

# Parkers Prairie Elementary Newsletter

December 2010

## Burrrrr! It's cold out there!

This morning I spent some time looking out of a classroom window to the playground. Students were very busy in their "work" of winter discovery. While I cannot say I am a fan of the cold weather, it surely is a delight to watch the student's reaction to the snow.

In places where there were significant drifts the students gathered and became human snow plows. Or, they would bound through the heaps that appeared to be as high as their thighs.

From another vantage point I could see the students on the sledding hill. They are great at sharing the sleds, and taking

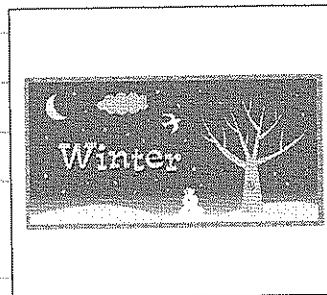
turns going down the hill. For the first morning of sledding it was enjoyable to watch the students even groom their own sledding trails. By afternoon recess the trails were ready, slick and fast.

I couldn't get very far in the halls today without students stopping me to say, "thank you," for the sleds.

We require full winter gear to have full access to the playground at PPES. This means that all students need to have boots, snowpants, a winter jacket, mittens/gloves and a hat to be out and about in all of the fun stuff. The main reasons for this are to stay warm

and dry—or at least as warm and dry as good Minnesota fun snow weather will allow. If your family needs assistance getting any of the gear, just let the office know and we will be happy to help out.

I've got my gear here at school and plan to hit the sledding hill soon!



**Winter seems to sneak up on us every year, but it is officially here.**

### Special points of interest:

✓ There is an important survey on page three of this newsletter. As a school we need your input on how to best get families involved through family involvement activities. Please take the time to fill out, and return this survey. It is also available electronically if you prefer. Thanks in advance, we appreciate your input.

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## Instant Alert

This is the second year that our school district is using Instant Alert as a parent notification system. We use this system to notify families of many school related things. During the winter months this is the system we use

to communicate with families about school delays or school closings.

Individual families are responsible for setting up and making changes to their Instant Alert account. This set up allows you to choose how you

would like to be contacted by the school. If you have not registered for Instant Alert you can access the information on our districts webpage—[www.isd547.com](http://www.isd547.com), click on the gold oval marked Instant Alert.

## Handbook Highlight

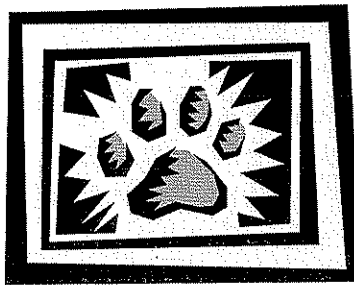
Did you know that the meal programs at our school are on what's called a "pre-paid meal policy." This means that students are supposed to have a balance in their account before eating meals. It is kind of like using a debit card as opposed to a credit card. With debit cards you can only spend money that exists in the account, where with credit cards you pay off your balance after you have acquired the goods or services. Please be aware of your families account balance, and keep it in the positive. We appreciate this!

Our elementary handbook can be accessed on our district website. [www.isd547.com](http://www.isd547.com)

## PRIDE

Maybe you noticed the PRIDE posters in the hallway during conferences. During one of our School Family Time activities students across grade levels worked together to make posters that related to PRIDE. They used an idea from our building wide focus on desired behaviors to show with pictures what PRIDE looks like, sounds like, and feels like. The posters are still up in the hallway, so if you happen to be in the building take a look and see how well our students can explain PRIDE.

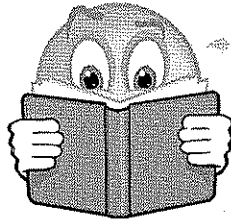
As your family gets ready for the holiday season there are many ways to use PRIDE at home. Here are some ideas: Practice Kindness – exchange warm greetings, or say "thank you" to the store clerk. Respect Everyone – share a favorite toy with a family member (even if you don't want to). Include Others – over the extended school break have a school friend over to play, or during family gatherings find ways to include others in conversation. Demonstrate Self Control – expressing gratitude for a gift (even if it was not your favorite thing). Everyone Be Responsible – have children help get the house cleaned up for company, after a family meal clear the table or help with dishes.



## Book Fair

Our fall Book Fair was a HUGE success. It is so energizing to watch children get excited about books, and about adding to their home libraries. Book Fairs are one way that we secure funds to add resources to our library program. The fall Book Fair earned us \$1400 towards books and programs we need for our elementary library. We had many volunteers that assisted with making this event a success and a THANKS goes out to all of them!

There will be two more Book Fairs this school year, look for more information in the coming months.



## Family Fun Night

We are in the early stages of planning for one of our family outreach experiences. For the past several years this has occurred in a "Family Fun Night" format. We have had evenings that focus on literacy and math – offering a good time for families and school staff to be together "learning" while having fun.

We would like your feedback as to the time of day that works best for you to come to the school with your child(ren) for such an experience. From the three choices below please check the time that works best for your family, let us know what you think as far as serving food for the evening, and let us know if your family needs help with transportation.

Your feedback is VERY important to us and a necessary first step in our planning. Please return this information to the school by Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. After this feedback we will continue with the planning process, and when a date has been sent we will get that information out to all families. Thanks for your input!

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

Time that works best for our family:

\_\_\_\_\_ 1:30 – 3:30

\_\_\_\_\_ 3:00 – 5:00

\_\_\_\_\_ 5:00 – 7:00

Food

\_\_\_\_\_ Serve a Snack

\_\_\_\_\_ Serve a Meal

\_\_\_\_\_ No Food is Fine

To attend Family Outreach Activities our family needs assistance with transportation Yes No  
If "yes" please provide address: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please Circle)

For families that prefer to respond electronically please use the following link -  
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/D5GX9RJ>