shipping fee, not per card). Place the check and the order form in the mail and in about 7-10 days your gift cards will arrive. With each order you will also receive a receipt telling you what you purchased, the donation that went to our school and your cumulative donation total, as well as another order form and pre-paid envelope for mailing. All names and addresses in the School Times data base are kept confidential and will not be sold to anyone else.

Please take advantage of this program. We can turn everyday shopping into money. With just normal expenses, 150 families can use 1-2 million dollars a year with gift card programs. At just a 2% average donation, our school could earn \$20,000 to \$40,000 each year.

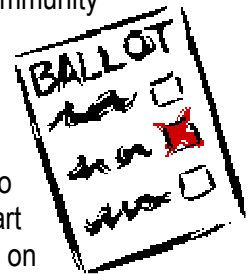
### PTO FALL FUNDRAISER

Our fall fundraiser is complete. Product is due to arrive Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please plan on picking your items up after school on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you are available to help sort and/or hand out products when they arrive please contact Rhonda James (848-8011) or Peggy Wirtzfeld (848-5180). Thanks for your support!



### SCHOOL FUNDING REFERENDUM INFORMATION

On November 7, 2006 there will be a school funding referendum on the ballot. Here is some information from Communities and Schools Together (CAST), a grassroots group of parents, educators, and community members, to get you started.



The Madison school board voted unanimously to support the three part building and finance plan on the November 7, 2006 ballot. The plan includes building a new school, financing a new cafeteria and internal remodeling to Leopold Elementary, and refinancing existing debt to free some pressure on the district's operating budget. For the average priced Madison home, \$239,400, the cost will be \$29.21. From 1996 to 2006 the school property taxes on the average-priced home have increased less than 1%, while that house has increased 80% in value.

Since 2002-03, elementary enrollment throughout the district has increased and is projected to continue to increase. The Memorial/West Attendance Area Task Force determined that a new school and more space

at Leopold is the most efficient and least expensive long term solution to the growth in student population.

Other district owned space or available classroom space was determined to be:

- 1) far from the areas of growth (requiring expensive bus rides of over 45 minutes);
- 2) too small to accommodate West side projected growth. Space on the East side will also be needed for predicted increases in enrollments in the East and LaFollette areas;
- 3) fully used for other important functions.

The district and board are committed to maintaining neighborhood schools in all areas of the community, both new and more established. The schools serve as anchors, building community within neighborhoods. Success of the referendum will maintain the strength of the schools and the community and will ensure that all parts of the community are served equally.



If the referendum should fail, the board has approved a plan which involves boundary changes in the Memorial area and then programmatic changes such as reduction/elimination of SAGE or putting specials "on a cart." (details: [www.mmsd.org](http://www.mmsd.org) click on 2006 Referendum or visit [www.madisoncast.org](http://www.madisoncast.org))

## PTO Meeting Minutes 9-19-06

### Call to order

Angie Hubbard, PTO Co-President

- Introduction of Board Members
- If interested, there are many board positions still open

Toni Coles, PTO Co-President

### PTO vs. PTA

- Purpose to join together to make Chavez Elementary a better place
- PTA is a central organization that is over 100 years old, requires formal membership, and pays dues, include political lobbyists
- PTO is more inclusive, remains independent, single school groups that operate on own bylaws, working together for betterment of school.

### PTO Objectives:

- To better children's school experience
- No membership fees this year to encourage involvement
- No membership fees this year to encourage comments/ideas/feedback from all
- This year when teachers write their wish list, it will need to conform to the guidelines of the PTO Objectives

### Fundraising/Current Activities:

- Garden/Re-mulching, this Saturday, 1:30 to 4:30, seeking volunteers and donations of bulbs and/or benches
- Bucky Books still for sale with Rhonda James and Peggy Wirtzfeld
- T-Shirt sale at Open House, coordinated by Joanne Gabriel
- Used Book Sale at Open House, coordinated by Nicole Charles
- Trash for Cash—all year long, coordinated by Meg Gillis

### PTO Website

- Mitch Kite is designing a website for the Chavez PTO, [www.chavezschool.com](http://www.chavezschool.com), please email Angie Hubbard any website ideas

### Introduction of Principal, Linda Allen

- This year so far things are going well
- Current population is 652
- Last week population was 658
- Projected population was 643
- Hired 13 new staff, 2 long term subs, still need .50 ESL position

- School is at 105% capacity. If school referendum passes then Chavez will be at an estimated 77% capacity.
- Changes with Animal and Food Policies
- New Infinite Campus Computer system will allow to view attendance, behaviors, more information coming in the next few months
- New bulletin board will be posted near office, will indicate lunch, district info, PTO info
- If sending an email to Linda, please complete the subject line
- Seeking volunteers on November 18 to collect money at the Doyle building for a Badger Game, time TBD
- Thanks to PTO for the new Mission Statement Sign in front of the entry way

Pam Emmerich, Vice Principal

- Back this year after maternity leave

Le Jordan, Treasurer

- No expenses yet
- \$26,000 currently in bank
- Approximately \$3500 left from last year

Linda Allen and Kathy Hellenbrand: Above the line

- School/district wide positive behavior plan
- Clear boundaries for behaviors, consistent throughout district
- Above the Line is outlined in the school handbook. Please pick one up in the office if you have not received it
- Behaviors fall either above or below the line
- Current program melds 'Stop and Think' with 'Above the Line'

School Pictures

- School picture day is October 4
- District now has exclusive contract with photographer, cannot bring in a different company to take pictures
- No longer affiliated with PTO
- Right now there will not be a picture day in the spring, however school will see if additional spring photo day is a possibility

Adjourned