

Jr. Highlights

Dr. Jill Earman, Principal
Mr. Michael Minnick, Principal

Parent Newsletter – February 2012
Mrs. V. Haney, Editor – Mrs. M. Snedden, Publisher

Our Principals' Perspectives

Greetings to our Junior High Families and Friends! It's so hard to believe we are more than halfway through the school year! We've had an incredible first semester. At the risk of bragging, allow me to share some of the great accomplishments of our IJHS family.

- IJHS students raised over \$1,240 for the Teddy Bear Fund Drive that benefits Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and Indiana Regional Medical Center, under the leadership of the **Builders Club** and their advisors, **Mr. Scott Mossgrove** and **Miss Kristine Bunyak**.
- There were 1,445 items collected for the Love Basket Foundation. The eighth grade collected 592 items to earn the Terrific Traveling Turkey Trophy. **Mrs. Valerie Haney** coordinates the Love Basket activities for IJHS, and retired teacher **Mrs. Joy Behr** coordinates the Indiana County School Collection Campaign.
- Athletic Director **Mr. Scott Mossgrove** reported that 173 students were involved in the fall and winter sports programs.
- In the first quarter, 403 students were on the honor roll, with 190 of them earning high honors.
- Attendance has averaged 96% during August through December.
- In a rebuilding year, the IJHS Forensics Team, under the direction of **Ms. Robyn Bailey-Orchard**, had no 9th graders and only two returning students. Even so, the team of 14 competed in the Five-County Junior High Forensics League's three tournaments, with over three-quarters of the team placing at each.
- Twelve students in the 6th and 7th grades participated in the **Knowledge Master** competition in December. The advisors, **Mrs. Brook Brautigam** and **Mrs. Faith Newman** are looking forward to a spring competition as well.
- According to director **Ms. Robyn Bailey-Orchard** and technical director **Mr. Jim Geidel**, 46 students were involved in the fall production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream, or the Night They Missed the Forest For the Trees*. Students were involved in the cast, ensemble, set decorating, light operation, sound operation, costume design, wardrobe management, props, make-up, set crew, and stage managers. There is a place for everyone who wants to get involved!

At IJHS, we celebrate positive character traits, such as responsibility, respect, and perseverance. We appreciate our students who display these admirable qualities and who continue to add to our impressive list of accomplishments. Best wishes for continued success in 2012!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jill Earman

It's amazing to me that we are half way through the school year. By the time you receive this publication, report cards with your child's 2nd quarter performance will have been delivered. Speaking of student learning, the **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)** tests, also known as NWEA will run from **February 2-9**, at the Indiana Junior High.

Student Achievement: The PSSA assessments are around the corner! Please make sure your child is completing their homework, reading daily, and exercising as many opportunities as possible to apply mathematical and problem solving skills. Simple measures such as these will only reinforce the application of learning.

School Community: The IJHS OLWEUS Core Team is planning a school assembly to promote school community and our efforts regarding bully prevention. A tentative February date is being considered with more details to follow. It's great to see the response to the "**Teens for Jeans**" effort! Thank you to the IJHS community for consistently responding so well to support those less fortunate!

Finally, I wish to pass on a friendly reminder to all our students to prepare for winter weather by dressing appropriately for the cold and wet conditions. Happy Valentine's!

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael Minnick



Free — Come and Get One!

David R. Allen, Ph.D.

District Psychologist

Everyone knows that technology is changing the way we acquire information, socialize, and communicate with others. With these advancements come certain risks for our children. They can be tempted to act or communicate inappropriately online, forgetting they are accountable. Also, there can be individuals online who have bad intentions, including bullies, predators, hackers, and scammers. Lastly, children may be exposed to inappropriate content such as violence, pornography, bigotry/prejudice, or other hate speech. What is a parent to do?

Technology experts say that the best way to protect our kids online is to “talk to them.” Sounds simple enough, but like many parents, I’m not sure what I would say other than, “Be careful.” Obviously, that’s not all that helpful.

Thankfully there are helpful resources available to parents. In the “Parent Help Resources” section of the District website I have posted a few excellent Internet and technology sites such as OnguardOnline.gov. In addition, we would like to give you a free copy of a wonderful booklet titled *Net Cetera: Chatting With Kids About Being Online*. The authors recommend that, “As soon as your child is using a computer, a cell phone or any mobile device, it’s time to talk to them about online behavior, safety, and security.” This booklet aids parents in having these discussions. Did I say they are free? Simply pick one up at your child’s school office or request that one be sent home with your child.



PTSA News

Listed below are the dates for the PTSA meetings for the 2012 year. If you have not joined for this year it is not too late! Please plan to join us at our next meeting! If you have any questions or would like to join the PTA please contact Melissa Shanshala at 724-541-0500. The meetings are held in the Indiana Junior High Library.

February 8 at 6:45 p.m.

March 14 at 6:45 p.m.

April 18 at 6:45 p.m.

May 9 at 6:45 p.m.

Jr. Highlights is the newsletter for families of students at Indiana Area Junior High School. It is published monthly during the school year under the authority of the Indiana Area School District, 501 East Pike, Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701.

News from the Nurse

Attention: Seventh Grade Parents!



The Pennsylvania School Health law requires that dental examinations for each student upon entrance into school, third grade, and **seventh grade**. These grades are selected because they represent critical periods of growth and development in a child’s life.

The school dentist will be at Indiana Junior High on **Wednesday, February 8, at 8:00 a.m.** You may choose to have the dental examination done by your own dentist or by the school dentist. The free school dental examination is merely a screening and no treatment will be provided. A notice will be sent home if the student requires additional work, such as cleaning or care of decay or abscess.

Please complete the permission slip that was sent home and return to me as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in helping me meet this mandate of the School Health law. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call me at (724) 463-8568 ext. 3.



STUCO News

The Indiana Junior High Student Council annually hosts a craft show at the Indiana Senior High in the fall. To host this craft show, we are in need of 40-50 eight-foot tables. If anyone in the community knows of a group that would lend us the tables for one day we would greatly appreciate it.

The STUCO Craft Show will be held on **October 20**, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We set up on October 19, immediately after school. This is our enormous fundraiser, which contributes approximately \$2,000 to the IJHS for various items. Through the funds generated from this annual event, STUCO has contributed such items as projection units, eight ping-pong tables, a podium for the auditorium, the outside marquee, and smart boards.

Great Opportunities in the Food Service Department



There are part-time openings for workers in food service.

This is a good job for those parents who are looking to work only during hours when their children are in school.

If interested, contact **Eleanor Sherry** at **724-463-8713**.

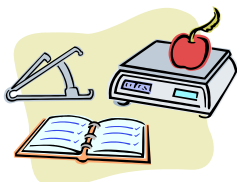
Skills for Living: An Integral Part of FCS!



Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) is one of the classes each 6th, 7th, and 8th grader will have during the 2011-2012 school year. This three-year rotation allows the FCS teachers, **Mrs. Caryn Penrose** and **Mrs. Dana Piccolini** the opportunity to build on the standards and essential life skills set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Sixth grade students spend their time in three main areas. In clothing and textiles, they make pencil holders that attach to their assignment books. Students apply valuable problem-solving skills creating this very useful project. In the Foods and Nutrition area, students are introduced to “My Plate,” the new initiative promoted by First Lady Obama, which replaces the food pyramid. They are learning to evaluate their eating patterns and apply the skills of simple food preparation. The third section they explore is Family Living. The topics of self-esteem, communication skills, conflict resolution skills, and healthy family relations are discussed.

Seventh grade FCS expands on the above three areas. The Food and Nutrition area discusses healthy eating in more depth. Students are taste-testing good whole foods and preparing simple breakfast items they can make for themselves and their families. Along with making the sewing project of a drawstring bag, 7th grade students discuss maintenance of clothing such as laundry and simple repairs such as sewing on buttons, which are skills these students use in their everyday life. Family Living for 7th graders’ emphasizes relationships skills with family members and friends. Conflict resolution skills are practiced. Terminology and helpful tips to help those grieving are all discussed in the mini unit on Death Education.



Eighth grade FCS centers around four topics: decision-making, foods and nutrition, child development, and consumer economics. The decision-making unit discusses making good choices by weighing the positive and negative outcomes of each decision. This decision making model is tied into the state mandate which requires drug and alcohol information be presented every year to all students. Building on the previous years in Food and Nutrition, students are preparing simple meals that exemplify the “My Plate” model. The unit on child development emphasizes the milestone of each age, safety factors in caring for children, positive guidance and proper care techniques for all ages. In consumer economics student learn the process of budgeting income and expenses. Credit, banking transactions, and consumer rights are a part of this unit.

The FCS experience gives all students an introduction into basic skills they will need in their adult lives.

The First Annual Battle of the Students!!!

February 24

7-9 p.m.

IJHS School Gym

Don't miss out on all the fun!

Tickets will be on sale

February 21-24 over lunches.

Cost is \$3.



Parent to Parent

The older my son Jonathan got, the less he read. I was concerned, so I asked the school librarian for ideas.

First, Mrs. Cruz said we should leave lots of reading material—books, magazines, newspapers, even comic books—all around the house. “If they’re lying there, he’ll pick them up.” She advised.

Second, she suggested that I stop at the library to return books when we’re out together. Once inside, she said, steer him toward sections he might like. Since Jonathan loves cars, I showed him books on NASCAR races and drivers. I was happy when he picked a few to check out.

Finally, Mrs. Cruz told me to discuss the books I’m reading with Jonathan. That will give him a chance to talk about what he has read that day—and give us a reading habit to share.

—from *The Middle Years, Working together for school success*, Resources for Education, 2011.

Attending an Activity at IJHS?

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need assistance at an event, please make your needs known to **Dr. Jill Earman** or **Mr. Michael Minnick** in advance. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate you.

News From the Athletic Office

Volleyball and Track Athletic Physicals. Seventh and eighth grade students who plan to participate in Volleyball or Track for the 2011-2012 school year must have their PIAA Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (CIPPE) form completed by an Authorized Medical Examiner. Forms must be completed and returned to the nurse by **February 3**, for Volleyball. Forms for Track must be completed and returned to the nurse by **February 29**.

If a student has been participating in a fall sport, **they still need to stop in the nurse's office to pick up a Re-Certification by Parent/Guardian Form (FORM 5)**. This form must be completed by a parent/guardian before they are able to tryout for winter sports. Supplemental Health History questions on Form 5 must all be checked **NO** and the **re-certification form must also be completed and turned into the nurse by February 3 for Volleyball and February 29, for Track**.

EXCEPTION: If any Supplemental Health History questions are answered **YES** indicating that there has been a change in health status on the PIAA Re-Certification Form 5, the student will be **REQUIRED** to complete PIAA (FORM 6) Comprehensive Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation and Re-Certification Form, and be re-evaluated by a **MEDICAL EXAMINER**. The student will not be able to practice or participate until this form has been completed and turned into the school nurse.

You may obtain a physical form in the nurses' office or download the forms mentioned on the school website. Follow these important steps:

- Type www.iasd.cc
- Click on **Indiana Area School District**
- Click on **IJHS Athletics**
- To the left of the screen - Click **Download Sports Physical Forms**
- Select desired physical forms

The following sports have designated their first day of practice. Please be aware that if students do not have a completed physical form to the nurse by the above mentioned dates, they will not be able to participate in their sport until they are up-to-date with the physical form. Students need to read the athletic white boards for practice times.

First Day Practices

Girls' Volleyball	7-8	Feb. 6	Jr. High Gym
Track	7-8	Mar. 5	Jr. High Gym Lobby



Cans 4 DC!



This spring, the entire 6th grade class will be traveling to Washington, DC, for the day. This annual trip will run approximately \$50 per student. Parents will be given the opportunity to pay for their child's trip in the near future. However, not every family will be able to do so. We have asked each sixth grade student family to participate in the "**Cans 4 DC**" collection. We would also love the 7th and 8th grade class to help, too. Do you remember your fond memories of your day in Washington DC? This is a great project to help your fellow students earn money for their special day in DC.

We are not hosting an event and we are not trying to sell anything. All you are required to do is collect aluminum cans during February and early March. You can ask extended family (aunts, uncles, grandparents) and neighbors to donate to you as well. Have parents collect at work or from co-workers too. We ask that you **DO NOT** crush or flatten the cans. The scrap vendors have can crushers that do that and prefer them as-is.

Where to bring them? The first collection date is **Thursday, February 16**, in the parking lot of the Indiana Junior High. There will be pick-up trucks and utility trailers for parents to put their garbage bags full of cans. The trucks will be there from dismissal (2:30 p.m.) through 8:00 p.m. The trucks will have balloons tied to them so you know which trucks are for the collection. They will be there for the evening, so if you are running students to activities, please stop by and drop your bag off anytime that is convenient for your family.

We are hoping to raise \$2,000 per collection (**February 16** and **March 14**), but we need to have 3,076 pounds of cans to make this happen each month! We are also asking for parent volunteers with pickup trucks and tow-along trailers that will be needed to drive the collection to the highest paying scrap vendor. If you are willing to volunteer, more details can be obtained via phone or email contact below.

We will be accepting all other types of metals such as aluminum, steel and copper. Do you have an old hot water tank, oven, air conditioner, dehumidifier to donate to the cause? We can make arrangements to pick these items up with your assistance at your home at a mutually agreed upon day. Parent volunteers also needed to help un-assemble these larger items for additional profit.

If you have any questions please call 724-349-8077 or our email: cans4dc@comcast.net.



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"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that **I** view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in."

-- Abraham Lincoln

## From the Attendance Office

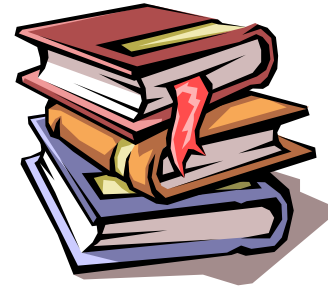


### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. Please **call the school** whenever your child is absent – **724-463-8568**. A **written excuse** with the correct days of absence listed, the reason for the absence, and the signature of a parent or guardian must be presented to the 1<sup>st</sup> period teacher by the **third day** following the absence. Excuses listing personal reasons or family emergency are not acceptable; more information is required. A doctor's excuse is necessary for students who have been notified that one is required; otherwise, the absence will be considered unlawful. Unlawful absences result in a "0" for the day's work.
2. **Early dismissals** for medical appointments, court hearings, or funerals should be requested in writing. Students should bring the written excuse to the attendance office before 1<sup>st</sup> period. The excuse must contain the time, exact **reason for the dismissal**, and whether the student is expected to return to school. Parents who call the school requesting early dismissals must come to the attendance office in person to pick up their child. It is requested that these situations be kept to a minimum because they create a disruption in the school day. An excuse from the doctor, dentist, or legal authority is required following return to school.
3. **Absences for educational trips, medical procedures, religious holidays, and other situations known in advance must be pre-approved.** The student should present a written excuse to the attendance office at least one week before the anticipated absence (or as soon as possible.) The excuse must contain the dates of the absence, reason, and if a request is made for a trip, the destination. The excuse will be attached to a pre-approval form, which the student will present to all teachers to notify them of the expected absence. It is the student's responsibility to return these papers to the attendance office before the absence to complete the pre-approval process and to complete assignments as requested by the teachers.
4. **Students must be in 1<sup>st</sup> period by 7:40** each morning to avoid being marked tardy. Students arriving between 7:40 and 9:15 a.m. are considered tardy. Disciplinary action begins with the fifth unexcused tardy. If the student is late because of a doctor, dentist, or legal appointment, an excuse from that office must be presented.
5. **All students who are not in 1<sup>st</sup> period by 7:40 must report to the attendance office to receive a tardy admission slip.** This includes students who arrive on a late bus unless a special announcement is made by the office.
6. **When a student arrives tardy to school, a note stating the reason should be presented.** Students, who arrive late because of a doctor, dentist, or legal appointment, must present an excuse from that office. If the student arrives without a note, he/she will have until the following morning to present the note. Please be aware that most tardy arrivals to school are unexcused.

## Accelerated Reader (Motivational Program)

As of January 25, **Hana Wahi-Anwar** continues to be our top point student with an amazing **654 points**. One student is a member of the 500-Point Club, and another student is a member of the 400-Point Club. Four students are members of the 200-Point Club. In addition, 26 students are members of the 100-Point Club and 28 other students have earned at least 50 points. Competition continues to motivate many students to read more books accurately in order to earn maximum points on books they have selected.








Top readers so far include:

|                                 |                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Hana Wahi-Anwar</b> .....    | <b>654 pts.</b> |
| <b>Charlie Bennett</b> .....    | 575 pts.        |
| <b>Savanna McMillen</b> .....   | 433 pts.        |
| <b>Keaton Libengood</b> .....   | 264 pts.        |
| <b>Athena Nakrosis</b> .....    | 230 pts.        |
| <b>Scott Mitsko</b> .....       | 223 pts.        |
| <b>Jacob Clark</b> .....        | 209 pts.        |
| <b>Abby McCauley</b> .....      | 180 pts.        |
| <b>Jake Stoltz</b> .....        | 177 pts.        |
| <b>Erin Fanning</b> .....       | 168 pts.        |
| <b>Zoey Everett</b> .....       | 157 pts.        |
| <b>Alex Fefolt</b> .....        | 152 pts.        |
| <b>Keara Cash</b> .....         | 151 pts.        |
| <b>April Blair</b> .....        | 148 pts.        |
| <b>Sarah Pistole</b> .....      | 146 pts.        |
| <b>Mufaro Shumba</b> .....      | 130 pts.        |
| <b>Thomas Budash</b> .....      | 129 pts.        |
| <b>Aaron Springs</b> .....      | 125 pts.        |
| <b>Patrick Pearce</b> .....     | 124 pts.        |
| <b>Amanda Phillips</b> .....    | 122 pts.        |
| <b>Aaron Kingan</b> .....       | 122 pts.        |
| <b>Grant Sharp</b> .....        | 122 pts.        |
| <b>Logan Bacha</b> .....        | 121 pts.        |
| <b>Carrie Smith</b> .....       | 121 pts.        |
| <b>Danyal Bajwa</b> .....       | 120 pts.        |
| <b>Amy Wallace</b> .....        | 117 pts.        |
| <b>Rebecca Olechovski</b> ..... | 114 pts.        |
| <b>Benjamin Geary</b> .....     | 111 pts.        |
| <b>Rhiannon Price</b> .....     | 105 pts.        |
| <b>Bricelyn Webber</b> .....    | 103 pts.        |
| <b>Amber Eisenberger</b> .....  | 101 pts.        |
| <b>Ashleigh Bowman</b> .....    | 101 pts.        |



# February 2012

| Sun                                               | Mon                                                | Tue                                                                                      | Wed                                   | Thu                                                                                                                                           | Fri                                                                                     | Sat                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                   |                                                    |         | 1                                     | 2                                                                                                                                             | 3                                                                                       | 4                                                                                         |
| 5                                                 | 6                                                  | 7                                                                                        | 8<br><b>PTSA Meeting</b><br>6:45 p.m. | 9                                                                                                                                             | 10<br><b>Emergency Snow Make-up Day #1</b>                                              | 11<br> |
| 12<br><b>PASA Reading &amp; Math</b><br>2/13-3/23 | 13<br><b>School Board Mtg.</b><br>7:30 p.m.        | 14<br> | 15                                    | 16<br><b>Cans for DC Collection #1</b><br>2:30-8 p.m.<br> | 17<br><b>Act 80 Day Early Dismissal</b><br><b>Battle of the Faculties @ SH - 7 p.m.</b> | 18                                                                                        |
| 19                                                | 20<br><b>Act 80 Day Parent-Teacher Conferences</b> | 21                                                                                       | 22                                    | 23                                                                                                                                            | 24<br><b>PTSA Battle of the Students</b><br>7-9 p.m.                                    | 25                                                                                        |
| 26                                                | 27<br><b>School Board Mtg.</b><br>7:30 p.m.        | 28                                                                                       | 29                                    |                                                           |                                                                                         |                                                                                           |

Please note that second semester Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on February 20.

To schedule, phone 724-463-9718.