

Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner

James Thiede



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

October 4-Walk a Thon fundraiser

October 4- High School Homecoming

October 18- 7th/8th Dance

October 23- MJHS induction Ceremony 7pm

October 24-Picture re-takes

November 5- No School-

Nov. 12-7th grade Vision Screening

November 22- 1/2 day

November 25-26-No School-Teacher PD

November 27-29—No School Thanksgiving break

December 6- Movie Night 5-7pm

December 11- Holiday Band Concert

December 12-Holiday Choir Concert

December 23-Jan.3- Christmas break-No School

January 20-MLK Day-No school

January 22,23,24,- Half Days- Final Exams

January 24-Last day of 1st semester

January 31- Dodgeball

February 14-17-Winter Break

October 2024

October is Anti-Bullying Month

I want to take a moment to address a critical issue that affects the well-being of all our students—bullying. At Anchor Bay NORTH, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where every child feels valued and supported. Stopping bullying is a shared responsibility, and we need your help to ensure our students can thrive both academically and emotionally.

Why Stopping Bullying is Important

Bullying can have serious consequences on a child's mental and emotional health, as well as their academic performance. Victims of bullying may experience anxiety, depression, and a lack of confidence, which can hinder their ability to learn and succeed. Furthermore, children who bully others may also face long-term consequences, including difficulty forming healthy relationships and facing disciplinary action.

How You Can Help

As parents and guardians, you play a vital role in preventing and addressing bullying behavior. Here are a few ways you can support our school's efforts:

1. **Talk to Your Child:** Have open conversations about what bullying is, how to recognize it, and why it's important to speak up when they see it happening. Encourage empathy and kindness in all interactions.
2. **Encourage Open Communication:** Let your child know they can come to you with any concerns or experiences regarding bullying, whether they are witnessing it, experiencing it, or even participating in it. Honest discussions can help address issues before they escalate.
3. **Monitor Social Media:** Many bullying incidents occur online through social media platforms. Keep an eye on your child's online activity and discuss the impact of words and actions in digital spaces.
4. **Support the School's Anti-Bullying Policies:** Review the school's bullying policy and discuss it with your child. Reinforce the importance of following school rules and respecting the school community.
5. **Report Bullying Incidents:** If your child reports bullying behavior—whether they are a victim, witness, or even if they're involved—please notify the school immediately. Early intervention can prevent situations from worsening.

Our Commitment

We are dedicated to providing resources, support, and training for students and staff to effectively address and prevent bullying. Our school has implemented a comprehensive anti-bullying policy, including consequences for those who engage in bullying behavior and support for those affected. We also offer programs that promote social-emotional learning, empathy, and respect.

Together, we can foster a positive school culture where every student feels safe, accepted, and supported. Your involvement is crucial to our success in stopping bullying and creating a nurturing environment for all children.

Thank you for your partnership and continued commitment to making Anchor Bay NORTH a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

SEE PAGE 2



October is National Bullying Prevention Month. I thought it would be a good time to review some of the things we do here at NORTH to ensure a positive school climate for our students.



Bullying Interventions Portfolio

Positive interactions among students and staff in school are an important part of our school culture. Showing respect for everyone in school must be a basic foundation of what we do. There are many challenges to ensure a positive experience for everyone. Educating our students about how to interact and show respect is an ongoing process. We developed this portfolio to highlight the many different initiatives we have put in place in order to promote a warm and friendly learning environment:

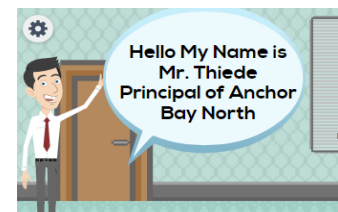
Direct Interventions

- **Incident Reporting** – Any student can notify any staff member to report bullying in person, or by filling out an Incident Report from the counseling center. Information received is immediately reviewed and reported to appropriate personnel. Each report is investigated by counselors and/or administration. If a bullying incident is confirmed, parents are notified and discipline is enforced.
- **OK 2 SAY** – is a State of Michigan program designed to empower Michigan students, parents, school personnel, community mental health service programs, and law enforcement to share and respond to student safety threats. It is a confidential way for students to report anything that threatens their safety or the safety of others. State of Michigan Representatives speak to all of our students by visiting classrooms and reviewing the program.
 - The OK 2 SAY Hotline is **800.815.8477**
 - Submit online – <https://ok2say.state.mi.us/>
 - Text message – **652729**

Educational Interventions

Social Media Parent Help – Parents can get information on Social Media by watching a presentation on the different types of Social Media and how they work. The presentation also includes ways to access additional information. Please click on the following links to access helpful tools:

- <https://www.powtoon.com/c/gcvfeMdfCaO/1/m>
- <http://www.connectsafely.org/>



Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner



Educational Interventions

- **Health Class** – Part of our Health class curriculum includes Bullying Awareness. Students learn how to advocate for themselves as well as for others. Students have placed posters around the school that give examples of bullying and how to stop it.
- **Staff Trained in Recognizing Bullying** – All Anchor Bay NORTH staff have been certified through “Safe Schools” by participating in a training program that focuses on recognizing signs of bullying.
- **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** – teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of school-wide **PBIS** is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. Reward trips (Cedar Point, CJ Barrymore’s), Student of the Month, and Sailor Salute are some examples of PBIS at NORTH.
- **National STOP BULLYING DAY** – On Wednesday, October 9th we are asking our staff and students to wear BLUE to bring awareness and stop bullying.
- **Anchor Bay Director of Security, Amanda DePape Presentations** – she will speak about bullying and social media. She will offer ways to seek help and outline consequences for negative behaviors.



STOMP OUT BULLYING

New Student Luncheon

We are very lucky to welcome new students to Anchor Bay North this school year! On Tuesday, September 25th, we hosted a special lunch for the new students who joined our school this year. We introduced our new students to staff and students, played games, and had a pizza party. It was a nice event for our new students to get to know each other and make new friends. Welcome new SAILORS!

Start with HELLO-

Social isolation is an individual’s perceived or real separation from a group of peers. It is a feeling that you do not fit in, that you don’t belong, or that you have been left out. When we conducted a survey of some of our students, they were asked if they see isolation happening and where they witness social isolation in our school. The results were:

1. Lunchroom
2. Classrooms during group work and when asked to pair up with a partner
3. The hallways at school in the morning
4. On the bus

In an effort to help end social isolation in our school, we adopted the National Campaign of Start with Hello. It is a prevention program that teaches children and teens how to be more socially inclusive and connected to each other. In an effort to educate our students on social isolation and how to recognize it and what to do, we will be holding a spirit week with Start with Hello activities.

START with Hello

September 16-20

MSN honored the Start With Hello campaign with a spirit week. Start with Hello is an initiative to encourage students to have empathy, reach out to others who may be feeling alone, and to be an upstander. During lunches this week, counselors invited students to sign the promise pledge.

SEE PAGE 4



What is AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a type of technology that allows computers and machines to perform tasks that usually require human intelligence. Some common examples include voice assistants like Siri or Alexa, self-driving cars, and recommendation systems on Netflix or YouTube.

Benefits of AI for Students

1. **Helps with Homework and Research-** AI-powered tools can assist you in finding information faster and more accurately. Search engines, online encyclopedias, and even AI writing assistants can help organize your thoughts, check your grammar, and offer ideas.
2. **Personalized Learning-** AI can create a learning environment that's tailored to your specific needs. For example, apps like Khan Academy or Duolingo adjust their lessons based on your performance, helping you learn at your own pace.
3. **Saves Time-** AI tools can summarize long articles, create study guides, and even automate repetitive tasks. This gives you more time to focus on understanding difficult topics or engaging in extracurricular activities.
4. **Creative Inspiration-** Tools like AI-powered art generators or writing assistants can help you come up with new ideas for projects, essays, or even creative stories.
5. **Accessibility-** AI makes technology more accessible for students with disabilities. For instance, speech-to-text programs can help students who have difficulty typing, and text-to-speech tools can assist students with reading challenges.

Areas of Concern with AI

While AI can be very useful, there are also some important things to be cautious about:

1. MISINFORMATION

AI can generate text, images, or even videos that look real but are actually false or misleading. This is especially true with **AI-generated photos and movies**. These "deepfakes" can be used to spread false information, make fake news, or even create false evidence. Always double-check information from trusted sources.

2. OVER-RELIANCE ON AI

Using AI for everything can prevent you from developing your own critical thinking and problem-solving skills. For example, using an AI tool to write an essay might save time, but it also means you aren't practicing writing yourself.

3. PRIVACY AND DATA SHARING

Some AI tools collect personal data, which can lead to privacy concerns. Be careful about what information you share online, especially when using AI-powered platforms.

4. PLAGIARISM AND ORIGINALITY

AI-generated content might be useful for inspiration, but copying it directly and passing it off as your own work is plagiarism. Schools are increasingly aware of this, and using AI irresponsibly could lead to academic consequences.

5. EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT

AI can affect how you see yourself and others. Social media platforms use AI algorithms to show you specific content, which can sometimes lead to comparing yourself with others or believing that what you see online is always true or real.

Responsible Use of AI

1. **Verify Information-** Before believing or sharing something you found online—especially AI-generated content—always verify it with trustworthy sources. Look for official websites, academic resources, or consult your teacher.
2. **Use AI as a Tool, Not a Shortcut-** AI can help you with research, organization, and even creativity, but it should never replace your own efforts. Balance AI use with your own learning.
3. **Stay Safe Online-** Be mindful of the information you share with AI-powered platforms. Avoid sharing personal information like your full name, address, or school without a trusted adult's guidance.
4. **Practice Digital Citizenship-** If you see AI-generated content that is misleading or harmful, report it. It's important to be responsible and help maintain a safe online environment.

AI-Generated Photos and Movies: Special Concerns

AI can create realistic photos and videos that are completely fake. These can be used in creative ways, like video games or movies, but can also be misused.

1. **Deepfakes-** AI can swap faces in videos, making it look like someone did or said something they didn't. This can be harmful and confusing, so it's important to be aware that not everything you see online is real.
2. **Fake News-** AI can create fake photos or videos that spread misinformation. For example, a picture of a fake event might be created and shared to deceive people. Always check with trusted news sources before believing or sharing such content.

Conclusion

AI is an exciting tool that offers many benefits for learning and creativity, but it also comes with responsibilities. By using AI thoughtfully, verifying information, and being cautious about privacy and plagiarism, you can harness the power of AI safely and responsibly.

Anchor Bay North

Principal's Corner



Cooking club

Mrs. Beninati and Mrs. Brees have Middle School North's Cooking Club in full swing! Students in grades 6th, 7th and 8th may participate. While in Cooking Club students will experience how to cook safely and discover several tasty recipes while working together as a group.

Cooking Club has received positive feedback from the students, staff, parents, and our Facebook parent page! Being able to offer after-school programs such as Cooking Club has a wonderful impact on our students. It provides them with socialization, feeling part of a group, the ability to express themselves creatively, and an overall fun time!

We will be offering several sessions throughout the year. Once the next session is scheduled, we will promote the club by making overhead announcements, during afternoon Broadcast class, on the website and on our Facebook parent page. The cost is \$20.00, and space is limited to the first 32 students that turn in their permission slip and money.

Dungeons and Dragons Club

A fantasy playing game where students create characters and go on campaigns. These campaigns are filled with different types of adventures. Some examples are fighting monsters, discovering treasure, and exploring a mystical world. This game is a great way for students to build their teamwork, communication, and mathematical skills. It boosts their creativity and helps with their memory. Each campaign is filled with six students and there is a dungeon master that is leading the group through their campaign. The Dungeons and Dragons club is going to have 20 members! We are going to meet every Monday from 3-4 pm starting October 7th.

Bridge Building Club

The purpose of the after-school Bridge Building Club is to provide an inventive way of introducing students to the wide variety of career opportunities available in the field of engineering. The program teaches secondary students how to apply a variety of math and science concepts to common engineering problems occurring in transportation systems. The TRAC program is also designed to allow students to identify and evaluate the social and environmental impacts associated with the development of new transportation systems within their communities.

Students work in teams of 3 to research, design, build, and test a Truss-style bridge made out of balsa wood. If their proposal is accepted by the Michigan Department of Transportation, the students will attend a free overnight field trip to the State Bridge Building Competition.

The bridge will be tested for strength-to-weight ratio. Student teams from grades 7 and 8 will be competing against other TRAC student teams from across Michigan. Interested students should talk to Mrs. Massey in C6!

Band & Choir Practice Club

The Practice club provides a chance for band and choir students to practice in a supervised environment. Students can work with their friends, ask for help from older students, including ABHS band assistants, and/or provide guidance to younger students. Practice club is a great opportunity for students to develop their musical leadership and chamber music skills.

Practice Club meets on Thursdays in room D7 with Ms. Kirven from 3:00- 4:00pm. Hope to see you there!

Middle School Parents

In some Principal's Corner articles, and in future editions, you will find information about Middle School-aged children. The information comes from a newsletter called "Middle School Parents" produced by "The Parent Institute". I hope you find the information insightful.

SEE PAGE 6



Middle School Parents

October 2024
Vol. 28, No. 2

Anchor Bay Middle School North

still make the difference!



Enhance learning by helping your child develop six traits

No two children are alike, but successful students share certain traits. To develop these qualities, encourage your middle schooler to be:

1. **Curious.** Curious students won't accept "just because" as an answer. They want to know things. To promote curiosity, expose your child to new ideas and experiences.
2. **Persistent.** Successful students keep trying until they master tough material. They set goals and work diligently to reach them. Acknowledge your child's effort with schoolwork and studying, rather than focusing solely on the resulting grade.
3. **Organized.** Even academic stars will struggle in school if they can't find things. Make sure your child has the tools to organize schoolwork and manage time, such as calendars, sticky notes and file folders.
4. **Resilient.** Everyone fails sometimes, but successful students don't let failure derail them. Encourage your child to take responsibility for actions and create a plan for improvement.
5. **Open-minded.** Remind your child to listen to the opinions of others and engage in constructive conversations with classmates—even during disagreements.
6. **Confident.** When students know the adults in their lives love them and believe in them, the sky is the limit!

Ask questions that promote deeper thinking



Middle schoolers need analytical thinking skills to do research, to make decisions and to solve problems.


As your child progresses through school, teachers will expect higher-level thinking. Instead of just giving an answer, your child will need to give examples to support it.

Help your child develop more mature thinking skills by asking questions such as:

- "Why are your favorites your favorites?" Whether it's a singer or a character in a book, explore the appeal with your child. Ask about the specific characteristics and reasons that make your child like them.
- "How can we save money as a family?" Review a family expense, such as the electric or water bill, and challenge your middle schooler to find ways to save money. If successful, what does your child think the family should do with the savings—and why?
- "Can you think of a volunteer opportunity for our family?" Ask your child to do some research and present information that supports the choice.



Middle schoolers need adult guidance about social media use

 According to Common Sense Media, middle schoolers spend more than five hours on screen media entertainment every day. And a significant portion of that time is spent on social media.

Middle schoolers need guidance and support as they learn to navigate the world of social media. To help your child:


- **Learn about online activity.** Ask how often your child checks social media accounts. Which ones does your child use the most? Download these apps yourself to understand how they work. Also, check if your child has separate accounts—one they show you and another for friends.
- **Set standards for online behavior.** Your child shouldn't post anything on social media that wouldn't be suitable for you or anyone else to read. Remind your child that nothing online ever goes away,

- so careful thought should be given before posting anything.
- **Encourage your child to limit followers.** Kids want to be popular, so they sometimes add followers at random. To protect privacy, your child's social media accounts should be set to private.
- **Build in digital downtime.** Be a role model yourself—put the phone away at meal time. After dinner, go for a walk or read a book.

Source: A. Wichard-Edds, "5 Ways Parents Can Help Kids Balance Social Media with the Real World," *The Washington Post*.

"The mental health crisis among young people is an emergency—and social media has emerged as an important contributor."
— Dr. Vivek Murthy M.D., Surgeon General

Three steps can help your child read academic material

 Not all reading is the same. There are many different kinds of reading material, and people also read in different ways depending on what they want to accomplish.

When middle school students read academic material, they are *reading to learn*. Their goal is to understand and retain what they read.

Review three steps with your child that students should take while reading a school assignment:


1. **Do a "quick read."** This is also called skimming or scanning the

text. Your child should pay special attention to pictures, headlines and text in boldface and italics.

2. **Read deeply and take notes.** Suggest also writing down words or concepts your child doesn't understand to look up or ask the teacher about later.

3. **Summarize and ask questions.** Your child should be able to write a summary of the material and answer basic questions about it. If there aren't questions at the end of the text, your child can make some up and answer them to strengthen comprehension and understanding.

Are you boosting your child's concentration?

 Helping your child develop strong focus and concentration skills supports both academic success and overall well-being. Are you helping your child stay focused? Answer yes or no to the questions below to find out: **___1. Do you encourage your child to engage in enjoyable focus-building activities?** For some kids, this might be reading; for others, it could be sports or chess club.

___2. Do you set limits on recreational screen time? Extended time in front of a TV, computer or digital device can reduce concentration.

___3. Do you encourage your child to finish tasks and then offer praise?

___4. Do you discourage multitasking? It's difficult to concentrate on schoolwork if your child is also watching TV and texting friends.

___5. Do you minimize interruptions when your child is working hard?

How well are you doing?

Mostly *yes* answers mean you are helping your child stay focused on tasks. Mostly *no* answers? Try the suggestions in this quiz.

Middle School Parents
still make the difference!

Practical Ideas for Parents to Help Their Children.

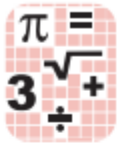
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Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
Editor: Rebecca Hasty Miyares.



Ask questions when your child gets stuck on math problems



Middle school math can be challenging for students and families alike! If your child gets stuck on a math assignment, it's helpful to think of yourself as a *guide* rather than as a teacher. You don't need to have the answers to demonstrate how to tackle assignments effectively.

To help your child figure things out, ask:

- **What specific problem** are you working on? This will help your child focus on one task at a time, rather than become intimidated by an entire sheet of equations.
- **What do the instructions say?** Have your child read the directions out loud to you. Sometimes students

miss key words the first time they read them.

- **Are there parts** of the instructions you don't understand? Suggest that your child check in the textbook or ask a classmate for clarification.

- **Are there things** you've learned before that may help you here?

If your child is still hopelessly stuck (and you are, too), suggest looking for help online. If the teacher has a website, look there first. Your child can also search sites like YouTube and find instructional math videos to watch.

If your child still isn't able to figure it out, that's OK. Your child can turn the incomplete assignment in and then ask the teacher for help.

Simple activities can reinforce your child's academic skills



Learning doesn't happen *only* during school. You can reinforce your middle schooler's academic skills any time! Here's how:

- **Have conversations** with your child about everything. Ask what your child thinks about certain topics—and really listen to the answers.
- **Ask about** what your middle schooler is learning in classes. What does your child find most interesting in each class?
- **Ask your child to explain** a new concept or idea to you. When students retell the things they learn, they reinforce those things in their own minds.
- **Help your child** engage in analytical thinking. Discuss the similarities and differences between classes.

Ask for advice when you are facing a problem at work.

- **Give your child** meaningful responsibilities. If you have a pet, ask your child to help with its care. Demonstrate how to prepare simple meals, do laundry and other chores to help the family.
- **Respect your child's ability.** Let your child use newly acquired knowledge and skills to help you. The next time your phone starts giving you trouble, see if your child can figure out a solution.
- **Expose your child to new things.** Every meaningful experience your child has—from a walk around the neighborhood to a trip to a store—has an impact on learning. On your next outing, ask how what your child sees relates to what they are learning in school.

Q: My seventh grader is clearly upset about something, but refuses to tell me about it. How can I encourage my child to open up without seeming pushy?

Questions & Answers

A: Adolescents and teens are notoriously tight-lipped when it comes to sharing problems with their families. But you *must* keep trying to find out what is bothering your middle schooler.

Although it's very likely the "something" that's troubling your child is relatively minor, it's important to address it. This is especially true if the issue drags on for days or weeks.

To encourage your middle schooler to share what's happening without feeling pressured in the process:

- **Say you are concerned.** "I feel like there's something you're not telling me. I want you to know I care about you and I'm here for you no matter what. You can talk to me about absolutely anything. Part of my job to help you figure things out."
- **Be clear** about your expectations. "I respect your privacy and the fact that you want to handle things on your own, but I need you to tell me what's wrong. You can have a little more time to think it over by yourself, but then let's figure this out together after dinner tonight."
- **Call in reinforcements.** If your child still refuses to talk, go to a teacher, pediatrician, school counselor, coach or other trusted figure. Work together to discover and help your child manage whatever is going on.



It Matters: Building Responsibility

Middle schoolers have a bigger role in learning



Middle school marks an important new phase in education. From this point on, students will be

expected to take more responsibility for their own learning. Instead of being teacher-led, learning in the secondary years becomes student-led.

To foster increased responsibility for learning, encourage your middle schooler to:

- **Be assertive.** Ask your child "What do you think you need to be successful this school year?" Then, encourage your child to ask for it. Suggest your child get to know teachers so approaching them will feel more comfortable.
- **Participate in class.** Your child should ask questions and give opinions during class discussions.
- **Get help at the first sign of a problem.** Your middle schooler should find out when teachers are available for extra help.
- **Work to get along** with teachers and classmates. Everyone learns better in a pleasant environment.
- **Take challenging classes.** Your middle schooler shouldn't just coast along. If classes seem easy, your child may not be in the right classes. Suggest talking to the school counselor about options.
- **Think about learning.** Instead of just memorizing information, your child should ask, "How does this topic relate to something I have learned or experienced before?"

Share these tools to help your student stay organized

Managing multiple classes and extracurricular activities can be a significant challenge in middle school. To help your child stay organized, recommend using these tools:

- **To-do lists.** Have your child write down everything that must be completed the following day, week, month, etc.
- **A planner.** Your child should write all assignments, due dates and test dates in a planner so everything is visible in one place.
- **Sticky notes.** Your child can use these to jot down unrelated thoughts that come to mind during a study session, and put them aside. That way, they won't be forgotten and your child can get back to studying.
- **Daily schedules.** Show your child how to make and follow a schedule every day. Here's a sample:



3:00 Arrive home from school
3:15 Snack and relaxation
3:30 Schoolwork
5:00 Change for soccer practice
5:30 Leave for soccer practice

Simple strategies boost your child's sense of responsibility



Fostering a sense of responsibility in children benefits them both in the classroom and in life. To cultivate

this sense of responsibility:

- **Include your child** when you pay bills or work on your budget. Don't share every financial detail, but demonstrate what budgeting looks like. "I'd love to order pizza, but it's not in our budget this week."
- **Adjust the chore list.** Are you still doing your child's laundry or making school lunches? If so, pass the torch. Don't overload your child,

but assign a few new self-care responsibilities that fit age and maturity.

- **Allow your child** to experience consequences. Don't run to the rescue when your child makes a mistake (unless there is true danger). Shielding kids from the negative outcomes of their actions denies them the opportunity to learn from their mistakes.
- **Help your child** manage money by tracking all personal money received, earned and spent. This responsibility instills a respect for money.