



Rosa Parks Elementary School April Parent Newsletter

Rosa Parks

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A note from the principal:

Panthers

As many of you have already heard, I will be moving to Highview Elementary School for the 2007-2008 school year. I have had so many great years in the Rosa Parks/Taft/McKinley community. I have been able to get to know many great students and have worked with some great parents. To have so many great students come through these doors and go on to some very successful careers has made every minute worth it. I will definitely miss all the students and parents who I have come close to over the years. I wish the students of Rosa Parks the very best!

I also leave you in good hands with Mr. Edwards taking over as principal. I have enjoyed working with Mr. Edwards this year and know he will continue to move Rosa Parks in the right direction to make it the best school in Middletown.

Ohio Achievement Tests are just around the corner. Our staff and students continue to work hard to prepare for them. What can parents do? Parents can make sure their child is in school everyday. Make sure your child is eating breakfast (at home or at school) and getting enough sleep. Parents can also encourage their child to do their best on the tests. Tell your child to take their time and do their best work. I know our students here can do well on the tests. They have worked hard all year!

Spring break starts this Friday, April 6th. I know all the students will enjoy this last break before we head to the last month and a half of school.

There are a few yearbooks still available. Yearbooks can be purchased at the school for \$10.00. As of April 2nd, there are 15 yearbooks left. They will not last long!

Open Enrollment for the 2007-2008 school year will take place from Monday, April 2nd and continue until Monday, April 30th. Applications can be obtained from the main office of any school or at the Administration Building at 1515 Girard Avenue. All applications must be turned in to the Student Services Office by Monday, April 30th. Parents will be notified of approval or non-approval of their request by June 20, 2007.

Congratulations to Ms. Jodi Adams. Ms. Adams was nominated for the Celebrating Families Award through Butler County. Ms. Adams volunteers for many activities throughout the building and also serves as the PTO treasurer.

Attached to this parent newsletter is information about what makes Middletown so special. Please read this information. I will be sending home more information about the upcoming levy later in April. Voting day is May 8th.

Parents can still order from our School Mall fundraiser. Go to www.schoolmall.com and enter the name of our school and the zip. The school earns a certain percentage of all purchases. There are many great deals and the site can be used year round.

Important Dates coming up:

April 2-30	Open Enrollment period for Middletown Schools
April 4	Early Dismissal
April 5	Market Day orders due
April 6	Good Friday – No School
April 9-13	Spring Break Week – No School
April 16	School resumes
April 17	Preschool and Kindergarten Registration 9-11 AM
April 19	Market Day pick-up 4:30 PM
April 19	Tri-Arts Festival @ MHS 5-8 PM
April 25	Early Dismissal
May 3	Preschool and Kindergarten Registration 5:30-7:30 PM

Have a wonderful spring break! See you on the 16th.

What's So Special About Middletown? Our Schools, For One.

I love this city. Most Middletown residents do. Our blood "flows purple" even though we might joke about our occasional troubles.

Today, I want to focus on just one of the many things that are right about Middletown, our schools.

The proof is in the numbers and the numbers are getting better every year! In the last three years, we moved from Academic Watch to Continuous Improvement. Some of our schools have received Excellent and Effective ratings. Our state Performance Index Score has risen 7.3 points, a number that indicates many more students are achieving at higher levels on required state tests. In just one year, 13 percent more students are scoring higher on the fourth grade Ohio Achievement Writing Test. Since 2004, 25.3 percent more students are scoring higher on the Ohio Graduation Reading test and 20.6 percent more students are performing better on the Ohio Graduation Math test.

It's working because our schools pledged to improve learning for every child. That means a lot of individual attention, frequently reviewing progress, and when needed, stepping in with more help.

Just a few examples of what we are doing to make this a reality:

Middletown High School

- Success Academy is a place where students can work at their own pace to gain high school credits and graduate on time or early. Earlier this school year, a student transferred from another state. At age 17, he had only one high school credit. Recently, I received a report that this particular student now has 16 credits and will graduate this year.
- A Middletown High School student has received the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Finalist recognition. This student is not only a scholar, but has participated in the MHS Marching Band, Jazz Band and Pep Band. He received top ranking at the Ohio Music Education Association State Marching Band competition, is also the captain of the MHS Academic quiz team and a member of national honor society and French national honor society. **Kudos to these students for their hard work.**
- High school students who have not passed the Ohio graduation test receive daily tutoring.
- High school students can attend after school study tables.
- High school students who work or need a more flexible schedule can attend the Success Academy. Students complete course work through a combination of online computer work and direct teacher support.

Elementary Schools

- Our staff identifies children who struggle with reading; specially trained staff members work with these children in small groups. Many children have been helped, and are making rapid gains in achievement.
- At the new elementary schools, we were able to start all-day kindergarten. Research has shown that all-day kindergarten significantly improves reading and math skills.

Middle Schools

- Children who need help at the middle school take part in daily sessions aimed at improving test scores.
- Counselors are available to help struggling students.

Overall

- Teachers have received a great deal of extra training on how to improve reading, math and science learning using research-based teaching methods
- Tutors help students in all subject areas working with children in smaller groups with more personalized attention.

Do these efforts cost money? Yes. Do they mean we need highly qualified staff in classrooms? Yes. Are they necessary for our children? Results say yes.

We seek grant funding wherever possible to help cover our costs and save the taxpayers money. This year alone, we sought and received \$8.6 million in grant funding.

We have much to accomplish, but Middletown City Schools are moving in the right direction. The schools - and our children -- are some of many bright spots in the future of Middletown.