



The Aggie Express

A publication of the Beal City Public Schools

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Pink - It's not just a color



Help support the fight against Breast Cancer! The Beal City Junior class is selling t-shirts in order to raise money for the cause. With the help of Hangin' by a Thread Embroidery of Weidman, the pink t-shirts are only \$10.00. To order yours, send your name, t-shirt size, and \$10.00 to Mrs. Christensen, the Junior class advisor, at Beal City schools. T-shirts will be on sale until November 15, 2009. The front of the t-shirt reads, "Pink" and the back reads, "It's not just a color. It's a cause." If you have any further questions, please email Mrs. Christensen at julianne_christensen@yahoo.com. Thanks for your continued support!



The Beal City Homecoming King and Queen this year are Jordan Rau and Kelly David

The Isabella County Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with Child and Family Enrichment Council will be offering free child safety restraint seat inspections November 12, 2009, during parent/teacher conferences. Child(ren) must be present. Please contact Jennifer Swanson with the Isabella County Sheriff's Department at (989) 772-5911 for further details and to schedule an appointment.

Board Briefs

The following was approved at a regular board meeting on October 19, 2009:

- ✍ General Fund payments of \$287,857.53, Hot Lunch payments of \$12,687.32, Capital Projects/General Fund payments of \$1,202.33 and Athletic Fund payments of \$5,708.20.
- ✍ The 2nd reading of the Neola New, Revised and Replacement Policies as presented.
- ✍ The 2008/2009 audit as presented.
- ✍ The following coaching recommendations: Chadd Fletcher - Freshman Basketball, Corey Stevens - 8th Gr. Boys Basketball.
- ✍ - The following coaching resignations - Chadd Fletcher 7th Gr Boys Basketball, and Dave King - Jr High Girls Track.
- ✍ The agreement with the Genesee ISD through the Gratiot Isabella RESD for seat time waiver.

Holiday Program Set

Mark your calendars now for the annual Mayes Elementary Holiday Program to be held on Thursday, December 17th at 1:00 p.m. in the small gym. The Senior Citizens Reception will take place in the gym before the program at 12:30 p.m. All families and community members are invited to attend this spectacular songfest!

Preschool Spots Still Open for 2009-2010

We finally received verification from the State this week that we would be receiving funding for our GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) Preschool program this school year. We still have three (3) spots open in our morning session for the 2009-2010 school year for any child turning four years old before December 1, 2009. If you have questions or would like registration materials, please call the Mayes Elementary office at 644-2740.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

November 2	PTO Meeting, 6:30 pm-Title Classroom
November 6	1st Marking Period Ends, ½ day for students, no lunch
November 9 – 12	PTO Book Fair
November 11	Veteran's Day Assembly, 10:00-10:30 am, Big Gym
November 12	Parent Teacher Conferences, No School for Students / Evening Book Fair
November 25	Recess in Rose Arena for K-6 students @ CMU
November 26 & 27	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 11	Santa's Shop in Preschool Classroom
December 17	Holiday Program and Senior Citizen Reception

Recess in Rose

On November 25, Mayes Elementary K-6 students have been invited to watch a CMU Varsity Women's Basketball game versus Georgetown FREE of charge. Students will need to bring a sack lunch to eat in Rose Arena prior to the start of the game. On October 27, Assistant Varsity Coach Bill Ferrara and varsity players visited Mayes Elementary School to introduce a poster design contest featuring the Women's Basketball team. The winning poster will hang in the women's locker room and the winning designer could win a pizza party for his or her classroom! Additional information will be coming home in the future. Fire Up Chips!

When dropping children off by the entrance to Mayes Elementary School, please encourage them to use the crosswalk by the front doors. It is difficult to see students when they are cutting through the parking lot and walking in between buses. We have had some close calls, especially with vehicles backing up and not realizing our younger children are behind them. Vehicles are also prohibited from parking in the yellow Bus Loading Zone in front of the building-even temporarily, even on rainy days. This, again, presents a hazard to children, bus drivers and other vehicles. We do appreciate those of you who follow these safety procedures.

Elementary Basketball

The Saturday morning elementary basketball program for girls and boys in third through sixth grade will be held on the following dates:

December 5, 12, 19 and January 9, 16, 23.

Third and fourth graders will have the 8:15 to 9:45 session followed by the fifth and sixth graders who will meet from 9:45 until 11:30. Cost will be \$30 and each student participating will receive a t-shirt.

The elementary basketball program will be run by the Beal City boys and girls basketball coaches.

Winter Clothing

It's that time of year again! Now that colder temperatures have been in the air for about a month, we wanted to remind parents of our "Seasonal Clothing" policy found on page 22 in the Parent/Student Handbook. When the temperature is 41 – 50 degrees, coats or sweatshirts are necessary. In addition, at 40 degrees or below, snow pants, boots, gloves and hats are required. If a student comes to school unprepared to go outside, he/she will receive a warning the first time. If cold weather clothing is forgotten more than one time, students will remain on the blacktop. At all times, best judgment in accordance with weather conditions is expected.

Mayes Elementary School could always use gently worn winter clothing for students to wear on the playground. Items needed include coats, snow pants, scarves, boots, and gloves. Please consider donating these clean, used items to the elementary office. Thank you for your generosity!

Test Day Nov. 4

Students in grades 9-11 will be involved in various testing activities on November 4 during the first half of the day. Ninth graders will be taking the Explore, tenth graders will be taking the Plan, and the eleventh graders will be taking the ASVAB.

The Explore and Plan tests are both designed by the same company that created the ACT. They both follow the same format as the ACT, and taking these tests helps our students to be better prepared for the ACT, which they will take in the eleventh grade. The results from the Explore and Plan help students focus on areas of strength and areas in which they need to put more effort. They also get career information from the test results.

The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) is an excellent test that helps students decide which career might be best for them. It is given by the military, free of charge, and the results compare the students' aptitude with their interests. The students receive a lot of information that will help them choose a career path.

The seniors will not be taking a test on November 4, but will be doing a job shadow or a college visit. This experience should help them with decisions they need to make in the near future.

The Explore, Plan and ASVAB are given every year, but in the past were given at various times. This year will be the first time they will be given at the same time. By doing it this way, it is hoped that there will be much less classroom interruptions and loss of instructional time.

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held on Thursday, November 12 for elementary and secondary students. Preschool through sixth grade conferences will be scheduled from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm and 5:00 – 8:00 pm. The elementary office has scheduled individual conferences.

Appointment times will be sent home in Friday Folders.

Conferences for grades 7 – 12 will be held from 12:00 noon – 3:00 pm and 5:00 – 8:00

pm. If you have any questions, please call Mayes Elementary at 644-2740 or the Junior/Senior High Office at 644-3944.

“Sexting”: Fun or Felony?

Sending indecent photos of themselves to their friends may seem harmless to students, but the repercussions can be dire.

A 15-year-old girl is arrested on child pornography charges for using her cell phone to send nude photos of herself to classmates. A young boy is put on probation after sending an explicit photo of his genitals to a girl's cell phone. Two high school cheerleaders are suspended from the squad after nude photos of them are sent by cell phone to the school's football team. Stories like these are increasingly common as more and more teens regularly engage in “sexting”—the practice of electronically sending nude or seminude images of themselves to others—usually on a cell phone.

Despite typically innocent intentions, distributing nude or sexually explicit photos of underage children is child pornography and is a felony. Accordingly, it's essential that school officials learn about the issue and work with parents and law enforcement officials to impress on teens that sexting can lead to quite a bit of trouble.

Child Pornography?

In October 2008, a 15-year old girl was arrested on child pornography charges after she distributed naked photos of herself to friends using her cell phone. School officials reportedly found the photos on the girl's phone and notified police, who arrested the girl and charged her with “possession of criminal tools and illegal use of a minor in nudity-oriented materials.” If convicted, the high school student would have had to register as a sexoffender. Interestingly, the incident occurred a month after a local prosecutor visited the girl's school to talk to students about the dangers of sexting (Clark-Flory, 2008). Authorities eventually dropped the charges against the student, who even after spending a weekend in jail reportedly did not realize the seriousness of her behavior. In her mind, she simply sent the photos to some boys who sent similar photos of themselves to her in return.

In another well-known sexting incident, two members of a high school cheerleading squad were suspended after nude and seminude photos of them were distributed

by cell phones to members of the school's football team. According to news reports, school officials heard about the photos and then anonymously received printed copies of the pictures in a sealed envelope. One photo, which reportedly had been taken three years earlier and sent to her then-boyfriend's cell phone, showed one of the girls topless. The second photo, which according to court papers was taken the previous summer, was a nude photo of the second cheerleader. That student argued that the photo was accidentally sent to other students at the school.

School officials allegedly showed the pictures first to other school administrators and then eventually to the police. According to an attorney involved with the case, school administrators talked with the two cheerleaders, who allegedly did not reveal the names of other students who had copies of the pictures (Corrigan, 2008).

Unable to identify who had provided the photos in the sealed envelope, school officials explained to the student body that having the photos was inappropriate and that students with information about the pictures should come forward. In addition, football players were allegedly told to delete the photos from their cell phones if they received them (Blanchard, 2008). Later, the two girls were suspended from the cheerleading squad. One cheerleader received a 30-day suspension, and school officials suspended the other cheerleader for a year. (The sexting incident was reportedly not that student's first violation of school rules).

In November 2008, the parents of the two suspended cheerleaders filed suit, claiming that school officials violated the girls' constitutional rights. The lawsuit alleges that school officials did not need to share the photos with other administrators and that they did not properly report the incident as required in a case involving child pornography. In addition, the girls' attorney found it “troubling” that school officials did not punish members of the football team who allegedly possessed and distributed the photos on their cell phones (Blanchard, 2008).

A spokesperson for the school district countered that school officials meted out the punishments in accordance with established school policy after giving both students notice

of the charges against them and an opportunity to be heard (i.e., to appeal their suspensions to a disciplinary committee and to the school board) (Blanchard, 2008). The school's spokesperson further contended that the incident was reported through proper police channels and that the girls' conduct violated the school district's athletic code, which set a higher standard of proper behavior for those students participating in certain student activities. The girls' attorney has argued that sexting was not prohibited under the school's student handbook and that the school should issue an apology to the girls, expunge their disciplinary records, and pay the legal fees associated with the case.

“No Biggie”

The sexting incidents described here are not uncommon. A recent survey by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and Cosmogirl.com reveals that nearly 40% of teens admit to having sent sexually suggestive text or e-mail messages. Even more of the 1,200 teens surveyed said they know someone who has sent such images or that they have received nude photos of a classmate. Interestingly, the survey found that one in five teen girls had sent nude or seminude pictures of themselves by cell phone or had posted such photos online. A press release from the campaign, however, points out that boys are sexting too: 18% have sent or posted online nude or seminude personal photos (National Campaign, 2008).

So why is sexting so common? According to the survey, technology has a notable impact on many teens. Twenty-two percent reported feeling “personally more forward and aggressive” because of technology (e.g., social networking Web sites and cell phones). Two-thirds of the girls surveyed said they engaged in sexting for fun or to be flirtatious, and more than half said they sent racy photos as a sexy present for a boyfriend. Another 40% engaged in sexting as a joke—while 19% of teens believe that sexting is “no big deal” (National Campaign, 2008).

Nevertheless, sexting is a big deal. First, the consequences of sexting can include criminal charges and other punishment or penalties. In addition, although sexting typically starts with an innocent intent at home, explicit photos first intended for a boy- or girlfriend often

spread to hundreds of unintended recipients on multiple school campuses. The photos can even make their way onto the cell phones of adult strangers, including pedophiles.

It is clear from the prevalence of sexting, however, that many young people do not grasp the seriousness of the practice. Specifically, because technology (e.g., cell phones, texting) are a part of daily life for some many teens, the notion of legal consequences stemming from something so mundane is typically lost. They mistakenly believe that because the photos are of themselves, they cannot be pornography or that having the photo or sending it to a friend cannot be illegal.

In fact, sending a received image to another underage student can also constitute distribution of child pornography (North, 2008). As a result, some schools have invited law enforcement officials to speak to students about the dangers of sexting (e.g., exposure to pedophiles and other strangers) and the very real legal consequences associated with the practice. Police officers tell students about the serious impact of sexting, including damage to a student's chances of getting into college, difficulty finding employment, and jail time (North). Other schools have gone a step further, adding “sexting” to existing policies governing cell phone use in school. In one Pennsylvania school district, students can receive detention, have their phone taken away, or have their parents brought to school if something they do on their cell phone causes a distraction in the school environment. For sexting, the school takes a zero-tolerance approach that involves law enforcement officials, and suspension from school (North).

Grand-Scale Humiliation

Stiff and extremely serious legal consequences notwithstanding, sexting has a clear hold on many young people. If there is a silver lining, however, it seems that the humiliation, bad reputation, or parental ire that can stem from having a nude or seminude photo fall into hundreds of the “wrong hands,” seems to resonate most with some teens (Morehouse, 2008).

Such threat of embarrassment, combined with increased and ongoing educational programs for students about the importance of making smart choices with technology, will hopefully begin to stem the sexting tide. PL

Log onto www.bealcityschools.net for the latest announcements and updates on school events, sports, and for teacher contact information.



REPORT to PARENTS

H1N1 Flu - Fighting to Keep Your Children Safe

If an H1N1 flu outbreak occurs in your community or in your child's school, rest assured that officials will keep parents updated about preventative measures such as disinfections and school closings. Here is information about what H1N1 flu is, how to protect your family, and what to do if your child becomes infected.

How does H1N1 flu compare to seasonal flu in terms of its severity? With seasonal flu, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related causes in the U.S., 10 percent of whom are children younger than 5 years old. More than 90 percent of deaths and about 60 percent of hospitalizations occur in people older than 65. H1N1 flu has caused greater disease burden in people younger than 25 years of age than older people. There are few cases and few deaths reported in people older than 64 years old, which is unusual when compared with seasonal flu. However, pregnancy and other previously recognized high-risk medical conditions from seasonal flu appear to be associated with increased risk of complications from H1N1 flu.

Infection Prevention. There are several precautions you can teach your children to reduce their chance of contracting H1N1 flu. Instruct your children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and to throw the tissue in the trash after use. If a tissue isn't accessible, children should be taught to cough or sneeze into the bend of the elbows rather than into bare hands.

Keep your children's hands clean by making sure they wash their hands frequently with soap and water, especially after a cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based cleaners such as Purell are also effective and come in small bottles that can be carried in backpacks. Children should also avoid touching their eyes, noses, or mouths – germs spread that way.

Develop a family emergency kit, which should include medicines, facemasks, alcohol-based hand rubs, and other essential supplies. That way, if someone in your household does get infected, you will be prepared to care for that individual while protecting others in your home.

What should I do? If your children are exhibiting flu symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue, vomiting, diarrhea), do not send them to school or daycare. Instead, keep them home, making sure they drink plenty of liquids and take fever-reducing medicines (not aspirin) to combat fever, sore throat, and muscle aches. If only one person is sick, keep that person away from those who are not sick. If your child comes into contact with



someone who has been diagnosed with H1N1 flu, ask your doctor if your child should receive antiviral medicine

- Get medical care right away if the sick person:
- Has difficulty

breathing or chest pain;

- Has purple or blue discoloration of the lips;
- Is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down;
- Has signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination or, in infants, a lack of tears when they cry;
- Has seizures (for example, uncontrolled convulsions); or
- Is less responsive than normal or becomes confused.

Before seeking medical care, make sure to call your child's primary care physician or the emergency room so that proper precautions can be made.

The thought of an H1N1 flu outbreak in your community may be alarming, but remaining informed and following precautionary measures is your best defense in protecting your family.



MENU

November 2 - 6, 2009

Monday: Breakfast – cinnamon-glazed french toast, cheese stick, granola bar, donut, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.
Lunch – pepperoni bagel pizza, cheese-filled breadstick, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Tuesday: Breakfast – egg/cheese omelet, hash brown, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – chicken nuggets or bbq beef/bun, hot vegetable, dinner roll, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Wednesday: Breakfast – pretzel/cheese, muffin, yogurt, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit juice and milk.

Lunch – breakfast pizza or egg cheese omelet, hash brown, bagels, fruit bar and milk.

Thursday: Breakfast – breakfast pizza, cheese stick, granola bar, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – nachos/meat and cheese or totally tacos, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Friday: Breakfast – breakfast kit with milk.

Lunch – Half Day/No Lunch.

November 9 - 13, 2009

Monday: Breakfast – waffle sticks, muffin, yogurt, donut, cereal, fruit and milk. Lunch – Big Daddy's cheese pizza, breadstick, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Tuesday: Breakfast – scrambled eggs/ham, hash brown, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – corn dog nuggets or hamburger/bun, french fries, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Wednesday: Breakfast - pretzel/cheese, muffin, yogurt, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.

Lunch – spaghetti or chicken Caesar salad, garlic bread, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Thursday: NO SCHOOL.

Friday: Breakfast – hot pocket, yogurt, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – chicken quesadilla or macaroni/cheese, dessert, salad bar, fruit and milk.

November 16 - 20, 2009

Monday: Breakfast – mini pancakes, sausage, granola bar, donut, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – stuffed crust pepperoni pizza, breadstick, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Tuesday: Breakfast – egg/cheese omelet, hash brown, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – popcorn chicken or baked potato, dinner roll, hot vegetable, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Wednesday: Breakfast – pretzel/cheese, granola bar, yogurt, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.

Lunch – Thanksgiving Dinner – turkey gravy over biscuit, stuffing, hot vegetable, dessert, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Thursday: Breakfast – breakfast pizza, cheese stick, granola bar, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.

Lunch – taco or chicken fajita, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Friday: Breakfast – sausage gravy/biscuit, cheese stick, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.

Lunch – grilled cheese sandwich or fish/bun, tomato soup, salad bar, fruit and milk.

November 23 - 27 2009

Monday: Breakfast – oatmeal, cheese stick, granola bar, donut, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch – cheese pizza, breadstick, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Tuesday: Breakfast – scrambled eggs/ham, hash brown, muffin, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch: beef/cheddar sub or chicken parmesan, peanut butter and jelly sand, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Wednesday: Breakfast – pretzel/cheese, granola bar, cinnamon roll, cereal, fruit, juice and milk.

Lunch – Salisbury steak/mashed potatoes/gravy or pork patty/bun, dinner roll, salad bar, fruit and milk.

Thursday: NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break.

Friday: NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break.

