

The Appleseed

Dear Community:

This past year the Michigan State Legislature passed new School Election Laws. The new legislation requires School Board Elections to be held in November of even years. The intent of the new law was to save districts dollars by aligning school elections with state/national election dates. While the intent of the new law is understandable, there are complexities that every school district must deal with individually.

Currently, Hudsonville Public Schools' Board of Education are on a 2-2-2-1 rotation. Consequently, there is at most two new board members every school year. The benefit to this type of rotation is that you have veteran and new board members working together to further the district's mission. With the new election law, if the school board does not vote to adjust term length, the board member rotation will be 4-3. That is, every other even year four new board members could be elected. Changing a majority of the board members all at once in any organization could create instability.

Therefore, our Hudsonville Board of Education has been discussing and will be soon voting on adjusting board member term length from 4 years to 6 years. By extending the terms of board members, this will allow for the district to be on a 2-3-2 rotation. Allowable under the new law, a board can make this adjustment with any new six year term board member elected by the community.

Another complexity pertains to the 18 mill non-homestead property tax. Hudsonville levies its property tax on a 50% summer and 50% winter basis. Most school districts in Michigan levy their taxes on a 100% summer basis. Given our 50/50 basis we run the risk of losing approximately \$3.9 million in general fund revenue if we do not place the 18 mill non-homestead property tax on the May ballot as we have in the past. We could try to extend the millage to reach the new election date. However, our Board of Education prefers to provide a consistent message to our community and maintain the ballot language that has been in place for the past eighteen years.

The annual school election will be held on Tuesday, May 8. There is one issue on the ballot:


◆ Non-Homestead Renewal

Hudsonville voters will be asked to approve the **annual renewal** of the 18 mill non-homestead property tax. This is a tax on businesses and second homes, not on homestead residences or qualified agricultural property. State Education Taxes on homestead residences will remain at the 1994 millage rate.

In November of 2012, in addition to the Presidential Election, we will have our annual school board election where two seats will be up for a vote. As we approach the November Election, we will communicate the specifics of the ballot.

We are deeply grateful for our community's continued support. Especially during these difficult financial times, passage of the Non-Homestead Renewal allows the district to maintain the current millage rate for operational funding. Please remember to vote on May 8th.

Sincerely,



Nick Ceglarek
Superintendent

HUDSONVILLE & KIDS FOOD BASKET TEAM UP FOR FAMILY FUN!

She shoots.... she SCORES! It was another close game as the Jamestown Jammers won 35-33 over the Alward All-Stars. The Third Annual Kids Food Basket-Ball game is done for another year. One team takes home the trophy; the other a determination to win the next year. But, for the third year in a row, in spectacular fashion, the real winner of the game is...Kids Food Basket (KFB)!



The game is free for anyone who wants to come watch - the only thing required for entrance are items for Kids Food Basket Snack Packs. These snack packs are provided by KFB for kids who would otherwise not get a well-balanced meal for supper, if at all! KFB is specific in their requirements - fruit, granola bars, meat sticks, crackers and cheese, and a fruit/pudding cup. It is the donation of these items that gains you access to one of the most highly anticipated match-ups in Hudsonville history!

During and after the game, many hands were busy packing, organizing, and transporting the food back to each school. Jamestown Elementary had their school families get together and assemble the snack packs. This year, thanks to the

generosity of our families and the community, we were able to assemble a combined 4,400 snack packs between the two schools! That's up 25% over last year's totals. What a great way to spend a Friday night in January - cheering for your favorite team, supporting local businesses (Jets and Jimmy John's were sponsors) and best of all, demonstrating compassion to MANY kids who would otherwise be going to bed hungry. We appreciate the support of the Hudsonville community!



TO AFGHANISTAN WITH "LOVE" FROM FOREST GROVE!



Students met in their multi-age family groups this past February 14, for the purpose of writing some "Love" letters to soldiers serving overseas in Afghanistan. Students paired up during this Bucket Bonanza activity time to work on improving their writing skills and to send some warm and humorous greetings to young men and women serving our country in a very challenging and dangerous place. As a school, we created 120+ letters/ Valentines Cards and these were sent to two different

soldiers who are uncles to two Forest Grove Elementary students. Special thanks to Marine Sgt. Jordan Bultema and Army Spc. Joshua Stander, both residents of Hudsonville, for their willingness to pass out these hand-made well wishes in person to their fellow soldiers! The highlight for students was sharing a funny joke on each of the cards (*something requested by the soldiers to help bring a smile to their day*) along with their letter thanking each soldier for their service, sacrifice, and wishing them safety and a quick return back home.



EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENT

Summer Childcare Program - 2012 Registration NOW OPEN

Georgetown or Jamestown Elementary

Monday - Friday (minimum of two days per week/set schedule is required)

6:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Ages 2 1/2 years - 5th grade

Program runs from June 12 - August 29, 2012

Preschool children - \$150.00 per week or \$35.00 per day

School-age children - \$140.00 per week or \$30.00 per day

(Students are considered school-age if they have completed PreK/K)

Summer activity calendar includes: special visitors (policeman, magician, fireman), gym enrichment, summer school-age curriculum, swimming, and field trips (ice cream, bowling, museum, roller-skating, parks, and much more).



Preschool Openings - Still Available

There are still spaces available in many of our Half and Full Day three and four year old preschool classes for the 2012-2013 school year. Children who will be three or four by Dec. 1, 2012, can take part in our two or three day Half Day programs with classes located throughout the district. Our Full Day program is available at Bauer, Baldwin Middle School, and Riley Middle School.

Pre-Kindergarten Full Day Care and Before and After School Care Openings - Still Available

Early Childhood is currently enrolling for the 2012-13 school year. These two programs service Pre-Kindergarten - 5th grade before and after school, as well as full day care on non-school days of Pre-Kindergarten. Before and After School Care is offered at Alward, Bauer, Georgetown, Jamestown, and South with bussing provided to and from other sites.

To register, please mail a registration form to the Early Childhood Programs, 3909 Baldwin Street, Hudsonville, MI 49426. Registration forms and information flyers are available online at www.hudsonvillepublicschools.org under the Early Childhood Programs link in the left-hand column. For more information, please call the Early Childhood Office at 616-797-0842.

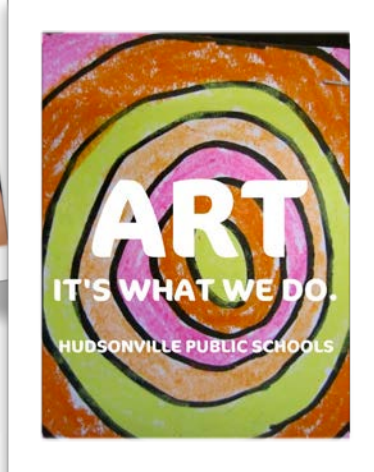
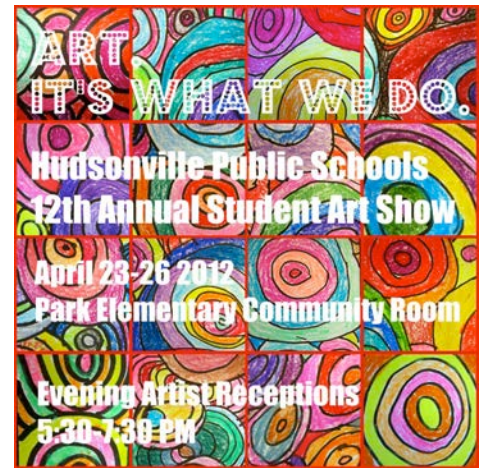
GEORGETOWN JOGGERS

For the first time ever at Georgetown Elementary School, there is a Georgetown Joggers Running Club. We have a group of about 25 students, 2nd-5th grade, that are training for 5 weeks to enter the Hudsonville Eagle 5K race on March 24! Mrs. Nienhuis and Mrs. Van Koevinger are working with the students on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays the students follow an at-home training schedule. We are so excited that some of our students and families will be racing, as well as supporting Hudsonville students with the money that is being raised for scholarships. It is a great way to be involved with our community and promote a healthy lifestyle at a young age. Way to go Georgetown Joggers, we will see you at the races!



ART. IT'S WHAT WE DO.

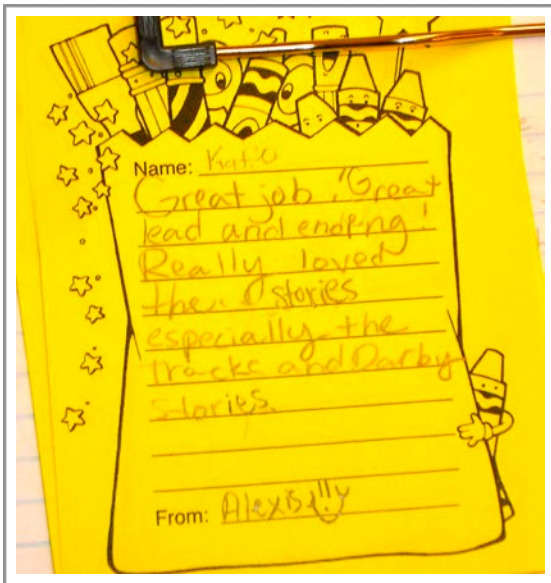
The 12th annual Hudsonville Student Art Show will be held April 23 through 26 at the Park Elementary Community Room. The show will be open to the public from 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. during the week, and artist receptions will be held from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. each evening. The district-wide show features student work from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade and includes spectacular pieces in clay, acrylic and tempera paint, pastel, and a variety of other media. The show is free and open to the public.



THE POWER OF A PERSONAL NOTE!

Forest Grove Elementary students are working hard every day to improve their writing skills. By the end of 5th grade, one of the expectations is that students will be able to proficiently create personal narrative writing that includes the following:

- * A focused small moment event written in a step-by-step sequence that begins with an interesting lead.
- * The story contains a problem, rising action, and a resolution or lesson.
- * A variety of details and descriptive language to convey meaning are used.
- * The setting is developed throughout the story and describes what a character sees, hears, smells, or feels.
- * Characters are differentiated from each other.
- * Text shows flexibility and contains a balance of dialogue, precise actions, and thoughts.



Wow! What a challenging undertaking for many adults, let alone upper elementary students! One of the teaching/ learning strategies that really helps students to engage, to enjoy the writing process, and to hone their writing skills is that of peer editing. The simple task of having a fellow classmate read one's writing and then give constructive feedback is not only fun, but powerfully effective for both participants. Of course, some training on how to be an effective evaluator and how to give meaningful feedback is necessary. Once this is understood, however, the learning potential of this unique kind of positive "peer pressure" may be just what our kids need more of! They love it and it works!

TAKE TIME TO EXPLORE YOUR WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUR CHILD

Did you know that the Early Childhood Programs offers **FREE** monthly play groups for children birth - 5 years of age? Play to Learn is an interactive parent/child program designed to enhance a child's developmental, social, and emotional skills. Classes include monthly play groups, literacy group, music, art, and science classes, and also family fun events throughout the year. For a schedule of events, visit www.hudsonvillepublicschools.org and click on the Early Childhood Programs link, or for more information, please call Darlene Van Kampen at 669-9362, ext. #16622.



HUDSONVILLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE CREATION OF THE INNOVATION IN EDUCATION AWARD!



The Hudsonville Education Foundation (HEF) has approved a new award which supports Hudsonville Public Schools' teachers, administrators, and staff.

The Innovation in Education Award has been made possible through a generous donation from a family in the Hudsonville Public School District. The anonymous family donated \$2,500, in honor of *Theresa Reagan*, Principal of Georgetown Elementary. The donor family wanted to recognize Theresa for her unquenchable desire to innovate, both in the classrooms and throughout her building. Her commitment to the students and families at Georgetown has directly impacted many children over the past 6 years that the school has been in operation.

The Innovation in Education Award is intended for any person or group who exhibits a passion for innovation, which directly impacts students in the Hudsonville Public School District. Recipients of the award could include teachers, administrators, employees, and volunteers.

Nominations for the Innovation in Education Award will be accepted each May. The HEF Board will review the nominations, and the \$500 award will be delivered to the winning nominee in September, at the beginning of the next school year.

The Hudsonville Education Foundation exists for the purpose of enhancing, promoting, and maintaining quality education in our community. The Innovation in Education Award allows families a new way to recognize a teacher or other staff member who has made a difference in the life of their child

Contact Robin VandenBerg at 616-669-1740, ext. 1 to learn more about this new opportunity to contribute to the Hudsonville Education Foundation.

JAMESTOWN SECOND GRADERS ARE EXPERTS!



Sea creatures, skiing, football, and even chinchillas. These are just some of the topics that second graders at Jamestown Elementary shared with their families and friends during a recent Expert Fair to celebrate their nonfiction writing. Each second grader planned, wrote, and published a nonfiction book to teach others about a topic of expertise. During daily writing workshop, students had the opportunity to study the work of authors who write nonfiction, develop their own topic across multiple chapters, and add in text features such as captions and bold words. Second graders even talked

about various methods of research to collect more information about their topics. All of this learning culminated with the Expert Fair. The second graders taught the visitors the most important things about their topics and shared parts of their books. Students enjoyed writing for a real audience and learned that nonfiction books are meant to teach!



CHILDREN AND FIRE

~by Jereme Vanden Heuvel, LMSW



Few chemical reactions have interwoven so deeply within the human survival sensory experience as fire. Our lives depend on it. Fire is essential for keeping us safe, warm and fed. It also seems to be a requisite for happiness and relaxation. Birthday candles, campfires, scented votives; we use fire to create fun, memorable experiences. How can something so vital to human existence be so misunderstood? Consider the following statistics: The United States Fire Administration reported in 2010, there were over 312,000 reported fires in people's homes. The fires resulted in 2,555 deaths and 13,275 injuries. These fires caused over 6.6 billion dollars worth of property damage (www.usfa.fema.gov). These numbers show how much we do not understand about fire safety, prevention, and survival.

Children misusing fire is a public health issue of particular interest to fire departments, schools, law enforcement agencies, courts, and families across the country. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) released a report in 2011 citing that from 2005-2009 an average of 56,300 child-playing fires were reported to United States municipal fire departments per year. The fires caused annual averages of 110 civilian deaths, 880 civilian injuries, and \$286 million dollars in property damage. Structure fires accounted for 22% of the fires, but 98% of the fatalities. Half of the home fires were started by lighters, 19% by matches, and 6% by candles. 40% of the fires began in the bedroom and bedding/mattress material was the item first ignited in 24% of the home structure fires. 44% of the home structure fires were started by a child between the age of 4 and 6. Outside (or unclassified fires) were started 2 out of 5 times by a child between the ages of 10-12 (www.nfpa.org).

The above statistics are based on data reported through the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). It is important to note, however, that NFIRS reports are filled out only when fire departments respond to the call. Many fires are not even reported to the fire department making the actual damages done by child set fires even higher than the data indicates.

As a community, we can make a difference with children and fire. Reporting all fires to the fire department is one way to make a difference. Even if the fire is out, contact your local fire department. This is especially important in child set fires. Children identified as intentionally misusing fire or playing with fire (or explosives) should be immediately referred to the West Michigan FIREmatch program (1-866-314-1116). West Michigan FIREmatch has been intervening with children for over 20 years. A FIREmatch screener will meet with the family and the child to assess the fire misuse and determine the best intervention plan. Children who have misused fire often fall within a specific category of firesetting behavior and require a specific intervention in order for the behavior to stop. The most common intervention is fire education. At times, the fire misuse may be motivated by troubled thoughts and feelings. Fire specific mental health services may be warranted to help the child and family improve. West Michigan FIREmatch will help link the family to appropriate services when those interventions are needed.

It is important to recognize fire (and explosive) misuse by children. Fire misuse cannot be ignored. Help is available. Contact Jereme Vanden Heuvel (HPS Social Worker and Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist) at 616-669-1970 x15523 if you have any questions or concerns about your child's use of fire.

HUDSONVILLE COMMUNITY EDUCATION SUMMER ACTIVITY BROCHURE

The Hudsonville Community Education Summer Brochure will be emailed to parents and also sent home with students at the end of April. We will again be offering many activities to keep your kids from saying those dreaded words, "I'm bored." We now offer online registrations, so do not delay in getting your child registered. Our web address is www.hudsonvillepublicschools.org, click on the Community Ed. link to the left of the page.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

One of the S.O.A.R. I goals for the Human Services Group is to monitor legislative changes and communicate the educational implications to the Hudsonville Public Schools staff and community. Matt's Safe School Law requires our Board of Education to adopt and implement a policy prohibiting bullying in our schools and at school functions. A committee made up of students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators has been reviewing and making revisions to our current policy language that prohibits bullying. We are excited to report that the committee is close to having a policy revision ready to recommend to the Board of Education. Look for additional legislative updates in future *Appleseed* publications.

Calendar

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Late Start for Middle & High School

March 29 - April 8, 2012

No school for students - Spring Break

**Parents/Guardians do you, or someone you know,
have a child who will turn four by December 1, 2012?
Would you like to have them attend preschool at NO cost?**

GSRP (Great Start Readiness Preschool) is a **FREE** state-funded preschool program for Hudsonville four year olds who meet certain criteria. This program allows children who qualify an opportunity to receive a high-quality preschool experience who may not otherwise have the chance. Parent/Guardian's must provide transportation to and from the program.

Children meeting at least two of the 25 criteria listed on the application can qualify. Some examples of the criteria include:

- Household income, for example a family of 4 is under \$66,000 annual income
- Single parent
- Unemployed parent

The Hudsonville Public Schools' GSRP program has openings as long as state budget allocations allow. Families who show the greatest need will be enrolled first. Registration for the 2012/2013 school year are now being accepted. For more information on the program, please call the Hudsonville Early Childhood office at [\(616\) 797-0842](tel:6167970842).



Hudsonville Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, handicap, disability, or limited English proficiency in any of its programs or activities. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Human Resource Director, Hudsonville Public Schools, 3886 Van Buren, Hudsonville, MI 49426, (616) 669-1740