

# February 2018

Houghton-Portage Township Schools

## Houghton Elementary School



Volume V, Issue 6

Doreen Klingbeil, Superintendent  
Anders Hill, Principal

### Upcoming Events:

- February 9th— Spirit Day (Wear Black & Orange) for Wing-Ding Winter Homecoming
- February 14th— Classroom Valentines Parties
- February 15th—**School Dismisses at 12:20**, Unscheduled Parent-Teacher Conferences 1-3 pm & 6-8 pm
- February 16th— **School Dismisses at 12:20**, Professional Development in PM
- March 7th—**School Dismisses at 12:20**, Professional Development in PM
- March 6th—Family Science & Engineering Night @ HES
- March 23rd—3rd Marking Period Ends
- March 26th—April 2nd—Spring Break **No School**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading Law- A Parents Guide to PA 306

In an effort to boost reading achievement in the state, Michigan lawmakers passed Public Act 306 in October 2016. The law requires extra support for K-3 students who are not reading at grade level and also states that a child may be retained in third grade if they are one or more grade levels behind in reading at the end of third grade. This law effects this year's 1<sup>st</sup> grade students and the grades to follow. At Houghton Elementary we have been meeting and in many cases exceeding the requirements made in the law.

**What do I need to know as a parent?** Your child's

reading progress will be closely monitored beginning in kindergarten. If your child is not reading where expected, a plan to improve reading will be created. This means your child's teacher and school will work with your child to find where your child needs support in his/her reading development and create a plan to support him or her. This plan includes extra instruction or support in areas of need, ongoing checks on reading progress and a read-at-home plan that encourages you and your child to read and write outside of the school day.

Extra supports in your child's reading improvement plan

will occur in small groups during the school day. Your child will not miss regular reading instruction. Starting in 2019-2020 school year, in order to be promoted from third to fourth grade, your child must score less than one year behind on the state reading assessment, or demonstrate a third grade reading level through an alternate test or portfolio of student work. If you are notified your child may be retained, you have the right to meet with school officials and to request, within 30 days, an exemption if in the best interest of your child.

### Winter Parent-Teacher Conferences

Please make every effort to attend winter parent-teacher conferences. They will be held from 1 to 3 pm and 6 to 8 pm on Thursday, February 15th. Parent involvement is a key to student success. These are unscheduled conferences, so it is first come, first serve. Please try to limit conferences to 10 minutes so that all parents have a chance to meet with teachers.

On January 18<sup>th</sup> we held our annual Geography Bee. We'd like to congratulate our winner Henry Lounibos and Runner-up Jack Rudak.



### Dropping Off Students at School



Parents please remember that students should be dropped off at the upper parking lot in the morning. Also, please remember to park in the parking lot if you are coming into the school. Vehicles should not be left unattended along the sidewalk. And please slow down in the parking lot.

## January TEAM Students

Every month we are recognizing a student in each class that exemplifies our schools TEAM goals:

Take Responsibility

Earn Respect

Act Positively

Make it Safe

These students will enjoy cookies and milk with the

principal and receive a certificate.

**Young 5's:** Matthew Labovsky

**K:** Nate Capello, Riley Cherubini, Joseph Saatio, Marjorie Black & Max Hill

**1st :** Cam Raffaelli, Hayden Matteson, Zainab Jadi, Hailley Peterson & Mariah Lake

**2nd:** Calvin Rinkinen, Rylan Lahti, Hayden Schuette &

Stella Park

**3rd:** Liam Inal, Desmond Holden, Miina Chopp, Tess Karagiannakis & Boden Rudnicki

**4th:** Maia Peters, Anna Wu, Annie Motherwell & Ayla Juntunen

**5th:** MaKena Rule, Eddie Zhou, Breanna Packham & Trayven Lahti

**Congratulations!**

TEAM Students



## PTO Corner

### PTO Thanks!

More than 150 Gremlins attended our second-annual Track Friday event! Special thanks goes to our event planners and volunteers, especially: - the PTO Board - the fifth grade - Student Council - Mr. Hill - Mrs. Matson - Mrs. Repp - Mr. Lawson - Jen Wall/High UP Fitness

**Prize sponsors:** - Copper Country Family Dentistry - Michigan Tech Housing & Residential Life - Michigan Tech - Mont Ripley - Portage Fitness Center - Upper Great Lakes Family Health - Wells Fargo Bank

### PTO Dates to Remember:

PTO Meeting

Tuesday, February 20, 5:30 p.m.

Inside the school library All families welcome

### Want to get more PTO updates?

Like PTO on Facebook: [facebook.com/HPTSPTO](https://www.facebook.com/HPTSPTO)



# Counselor's Corner

Micah Stipech

## Miracle Grow for the Brain

What if there was a miracle grow for the brain? Something we could sprinkle on and “poof” we are able to learn more, perform faster and age slower? What if there was an easy-to-achieve, scientifically proven, way to make yourself smarter? It turns out this is exactly what happened when researchers sprinkle a protein called Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) on brain neurons in a petri dish. Similar to fertilizing a plant, the neurons sprout new branches, make new connections and literally take off.

A massive amount of research is highlighted by Dr. John Ratey, a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School in his book SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain (Little, Brown, 2008).

How it works is BDNF binds to receptors in synapses that connect the neurons in our brains. It increases the voltage of those electric connections. In other words, it boosts their signal strength.

Inside the cells BDNF goes to work activating genes that create more BDNF, other important proteins and neurotransmitters. One of those neurotransmitters, Serotonin, is crucial in regulating mood and feelings of well-being. Pharmaceuticals that create anti-depressants target serotonin attempting to artificially improve mood and curb depression.

So how do we create more BDNF in our brains so that we can learn more, retain more, combat stress and feel better? The answer, researchers agree, is free. Daily exercise, in particular, bursts of high intensity exercise. Those who exercised vigorously for short bursts of 3-5 minutes create more BDNF than individuals doing something like a moderate 40minute jog.

In a recent German study, volunteers who did two 3 minute sprints (separated by 2 minutes of lower intensity) during the course of a forty-minute treadmill session demonstrated higher increases in BDNF than non-sprinters. Not only that, the sprinters learned vocabulary words 20 percent faster than non-sprinting exercisers. It seems even a small amount of high-intensity exertion can have a profound effect on your brain!

BDNF production is most crucial in Children. Children’s brains are rapidly creating connections enabling them to learn at a staggering rate. By their teen years brains are already going through neural pruning, cutting out those connections that are not being used. It is critical that children utilize these windows of trainability and create neural connections that will last a lifetime. When children are sedentary, looking at screens and not moving and playing, they are missing out on tremendous cognitive development.

Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor, a fancy name that tells us what people have known for ages; a healthy body, mind and spirit are inseparable. Include plenty of activity and play in our children’s day and sprinkle miracle grow on their brains.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/magazine/how-exercise-could-lead-to-a-better-brain.html?pagewanted=all>

SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain (Little, Brown, 2008).



# Attendance Matters

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in Kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college and at work.

attendance  
**MATTERS**<sup>®</sup>

### When Do Absences Become a Problem?



Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.

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**EVERY  
MINUTE  
IN SCHOOL  
MATTERS**

Two missed days a month adds up to being a half a year behind by the time your child reaches 4th grade.

And once a child falls behind, they rarely catch up.



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Mission Statement:

**Every Student, Every Day!**



Congratulations to our 5th Grade Spelling Bee classroom winners: Omar Alaraje, Julia Jeon, Laney Johnson, Cheyenne Laplander, Drake Markham, Hudson Markham, Keona Sutinen and Eddie Zhou. In the district competition Eddie Zhou was our runner-up and Julia Jeon was our winner. We wish Julai and Eddie the best of luck at the regional spelling bee.

## **Kindergarten Round Up 2018-19**

Houghton Portage Township Schools will begin registering kindergarten-aged children for the 2017-18 school year. Children who will be five years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 (Waiver available if students turn 5 before December 1st, 2018), are eligible to enter kindergarten or Young 5's. Please call Houghton Elementary School at 482-0456 ext. 3040 to pre-register. Children currently attending Young 5's are automatically registered for kindergarten.

**K**indergarten  
Registration