

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER
ANNA MCDONALD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

200 Second Street; Manhattan, IL 60442

815-478-3310

www.manhattan14.org

Ryan McWilliams, Principal

Debbie Jones, Secretary

August 2011

Welcome to 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 2011-12 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. Small group instruction, as well as a Response to Intervention approach, is implemented at all grade levels to promote student success. Thank you to our Education Foundation for their continued support of our reading initiatives, to include the purchase of a SMARTBOARD for our building leveled library and book room. I would also like to thank our Board of Education & Superintendent Butters for their continued support of curricular initiatives.

Third through fifth grades will continue to use the Houghton-Mifflin Math series. In addition, select classrooms at each grade level will be piloting new Math material for a potential Math adoption for the 2012-13 school year. Teaching, reviewing, assessing, re-teaching and enrichment are important parts of our math instructional delivery. I thank our math committee for its continued efforts ensuring our instructional practices and curriculum maps meet the needs of every child at each grade level. Enhancing WHAT & HOW we introduce material 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 fourth full year at 4th and 5th grade 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.

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 are passed along to the next grade level or school. Ask your teacher at parent/teacher conferences for details.

The Science and Social Studies Committees collaborated over the past year to develop new curriculum maps for the 2011-12 school year. Changes in content assures each student streamlined exposure to important topics and concepts K-8th grade.

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

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815-478-3310 x 4

Important Note

Manhattan School District will be doing a practice CODE RED DRILL in September with Manhattan law enforcement. We will not announce the date to staff or students so we will have an accurate reflection of our response. Please let your child know that this may happen but it is only a practice drill. As always please call the school if you have any questions.

First Day of School

Our first day of school, Monday August 22, 2011, will be a **FULL DAY**. We will be dismissed at 3:12 p.m. for walkers/parent pick up and 3:15 p.m. for bus riders. Hot lunch will be available for purchase. We will be serving popcorn chicken on August 22nd.

HOT LUNCHESES – \$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. Only 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.

Pictures

Pictures will be taken of all the children on Thursday, August 25th. Picture package information will be sent home with all students.

Open House

Open House will be held on Thursday, September 1st, 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 21st and 22nd.

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 can be requested on the second day of the student's absence. If requesting homework on the second day, please do so when reporting the absence. If a student will only be absent one day, the child can 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 August 23rd 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.

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. If you are interested in volunteering this year, please look for the "Volunteer Fair" during Open House. We are always looking for help both in the classroom and with other various projects and copies. If you have any questions, please call the school at 478-3310.

Young Rembrandts Art Class

Young Rembrandts New Sessions will begin on Wednesday, September 28th!
For more information or to enroll, please contact the Manhattan Park District at 815-478-3324.

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.

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.

Manhattan School Board

Please update your school calendar to show that the school board meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Important Dates

August

22nd 1st full day of school
23rd PTO Meeting at 9:30 a.m. at Wilson Creek
25th FALL PICTURE DAY

September

1st Open House 7-8 p.m.
5th No School – Labor Day
6th PTO meeting @ WC 9:30 a.m.
14th Board of Education meeting @ WC 7 p.m.
24th Progress Reports
26th Picture re-takes
29th PTO Room Parent Tea at Wilson Creek @ 2:00 p.m.
29th 5th Grade Music Program at 7:00 p.m.