

School Board Meeting
Monday September 25th
@ 5:00



Parent Council
Mtg September
28th at

The Patriot Press

"Do not act as if you had ten thousand years to throw away. Death stands at your elbow. Be good for something while you live and it is in your power."

— [Marcus Aurelius](#)

HILLSDALE
PREPARATORY
SCHOOL

Volume II, Issue 1

September 1, 2017

2017-18 Year Begins!

Please Be Kind!

If you are coming into the school during drop off, please park in the back. When cars are parked up by the door it creates congestion and slows the exit from the school. This can cause other parents to be late for work in the morning.

Special points of interest:

- ☺ Patriot Run
- ☺ NWEA MAP Testing
- ☺ HPS Mobile App
- ☺ Volleyball Begins

PATRIOT 5 K RUN

The annual 5K run is scheduled for Sept 9 at 8:00 AM at the Hillsdale County Airport. Come out and join in the fun, have some pancakes and sausage, and help support the school. For more info see the flyer on the school website or pick one up at the office.

Casual Day
Sept. 29

This newsletter was done under extreme stress and duress. Expect errors! Sorry!

NWEA TESTING

This year we will be replacing the Scantron test that students have taken at HPS with a MAP (Measure of Academic Growth) Test from the Northwest Evaluation Association. These tests are diagnostic tools to assist teachers in developing specific instructional strategies to address student needs. The reasons for the changes include:

- State law now requires all K-3 students to be administered an assessment to determine reading ability three times each school year. The MAP test is one of the State approved assessments.
- State law requires that teacher evaluations include a student growth component. This means that student academic growth must be measured with an approved assessment from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.
- The MAP Test provides meaningful data which can be used to drive instruction. Teachers can use the results of the test to create more precise and better learning plans for students to ensure mastery of the curriculum. The MAP test will also provide students, teachers and parents with target goals for students to attain from the first of the year to the middle of the year and to the end of each year.

As we begin the testing, which consist of Math, Reading and English Language Arts it is important for students to make their best effort. While it is an intuitive test, meaning that as students answer correctly the difficulty increases and then decreases as their answers are incorrect, we will not get any data of value if students are simply guessing or clicking. Please be sure students get plenty of rest, have a good breakfast and come to school with a positive attitude about the testing. We have created a schedule which spaces out the testing and students will only test two consecutive days at a time. Most testing will be done in the morning when students are still fresh and alert. This is designed be as unobtrusive as possible and also serve as a learning experience.

New Mobile App!

Late last spring we conducted a parent survey and examined the responses. One of the issues which was revealed was that better communication was needed. To that end I did lots of research and shopping around and found a service which will allow us to communicate to parents and others across multiple platforms. It will allow teachers to instantly text, voice mail, and send alerts to the phones of parents; all at the same time! This app may be downloaded for free to your smart phone. Weather delays, school announcements, event schedule and many other items can be readily sent to parents and they can get the news from their phone, email, on Facebook, or Twitter.

Right now the down side is that we are still in the design stages and won't have full implementation until the end of October. The provider will also be taking over our webpage design and teaching us how to maintain the content. All of this is going to involve training people and it will obviously have a learning curve. Therefore, I would ask that you be patient with us as we move into the 21st century and use technology to provide a better means of communication. As with anything new there are bound to be some hic cups in the beginning. However, the end result is going to be a much better product for everyone!

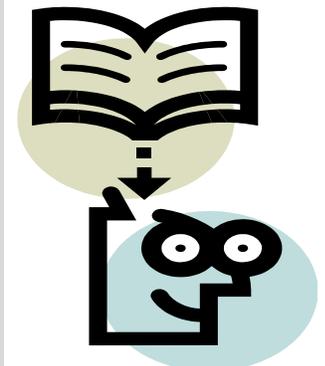
As mentioned above, the webpage is being designed for us. The digital address will not change, or the URL. Should you have something that you would like to see included on our webpage, now would be an excellent time to communicate that as we are in the design stage with the provider right now. When you download the app to your phone you will basically be accessing the webpage when you open the app. You will also have a very user friendly menu with which to access a staff directory, a school event calendar, school news, and other information. This new app is essentially making our monthly newsletter obsolete because now you can receive all the news "as it happens" instead of waiting until the first of the month!



A Big Thank You to Trish Rich! Trish was able to get me connected with a Jackson County school system which was giving away the "Literacy by Design" curriculum they were replacing. In addition they offered us lots of non-fiction leveled reading books. They are boxing those up for me now and I am going up Thursday morning to get them for the school. I'm sure our teachers will make great use of these materials!

SWIMMING

Once again this year we will be taking students to Hillsdale College for a day at the pool! This is not only a nice and enjoyable little trip from the school, but it is a very educational and important part of our PE curriculum. Mr. Blanchard, the PE teacher, will be providing students with the information regarding the rules and dress for the pool and college. The dates for the trips have not been established at this time. Each year we are provided a contract with Hillsdale College which we agree to rent the pool for a fee. As soon as the college provides us with the contract and the dates they have available we will relay this information to parents via a letter home from Mr. Blanchard and through our email list as well as the sign board out front.



Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Mr. Bauman, Headmaster)

It somewhat saddens me to write this newsletter. While it is the beginning of the school year, it is the beginning of the end for the Patriot Press. While few may have found the time to read these pages or seen much value in what was written, it was a publication which cast a bright light upon the students and their school. The mission was noble. The goal was to recognize as many students as possible in a positive light and to create a vessel for them to fill with their creativity. I was overjoyed last year as students began to contribute to the newsletter with little bio's and book reviews. It hinted at the possibility of students taking an even greater role in their own educations.

Alas, the world is a rapidly evolving place and the printed word has been losing the battle with technology for many years. People prefer TV and movies to books. Records have been replaced with cassette tapes, CD's and now digital files from the "Cloud". People want their info instantly and can't wait for the morning paper or the 6 O'clock evening news. We have gotten so obsessed with instant gratification that we now embrace a source of news, information and communication which imposes a limit of 140 characters! It's like a huge neon sign that boldly flashes out the warning that this is the limit of what we are willing and able to absorb and comprehend!

It's a shame in many ways, but that is the world which we now inhabit. We have the ability to digitally sort and filter data and information so that we only receive that which we choose to receive. Our DVR can find the genre of program we wish to record and watch. Our phones will find only the music we wish to listen to. Our computers will search out whatever it is we are interested in. They are now even telling us what it is we ARE interested in based upon our own habits!

While I certainly appreciate the value of time and realize it is a scarce commodity, it is sad to have to admit that reading to expand one's horizons is becoming extinct. Maybe it is just that I am old and old fashioned. I just seem unable to resist the urge to read every page of a newspaper or a magazine from cover to cover just to see what is going on in the world. To me reading without a bias imposed by filters and limits on characters is to "learn".

I am not a sage, an author or a journalist by any means. My "expertise" is limited to my years of experience in life, education and having lived in different parts of the country. It also comes from having "read" something more than a tweet or a two paragraph summary. While I suspect some may not appreciate what I am writing, I am comforted in that I've only had two people ever comment to me about what I have written in the Patriot Press. Maybe that is a good thing and I am fortunate. Still, I will miss putting the newsletter together but the fact is that it took up huge amounts of time that could be better spent and it was not achieving the desired goal of communicating and involving parents. I will instead focus on making great use of the new mobile app and instead of pining for days of yore, master the art of the tweet and Facebook. Now if I can just get one of the kids to show me how to use this Smart Phone.....

What's Going On:

- Volleyball has started for the girls. Practices are taking place after school and the first game is scheduled for September 14th with Mar Lee at home.
- Parent Council had it's first meeting of the year and finalized plans for the 5 K run. Darrell Kratt is the new President and has gotten off to a great start. Your support for him and Parent Council would be greatly appreciated. The next meeting is at the school on September 28th @ 6:15 PM.
- Mrs. Draheim is sending home a volunteer form with students asking for "Room Moms". In an effort to improve communication and involve parents we would like to have "Room Moms" take over some of the organizational and communication responsibilities for each class. If interested return the form or contact a teacher!
- Cheerleading is beginning at HPS! There will be a cheerleading clinic for all girls K-8. The clinic will be on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30 and run for a month. The cost for the clinic will be \$20 per student, which will include a t-shirt, shorts and a hair bow. Look for a flier to come home with more information and to sign up!
- Subway sandwiches will be available Thursday (no school the Friday) and next week we will also have pizza slices on Friday.
- M-STEP results are in and we have reports to mail to parents. Please look for these in the mail. If you have any questions regarding the reports contact Mr. Bauman or the teacher.



New Webpage!

If you have a suggestion to improve our school webpage, now is the perfect time to let us know. We are getting a new system to communicate with parents which will allow you to access the website from an app on your phone.

Over the next couple of weeks we will be engaged with the provider in designing the webpage. The goal is to make it as user friendly as possible and be easily assessable. You are the end users of the content on the website. Your ideas for improvement will be carefully considered and most likely incorporated. Thank you!

Student Council will be starting up next month. Nominations are due by September 15 with elections being held on September 29. Mrs. Kuenzer will be posting and distributing information regarding offices and procedures.

School Attendance— This year schools are required to take attendance twice a day. We can no longer count students present for being here just part of the day. Please take care and only hold children from school when it is absolutely necessary.

Chris Fowler — Mr. Fowler is our new fourth grade teacher. He is filling the vacancy from Mr. Draheim leaving us. Mr. Fowler is off to a fantastic start and is going to do an excellent job this year. We are working on getting his email account set up and you will soon be able to contact him directly.

Bible Study — We are making arrangements to continue the Bible study program this year. Last year it ran into transportation issues and we had to stop. They now have a bus and we are planning the dates. Permission slips will be sent home soon.

Dress Code — We have a Uniform established by the school. Please be familiar with the dress requirements as found on page 15 of the school handbook. Teachers will also be sending a note home to be signed and returned. Last spring another concern expressed in our survey results was not enforcing the dress code. We are taking steps to rectify this, but also trying to be patient and as accommodating as possible as everyone eases into the climate of compliance. Your help and understanding is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Mrs. Wallace — Due to the resignation of Mrs. Fix, Mrs. Wallace is the new 6th grade teacher. She has experience teaching 6th grade and will do a fine job in the assignment. You may have noticed she is soon to be going on leave for six weeks, but we have capable people who will cover her class until she returns.