

MCAS Communicator

an e-newsletter for the staff of the Michigan City Area Schools

February 2018

(Please post for/share with those employees who do not check email!)

IMPORTANT: Did YOU Schedule your Meeting?

All MCAS Staff: Please follow the link below to register for a time to meet with our American Fidelity representative re: your Section 125 pre-tax benefits plan. All employees are required to meet with the representative; the link shows dates and locations (note that these meetings are already under way in buildings!). Questions? Contact Jim Martin, Jim.Martin@americanfidelity.com
<https://benefits.americanfidelity.com/michigan-city-area-schools>

New Adult Ed Program!

Big News: Our Adult Ed program at A. K. Smith is beginning a new series of FREE classes for adults, to help individuals earn certifications in Hospitality (ProStart) or as a Paraprofessional (Para Pro). These classes run 14 weeks on Tuesdays, 2:30 to 6:30pm. They are open to people with or without a high school diploma (for those without, the classes also assist in earning a HSE high school equivalency diploma). All classes, books, materials, and certification exams are free thanks to funding from the Dept. of Workforce Development. Classes begin February 13; registration deadline is February 6. Contact Clausell Harding, (219) 873-2122, ext. 8705 to sign up or with any questions.

CPR Training for Certified Staff

A CPR class for teachers in need of license renewal will be held Thursday, March 8. Training is at 3:30 at Mullen, 100 Manny Court, adjacent to Lake Hills Elementary. Note: Due to an increase in card fees by the American Heart Assn., the fee has increased to \$50, payable by cash or check to Dolphin Solutions. The certification lasts two years. Important: Please contact Linda Bechinski (lbechinski@educatemc.net) to sign up.

Black History Month Contest

The Michigan City Human Rights Commission has announced its annual Black History Month contest. This is a poster contest for elementary students, and an essay/poetry contest for middle and high school. Winners receive cash prizes and will be honored by Mayor Meer at City Hall. Follow the link or details and the required application form. HURRY! Deadline for submissions is February 2.

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/domain/85/january%202018/2018%20Black%20History%20Month%20Contest.pdf>

Black History Exhibit at Mullen

Safe Harbor and the Michigan City Black History Committee are again offering tours of an extensive Black History exhibit housed at Mullen. School and other group tours can be arranged Feb 3 - March 3 by calling Allen Williams, 873-2026. Follow the links below for info. Note that this is also open on weekends!

Memo from Allen Williams:

[https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/BHM Exhibit%20Memo.pdf](https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/BHM%20Exhibit%20Memo.pdf)

Flyer:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/Black%20history.pdf>

World Civility Day

The Northwest Indiana Times encourages schools to share their effective anti-bullying programs for recognition at World Civility Day events April 12.

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/special-section/civility-counts/community-civility-counts-to-honor-anti-bullying-initiatives-at-world/article_be2415f2-cae0-5fcf-bb4e-36dd8d2f6a03.html

For more info on World Civility Day...

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/third-world-civility-day-set-for-april-at-the-indiana/article_e6840803-e0ce-5b41-8eb5-536c0cbd272a.html

Free and Confidential Mental Health Services

As an employee of MCAS, you qualify for 6 FREE mental health counseling sessions for you and your immediate family members. This is part of our "EAP" (Employee Assistance Program). Click on the link below for more information on this important service:

<http://educatemc.net/cms/lib5/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85/0816EAP.pdf>

Healthy U @ Work January Newsletter

The Dangers of Alcohol and Acetaminophen, Turnips, How to Exercise Outdoors in the Winter Safely, and more...

http://images.franciscanhealthcare.org/PDFs/NWI/ww_newsletter_january2018.pdf

From Safe Harbor: Please Advocate for America's Afterschool Programs!

Last year, dedicated advocates and afterschool champions on Capitol Hill saved afterschool programs across the country from shuttering due to lack of federal funding. The government is back open, but the appropriations process rages on — even as a new budget from the White House is primed to be released in early February. We expect afterschool funding to be back on the chopping block this year. Let's get ahead of the curve and make our message to Congress loud and clear: We can't afford cuts to afterschool programs! Follow the link below to show your support in less than 10 seconds.

<http://afterschoolalliance.rallycongress.net/ctas/5a67accb77887-urge-congress-action>

St. Patrick's Day Parade

Schools, clubs, and organizations are all welcome to march in the annual Michigan City St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 10th. Follow this link for a registration form and info:

https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/St_Patrick.pdf

Career Cafe Now Open

The "Career Cafe" restaurant, operated by AK Smith culinary students, is once again open for lunch! Hours are Wednesday and Friday noon till 1:15pm, for the remainder of the semester. Catering is also available. Call (219) 873-2119 for details.

Sumdog Math Contest

Another Northwest Indiana Sumdog math contest starts on February 2. Sumdog is a computer Math and ELA fluency program where students practice skills aligned to Standards. The top 3 classes win a subscription to Sumdog's premium teaching tools; there are also participation awards and certificates for top students. Find out more, including how to enter, here: sumdog.com/enter_contest. Contact Christian Richards for additional info:

christian@sumdog.com

Kid Whisperer at PNW

Author and educator Scott Ervin, a.k.a. the "Kid Whisperer," will speak at PNW on March 30 from 4-7pm. Learn simple, low-stress techniques for guiding children to positive behavior. More info is here:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/kidwhisperer.png>

IDEM Earth Day Presentations

Beginning in April, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) will offer hands-on, interactive classroom presentations to Indiana elementary schools. Earth Day presentations are available for grades K-4, and vary in length from 30 to 50 minutes. The interactive presentations offer activities such as a recycling relay race and traveling through the water cycle as a water drop. Programs are available on a first-come, first-served basis through the month of April, and each school may request up to four presentations.

Registration is now open, and teachers can request a presentation by visiting www.idem.in.gov/iee/2418.htm. The deadline to register is Feb. 21, 2018. Questions? Contact Deanna Garner, IDEM's Environmental Education Outreach Coordinator, at education@idem.in.gov or (800) 988-7901.

Way to Go!

- MCHS teachers **Stephanie Dege** and **Andy Jasicki** will be traveling to Indianapolis next week to accept the prestigious Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. Congrats to all who are involved in the Wolves Environmental Restoration Team's work at Hansen Park!
- It's official: Our **MCHS graduation rate** is at an all-time high **90.3%**! This is higher than the state average and higher than some of our neighboring high schools, public and private. CONGRATS TO ALL!
- **Coolspring Elementary** collected the most books for "Operation Bookworm," bringing in a whopping 231 of the total 386 books collected. All books were donated by the MCHS National Honor Society to the Salvation Army as part of its holiday drive.

Give Backs and Other Fun - Please support these causes!

1. Eat at Hacienda on **Thursday, Feb 8**, and support Pine Elementary. Required coupon is here: https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/Pine_Hacienda_Feb8.pdf
2. Eat at **Buffalo Wild Wings** on **Wednesday, Feb 21**, 5:00-8:00pm. No coupon required. Supports MCHS Girls Tennis.
3. Eat at **Panera** on **Wednesday, Feb 21**, 4:00 - 8:00pm. Supports the Class of 2019 Prom. Show this coupon: https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/Panera_Prom.pdf
4. **Attention, Bowlers!** The 2nd annual "Bowling for Barker" event will be held on **Saturday, February 24** at 1:00pm at City Lanes. This fundraiser supports STEM programs and will help the school purchase new microscopes. Sign up info is here: <https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/Bowling%20for%20Barker.pdf>
5. **Trivia Buffs:** Please support MCHS Baseball at their Trivia night on **Saturday, February 24** at the DAV. More details: https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//February%202018/Baseball_trivia.jpg

Community Backpack - NEW on <http://educateMC.net/communitybackpack>

- Elston YMCA Kids' Indoor Tennis (begins Feb 2)
- FREE Tutoring for kids at Grace Learning Center (new!)
- "Give Kids a Smile" free dental services Feb 20
- Host Families needed for exchange students
- LaPorte County Parks Winter Programs
- And more!

Calendar Reminders:

- February 3 - AK Smith Pancake Breakfast (8am - noon)
- February 8 - Future Careers Expo at AK Smith (volunteers still needed for mock interviews - contact counselor Jerra Barnes!)
- February 19 - **SCHOOL IN SESSION, SNOW MAKEUP** (Famous Americans Day)
- Feb 26 - Mar 9 - ISTEP testing window
- February 28 - Kindergarten Roundup (10am - 6pm)
- February 28 - Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences (3:15 - 7:15pm)
- March 8 - Student reception for elementary art show
- March 15 - Secondary Parent/Teacher Conferences (2:30 - 5:30pm)
- March 15 - Wolfpack Roundup (5:30 - 6:30pm)
- March 30 - No School - Good Friday
- April 2-6 - Spring Break
- April 16 - May 4 - ISTEP Window
- May 31 - **SCHOOL IN SESSION, SNOW MAKEUP** (now last day of school for students)
- June 4 - Retirement & Wall of Fame Dinner at Blue Chip