

## **Principal's Message: October 2016**

**Dear Parents:**

**Happy Autumn to you and your family.**

Homecoming week was wonderful. Seeing the senior class rise up to the leadership role in the week's activities was absolutely the highlight of the week. The parade floats were fun. Thank you for driving the floats, attending the parades and games, supporting the kids, and enjoying the time with them. The activities were positive, filled with fun, and worthwhile.

Thank you, also, to those who attended conferences on Thursday, October 6th. It was a great way to communicate at the mid-quarter grading point. If you have questions regarding grading at any point, please connect with the specific teachers directly.

Co-curricular activities are beginning to take place with events and trips happening throughout the next weeks and months.

As stated last month, we have several goals for our school, students, and staff. Two goals have been our focus for the month of September: work completion and attendance. Even though we have battled a wicked cold here at PPHS, students have stuck it out and come to school on a noticeably better average than September of 2015. At this point in the year last year, our attendance rate was 96.8% and we are now at 97.5% attendance. This is great news! Congratulations to all students and families making the push to have the students in the building.

### **Panther Hour**

We continue our academic intervention for the year: Panther Hour. Students who are missing assignments or not passing their classes are referred to Panther Hour for the week. This is a great opportunity for the students to work with teachers closely and get caught up. If you have questions about your student's participation in Panther Hour, please contact the teacher for the course directly.

### **Quarter 1's Completion**

It's hard to believe we are talking about it, but we are already looking at Quarter 1's completion on November 3. Please continue to work with your student regarding homework and study skills with that date as a goal. It matters.

### **Upcoming Events of Note**

- Students will partake in a Spark! Workshop with the Diversity Council of Rochester, MN on Monday, October 17, 2016. Details are in the letter that was emailed below.
- October Saturday School sessions: Open to all from 8-Noon. A chance to complete work and meet goals in a structured setting with a staff member.

- October 15: Media Center 8-Noon
- October 29: Media Center 8-Noon
- Picture Retakes October 18
- Vision/Hearing re-screening October 25
- No School for MEA Break October 20-23.
- Check rSchool Calendar for specific events

**Letter to Parents for Diversity Council Workshops, 10.10.16**

**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**The Diversity Council from Rochester, MN, will be doing Spark! Workshops with the students, grades 7-12, on Monday, October 17, 2016. Each grade will have a class period dedicated to the workshop.**

**The Diversity Council's mission "is to educate people to embrace diversity as a foundation for building a healthy, inclusive and prosperous community." The council has developed workshops that are student specific and age appropriate, "seeking to increase knowledge and understanding, build empathy and self-esteem, and develop critical thinking skills."**

**It is an honor to have the Diversity Council work with our students. They work with about 15,000 students annually and have experienced positive feedback from the staff and students who have been in attendance. Following the day's workshops, the staff will meet with the Diversity Council to continue the conversation. Staff members, including myself, will be in attendance with the students during the sessions. The council promises a warm, inviting environment where students may participate as they so choose.**

**If you have further questions or feel you would not like your child to participate in the workshops, please contact me directly. Together, we are working to help our students build the skill of empathy and understanding for all.**

**Thank you for all you do to support our students and this school.**

**Sincerely,  
Carey Johnson  
Principal, PPHS**