



The “PACK” Newsletter November 2009

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From The Desk of Mr. Wall-Principal

This month I've chosen to focus on some 21st century tools you can use to stay involved and informed as a parent.

Email is a fast and efficient tool for communication between parents and school. If you have email access at home please consider providing your email address to the school. Once your email is entered in our school management system, teachers, secretaries, and the principal can easily send you messages. We also have the ability to send mass

communications to all the email addresses we have in our system. This comes in handy in distributing information to parents quickly and without the expense of postage on a letter.

Another useful, electronic tool for parents is our **Online Parent** access. This is a web-based system whereby a parent/guardian may access information from our school information system about their child. They can view attendance reports, recent report cards, progress reports showing scores on assignments, quizzes, and tests, and update

parent/guardian contact information. To receive access to Online Parent, each parent/guardian needs to set up a username and password. Look for a link on our school website (www.ikm-manning.k12.ia.us) that will lead you to instructions on how to set up access. Or you can call Sonia in the high school office. If you already have your Online Parent access set up, take a minute to review your contact information and make sure your information is correct. You can submit corrections right from the web and this would be a great way to get an email address from you or

update an old email address we may have in our system.

Finally, with winter and potential snow days just around the corner, now would be a great time to get signed up for our Snowcap alert system. Once registered you can receive text messages and/or email messages about cancellations and postponements of school activities. You'll find a link for signing up on our school website.

A note for parents about student cell phones...

Many students now carry cell phones with them and while there are several good reasons why a parent might want their child to have access to a cell phone there also are many ways cell phones can be misused and disruptive in a school environment.

IKM-Manning High School has a policy that student cell phones are to be turned off during school hours and are not to be used in classrooms, halls, study hall, bathrooms, locker rooms, or the cafeteria. If your child has a cell phone, your cooperation and support of school policy is greatly appreciated.



“Techie Talk”

A 2008 study posted in the “American Psychologist”, found some interesting

statistics about youth ages 10-17 and their online behaviors.

- 56% report posting personal information online
- 43% interact with unknown people online
- 35% admit to having unknown people on their friends list
- 28% use the Internet to make rude comments to others
- 26% have sent their personal information to people they met online
- 15% download images from file-sharing programs
- 13% have knowingly visited x-rated sites
- 9% have used the Internet to embarrass or harass people
- And 5% have talked to people they didn't know about sex online

“Are any of these stats alarming to you? Do you know where your kids are — and who they're talking to online? Want to know more about what you can do to protect yourself or your children online?”

Monday, November 9th, FBI Victim Specialist, Karen Gale, will be presenting to middle school students at 10 a.m. in Manilla and to high school students at 2 p.m. in Manning on online Internet safety. There will also be a parent presentation open to community members at 5:30 p.m. at the IKM-

Manning High School Auditorium in Manning. Her presentation will guide students to recognize and avoid the potential dangers on the Internet so that they can make safer choices online and in the real world. The bulk of her presentation is from NetSmartzkids.org and will focus on online predators, social networking, cyber bullying, online gaming, spyware, spam, and scams.

The Federal Trade commission urges parents to talk to your students about social networking and provides the following tips:

- Keep the computer in an open area so you can keep an eye on where your kids are online
- Use the Internet with your kids. Talk to your kids about their online habits.
- Make sure your kids' screen names don't say too much about them.
- Your kids should post only information that you and they are comfortable with others seeing.
- Remind kids that once they post information online, they can't take it back.
- Warn your kids about the dangers of flirting with strangers online.

•Tell your students to trust their gut if they have suspicions. If something makes them feel uncomfortable they need to tell a trusted adult.



New Feel for Math

Students in Mrs. Royer's seventh and eighth grade math classes are experiencing math in a new way – without textbooks. The textbooks will remain a reference for all students, similar to dictionaries. Math classes will be problem based with students answering essential questions centered on topics selected to stretch their previously developed math knowledge and build new skills.

Technology plays a large role in these math classes too. All students have access to internet-capable computers every math class. Students will be writing their answers in a journal and will collaborate in their wiki (an interactive web page) and work with various web 2.0 tools, such as Wordle and Animoto. (Ask your student about the Wordle he/she just created the first week of school.) All students received their new usernames and passwords for First in Math, (the online program where students practice the basics and problem

solving in a competitive game-like environment). Additional online digital math games students will experience this year are Calculation Nation and Lure of the Labyrinth.

New this year is the addition of Geometer's Sketchpad, a dynamic geometry computer program. Students will be able to construct various geometric shapes, manipulate and animate them, exploring and learning geometry in new and exciting ways.

Computers are not the only technology in the math class. Students are utilizing the clickers, a remote response system that records their answers to questions posed electronically. The clickers, coupled with the electronic whiteboard, help students look at and understand math in new ways.

Looking for ways to explore math at home with your child? Check out www.figurethis.org, <http://calculationnation.nctm.org/>; www.firstinmath.com; and <http://www.mathmuseum.org/games2.htm>



Reorganization At Length

During the joint school board meeting on October

8, the IKM and Manning boards discussed reorganization options at length. The first official step in the reorganization process is the development of a reorganization petition. The reorganization petition must state the name of the proposed school district, the number of directors to be included in the initial or regular board of the new school district, and the method of electing or selecting those directors. If director districts are included in the method of election, the boundaries are determined after the reorganization proposal is approved by the voters.

Both the IKM and Manning School Boards approved the name of the new district to be IKM-Manning, the number of school board members to be seven, with a combination of some board members elected by director districts and some board members elected at-large. It is the intent of both boards to become a reorganized district by July 1, 2011. Currently the plan is to have both communities vote in April, 2010. A second informational meeting was conducted on Friday, October 16, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Manning on reorganization. Administrators plan to be present during P-T conferences to provide

information on reorganization.

The recognition of honor students at graduation was discussed with both boards approving the recommendation of the joint advisory committee to recognize the valedictorian and salutatorian positions, recognizing ties with no distinctions between districts, and maintaining the recognition of honors students.

An early start waiver hearing was conducted prior to the regular IKM board meeting. There were no objections communicated during the hearing to the board; therefore, the district will make application to the state for an early start waiver next fall.

A few weeks ago, Governor Chet Culver announced a 10 percent across-the-board cut to state general fund appropriations effective immediately. At the state level, this means that approximately \$600 million must be cut from the state's budget between now and June 30. At the local level, this reduction will decrease the amount of state aid by approximately \$200,000. School districts do not lose the

spending authority, but the amount of cash received is reduced unless local districts approve cash reserve levies in the future. A cash reserve levy is a property tax levy at the local level. This announcement comes one day after the Revenue Estimating Conference reported a projected 8.4% decline in state revenue.

Scholarship Scams

The following has been adapted from information provided by Fastweb and the Iowa College Access Network.

Scholarship Scams Tips

Knowing the warning signs can keep you from being a scholarship scam victim.

Fees: You shouldn't have to pay to search for or apply for scholarships. Check out the *free* scholarship search at www.fastweb.com.

Credit card or bank account information needed: You should never have to give credit card or bank account information to award providers.

Scholarship guarantee: No one can guarantee that you'll win a scholarship because no one can control

scholarship judges' decisions. Also, be wary of "high success rates"- they usually do not refer to actual award winners.

No work involved: Legitimate scholarship applications require time and energy.

No contact information: Legitimate sponsors should provide contact information upon request. If the sponsor does not supply a valid e-mail address, phone number and mailing address (not PO Box) upon request, that could be the sign of a scam.

Unsolicited scholarships: If you are called to receive an award for which you never applied, be alert-it's most likely a scam.

Pressure tactics: Don't allow yourself to be pressured into applying for a scholarship, especially if the sponsor is asking you to pay.

Claims of "exclusive" scholarships: Legitimate sponsors won't restrict knowledge about their award to a single search service.

An official-sounding name or endorsement doesn't automatically mean legitimacy: A sponsor may use words like "national", "education" or "federal" or have an official-looking

seal, but might still be a scammer. Also, the federal government and the U.S. Dept. of Education do not endorse private businesses.

Your questions aren't answered directly: If you can't get a straight answer from a sponsor regarding their application, what will be done with our information (e.g., if it will be sent to a third party) or other questions, proceed with caution.

FAST TIP: Applying for financial aid should never cost more than a postage stamp!

BONUS TIP: An upfront fee is not needed for scholarship or loan applications!

Suspect a scam?

Report the suspected scammer to any of the following organizations with as many details as possible.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
Ph: 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357)
Web: www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams

National Fraud Information Center (NFIC)
Ph: 1-800-876-7060
Web: www.fraud.org

Better Business Bureau (BBB)

Be sure to have the address of the company about whom you are filing the complaint.
Ph: 1-703-276-0100
Web: www.bbb.org

United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS)
Ph: 1-800-654-8896
Web: www.ups.com/postalinspectors/fraud

The following is an excerpt from an informational letter from the *Iowa College Access Network*. The *Iowa College Access Network* is the organization that provides the FREE educational college planning and financial aid sessions for IKM-Manning students and parents. The *Iowa College Access Network* can be contacted at <http://www.ICANsucceed.org> or toll-free at 877-272-4692.

WARNING: Usually at this time of year college-bound students find themselves bombarded with information regarding colleges, financial aid services, and scholarship offers. Much of the information is valuable, however, there are several less than reputable organizations popping up offering students all kinds of services- usually with a price. "Ironically, there are qualified financial aid professionals who will

help students and parents for free," said Steve McCullough, CEO of Iowa Student Loan Liquidity Corporation. "Our College Planning Center is staffed by former college financial aid and admissions professionals whose entire purpose is to provide quality assistance, FREE of charge and with no strings attached. High school guidance counselors, college financial aid officers and the Iowa College Student Aid Commission are also sources that provide FREE financial aid information."

SENIORS & SENIOR PARENTS TO DO LIST

I have put together a small checklist for you and your child to make sure things are getting done, as they need to.

1. Send out applications to schools that may be options for attendance.

2. Investigate all potential sources of financial aid.

**Watch for the FAFSA workbook packet to be coming home with your child. On-line version available at www.fafsa.ed.gov

3. Checkout web sites of institutions and financial aid sites. Two excellent sites for scholarships are www.ICANsucceed.org and www.fastweb.com.

4. Read and complete all scholarship information.

****Make sure to meet all deadlines.**

5. Register for December ACT, if haven't already taken.

****November 6 for regular registration and November 7-20 for late fee registration.**

6. Set up visits to potential college choices.

****Call Mrs. Soyer to set up visits. Please have a date and name of institution ready when calling for visit scheduling.**

7. Be watching the mail for housing forms.

****Watch for due dates and deposit fees.**

8. When necessary, ask your teachers, counselor, and/or employers to write letters of recommendation for your admission and scholarship applications.

JUNIORS TO DO LIST

Begin gathering information about colleges that interest you.

Check out the Iowa College Access Center's website:
www.ICANSucceed.org.
It is directly linked to Iowa college homepages and

contains valuable information about college.

Be thinking about what is important to you in a college (i.e. size, type, location, programs, facilities, cost, academic quality, etc.).

SOPHOMORE AND FRESHMEN TO DO LIST

Visit with adults in a variety of professions and ask about likes and dislikes in their career. Also ask what kinds of training and degrees are needed for their profession.

Remember to work hard in school because colleges look at all four years of high school when determining admission.

Make sure we're taking classes that will help you later on. Some colleges recommend 4 years of English, 3-4 of Math, Science, and Social Studies and 2 years of a foreign language.

Get involved. Colleges not only look at grades but also activities.

The Iowa College Access Network is a division of the Iowa Student Loan Liquidity Corporation, a private not-for-profit corporation. The ICAN mission is to supply FREE information, assistance, counseling and support to

college bound students and their families as they plan for college and apply for financial aid. In addition, the ICAN will support community organizations, employers and high school guidance counselors as they help individuals prepare for college.



Hammrich's Howl

Flu germs may just stay
away

When we use soap and
water

Many times a day!!

Many times a day??

Many times a day!!

I know, I know...the "rap" (and I use that term loosely) is a little "corny" but this is the behavior we are trying to encourage and model in the elementary to help combat the cold and flu season that is upon us. HANDWASHING is one of our greatest defenses according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A big THANKS to all our parents who are also promoting this habit at home!! The practice of hand washing at school is much more automatic to those who wash their hands frequently at home. Many if not all classrooms also have a bottle of hand sanitizer (donated by a local community member)

available for all to use. This is the next best thing if they are not able to get to soap and water in a timely fashion. In addition... students are reminded to cover their coughs or sneezes by either using a tissue or their inner elbow area.

If your child does become sick we ask that he/she be fever free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. That should help support a strong recovery AND limit exposure to other students.

Of course another great way to keep our children healthy is by feeding them well-balanced meals and energy-giving snacks. With parties and birthdays coming up as well as scheduled snack times for the younger children it is important to keep treats as healthy as possible. I am one of the first ones to wonder how we connect the words “healthy” and “treat.” However, kids do enjoy our individually wrapped baby carrots at lunch as well as many kinds of fruits or crackers. Our wellness policy does a great job of addressing snack issues asking that they not only be healthy but also prepackaged and individually wrapped. The healthy part of “prepackaged and individually wrapped” is the fact that far fewer germs are SHARED. Bottom-line ...we are

trying to keep our kids as happy and healthy as possible by teaching them good habits that will last them a lifetime.

Happy Thanksgiving to you all!

Dates to Remember:

November 5th:

Parent/Teacher

Conferences (1 hour early out)

November 6th: NO SCHOOL

November 17th: 2 hour early out

November 25th: 1 hour early out

November 26th & 27th: NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Vacation

October 29th through November 5th – BOOK FAIR



Supporting Student Performances

During November and December, we have the opportunity to watch our young people perform in a variety of concerts, plays, and other productions.

They have worked hard and put in a lot of practice time to give us an enjoyable performance.

As adults, we respect their work and time. This fall we've had great fan support at football, volleyball and cross country events. We'd like to see that continue for our

fine arts program as well.

The differences between athletics and fine arts require that we show our respect and enthusiasm in different ways. When attending a concert or play, keep these simple rules in mind:

1. Enter and exit your seat only between selections or acts. If possible, wait until the audience is applauding before moving. The only exception to this is if you need to remove a restless or crying child.
2. Don't talk while the students are performing.
3. Cell phones off or on vibrate Please.
4. Do not applaud until the conductor has dropped his/her hands and has turned around to acknowledge the audience.
5. Whistling, yelling, or otherwise congratulating the performers loudly is generally not appropriate. After the performance, they would love to hear your comments and appreciation.

Thank you for your help in being positive role models for our students.

Student Achievement

Measures of Achievement

The Manning Community School District uses a variety of ways to measure student achievement. Our goal is to create a picture of the knowledge and skill of each student that is as accurate as possible. To do this we use district-wide assessments (ITBS/ITED, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress, WorkKeys, BRI, DIBELS), classroom projects, quizzes, discussions, homework, reports, and tests. This type of student achievement information helps us understand individual student progress toward district standards and benchmarks. Data from District-Wide Assessments as well as State and Local Indicators of Achievement are part of the District's Annual Progress Report (APR). Portions of the APR will appear in newsletters throughout the 2009-2010 school year. Complete copies of the APR are available in the Superintendent's office.

State and Local Indicators of Achievement

	2007/2008	2008/2009
Attendance Rate		
Average Daily Attendance Grades K-6	96.82%	(K-4) 96.98%
Average Daily Attendance Grades 7-12	93.88%	(9-12) 93.17%
Average Daily Attendance K-12	95.28%	NA
State Average Daily Attendance K-8 Goal	95.8%	95.8%
Dropout Data		
Dropout Rate, 7-12	0.42%	NA
Statewide Dropout Rate, 7-12	1.96%	NA
Dropout Rate, 9-12	0.46%	0.71%
Statewide Dropout Rate, 9-12	2.85%	NA
Female Dropout Rate, 9-12	0%	0.65%
Male Dropout Rate, 9-12	0.94%	0.79%
Graduation Data		
Number of Seniors	45	66
Graduation Rate	100%	96.97%
State of Iowa Graduation Rate	88.7%	NA
State of Iowa Graduation Rate Goal	90.3%	90.3%
Postsecondary Plans of Graduating Class		
Intend to Pursue	95.56%	93.75%
Core Program Completion of Graduating Class		
% Graduates Completing Core	66.7%	100%
College Entrance Scores (ACT)		
% Graduates Taking ACT	62.2%	65.6%
% Graduates (who took ACT) Scoring 20 or Above	71.4%	83.3%
% All Participants Scoring 20 or Above	76.74%	79.69%
Dual Credit Course Enrollment (Academy)		
% Senior Participants	70.7%	71.2%

Effective schools research indicates that high attendance is an indicator of potential student achievement. School attendance is an indicator of school and later career success.

Manning Community School District had a 0.42% dropout rate (Grades 9-12) during the 2007-08 school year. Dropout Rate is calculated by the Iowa State Department of Education. The most current data is from the 2007-08 school year. Data from 2008-09 was calculated according to district records. State data may vary slightly.

Graduation Rate is calculated yearly by the Iowa State Department of Education. The most current data is for the graduating class of 2008.

Core Program is the recommended core college preparatory curriculum. This curriculum includes 4+ years of English, 3+ years of Mathematics, 3+ years of Social Studies, and 3+ years of Science.

Students who intend to go to college generally take the American College Testing Program (ACT) Exam to meet entrance requirements. A score of twenty or higher on the 36-point scale indicates probable success in college.

Dual Credit Course Enrollment data is based on the number of seniors who participate in at least one dual credit course. The student who successfully completes a dual credit course receives DMACC credit as well as IKM-Manning High School credit toward graduation requirements.