

falcon files

AURORA ACADEMY SCHOOL-WIDE NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2010

The Flag Pole is Back!

After a hiatus of several years while it resides prone along the north side of the building, our flag pole has been *replanted*. We removed the flag pole several years ago to allow carline to expand; the flag then migrated to the top of the building. As part of the playground remodel Mike Jakl recently installed our pole in the east garden.

Protocol dictates that if the American flag is left up at night it must be illuminated. As there is no light trained on the pole in this new location, the flag must be raised and lowered each day. This affords our kids the chance to embrace that responsibility. Suitably, a collection of kids who are also Scouts has accepted the charge. Every morning we're in session, a few of them join parent Mark Brazee to raise the flag. It's great to have the pole back in play and be able to get kids involved in this important activity.

MAP Tests in Sept.

MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress) is *the other standardized test* that we use to gauge how well we're doing in our pursuit of a great education for your kids. Administered twice yearly, fall and spring, it's a chance to compare us against the nation, for many schools across the country employ this instrument.

Kids in 3rd-8th grade take two tests that are computer-based, one reading and one math. The program uses the opening questions to take stock of where the learner's ability range resides, then asks questions in that zone.

Data from MAP tests is a piece of your child's academic abilities picture; we use it to support their growth. Please encourage your child to do his/her best on their MAP tests.

Celebrating the New Playground

As part of the Back-to-School event, Aurora Academy celebrated the renovation and relocation of our playground. Board Vice President Sara Ker, bullhorn in hand, recognized those parents who have put in tremendous efforts to make this happen. In particular, Mike Jakl, Aaron Zimmer, Mark Brazee, Brent Curnow, and staff members Jon Hovan and Miclele Cvar, all members of the Playground Committee.

While this is an outstanding group, one person has gone so far above and beyond to make this a reality...Mike Jakl. Mike, the community, especially the kids of Aurora Academy cannot thank you enough.

There is still a little work to be done and Saturday, Sept. 11 is scheduled for a volunteer effort to wrap up some of the details. Later this month, the playground and the relocated north parking lot will be seal-coated, and the playground will be painted.

PTA Fundraiser In Swing

PTA does one big fundraiser each year to support the myriad things they do for the school...

- Field trips
- Falcon Fest
- Social events for the kids
- Staff Appreciation Week
- Skate City Nights
- Classroom support

All this takes a healthy bank account, so, PTA comes to the community each fall with an opportunity for parents and friends of Aurora Academy to help. There's a new product line this year from a new company. Many of you may have been able to sample product at Back-to-School. Thanks for supporting our kids.

Thanks, Jim! ...Sure You Want to Retire?

*My door is squealing. * The handle of locker #87 is broken. * Can I get this whiteboard moved from this wall to that wall? * It's too hot/cold/windy/purple in my room!* These are just a few of the greetings for Jim Broeren each day. As our trusty maintenance person, Jim has been able to almost literally fix anything that breaks around here. Repeatedly, he devises some sort of solution to deal with a need. Jim is the true embodiment of a problem solver in the real world. And, he has decided to retire.

We knew we wouldn't be able to keep him here forever...and we just can't understand why fishing, camping, attending to home projects, being with family, traveling, and relaxing are such a draw when compared with the exciting challenges of keeping Aurora Academy's facility humming and staff happy! We will miss Jim in the biggest way, not just for what he does for us, but for who he is...truly a prince of a guy; caring, thoughtful, friendly, and even sometimes funny. It has been our grand fortune to have shared these years with you, and we wish you more than the very best.

Cross Country Added to Sports Offerings

Mr. Hovan and Ms. Nesberg will be shepherding a crew of kids in the latest addition to our sports program for middle schoolers. The challenge and exhilaration of distance running offers a host of life learning opportunities, things kids can transfer to other areas of their lives...about setting a goal and training to meet it; learning to pace yourself over a long effort to be able to make it to the end of the task; being an individual with your own goals, while at the same time being part of the team...among them. Several meets are set up. Good luck and good running!

