

PIERCE

P O I N T E R

GARY BUSLEPP, PRINCIPAL

JUDITH GAFFREY, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

JANUARY 2008

VIEW
from the
OFFICE

Dear Pierce Parents,

Throughout this edition of the Pierce Pointer you will find relevant information that will assist you in the course registration process for next year.

If you're the parent of an eighth grade student heading to Grosse Pointe South next fall, you will have already pre-selected classes with your student. Your December meetings with Pierce counselors, **Chris Cramer** and **Angie Niforos**, have already transpired. Please make sure you follow the timeline for the successful return of your child's course registration form.

Breaking News: The study of Chinese as a foreign language is expected to receive GP Board of Education approval before we ring in the New Year. This introductory one semester course will be available to all 7th and 8th grade students in the 2008-2009 academic year. The course will be offered if enough students select it as one of their electives.

If you are the parent of a current Pierce 8th grader, this information is very new in light of your recent course selection appointment. If you wish to re-visit your child's schedule as a result of this new course offering, please contact Mrs. Cramer or Mrs. Niforos by e-mail when we return from the holiday break. Once approved, South will implement a full program of Chinese based on student interest.

Why Chinese? From *The Washington Post*....After years of insisting that the world speak English, of grants and initiatives that established foreign language programs in fits and starts, Americans have awakened to a far more global playing field and the need for specialized languages, economists say. "China is being mentioned everywhere in relation to everything from business, international affairs—even the war on terror," said Kenneth Lieberthal, University of Michigan political science professor. More than 1.3 billion people worldwide speak Chinese, and about 885 million of those speak Mandarin, China's official language and dominant dialect. More than one-third of Maryland's public school systems offer Mandarin. That's more than twice the number that offered it last year. School systems in Philadelphia, Houston, New York City and Portland, Oregon are launching Chinese programs. Chicago public schools teach more than 3,500 students in the largest program in the nation.

DATES TO REMEMBER

STAFF /STUDENTS RETURN

Wednesday, January 2
8:25 AM

WINTER VOCAL CONCERT

Tuesday, January 8
7:00 PM
Pierce Auditorium

PTO MEETING

Tuesday, January 15
7:00 PM Rm #129

PARENT MEETING INCOMING 6th GRADERS

Wednesday, January 16th
7:00 PM
Pierce Auditorium

NO CLASSES MARTIN LUTHER KING JR OBSERVANCE

Monday, January 21

NO CLASSES FOR STUDENTS RECORDS DAY

Tuesday, January 22

CONEY NIGHT

Thursday, January 24
6:00 PM
Incoming 6th graders &
their families

REPORT CARDS

Sent home with
your student
Tuesday, January 29th

Course Selection Info: Future 6th graders (current 5th graders) from Defer, Maire and Trombly will be paid a visit by Pierce administrators and counselors during the month of January to learn more about our academic programs and middle school. Current 5th grade parents are invited to a similar meeting on Wednesday, January 16th at 7pm in the Pierce Auditorium.

Current 6th and 7th graders will be bringing their course selection forms home later this month. These forms will require parent signatures before your child's course requests will be entered. If you have any questions regarding course selection, please contact your child's counselor. The middle school program of studies can also be found online at www.gpschools.org for further information and course descriptions. Please review your child's course selection form with them before signing.

Honors Courses: This edition lists the criteria needed for placement in honors classes. Honors placements are made when all assessment/report card data has been received. Although this typically occurs during the summer months, efforts will be made to let students and parents know before school is dismissed in June.

Thanks for Keeping Pierce Posted: Technology has come a long way. Teachers and parents have more ways to access one another than any other time in the history of modern education. With new technologies come new issues in how to use them correctly and to the benefit of parents and students. Many times parents will read an email and deal with the matter but not reply to the teacher. Any response is helpful and thanks for letting us know that you have received the email and are aware of its contents.

Many times email addresses and cell phone numbers change. Companies are constantly creating incentives to entice us to sign on to their plans. If you should change your email address or cell phone number midyear, please let us know as soon as possible. It is challenging to continue effective communication when receiving messages that cell phones are no longer operating or receiving no response from important emails. Keeping Pierce up-to-date on email addresses and cell phone numbers allows us to communicate with you more effectively.

Halfway Mark: January 18th marks the end of the 2nd quarter. That leaves only 13 days of school after the holiday vacation. Although our next parent-teacher conference is scheduled for March, all Pierce students know how to access their grades via Pinnacle. This holiday break presents an excellent opportunity for students and parents to review student progress. Should questions arise, please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

Productive Parenting: What is "effective parenting?" This is a challenging question because raising children is complex and involves carrying out a wide range of responsibilities. We're responsible for guiding and nurturing all facets of our children's development, including their social, emotional, cognitive, and how they progress in learning and school. As a result, we are our children's first and foremost teachers, guidance counselors, and nurturers.

Every parent, regardless of parenting style, can learn the *Productive Parenting Style*. Some of the best parenting skill-building programs for parents are available online at www.ciccparenting.org

Remember, "effective parenting" is the greatest gift that can be given to a child!

Happy New Year!

Gary Buslepp
Principal

From the Assistant Principal's Desk

The beginning of a new year is a great time to take stock of our achievements and set goals for the upcoming months. At Pierce we will spend the month of January looking back, reviewing past policies and practices as well as planning for the spring and beyond. In December our eighth graders and their parents spent some time reviewing their career at Pierce and planning for their futures at South. In January the parents of our sixth and seventh graders will be working with their students to choose their courses for next year and we will begin to meet with fifth graders from Defer, Trombly and Maire to welcome them to Pierce.

During the first week in January Mr. Buslepp and I will also be reviewing school policies with your students. A copy of these policies can be found in the front pages of your student's planner. Please take a moment to review them with your student.

One of the most important policies in place at Pierce is the tardy policy. We use this policy to reinforce the importance of arriving on time to class, ready to learn. I've copied the policy below for your review. As always, we appreciate your support and if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Judith Gaffrey

TARDINESS

Students reporting to school later than 9:10 AM on Mondays and 8:25 AM Tuesday-Friday will be marked tardy.

Excused tardiness relates only to medical or unavoidable appointments.

Oversleeping or car troubles are not acceptable excuses.

A parent telephone call does NOT determine excused or unexcused status.

Penalties relating to tardiness are:

- a) 5th tardiness in one semester: 1 hour after school detention
- b) 7th tardiness in one semester: 1 hour after school detention.
- c) 10th tardiness in one semester: Saturday School.
- d) 15th tardiness in one semester: 1 day out of school separation
- e) Over 15 tardies will result in consequences determined by administrator.

Students who report to any of their classes later than the prescribed time will be recorded as tardy and may be assigned detention by the teacher.

Tardy records accumulate throughout a semester and are not erased at the end of a quarter.

=PTO POINTS=

DATES TO REMEMBER

January 15-PTO Meeting 7 pm
January 24-Coney Island Night 6 pm to 8 pm
February 1-Winter Fun Night
February 9-Euchre Night at the Tompkins Center
(See flyer in this Pierce Pointer)

The **Poinsettia Sale** was a huge success thanks to **Cindy Aboukasm** and her committee. Annually, this is a major fundraiser for our school. We appreciate everyone who supported the sale by volunteering time or by placing an order. The plants are beautiful!

Trish Cozad and **Lynn Jones** are busy preparing for this year's **Coney Island Night**. Mark your calendars and plan on attending this wonderful family event on January 24th. Our incoming 6th grade class is invited to experience all that Pierce has to offer.

Kelee Teodecki and **Tony Zak** are planning the first Pierce **Euchre Night**. This adult only event will be held on Saturday, February 9 at the Tompkins Center located at the Windmill Pointe Park. Food, beverages, and prizes will be included in the cost for the evening. Fill out the flyer in this month's Pierce Pointer and join us!

A special thank you to **Cindy Aboukasm** who is assuming the **Hospitality Committee** duties for the remainder of the year. **Cindy, Helen Srebernak,** and **Sue Sattelmeyer** will host the **Staff Appreciation Luncheon**. Thanks for being the "go-to" gals! My sincerest best wishes to you and your families for a safe and happy holiday!

Patty Groezinger
PTO President

Poinsettia Sale 2007

The Poinsettia Sale raised just shy of \$1500.00 profit for Pierce Middle School. Thank you to all families, friends and staff who sold and purchased the lovely holiday plants.

I want to give a huge thank you to **Patty Groezinger, Helen Srebernak, Carol Jackman, Lori Caruso, Mr. Cole, Mrs. Allan** and her 1st period class who helped un-load the poinsettia's from the truck. Thanks to you **Helen Srebernak, Sue Sattelmeyer, Sherrill Zimmer, Lori Caruso, Maurya Kay** and **Patty Groezinger** who cheerfully staffed the pick-up day.

Cindy Aboukasm

CONEY ISLAND NIGHT

*Mark your calendars!!
Thursday, January 24
6:00-8:00 PM*

*Pierce Middle School's faculty,
student body and PTO
cordially invite all
incoming 6th graders & their
families from our feeder schools to
attend our Open House and Coney
Island Dinner.*

Cricket Magazine Winners

In October, *Cricket* magazine had a contest that involved creating a mask of a character from a story, or anything of a whimsical nature that the student wanted to craft.

Mrs. Carey's drama students were given the opportunity to create a mask that could later be used in a play or skit.

December's Pointer article neglected to mention that **Mary Weipert** received honorable mention for her mask.

All State Orchestra

Two Pierce MS Orchestra students have been selected for the 2008 MSBOA All-State Orchestra that will perform on January 24, 2008 in Grand Rapids at the Devos Center and Amway Grand Hotel held in conjunction with the Michigan Music Conference. Congratulations to Pierce eighth graders **Erika Arora** and **Brian Hall** who were chosen from a pool of 1850 applicants state wide to represent our school. The Pierce Orchestra is under the direction of **Mr. James Gross**.

Allison Cornell, 6th grader from Mrs. Carey's writing class was awarded an Honorable Mention for her *Cricket* magazine entry in September. *Cricket* magazine is an award winning internationally published children's magazine.

Below is her entry.

The Desert Race

I mounted the great black horse, and gazed across the empty desert. My mother grasped my hand and bid me farewell. I returned it with a sad smile.

"I'll be home soon, Mama. Don't worry." I whispered reassuringly, and set off on my quest, with my horse, thundering across the bare stretch of land. I was on a journey; I was to deliver medicine to the dying children across the bone-dry desert. They had a disease, and I was the one our village had chosen to save their lives.

I raced through the desert, only stopping at the occasional oasis to fill my leather canteen and to let the horse graze.

At last I reached my destination. Little tents covered a small stretch of land. Troubled looking adults stood outside tents. Other parents mourned over the loss of their child. I slipped off my horse and ran my hand over his glossy mane. Pulling a large, leather pouch out from under the saddle, I strode over to one of the tents and entered. There children lay, coughing and wheezing. I pulled a small glass bottle out of the pouch and gave one of the children a sip.

I went from tent to tent, giving children medicine.

"You saved my daughter!" A man cried, grabbing my arm. "Thank you!" he exclaimed. He offered me a small tent for the night, and I thanked him.

I woke up and stretched. I walked outside and saw a few of the ill children getting a breath of fresh air. I smiled and left two more bottles of medicine in the tent, just in case.

The people thanked me, and I mounted my horse to leave. The great black horse shook his head and told me it was time to depart. I waved, and started out across the parched desert towards home.

NEW

DIE CUTS UNLIMITED

The students of Ann Marie Bokatzian's room have begun a micro-business. The business is run out of their new classroom at the Grosse Pointe Public Schools Administrative Offices. The classroom is a South High School satellite.

The students are between the ages of 20 and 26 years old with a diagnosis of autism. The micro-business is called "DIE CUTS UNLIMITED". Die cuts are letters, numbers and shapes which are used to create bulletin boards, poster and craft projects. They are about 3 to 4 inches large and their shapes range from food items and science molecules to holiday symbols. These shapes/letters would be perfect for making birthday cards, Girl Scout projects, pre-school activities and games. The die cuts are available for a very reasonable cost to anyone who is interested. For more information or a list of the die cuts feel free to write Ann Marie and the staff of Die Cuts Unlimited at annmarie.bokatzian@gpschools.org or call at 432-5249.



REMINDER
**REPORT CARDS SENT HOME WITH YOUR
STUDENT ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 29TH**



EARLY DISMISSALS FROM SCHOOL

When a student needs to be dismissed early from school, *please send a signed note identifying the time and date of dismissal.* This note is presented to the attendance office before 8:30 AM that day. A pass is then given to the student, permitting him/her to leave class at the designated time. Students are not released until a parent, guardian, or person designated on the emergency card comes to the attendance office to sign the student out.

"SPAIN TOUR BENEFIT CONCERT"

GPS High School Choir, Brownell and Pierce Middle School Choirs

Saturday, February 9, 2008 at 7:30 pm Pierce Auditorium.



Balcony ticket order forms will be sent home with your Pierce choir members in January.

Tickets will be available at Posterity, A Gallery after January 10, 2008.



PIERCE PROFILES YEARBOOK NEWS:

Teachers, school staff, students, parents and friends...now anyone may submit photographs online to be considered for use in the 2008 year-book!

Have some great photos from a special in-class activity? From a field trip? An away game? A D.I. tournament? A music festival? Other shots of student activities off the Pierce campus? Please share them with us! You are welcome to submit your best **high-resolution** scanned or digital photographs to the Pierce Profiles community photo site. Photographic prints should be scanned at a resolution of **500 dpi or higher**. Digital images should be taken at a resolution of **3.2 megapixels or higher**.

It's so easy to do: just go to

<https://portal.jostens.com/login.asp>

Our user ID is 1139693 and our password is **profiles**. We will accept photos for consideration right up until mid-March.

You must provide some basic contact information for us and you also have the option of describing your photos in more detail. Correct identification of people and events, and correct spelling of their names will be very helpful to us.

Thank you for your participation! We look forward to having even more photos to choose from as we create the 2008 Pierce Profiles yearbook for all.

Yearbook Student Recognition Ads

Straight from the heart and into the yearbook!

Our yearbook staff is now offering the opportunity to "personalize" the yearbook in a very special way with a "Student Recognition" ad. Space is available to congratulate any 6th, 7th, or 8th grader! Tell a student how proud you are. Parents, staff, groups of friends and club members may join together and purchase an ad. **To reserve your space, go to the Pierce Website and click on the Pierce MS tab, then Activities, and Yearbook.** On the site you will find the order form, template choices and all the information you need to purchase and create your ad. To reserve your ad space, print the order form from the website or pick up a form in the front office. Prices range from \$35 for 1/8 of a page to \$180 for a full page black and white ad. All submissions and payments are due by January 30, 2008.

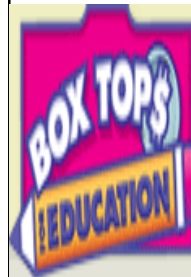
If you didn't purchase a yearbook during enrollment, time is running out. Don't be caught without one at the end of the year. Not only is this a great way to have a record of the year's highlights, it also is a great place to gather autographs from all your friends. If you are not sure if you purchased one, the office has a list of those who have already paid. For just \$20, you can purchase a Pierce Yearbook!!



COUNSELOR CORNER

During the month of January, 8th graders will input the classes they selected on their worksheets in December into Zangle (the computer scheduling program). Once they have been processed in the system, parents will be able to view the courses that are entered through Parent Connect. In addition, 5th, 6th, and 7th graders will choose their courses for next year before the end of January. Counselors will be doing a presentation for our current 6th and 7th graders, outlining what choices are available and walking them through the registration process. Counselors and administrators will also present information to each of the elementary schools on this process and meet with 5th grade parents on January 16th at 7 PM in the Pierce auditorium. Once the forms are complete (including parent signature), we will take students to the computer lab the beginning of February to input their choices for next year online.

Parents will be able to go online to check and make sure the choices reflect what they helped their child choose. More details on this procedure will be shared in next month's Pointer.



BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Collecting Box Tops from many General Mills products is an EASY way to earn money for Pierce Middle School. Our goal this year is to earn over \$500.00 to be used for necessary items and programs for Pierce Students.

CLIP box tops from all the products you use (be sure not to cut off the expiration date).

Turn them in to 6th hour teachers between January 2nd and 11th. Classes from each grade to collect 500 Box Tops will have a POPCORN PARTY. One class from each grade to reach 1,000 Box Tops will have a PIZZA PARTY.

Yes, it's that easy: just clip, collect and turn them in. We will do the rest. Questions?? Call Teri Brown — 882-3567

GROSSE POINTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PIERCE MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS CLASS PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

6TH GRADE

Honors Math

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 on Math MEAP
- A minimum of 10 on constructed response and/or 60% on the GP Math Assessment
- NWEA score of 231 or above in mathematics

Honors English Language Arts

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 on Reading MEAP
- A three-year composite score of 16 or higher on the GP Writing test
- NWEA score of 220 or higher in Reading

7TH GRADE

Honors Math (For students not enrolled in honors Math in the prior school year)

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 Math MEAP
- NWEA score of 238 or above in Mathematics
- Teacher recommendation

Honors English Language Arts (For students not enrolled in honors ELA in the prior school year)

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 on Reading MEAP
- A three-year composite score of 16 or higher on the GP Writing test
- NWEA score of 228 or higher in reading
- Teacher recommendation

Honors Science

- Enrollment in advanced math
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Science test
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Reading test
- Level 5 or higher on the most recent GP Writing test
- Minimum average grade of A- in the prior school year Science class

Honors Social Studies

- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Social Studies test
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Reading test
- Level 5 or higher on the GP Writing test
- Minimum average grade of A- in the prior school year Social Studies class

8TH GRADE

Honors Math (For students not enrolled in honors Math in the prior school year)

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 on Math MEAP
- NWEA score of 243 or above in mathematics
- Teacher recommendation

Honors English Language Arts (For students not enrolled in Honors ELA in the prior school year)

- Ability to work at (or capable of working at) approximately one grade level ahead
- Level 1 Reading MEAP
- NWEA RIT score of 231 or higher in Reading
- Level 5 or higher on the most recent GP Writing test
- Teacher Recommendation

Honors Science

- Enrollment in advanced math
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Science test
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Reading test
- Level 5 or higher on the most recent GP Writing test
- Minimum average grade of A- in the prior school year Science class

Honors Social Studies

- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Social Studies test
- Level 1 on the most recent MEAP Reading test
- Level 5 or higher on the GP Writing test
- Minimum average grade of A- in the prior school year Social Studies class

Please Note: Students who are placed in honors courses must maintain the grade of 'B-' (2.75 GPA) and must stay current with homework. Students who drop below the grade of 'B-' (2.75 GPA) and/or do not stay current with homework, as indicated by either an interim or quarter grade report, will be placed on probation for period of nine weeks (the equivalent of one quarter). At the end of the nine-week probationary period, the student must have raised his or her grade back to the level of 'B-' (2.75 GPA) and satisfactorily completed homework in order to continue his or her enrollment in honors courses. If the student continues to earn less than a grade of 'B-' (2.75 GPA) and/or not stay current with homework at the end of the nine-week probationary period, he or she will be removed from the honors class(es) where the student is not achieving at the required level.