

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
ANNA MCDONALD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

200 Second Street
Manhattan, IL 60442
815-478-3310

www.manhattan114.org

Ryan McWilliams, Principal
Debbie Jones, Secretary

Welcome to the website for Anna McDonald School "Where We Succeed Together!"

Anna McDonald School serves the educational needs of students in 3rd through 5th grade. As a learning community, we are committed to providing our students with a well-rounded educational program. With the support of our families, friends, and the community of Manhattan, our children receive a quality education in a learning environment that is both enriched and nurturing. As a growing school community, we welcome all students and families to the 2009-10 school year.

Our instructional goals this year are to continue the rich tradition of academic excellence and increase student success and achievement in literacy, math, and writing. In the area of literacy, students will receive instruction using Harcourt STORYTOWN and other various reading materials. Guided Reading instructional methodologies is implemented at all grade levels to promote student success. Thank you to our Education Foundation for sponsoring many of our reading initiatives and to our Board of Education & Superintendent Mr. Butters for it's continued support of curricular initiatives.

Third through fifth grades will continue to use the Houghton-Mifflin math series. Teaching, reviewing, assessing, re-teaching and enrichment are important parts of our math instructional delivery. I thank our K-8 math committee for meeting over summer to tweak our curriculum maps for the district. Enhancing how and what we introduce is of utmost importance and the great work of our committee ensures State Standard alignment and appropriate content exposure for your child.

Our Accelerated Math program will be in its second full year and I am very proud of the progress and accomplishments from this past year's students and staff. The goal at each grade level for this group of students is to fulfill 5 quarters of work in a school year. For example, a 3rd grade student will be working on 4th grade material during the 4th quarter. I am pleased with our first year's progress and am excited to see these efforts continue.

Our writing committee met before summer to tie up loose ends and prepare for the upcoming year. To continue our continuity district wide, student writing portfolios have been passed along to the next grade level or school. Ask your teacher at parent/teacher conferences for details.

Anna McDonald seeks success for each student through instructional excellence, teamwork, and school spirit. We are very proud of the education we provide to our students & families and we are dedicated and committed to excellence. Please e-mail, call, or visit us any time.

Sincerely,

Ryan McWilliams
Principal

rmcwilliams@manhattan114.org

815-478-3310 x 4

Pictures

Pictures will be taken of all the children on Wednesday, August 26th. Picture package information will be sent home with all students later in the week.

Early Dismissal

As a reminder to parents, there is an early dismissal on **Friday, September 25th at 12:45 p.m.** Please refer to the school calendar for other early dismissal days and times as they have changed from years past.

HOT LUNCHES – NOW \$2.75

PREFERRED MEALS, will be our lunch provider. They will utilize a computer generated accounting system, just as we have in the past. Students will be provided with photo I.D. lunch cards. Cards will be kept at school and given out each day by your child's teacher prior to lunch. Payments can be made anytime during the month, but it makes our bookkeeping easier if you make payments on the first day of the week.

Payment can be made for as many lunches as you would like. To help insure accuracy and expediency, parents are asked to send payment in a sealed envelope. Please address the envelope with your child's name on it, teacher, and also indicate how many lunches you wish to purchase. Lunches will be added to your child's account that day. If you send a check please make it out to Manhattan School District 114.

PLEASE NOTE: WE NEED SEPARATE LUNCH PAYMENTS FOR EACH CHILD IN THE DISTRICT. We feel that this will help families to know how much money each of your children has in his/her lunch account.

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO INCUR A NEGATIVE BALANCE. STUDENTS THAT STILL HAVE NEGATIVE LUNCH BALANCES FROM LAST YEAR WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PURCHASE A LUNCH UNTIL THAT BALANCE HAS BEEN PAID. Cheese Crackers and Milk will be provided to students who do not have money in their lunch account.

Free/Reduced Lunch applications will be sent home the first day of school. If you feel you are entitled to free/reduced lunches you must fill out a new application each year. If you received free/reduced lunches last year your child will receive these lunches only for the first month of school. We will need a new, approved, application on file to continue to provide them with fee/reduced price meals.

Staff Update

A special welcome to new staff members that have joined us this year.

Ms. Elise Stuedemann – 5th grade teacher
Ms. Lindsey Bradbury – 4th grade teacher
Ms. Megan Alvin – 3rd grade teacher
Mrs. Mary Rinaldi – Reading Assistant
Mrs. Amanda Lyen – Psychologist
Mr. David Hurd – Technology Assistant

Ms. Tracy Lamont – 5th grade teacher
Mrs. Kim Davern – 3rd grade teacher
Mr. Jeff Riley – Computer teacher
Mrs. Robin Millner – student teacher
Ms. Amy Vanderveen – Speech/Language
Mrs. Nicole Conroy - ELL

Open House

Open House will be held on Thursday, September 3rd, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. During the Open House parents are asked to schedule their Parent/Teacher Conference. Sign-up forms will be available in all classrooms. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled for November 9th and 10th.

Conferring With Teachers

Parents wishing to confer with teachers are asked to call the school office or call the staff members voice mailbox. If the teacher is unable to take your call, we will gladly leave them a message to return your call at their earliest convenience.

If wishing to confer in person with a teacher, please schedule an appointment in advance. Often, teachers

feel bad when a parent arrives at school to confer with them and they cannot meet with that parent due to other demands and responsibilities placed upon them. By scheduling an appointment they will be prepared to meet with you to address your concerns.

Student Absences/Truancy

All parents are required to call the school at 478-3310 if their child will be absent from school. The call should be made between 6:00 and 8:30 a.m. A parent or a legal guardian must report absences. Student reports will not be accepted. When calling, please state: parent name, student name and the reason for absence. In the event you do not contact us, we will make a reasonable attempt to contact you at home or work. Failure to report a child's absence constitutes the child considered absent without a valid excuse.

Absent work should be requested if a student will miss more than one day of school. If a student will only be absent one day, the child can request or will obtain make-up work the next day from his/her classroom teacher. Please refer to parent/student handbook or call the main office if you have any questions.

NOTE: Illinois School Code 5/26-21 states: "A "truant" is defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for a school day or portion thereof."

"Chronic or habitual truant" shall be defined as a child subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 10% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days." This equates to a child being absent more than 17 days during any given school year.

P.T.O. Thank You!

A big thank you to the fundraising efforts of the P.T.O. last year. The staff and students at Anna McDonald are very grateful for their monetary donation for assemblies and incentive programs. We continue to be very grateful for all that this fine organization does for our school. Next meeting is Sept. 2nd at Wilson Creek @ 9:30 a.m.

Bus Transportation

Parents, thanks for your patience during this first week of school. Start the school year right with a review of the handbook section concerning bus transportation. It includes bus-riding rules.

News from the Manhattan Public Library

Mrs. Paula Basil will be present at our Open House to share exciting programs the library has to offer. Please stop by her table Thursday night or phone her at 478-3987.

Manhattan Foundation for Educational Excellence

We hope you enjoy the school calendar developed by the Manhattan Foundation for Educational Excellence. The calendar was a fundraising project by this organization. Profits from the calendar and other donations obtained by this group are administered by the Foundation to provide District #114 students and faculty with educational supplies and equipment beyond what the school budgets allow. Further information about the Foundation for Educational Excellence can be found inside the calendar. We are very grateful to the Foundation for their efforts. We also would like to thank all the volunteers and advertisers for their support of the students and faculty through this calendar.

Volunteers

We are very fortunate & grateful to have so many people volunteer their time to work at Anna McDonald School. Mrs. Kim Maher is the program coordinator. If you are interested in volunteering this year, please fill out the volunteer form in your child's classroom during Open House and return it to the office. If you have questions, please call Mrs. Kim Maher at 478-3310.

Wellness

Due to the rising numbers of obesity in children, the Federal Government has mandated that schools have a Wellness Plan. Given the growing epidemic of obesity in the U.S. and the link between nutrition and academic performance, we must work together to ensure that healthy foods are available throughout the school environment - in school meal programs, vending machines, snacks and birthday treats, and school sponsored activities. With the help of parents and staff members, we have a policy that will help us to educate the children regarding health and nutrition, but we need your help! In addition to watching food content labels for healthy alternatives, we also need to be more aware of a variety of food allergies that our children face- some of them life threatening.

In order to best implement our Wellness Plan we are asking that any treats brought to school to be shared with other students, (i.e. birthday treats, holiday parties, etc.) must be pre-packaged and have an ingredient label on them. The exception to this will be cupcakes and the iced sugar cookies from Kirby's Bakery. They will provide for us an ingredient label to keep on file at school for these two items.

As we will be doing here at school, we would also like to encourage parents to think of healthy food alternatives or non-food items, when planning rewards or birthday treats. Some popular items with our students are birthday pencils, stickers, erasers etc. We certainly don't want to take the fun out of these special times in your child's life, but have learned that they can be just as meaningful with a fun alternative treat or prize. Our plan with the Wellness Plan is to start to make children aware that they have choices when it comes to what they eat.

From the Nurse's Office

If you have any questions concerning physicals, immunizations, dental or eye exams, medications, or any other health issues feel free to call our nurse, Mrs. Maria Rayson at 478-3310. Please do not send any medications, including cough drops, to school with your child. A more detailed letter will come home from the nurse in the near future.

Substitutes Needed

We are looking for substitute teacher assistants and nurse substitutes. Please contact Diane Ponshe in the Business Office at 815-478-4527.

Ronald McDonald House Thank You

The Friends of the Ronald McDonald House would like to thank the Manhattan Schools for collecting pop tabs last year. All the proceeds collected from pop tabs go directly into operating costs of the house. Thanks for your support and keep sending in your pop tabs. In May, we donated 198 lbs. of pop tabs!

Important Dates

August

26th Fall Picture Day

September

2nd PTO meeting @ WC 9:30 a.m.

3rd Open House 7-8 p.m.

8th Board of Education meeting @ WC 7 p.m.

25th Progress Reports

Early Release 12:45 p.m.

29th Picture re-takes