



# Broadalbin-Perth Middle School

October 2011

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## A note from Mr. Bell Principal's Message

Welcome to a new school year! Students should be acclimated to their schedules by now and have a routine in place. We've sent many papers home that require parent signatures. If you have not received these papers, please contact our office, 954-2700.

At this point in time, students should have daily homework assignments. The homework hotline, 954-2735, will give you the most up-to-date homework assignments. Additional information is provided on the district website, [www.bpcsd.org](http://www.bpcsd.org). Go to the middle school section regarding specific middle school information. The first quarter interim grades come to a close on Friday, Oct. 7, 2011.

Athletics, band, chorus, and clubs are all underway. Please encourage your child to participate in the positive activities we have to offer. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me through e-mail or by calling our office.

Sincerely,

**Mr. Bell**

Middle School Principal



*Seventh-grade students in Ms. Quackenbush's art class create tile designs as part of their study of design elements, color theory and composition.*

For the latest information on everything happening at Broadalbin-Perth, visit our district Web site:

**www.bpcsd.org**





## Voyager Team

### Mrs. Purcell's English Classes

In Mrs. Purcell's English classes we are starting off the year reading *Weasel* by Cynthia DeFelice. This novel takes place in Ohio in the 1840s during the westward expansion. It's suspenseful and the students relate to it because the main character is a boy their age. We will also be working in the media center at learning stations so the students can learn about the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears. The students will get a chance to see how life was lived during that time in history. They will also be writing in their journals daily, studying spelling words and reading books on their own from the media center, which they will visit as a class every other Friday.

### Ms. Kaczor's Social Studies Classes

Welcome back to school! It's amazing that our summer months have come to an end and fall is here. As time is quickly passing by, I'm having flashbacks of my little third-graders who are now sixth-graders. I love seeing how much they have grown, physically and mentally! Social studies has been a blast to teach. Learning about our social studies scholars has led us to some great discussions and the children are excited to begin their classroom projects. Cookie excavations and cave paintings have been the buzz in my room. I hope I don't forget the camera!

### Mrs. DeGiulio's Sixth-Grade Classes

In addition to the homework hotline (954-2735), a sixth grader can access announcements, homework assignments and classroom notes online. This is a great resource for parents and students.

- ★ <http://blackboard.neric.org>
- Username: grade6
- Password: voyager

### Mrs. Foust's Reading Classes

Mrs. Foust's sixth-grade reading students are off to a great start this year! Our reading theme for this five week period will be "Personal Triumphs." The students will read from several genres including: realistic fiction, personal narrative, historical fiction, poetry, biography, magazine articles, almanac, and a talk show called "Reader's Theater."

Every lesson presents an opportunity for students to use their robust vocabulary as they engage in meaningful activities in order to reinforce learning. In order to strengthen students' comprehension skills, we will focus on plot and setting; text structure and chronological order; story structure; and make use of graphic organizers. The students will also be learning about forms of fiction, synonyms and antonyms, reference sources and making generalizations.

Please remember that all materials used in class are also available online at [www.thinkcentral.com](http://www.thinkcentral.com). Students should be using their homework sheets as study guides before each weekly test. I'm looking forward to a wonderful school year!

### National Junior Honor Society

Members are planning to hold a bake sale in conjunction with the Making Strides Walk on Oct. 12. Please help support the event as all proceeds will go to the American Cancer Society. Members will host a Pampered Chef fundraiser in November that will help support our Families in Need holiday shopping event.

### Travel Club

After a two-year absence, Travel Club has returned to Broadalbin-Perth Middle School. Open to seventh- and eighth-graders, Travel Club offers students an opportunity to travel to historic places in the Northeast. Although club sign-ups took place the last week of September, students can sign up to be part of Travel Club anytime during the school year.

Club members will be taking orders for Yankee Candles from Sept. 30 to Oct. 14. If you have any questions or want to learn more about Travel Club, please see club advisor Mr. Baker.



## Discovery Team

### Mr. Sengenberger's English Classes

English 7 students completed three major writing assignments during the first two weeks of school. They will be reading *Don't Feed the Bully* by Brad Tassel at the end of September.

I post student averages in my classroom each Monday—please ask your child to keep you updated!

Homework assignments for English, math, science, and social studies are posted online daily:

- ★ <http://blackboard.neric.org>
  - Username: ela7seng
  - Password: discovery

### Mrs. Thompson's English Classes

Mrs. Thompson's seventh and eighth grade English classes are reviewing what students learned last year as well as learning new literary techniques and devices. We are setting the stage for the real work to begin.

Later this year, students will be introduced to the formal writing process. They will be asked to use and hand in a description of the entire writing process they use for every essay they submit this year.

This will be an exciting year, full of wonderful literature and challenging opportunities to write.

### Mrs. Sengenberger's Science Classes

Seventh-graders are studying laboratory skills, including using a metric ruler, triple beam balance, and graduated cylinder. Within this process students are learning metric conversions, interpretation of data and how to write laboratory reports. I have created a website to assist students and parents:

- ★ <http://blackboard.neric.org>
  - Username: sengscience7
  - Password: smile

Please contact me with any questions or concerns at [sengenbergerc@bpcsd.org](mailto:sengenbergerc@bpcsd.org).

### Mr. Zientak's Social Studies Classes

Eighth-grade social studies students are currently examining the plight of African Americans in the North and South prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. The students have just completed a unit that emphasized the reform movements of the early 1800s. These movements, which included reforms in women's rights, education and prisons, as well as the abolition of slavery, sprang up as a result of the Second Great Awakening and the dismissal of ideas of predestination.

### TechYES

Broadalbin-Perth Middle School is fortunate to have the opportunity to be part of an innovative technology program called TechYES. This program has a two-pronged approach:

- ★ First, all seventh graders will complete two TechYES projects before the end of the year, which will make them nationally certified as 'technology literate.'
- ★ Second, student technology leaders will assist staff members who are interested in incorporating technology into their lessons.

Bethany Dezolt, Callie Jennings, Jake Cope and Allie Hadley trained at HFM BOCES over the summer and earned their TechYES certification. They will serve as student technology leaders.





## Enterprise Team

### Mrs. Thompson's English Classes

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This will be an exciting year, full of wonderful literature and challenging opportunities to write.

### Mrs. Thomas' English Classes

Eighth-graders are diving into literary terms and vocabulary for the mystery novel, *Down a Dark Hall* by Lois Duncan. Ninth-graders are reading *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Please make sure your child is doing his or her homework.

### Mr. Hills' Math Classes

In Math 8, we are currently working on a unit on the real number system. The first half of this unit is a review of operations with integers and rational numbers. In the 2nd half of the unit, we will turn our focus to irrational numbers as we apply them to the Pythagorean Theorem.

Students receive daily notes that they should be bringing home as a resource to assist them on their homework assignments. We will also have a cooperative learning group activity toward the end of this unit that will require students to apply many of the skills they have learned.

Students receive a cumulative grade report every Monday and a syllabus at the beginning of each unit.

### Mr. Baker's Social Studies Classes

Seventh-graders are studying the cultural regions of early America. In pairs, they examined three aspects of each cultural region and had to identify which region they belonged to. Each student created an annotated diagram showing the climate, land, and adaptations made by the Native Americans in one cultural region. The next unit of study is European exploration and discovery.

## Team Adventure

### Ms. Quackenbush's Art Classes

*We view the visual arts as a discipline equal to all other disciplines that prove to stimulate and challenge the minds of our youth today.*

Welcome to "The Middle School Art Studio Experience!" The school year has started and the art studio is booming with very creative children. Students in grades six, seven, and eight are creating portfolios and learning new terminology and techniques that apply to many different styles of art. All classes are working on a "word wall" that features vocabulary, and we're also integrating math, history and language arts into the students' studies in art. All students are learning skills and techniques as well as how to use the art tools in the studio.

#### Grade 6

Sixth-graders are studying color theory and completing an observation drawing of a wooden sculpture of a man. The students are learning to use lines and shapes, positive and negative space, and shading techniques. They're also developing their critical observation skills, which are important in all areas of study.

#### Grade 7

Seventh-graders are studying the elements of design, color theory and composition. They are creating tile designs and making cultural masks.

#### Grade 8

Eighth-graders are studying color theory. They have completed one-point perspective drawings and are now moving on to creating observational drawings. They will start by creating blind contour and contour drawings before working their way up toward creating their main still life drawings. Students of all classes are learning skills and techniques as well as the use of art tools here at the middle school level.

Remember, 'EARTH' without 'ART' is 'EH!'



## Team Adventure

### Mr. Samek's & Mr. Willey's Engineering, Computer and Technology Classes

We have designed our engineering, technology and computer curriculum around this premise:

*Engineering is one of the most progressive, challenging and rewarding fields that can be studied today.*

Many people want to be engineers. Almost everyone has the ability, but few possess the drive and perseverance. How do you get the drive and perseverance? Simply stated, you have to be willing to make the effort and not let anything stand in your way. You have to know what you are getting into and have a clear idea about what you want.

Individuals with a bachelor's degree in engineering enjoy some of the highest paychecks of all baccalaureate graduates. Look in the classified ads of just about any newspaper and you'll find several ads or even whole columns or pages of fabulous job opportunities for engineers.

### Mrs. Campos' Health Classes

Welcome to Yvonne Major from HFM Prevention Council, who is helping me facilitate the 'Too Good for Drugs and Violence' program in all classes. The program expands drug prevention education to deal with issues prevalent to this age group. In addition, it helps students develop skills in decision making, communication, media literacy and conflict resolution, as well as making and maintaining healthy relationships.

#### Grade 6

We have completed our first unit, 'Making Your Health Important,' which covers the importance of life-long wellness. Our next unit will be on personal hygiene—caring for our skin, hair, teeth, eyes, ears, nails and feet.

#### Grade 7

Seventh-graders are studying Unit One, 'You and Your Health,' which provides a review of physical, mental and social wellness. Next, we will study mental health, including stress management and mental disorders.

#### Grade 8

Eighth-graders are studying the unit, 'Wellness: A Way of Life.' Students have decorated the hallways with their health autobiographical poems. The next unit they'll study is entitled 'Family Life.'

### Mrs. Davis' Band and Music Classes

Concert Band is preparing for our winter concert, which will take place at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 14 in the high school auditorium. Eighth -grade music classes are currently learning how to read, write and compose music.

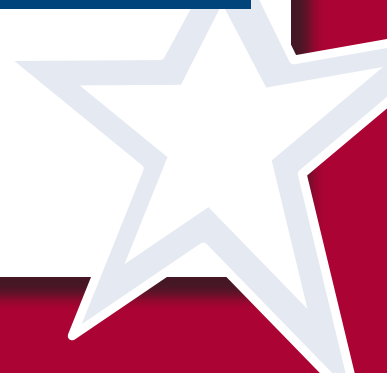
### Mr. Cotter & Ms. Nasner's Physical Education Classes

Middle school physical education classes have been busy participating in fall physical fitness tests. Students complete five fitness tests that evaluate five areas of physical fitness, including cardiovascular endurance, agility, flexibility, muscular strength and muscular endurance. Our soccer unit is in full swing and we'll follow that with a flag football unit that will take us through October.

### Yearbook Club

The 2012 Broadalbin-Perth Middle School Yearbook will be on sale soon. Each middle school student will receive an order form in October. Early-bird prices are \$3 less than the regular yearbook.

We will also have a school-wide sale to help offset the cost of our yearbook so our students will pay less for a book than we pay the printing company. If you have any questions about the yearbook, please see one of the club advisors, Mr. Baker or Mrs. Nichols.





## Good technology gone bad

The following story is from the B-P Parent Corner. Read more stories about issues facing parents and children of all ages at [www.bpcsd.org](http://www.bpcsd.org). The B-P Parent Corner can be found under the Community tab.

Instant messaging, texting, tweeting—communication technology is an integral part of our society. We can now communicate instantly with almost anyone in the world. When used improperly or carelessly, however, these technologies can create big trouble for adolescents. The media is filled with stories of students who use technology to send “sexting” messages, cheat on exams, or harass others. Parents who understand the power of instant communication will be better able to protect their children from the personal—and even legal—consequences of its pitfalls.

### Technology and social networks are here to stay

The statistics are clear; technology is growing at an incredible pace. Consider these facts:

- ★ A current generation cell phone that fits in your pocket has 1000 times more computing power than MIT’s most advanced computer in 1965. Experts predict that in 25 years that same computing power will fit inside a space the size of a blood cell.
- ★ We will generate more information in this year than was generated in all of the past 5,000 years.
- ★ In 2006, Internet users searched Google 2.3 billion times each month. Today, that number tops three billion per day.
- ★ The first commercial text message was sent December 1992. Today, the number of text messages sent and received exceeds the population of the planet. (The average kid sends 3,339 messages per day!)
- ★ Estimates vary, but 200-300 million people use social networking sites (online sites such as Facebook and Google+ where users share personal information).
- ★ Twitter was the primary means of sharing information during the 2009 Iranian elections.

So what does all of this mean? Technology is an integral part of our society. The changes come quickly and will come even faster in the future. No

## Online Resources

Looking for more information? Try the following online resources:

- ★ **A Real-life stories**—A series of stories and videos about the dangers of cyberspace <http://www.netSMARTZ.org/resources/reallife.htm>
- ★ **Finding Theresa**—A step-by-step video showing how easy it is to collect information about an online teen. <http://www.netSMARTZ.org/stories/teresa.htm>
- ★ **Web-Wise Kids**—A list of games and resources for students and parents teaching Internet safety. <http://www.webwisekids.org/parents-teachers-kid-zone.html>
- ★ **Common Sense Media**—Internet safety tips and more resources; offers several in Spanish. <http://www.common SenseMedia.org/internet-safety-tips-middle-school-kids>
- ★ **WiredSafety**—A vast resource of online safety tips and articles. <http://www.wiredsafety.org/>
- ★ **Just 4 Kids**—An interactive government site for kids addressing many health and safety issues [http://www.attorneygeneral.gov/kid\\_site/middle\\_school/index.htm](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov/kid_site/middle_school/index.htm)

amount of complaining or ignoring will change the facts. Everyone, especially our children, is a part of this phenomenon.

### The upside

Technology has opened new frontiers and opportunities. Our schools are preparing students for careers that will use technologies that no one has even invented. Those students will use those technologies to address problems and opportunities that we have yet to recognize. We have nearly instantaneous access to answers to the most detailed questions concerning the most serious world crises. Walls that formerly divided nations



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around the world are being torn down thanks in part to the free flow of communication.

### The downside

Technology is not perfect; in fact, with new opportunity comes new problems. That's not to say that trouble began with technology—there has always been bullying and pornography. What has changed is that technology places such things within easy grasp of all ages in all places. For students, some of the problems are:

- ★ **Cheating**—Passing notes and copying papers have become high-tech. Cell phones snap photos of exams and transmit them to classmates; text messages relay test questions and answers; online sites place papers and sources within a mouse-click — making plagiarism a simple task.
- ★ **Bullying**—Threats and taunting used to be restricted to school grounds, but that has changed. Students gang up on others via Facebook and other social networking sites, create unkind or untrue photos and videos that are posted on YouTube, and send bullying messages via Twitter and texting. And students can do this 24 hours a day.
- ★ **Wasting time**—Research shows that the average teen spends about 30 hours per week on the Internet. That time is taken away from studies, household chores, actual time with friends, or sleep.
- ★ **Viewing pornography**—Just 10 years ago, pornography was found in magazines, books, and videos. Today it is the number one income generator on the Internet.
- ★ **Sexting**—Sexting is the sending of nude or semi-nude photos or sexually suggestive messages electronically. Most students are unaware that sending a photo, even of themselves, could be considered distributing child pornography—a felony. It is a growing problem among students, one that deserves a closer look.

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## Foreign Language

### Mrs. Kopec's French Classes

The middle school French classes are off to a good start this year. Seventh-graders have already learned their colors, greetings, titles, alphabet, and are learning to count to 100 in French. They are just starting to learn the names of school objects in French (e.g. pen is *le stylo*). Each tried one, saying ‘yes, please’ or ‘no, thanks’ in French.

The eighth-graders are off to a great start reviewing all of their seventh-grade material. Before they move on to new material they will take four review quizzes. They say things like, “Yes, I would love a candy, please,” in French.

### Art Club

The Middle School Art Club is very busy this year! Our 38 members are getting ready for a new and exciting school year.

Art Club will meet every-other Wednesday; our members will receive a schedule at our first meeting. If a student is involved in a sport whose practice schedule conflicts with Art Club, that student can still sign up for Art Club and join us when his/her sport's season is over.

This year, Art Club members will be busy with a variety of creative projects, including working with clay on a pottery wheel, painting, drawing and sculpting, as well as helping to create the scenery for school dances. One of our most exciting projects will be creating altered book journals. We will also try to fit in a museum visit and plan to have a group of students focusing on photography. Students will also be invited to attend a three-hour course in stain glass during which they will create a sun-catcher ornament.

Art Club members will also have the opportunity to learn one of the oldest crafts from our area, Adirondack backpack basket-making. The students will weave beautiful miniature baskets during another three-hour course.

Students must have a ride home and must be picked up at the middle school directly after Art Club at 2:50 p.m.



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### The shocking statistics behind sexting

Sexting is far more widespread than most adults realize. A survey by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy interviewed teens (ages 13-16) to determine their use of sexting. Although the data only measures use by a subset of teens, it is a fair indication of what is happening among adolescents. Here are some of the scary facts:

- ★ 48 percent of teens have received a text message containing nude or semi-nude photos or sexually suggestive language.
- ★ 20 percent of teens (22 percent of girls, 18 percent of boys, 11 percent of young teen girls) have sent or posted nude or semi-nude photos of themselves—most often to a boyfriend or girlfriend.
- ★ 39 percent of all teens (37 percent of girls, 40 percent of boys) have sent or posted sexually suggestive messages.
- ★ 3 percent of teens have sent nude or semi-nude images of themselves to someone they know only online.
- ★ 48 percent of teens have received such messages.
- ★ 21 percent of teenage girls and 39 percent of teen boys have sent such content to someone they wanted to date or hook up with.
- ★ 36 percent of teen girls and 39 percent of teen boys admit it is common for nude or semi-nude photos to get shared with people other than the intended recipient.

### Things an adolescent should consider before pressing “send”

- ★ Don’t assume anything you send or post is going to stay private. The research is clear; messages you send are often shared with others.
- ★ There are no “take-backs”—just because you delete that photo from your phone or computer doesn’t mean it will go away. It may have seemed funny or flirty, but that image

## Book Resources

Looking for more information? Try the following book as resources:

- ★ *Internet Safety Kids’ Guide* by Victoria Roddel
- ★ *Internet Safety Family Guide* by Victoria Roddel
- ★ *Cyber-Safe Kids, Cyber-Savvy Teens: Helping Young People Learn To Use the Internet Safely and Responsibly* by Nancy E. Willard
- ★ *Totally Wired: What Teens and Tweens Are Really Doing Online* by Anastasia Goodstein

can be copied and shared and may turn up at school, online, or even in the hands of future college recruiters or employers.

- ★ Consider how the recipient will react. A young girl’s flirty message can be perceived as something much more by the boy on the other end.
- ★ Nothing is truly anonymous. Sending a photo or text to an online stranger is dangerous. If that person truly wants to find you, he will.

### Helpful questions for parents

A simple conversation can go a long way toward avoiding the problems that come with technology. Kids need to know that cyberspace can be a fun and exciting—but dangerous—place. Parents need to be informed and involved, because kids are generally more tech-savvy than their parents (a good reason for parents to try a Facebook page or Twitter to familiarize themselves with the technology). A few simple questions can help parents learn:

- ★ What their children are doing online or on cell phones;
- ★ Who their kids are communicating with;
- ★ Whether they need to place limits on electronic communication. This might include removing a computer from a child’s bedroom or taking away the cell phone at bedtime.

For more resources, please visit [www.bpcsd.org](http://www.bpcsd.org) and click on the Community tab to access the B-P Parent Corner.