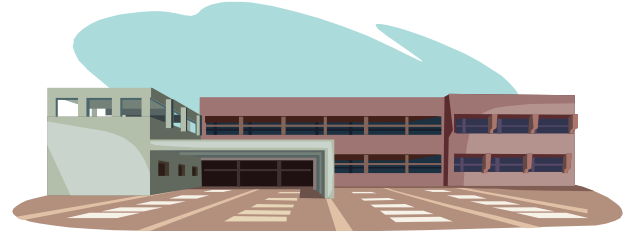


# The Bennet Elementary Newsletter

Volume 1 No. 1

www.districtor1.org

August 19th, 2011



## Character Counts Corner

### Every Good Decision Starts with a Stop

More often than we like, most of us face choices that can have serious and lasting impact on our lives. Do we go along with the crowd? Do we tell someone off, quit a job, or end a relationship? Unfortunately, these decisions are not preceded by a drum roll warning us that the stakes are high. Even worse, we often don't have a lot of time to figure out what to do.

It's no surprise that most bad decisions – the ones that mess up our lives – are made impulsively or without sufficient reflection.

Ancient proverbs tell us to "count to ten when you're angry" or "think ahead." But anger and lack of preplanning are only two factors that can impede excellent decision making. Fatigue, fear, frustration, stress, impatience, and emotions also create obstacles to wise choices.

Just as we learned to look both ways before we cross the street, we can learn to analyze every important decision-making situation to allow us to arrive at conclusions that are both effective and ethical.

Each decision, therefore, should start with a stop – a forced moment of reflection to help us clarify our goal, evaluate the completeness and credibility of our information, and devise an alternate strategy, if necessary, to achieve the best possible result. Stopping also allows us to muster our moral willpower to overcome temptations and emotions that could lead to a rash, foolish, or ill-considered decision.

While it's great to have a day or two to sleep on a problem, or even a few hours, many situations don't afford us that luxury. But a pause of even a few seconds can often be enough.

This is Michael Josephson reminding you to think ahead because character counts.



## New Year is Underway

### Welcome back to another year at Bennet Elementary and Little Panthers Pre-School

The summer flew by as usual. One week of school is already behind us. We have had a great first week. The students came back ready to learn. It seems like we haven't missed a step since last spring. Thanks for all the support and help you provided in making sure that your children were ready for the new year.

We had a busy summer of construction at Bennet Elementary. Perhaps you have noticed the huge metal structure outside of the building as you drive up Dogwood. That is our new cooling tower for our air conditioning system. It replaced our old cooling tower which was inside the school in our utility room. A new boiler was installed also which will heat the building in the winter. Both the air cooling tower and the boiler are energy efficient models which will save a considerable amount on our utility bills in the future. In addition to the cooling and heating project, a number of other projects were completed this summer.

Our enrollment is up from last year. We started this school year with 232 students, up from 222 last year. We have 23 new students starting school in grades 1-6. Our kindergarten has 36 students with 18 of those being the first child to start school in their family. In preschool, we will have two sessions with 12 students in each session.

### Little Panthers Preschool Open House

The Little Panthers Preschool will be hosting an open house on Friday, Aug 19, 2010, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Parents, grandparents and current preschool students are welcome to attend the open house, as well as prospective parents and interested community members.

There will be tours of the preschool facility and outdoor classroom (playground). There will also be treats! Come on over to the preschool Friday after school.

### Bennet Elementary Open House Held August 23rd Scholastic Book Fair To Take Place Also

Bennet Elementary will host its annual Open House on Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. We would love to see parents, grandparents and community members visit.

The school will be open for everyone in the community to come and visit. The classrooms, library, art room and computer lab will be open for parents and patrons to visit. You may sign up to volunteer in the school during the year. Representatives from the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts will be on hand with registration information. Members of the Elementary Boosters will be passing out free ice cream bars to all students who bring their parents or guardians!

The Scholastic Book Fair will again be held in conjunction with the Elementary Open House. All proceeds will be used to select books for the library and classrooms. Additional hours for the Book Fair will be 3:00-4:00 p.m. Wednesday - Friday. We are still looking for Volunteers who would like to work at the Book Fair. You may contact the school at 782-3535 if you want to help.

## SECOND STEP CHARACTER PROGRAM

This year we are implementing a new curriculum, *Second Step*. The *Second Step* program teaches skills in the following four areas:

1. Skills for Learning: Students gain skills to help themselves learn, including how to focus their attention, listen carefully, and be assertive when asking for help with schoolwork.
2. Empathy: Students learn to identify and understand their own and others' feelings. Students also learn how to take another's perspective and how to show compassion.
3. Emotion Management: Students learn specific skills for calming down when experiencing strong feelings, such as anxiety or anger.
4. Problem Solving: Students learn a process for solving problems with others in a positive way.

Throughout the year, your child will be bringing home Home Links that go with several of the lessons. Home Links are simple, fun activities for you and your child to complete together. If you have any questions about the *Second Step* program, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. McIntosh for more information. Thank you for supporting your child in learning the skills that lead to success in school and in life.

## Fine Arts Boosters Selling Activity Calendar

The Palmyra Music and Fine Arts Boosters have again put together an activities calendar for the District OR-1 schools. The calendar has always been an excellent fund raiser for the Music and Fine Arts Boosters; however, due to the expense of the process this year we are asking \$5.00

for the flip calendar and \$5.00 for the pocket calendar. The money raised always applies toward the music and fine arts students in the forms of a scholarship for a graduating senior, camp scholarships, band uniforms, etc. The calendars will be available at the Bennet Open House on August 23 and the Palmyra Booster Bash on August 25 or from any booster member (Jackie Bremer, Calendar Coordinator; Denise Knutson, President; Jill Jones, Vice President; Diana Poskochil, Secretary; and Sonja Bartels, Treasurer). Please patronize our advertisers whenever possible and thank you for your support. Jackie 402-432-1410.

## Volunteers Needed for Book Fair

Volunteers are still needed to run the Book Fair during Open House on Tuesday. Call the school at 782-3535 to sign up for an hour shift. All proceeds from the Book Fair will provide books for the elementary media center and classrooms.

## Student Parent Handbook and Emergency Card Notes

A copy of the Student Parent Handbook was sent home on Monday with the oldest sibling in each family. If they did not get it to you, please call the school and we will make sure that another is sent out. It is important that you receive a copy and read through the handbook. On the back page of the handbook is a Parent Receipt of Handbook Form. **These were to be returned back to school by today, August 19<sup>th</sup>.**

Emergency Contact Cards were sent home on Monday also. These need to be returned ASAP. Please contact the school if your children did not bring any of these forms home to you. We will get another one to you. Thanks!

## Morning Arrival Times

We are trying to alleviate some confusion and chaos at the beginning of the day by adhering to the following arrival times; **Bennet town kids that are eating breakfast are not to arrive before 8:00 a.m. Bennet Town kids that are not eating breakfast should not arrive before 8:15 a.m.** Please help us out by following these arrival times. If you need to drop your children off earlier, we have the before and after school program available for your use.

## No Parking in Circle or Preschool Lot

The circle drive in front of the school is for bus pick-up and drop off. During loading and unloading times before and after school, please do not pull into the circle. It is for buses only. This is an important safety issue. Please help us out by not pulling into the circle drive from 7:30 – 8:45 a.m. and from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. **We ask that you use the driveway south of the school for drop-offs in the morning and exit through the south parking lot. If you are picking up your child, please park in the south parking lot also. Do not park on Dogwood Street.**

The preschool parking lot east of the school is to be used for drop off and pick up for preschool students only. Bennet Elementary students are to be picked up and dropped off in the parking lot to the south of the elementary school. Thank you for your cooperation in these areas.

