

# PELLA MIDDLE SCHOOL

## March Newsletter

*“Together”*

### Dear Parents/Guardians:

I can't say enough about the positive energy your kids bring into this building. Thankfully the students are doing an outstanding job of funneling that energy into their school work, friendships, and extra curriculars. They have also been supporting the building projects we are trying to accomplish. Students continue to step up and assist Mrs. VanWyk with the artwork and murals throughout the building, and we have several students stripping the old wax off the cafeteria floor. There are so many names to mention that I don't know where to start. Ask your child if he/she has had an opportunity to help with a project at school. Thank you for sending us great kids; we are very fortunate to have such a supportive group of parents in our community. Below are some pictures of students working after school hours Thursday, April 2, on the floor resurfacing; what outstanding work ethic and dedication by these young men.



### 8th Grade Specific

- **8th Grade Party**
  - Saturday, April 18, from 6:00 - 10:00 PM
    - Parents should have received:
      - Party information letter and RSVP at the bottom of the letter
    - Students should have received:
      - T-shirt size request via email/Google Forms
      - Music Preference request via email/Google Forms
  - If you are unable to attend planning meetings but would like to contribute, please feel free to contact the 8th grade party facilitator:

- Carrie Valster: [carrie.valster@gmail.com](mailto:carrie.valster@gmail.com)

### 7th Grade Specific

- As the 8th grade party is approaching for our 8th grade students, it seems like an appropriate time to share general information about what the 8th grade party is in case you do not know about it. I have attached a link to the letter that went out this year, simply for your information. The 8th grade party is an annual tradition that continues to be a success because of supportive parents. This year, the team of planners has tried to make it an event that once again focuses on the students in a less formal setting. Please take a look at the letter, and consider being a part of the planning for next year. If you would like to discuss the possibility of overseeing this next year, please let me know **prior to the end of the school year**. This will also allow parents to begin the planning process early in the 2015-2016 school year, in case your group of parents wants to make changes to the general idea of what the party is and/or entails. Again, parents make nearly all the decisions about the 8th grade party and dictate what type of party it is.
- [8th Grade Party Link](#)

### All Students

- **3rd Quarter/2nd Semester Midterm Grades**
  - These grades have been posted, and they are now visible on your student's Infinite Campus gradebook.
- **Middle School Renovation Open House - April 20 from 6:30-7:30**
  - This is not formal, and there will be no formal presentation. We would love to have any and all of you come in, walk the halls, talk to teachers, and see the final results of our new spaces. We also invite you to bring along any and all friends and family, so they can view it, too. You will be impressed!
- **Murals**
  - Our amazing art teacher, Mrs. Vanwyk, has honored our students and brought their work to our walls, and it will be displayed there for many years. Mrs. VanWyk and several students continue to work diligently to have the artwork completed by April 20 for the open house. The following students' artwork were chosen to be painted on the walls. See if you can figure out who's is who's next time you visit the building.
  - **Analeigh Babcock (7th) - bubbles (7th Grade)**
  - **Lindsay Blommers (8th) - pillars of character (8th Grade)**
  - **Abbie Nunnikhoven (8th) - academics, athletics, and fine arts trees**
  - **Jack Stratton (7th) - learning street**
- **Art Continued - Donations Welcome**
  - Our final phase of our art displays is in the design phase right now, and we are partnering with Mr. Goodrich and his students at the high school to get it accomplished. This, too, will be an amazing piece once we are able to round up the supplies and get it accomplished. That being

said, we are looking for any 16-18 gauge metal you may be willing to donate to the school. Please contact me at the school or Mrs. VanWyk, and we will arrange for pick up. We are hoping to seek donations, such as scraps, prior to purchasing to see if we can be more economical with this project. Thank you for considering joining us in this endeavor.

- **Track has Taken Off**

- We have nearly 100 students participating in track this spring between the boys' and girls' teams, and we are excited to see how they gain strength and stamina as the season progresses.

- **Avoid Texting/Calling your student while in school:**

- Students can have messages left in the office for them at any time.
- Students can call or text their parents from the office if they must communicate with them.
- When students receive texts from parents during the day, they feel obligated to reply, which pressures them to break our school expectations and/or policies.

**Cell Phones & Electronic Devices Handbook Policy**

Cell phones should remain OFF except for before school, at lunch, or after the final bell unless cleared through the office or their teacher. Teachers may ask to hold a student's cell phone while a student uses the restroom. Students are encouraged not to bring radios, CD's, iPods, laser lights, games, and other electronic devices, etc. to school. Use of these items is prohibited at school unless cleared through the office or their teacher. Exceptions to this rule include iPods, cell phones, or other similar devices used for classroom learning purposes. Detentions will be issued for repeated offenses, or if these items create a classroom disruption (i.e. cell phones ringing or vibrating in class). The school is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

**Permissible technology use at lunch:**

- playing games
- listening to music
- surfing the web

**Nonpermissible technology use at lunch: (not limited to the following)**

- text messaging, facebooking, social networking, emailing, snap chatting, tweeting, etc.
- phone calls
- taking photos of classmates, teachers, or staff without permission

**Steps for dealing with technological devices misuse:**

1<sup>st</sup> incident: Staff will confiscate, give to the office, and it will be given back after final bell by the office.

2<sup>nd</sup> incident: Student will pick-up the item from the principal, dean, or counselor.

3<sup>rd</sup> incident: Parents will pick up phone after the third incident from the principal. If the student brings the phone back to school after the third incident, the phone will spend minimally three school days in the principal's office. The student may be asked to leave the phone at home or in the principal's office daily if the problem persists.

\*\*Detention may be issued if deemed necessary.

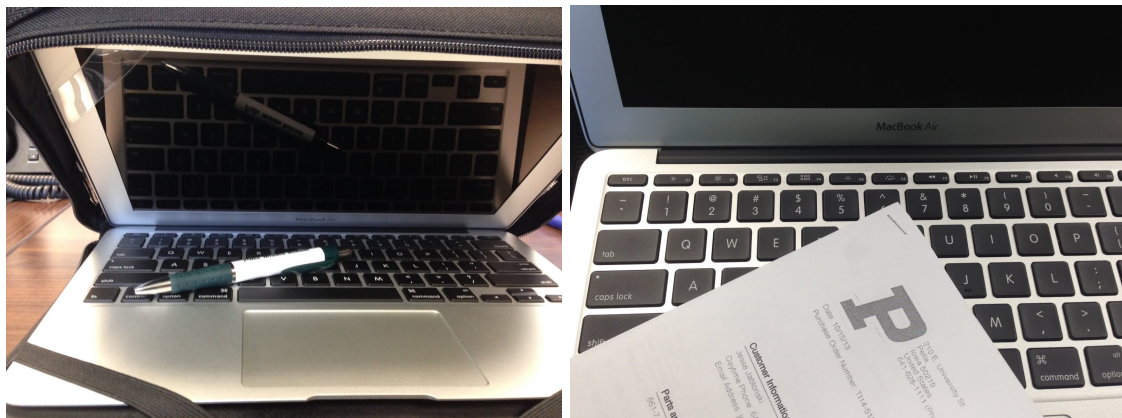
- **Avoid Laptop Screen Breakage**

- **Remind your student about ways to avoid spending \$350.00 to replace his/her screen.**
  - avoid leaving the charger tip on the keyboard when shutting the lid

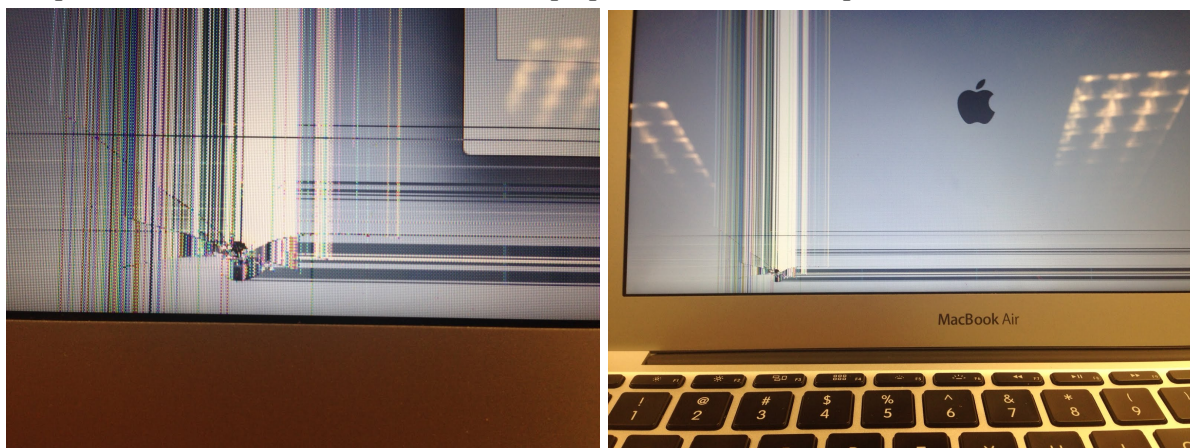




- avoid leaving headphones on the keyboard when shutting the lid
- avoid leaving pens/pencils on the keyboard when shutting the lid
- avoid leaving papers with paper clips or staples on them when shutting the lid.



\*\*These simple steps can help students reduce the likelihood of replacing their screens.  
Samples of broken LCD screens on student laptops due to blunt force pressure:



- **Host a Student from Another Country**

- Want to experience what it's like to host a student from another country? Consider opening your home to a student from the Netherlands April 25-May 13. For more information, contact Kathy Jaarsma-Tripp at [u5tripp@iowatelecom.net](mailto:u5tripp@iowatelecom.net) or Ann Visser at [avisser@lisco.com](mailto:avisser@lisco.com).

### **2014 - 2015 Calendars**

2014 - 2015 Approved District Calendar

<http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/14-15District-Calendar.pdf>

Activities/School Calendar - has ALL 2014 - 2015 district activities updated on it

[http://www.littlehawkeyeconference.com/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=206&school\\_id=4](http://www.littlehawkeyeconference.com/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=206&school_id=4)

### **Links for Resources (may have to copy and paste links)**

Middle School Specific Site: <http://www.pellaschools.org/schools/middle-school/>

Middle School Handbook:

[https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1JuW6bmJiBZ9Mm9dhi-Xt\\_edIeW\\_AyeOL8LxE7sc2S4I/edit](https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1JuW6bmJiBZ9Mm9dhi-Xt_edIeW_AyeOL8LxE7sc2S4I/edit)



Pella 1:1 Handbook:

[https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3\\_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXI5SsjYh68y-h9K8qZ6M5VM/edit](https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXI5SsjYh68y-h9K8qZ6M5VM/edit)

Middle School Band: <https://sites.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/pella-middle-school-band/>

Pella Digital Learning Environment (DLE) Link: <http://pcsd-dle.blogspot.com/>

**Dates to Remember for the 2014-2015 School Year**

April 3	No Classes - Good Friday
April 8	90 Minute Early Dismissal
April 15	90 Minute Early Dismissal
April 18	8th Grade Party from 6:30 - 10:00
April 20	6th - 7th Grade Orientation from 5:45-6:30 in the Gymnasium Public Open House - Middle School Renovation Project
April 22	90 Minute Early Dismissal
April 29	90 Minute Early Dismissal

As always, we appreciate your partnership with us in our journey to fulfill our mission of *Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child*.

Respectfully in Education,

*Joshua A. Manning*

Josh Manning  
Principal, Pella Middle School

***Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child***