



Howard Happenings

February 2017

www.howardelementary.org

What a Difference Attendance Makes. Every Minute Counts!

According to multiple studies, missing several days of school over the course of a year significantly reduces the likelihood that students will graduate from high school. With attendance a crucial factor to keeping kids on the right path to graduation,

Attendance Works (<http://www.attendanceworks.org/research/mapping-the-gap/>) has substantial information on attendance and the impact on student achievement. Below is some of the research below on why attendance matters.

Start Strong

Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict frequent absences later in the school year. Nearly half of all students that missed more than two days of school in September went on to miss almost a month of school.

Chronic Absences

An estimated 5 to 7.5 million students in the United States miss almost a month of school every year. This adds up to over a year missed by the time of graduation.

Early Absences Lead to Attendance Issues in Later Grades

Absenteeism starts early. One in 10 kindergarteners and first graders are considered to be "chronically absent."

Chronic Absence = Missing two or more days per month

Research shows students who miss 10 percent of school, or two days per month, show negative academic progress. In some schools, that adds up to 18 days a school year and is considered to be chronic absence.

Third Grade Reading Level

Poor attendance can keep children from reading proficiently by the end of third grade, which is shown to negatively affect their chances of graduating on time.

Save

Dropout Indicator

By sixth grade, a chronically absent student is shown to have a significantly higher chance of dropping out of high school.

Excused Absences Hurt Too

Excused absences are just as negative as unexcused ones. Suspensions add additional missed time in the classroom, which in turn increases the dropout risk.

At Risk Students are at Risk for Absence

Students from low-income families are four times more likely to be chronically absent. Reasons for this are often out of the student's control, such as unreliable transportation, unstable housing, and a lack of access to quality health care.

Every Minute Matters

If a student is 10 minutes late to school each day, this adds up to missing more than 33 hours of class time. A student with a 90 percent attendance average for Kindergarten through 12th grade will miss over a year of accumulated time in the classroom.

Weather Related Closures Extend the School Year

The last day of school for students is currently set for Wednesday, June 21, 2017, however, schools have had to close for more days due to weather since that date was made. The district is currently looking to make up additional instruction time by adding more days at the end of the year or by other schedule adjustments. Please stay tuned to the 4J website (<http://www.4j.lane.edu/>) and the Howard Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/4jhoward/>) for school calendar updates.

School Choice for the 2017-18 School Year

There is still time to spread the word to all of your friends that Howard rocks! With Howard's focus on technology we are an excellent school and a positive choice in your child's education. With in-district School Choice closing on February 28, please invite friends and acquaintances to visit Howard and seriously consider joining the Howard family. And if you have any friends or neighbors living in the Bethel School District, be sure to let them know that they too can apply to attend Howard, even if they live outside of our school district. Tours will be available any time during the week of February 21 - 24.

Families in 4J have a choice of schools. 4J's school choice policy means that families may send their children to any school in the district provided there is a place available. School choice request forms are available online at 4j.lane.edu and will be accepted until Tuesday, February 28 at 5:00 p.m. Families that reside outside of 4j boundaries will be able to apply online beginning March 1 and will be accepted until Saturday, April 1. If you need assistance or computer access, please call Lisa Hollingsworth at 541-790-7553.

Literacy Night! Save the Date!

Our 13th Annual Literacy Night is approaching!
Thursday, March 2, 2017 from 6:00-8:00
Dinner will be provided!

Join us (in your PJs) for a night focused around literacy to celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and our recent schoolwide reading of the book Ranger in Time: Rescue on the Oregon Trail! There will be literacy activities and projects students have been working on. Each Howard student that attends and visits the classroom will receive a FREE book!

Book Fair is coming!

Dates: February 27th - March 2nd
Hours: M&T 2:00 - 6:15, W 1 - 6:15, Th 2:00 - 8:00 (Literacy Night)
Location: Howard Library

Please join us in our new library for this year's Book Fair. We're excited it's going to be great! New books, games lollipop pull, spin to win, pencil draw and raffle baskets. What a fun way to put books in your children's hands while supporting our teachers and library. See you there!

Due Date for Complete School Immunization Records

Wednesday, February 15, 2017 is immunization exclusion day this school year. This means that **your student's school immunization record must be up to date with all required immunizations in order to stay in school. Letters were mailed at start of December if your student is missing immunizations.** Please return these letters with the dates of shots that were given. For questions or a duplicate letter, please leave a message for the health assistant at your child's school.

Do you lack health insurance or financial resources to pay for needed shots? Here are some options to check in with....

Lane County Public Health 541-682-4041

North Eugene Clinic 541-790-4445

Churchill Clinic 541-790-5227

Questions? Contact Robin Wellwood, RN at 541-852-6734 or e-mail: wellwood@4j.lane.edu

Flu Vaccines – Not Too Late

Influenza typically continues through April. It isn't too late to benefit from Seasonal flu vaccines. The vaccine is available at pharmacies, your health care provider and Public Health Clinic, 541-682-4041. We encourage all children to be vaccinated.

Please Keep Sick Children at Home

When children are sick, they need to stay home. If your child has any of the following symptoms, please do not send him/her to school:

Fever of 100 degrees or more. Children should stay home until the fever has been gone for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

Vomiting or severe diarrhea. Children should stay home until symptoms have been gone for 24 hours. **If the doctor confirms norovirus please keep your child home for 48 hours.**

Severe cold. A little snuffle is not a reason to stay home, but a severe cold or influenza is.

Severe sore throat, ear ache, head ache, or persistent cough.

If your child has a communicable disease, he/she should not come to school. Common childhood communicable diseases include chicken pox, measles, mumps and whooping cough (pertussis). Please call the school and let them know if your child should contract any of these diseases.

Dismissal Time Reminder

Students must be picked up between 2:05 and 2:15 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and between 1:05 and 1:15 p.m. on Wednesdays. After-school supervision is provided only during these times. Please make sure that your child is picked up from school by that time each day unless your child rides the bus or goes to an after-school program at Howard. Students still at school after the times listed above will be brought to the office to call home for pick up, and you or another person you have authorized will need to come into the school office to sign them out. **The office staff IS NOT available to supervise children after 2:15 or 1:15 on Wednesdays.**

Howard Elementary Nights with the Ducks

Are you a UO Basketball fan and also want to support Howard? Order your tickets online for the UO vs Utah game on February 16th and Howard gets \$3 of every ticket sold. Just order your tickets online at <http://goducks.com/promo> and use the code: 2016HOWARD

Howard PTO Upcoming Events

Please plan on attending our McTeacher's Night fundraising event on Thursday, February 16th from 5:00 – 8:00 pm. This will be held at the River Avenue McDonald's and is fun event. Let the Howard staff serve you dinner!

The next PTO meeting will be Tuesday, February 21 at 6:00. Childcare will be provided.

Start saving your pennies! The annual Penny War will be held March 13th – March 17th. More information will be coming home soon.

School Counselors: On the Front Lines of Our Schools

By: Matthew Robinson

Since I was in my teens, I would frequent coffee shops in order to think and get work done. For years, this atmosphere helped me study for the SATs, write term papers, prepare for GREs, write a master's thesis, and now planning lessons for my career. So naturally, when I wanted to come up with an article for this newsletter, I ended up in a coffee shop to do one thing: to think. As I sat there with a blank page and Miles Davis' Blue in Green playing in the background, I recalled my first year as a school counselor when an elderly couple came walking into our local coffee shop. He opened the door for her as he proudly wore his navy blue World War II Veteran hat that seemed to have had a hundred pins attached to it. I felt compelled to approach them, so I stood up and thanked him for his service and for putting others before himself. After some exchange of words, they asked if I was in school. I replied, "Sort of, I work in one!" I told them how I was a school counselor and how I recently got a job working with middle school kids. Then, I shook their hands and went back to my work. About thirty minutes later, they got up and approached me before leaving. He introduced himself as Anthony "Tony" Natale and he thanked me for my service! I was shocked. He said that his counselor after the war saved his marriage that provided him with a lifetime of love. As they left hand in hand, Tony said, "Keep up the good work." A hero thanking me? I felt humbled. This man was on the front lines on D-Day! I gave this moment a lot of thought. As a school counselor, we too are on the front lines as we shape the minds and character of the children we serve. Instead of receiving medals and pins for our service, we receive drawings, homemade snow globes, and hugs. Our position as school counselors give us a VIP pass to the intimate and often complex details of people's lives that are entrusted to us. This is a both great responsibility and an honor. To all the school counselors out there, keep up the good work. February 6th begins National School Counseling Week, so I encourage each of you to remember what an important job you have as you serve on the front lines of our schools.

7 Strategies to Help Your Child with Reading Fluency

This article gives several strategies to help children (or adults) improve reading fluency with explicit directions on how to implement each one. Reading fluency is the ability to read automatically, accurately, and effortlessly, while using expression. Fluency is just as important of a skill as understanding phonics (knowing the letters and their sounds), knowing sight words, and comprehending what is read. Readers who are successful with fluency can concentrate on comprehension because they don't have to focus on figuring out the words. Read at the link below for a list of strategies to help your child become fluent readers (be sure to pick passages that spark your students' interest): <http://www.educationandbehavior.com>



Future Chefs Cooking Competition

The Future Chef Competition is back this year, and we are looking for your favorite breakfast recipe. This competition is open to 4th and 5th grade only. Entry forms will be available in early January.

The idea behind this event is to help educate the kids in HEALTHY EATING HABITS. Too often we hear about obesity in kids and kids not making the right choices in terms of their eating habits. That's why we want kids to submit recipes for their favorite healthy breakfast!

Judging will be based on the following criteria:

- Originality
- Kid Friendly
- Ease of Preparation
- Healthy Attributes
- Plate Presentation
- Taste

A flyer and a blank recipe form were sent home with students describing the event in January. Those students wishing to participate must turn their recipes into the Howard kitchen no later than February 17th. After evaluating recipes, one or two finalists per school will be chosen and notified in early March. Those finalists will be formally invited to a Culinary Competition "Cook-Off" on April 22, 2017. All Finalists will receive a framed certificate, a recipe book of all of the finalists' recipes, apron and chef hat.

If your child has a talent for cooking we encourage you to help them enter their breakfast recipe and show off their cooking skills.

Oregon Battle of the Books

Let the games begin! We have been practicing studying our questions and learning our book titles and author names. The students are so excited! Our games will be held February 6th, 10th, and 13th. Our top two teams will play during an assembly with Mr. Chinn, Wednesday, February 15th. The top team will represent Howard Elementary at the regional competition at North Eugene High School Saturday, March 18th.

Future Happenings

2/3 – No School, Grading Day
2/8 – Wacky Wednesday – Favorite Character Day
2/15 – Exclusion Day
2/16 – PTO McNight Fundraiser, 5:00 – 7:00
2/20 – Presidents Day, No School
2/21 – PTO Meeting, 6:00 pm
2/21 – 2/24 - School Visitation Week
2/27 – Site Council, 2:30
2/27 – 3/2 –Book Fair
2/28 – In District School Choice Closes
3/1 – Open Enrollment Begins
3/2 – Literacy Night
3/3 – No School, Howard Professional Day
3/8 - Wacky Wednesday – Crazy Hair or Hat Day
3/13 – 3/17 – Penny War
3/21 – PTO Meeting, 6:00 pm
3/27 – 3/31 - Spring Break
4/1 – Open Enrollment Closes
4/3 – No School, Professional Development Day
4/4 – Students Return from Spring Break