

# The Bridge



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## **Important Dates**

January 1	New Years Day (No School)
January 11	VCES LSIC at 5:30 p.m. Board of Ed. Meeting 6:30
January 18	Martin Luther King Day (No School)
January 25	End of 2nd Nine-Weeks and First Semester
January 25	PMS LSIC at 5:30 p.m. Board of Ed. Meeting 6:30
January 26	Third Nine-Weeks Grading Period Commences
February 1	Second Nine-Weeks and First Semester Report Cards
February 2	Parent-Teacher Conferences (Elementary Schools)
February 4	Parent-Teacher Conferences (Middle Schools)

## **Along With Winter, Crunch Time Comes Early**

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. Although a week of snow days has delayed our return to school, we are now back in the saddle, so to speak, and must begin a concerted effort to ensure that every student masters all of the content standards they are required to learn by the end of this school year. And this will be difficult on everyone's part, as the weather has, and might again, conspire against us, shortening the precious little time that we have to make certain that our students really learn what they need to learn to be able to perform well on the WesTest in May. It is imperative that we work together to make sure that our time available really counts. Below, Mr. Kittle has provided information about how we will work with the calendar to increase instructional time to the extent possible. We should also work hand-in-hand with other employees, administrators and parents to utilize every instructional minute to the fullest, staying focused on the CSOs and limiting the number of "fluffy" (also known as "fun") stuff, like watching movies and other such possibly enriching activities. Teachers can engage students during instruction by using different instructional delivery strategies and assessment techniques, such as problem based learning, increased technology use, and alternative assessment methods. I'm not telling you anything you don't already know is best practice. I am simply hoping to remind us all of the urgency of using every minute given the eight ball behind which Mother Nature has placed us all. I believe in us, a group of educators and support personnel who always keep our eyes on the prize—our students and their learning. Thanks for all you do!

## **From the Desk of Jeff Kittle: Instructional Days**

The winter of 2009-2010 has seen a resurgence of winter weather reminiscent of the 1970's when the mercury would plummet into the single digits, the snow would pile up, and you would not see the sun for weeks. Severe winter weather also brings with it hazardous road conditions which, in turn, can cause school to be canceled. Through January 8<sup>th</sup>, Barbour County Schools has lost seven instructional days. In our school calendar, four Out-of-School (OS) days are scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> and also June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. These OS days will be rescheduled as instructional days to help compensate for the loss of instructional days due to the inclement weather.

Schools were closed on December 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> due to inclement weather. During this timeframe, Governor Manchin declared a "State of Emergency" for the state. This situation has prompted some to ask, "If the county schools are closed

because of inclement weather and the Governor declares a state of emergency, must a county school system make up the lost instructional days?" State Superintendent, Dr. Steven Paine, recently issued a memorandum to all county superintendents on this very subject. In his memo, Dr. Paine states that indeed school systems are to reschedule days in their calendars later in the year to make up missed instructional days that occurred earlier due to inclement weather.

Finally, several school calendar changes have been made by consensus due to the weather-related loss of instructional time: A) the second nine-weeks and first semester will end on January 25; B) the third nine-weeks will commence on January 26; C) report card distribution will occur on February 1; D) elementary parent-teacher conferences will now be held on February 2nd and middle school parent-teacher conferences have been rescheduled for February 4th..

## Kasson Honored as WV Exemplary School for Fifth Time

For the fifth consecutive year, Kasson Elementary/Middle School has been named a West Virginia Exemplary School by the state Office of Education Performance Audits. KEMS represents the top 10 percent of elementary/middle schools in the state of West Virginia.

West Virginia's 2009 Exemplary Schools were honored during a celebration on November 9 at the Embassy Suites conference center in Charleston.

To achieve exemplary status, a school must meet a high level of student proficiency in core subjects on the WESTEST II; meet a student attendance rate at or above 94 percent; meet a student graduation rate at or above 85 percent; meet a college or post-secondary attendance rate of 55 percent; and meet a 5 percent standard of students who successfully complete Advanced Placement, dual credit and honors classes as defined by state Policy 2510. Approximately 8 to 10 percent of West Virginia schools qualify for the honor annually.

Kasson Elementary/Middle School, located in the northeastern corner of Barbour County, is the educational home to some 187 students in grades pre-kindergarten through eight.

"I am proud of the students, faculty and staff members for their hard work and dedication," KEMS Principal Michelle Barb. "It takes support from the school, parents and the community to achieve this top honor."

Barbour County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Deede Lundeen added, "Once again, Kasson School shines like a beacon in Barbour County. For the fifth year in a row, the students, faculty, administration and community have come together to produce an exemplary school. The Board of Education and I are very proud. Well done."



*Kasson's students assemble for a school celebration.*

## Philippi Middle Students "Bring on the HEATT" During National Education Week Events



Healthy habits earned prizes for PMS sixth graders, Vanessa Kelley, Jared Kitsko and Sabrina Waugaman. Other winners were Adam Anglin, Brandon Mayle and Bryan Schulte in grade seven, and Ian Nuzum and Brittany Wentz in grade eight.

Students at Philippi Middle School celebrated National Education Week during November by conducting programs related to the school's Bring on the HEATT (*Healthy Eating and Activity Teams and Tactics*) initiative.

The values of nutritious foods and physical activities were stressed during the week, using food templates and nutrient analyses learned in health classes. Results were posted in the cafeteria, with the culminating event a prize drawing for those attaining 100% scores. The events were coordinated by Tina Shriver, health teacher; Ronda Jones, food service secretary; Freda Cross, cafeteria manager; and Rebecca Nesbitt, county child nutritionist.

PMS was one of three county schools to receive a HEATT grant from the US Department of Agriculture in 2008-09. The program provides training, support and activities designed to empower students in making healthy life choices.

Local Assessment Schedule Provided for Remainder of 2009-10 School Term

Following is a current assessment schedule for January–June, 2010. In addition to the data included on the chart, several updates are included in the special notes at the bottom of the page. The calendar is always available for review on the BCS website. Questions may be forwarded to either Jack Reger or Elaine Benson at the board office.



Barbour County Schools—Assessment Schedule					
2009 - 2010 School Year (January—June): Last Updated on January 14, 2010					
WEEK OF...	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Jan. 4-8	DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8				
Jan. 11-15	DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8				
Jan. 18-22	DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8; DATA SETS completed 1/28				
Jan. 25-29	DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8; DATA SETS completed 1/28				
Feb. 1-5 and 8-12	BENCHMARK 2: MATHEMATICS AND RLA				
Feb. 15-19 and 22-26	Writing Benchmark 4				
Mar. 1-5	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 6-8/PBHS Work Keys: Grade 12				
Mar. 8-12	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 6-8/PBHS Work Keys: Grade 12				
Mar. 15-19	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 6-8				
Mar. 22-26	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 6-8 & 9-11				
Mar. 29-Apr. 2	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 3-5 & 9-11				
Apr. 5-9	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 3-5 & 9-11				
Apr. 12-16	WESTEST 2 WRITING: 3-5				
Apr. 19-23	WESTEST 2 WRITING 3-5/BENCHMARK 3: MATHEMATICS AND RLA				
Apr. 26-30	W2W/PLCs/ECOTST	W2W/PLCs/ECOTST	W2W/PLCs/ECOTST	W2W/PLCs/ECOTST	W2W/PLCs/ECOTST
May 3-7	AP ASSESSEMENTS/*CTE ECOSTS/DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8				
May 10-14	AP ASSESSEMENTS/*CTE ECOSTS/DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8				
May 17-21	WESTEST 2 Grades 3-11				
May 24-28	WESTEST 2 Grades 3-11: Make-Ups/DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8				
May 31-June 4	Memorial Day	*CTE ECOSTS Ends June 1/DIBELS K-6/AIMS Web 7-8			
June 7-11					

CTE ECOTST: To Be Announced by WVDE-CTE

Golden Horseshoe (Grade 8) March 10 essay; March 29 online; Tech Steps (Grade 8) 9/04 - 4/30; WESTELL (K - 12) 3/29 - 4/30

Young Writers submissions due to BOE office on March 1

Writing Assessments: On-line windows: March 1-26 (middle); March 22-April 9 (high school); March 29-April 30 (elementary)

High Schools That Work (Grade 12) 1/04 - 1/29; HEAP Health Assessments. (Grades 6, 8 or 9 - 12) On-going

APTA (Grades 3-8 & 10 / Science 4, 6, & 11) 4/26 - 5/7; NAEP (Grades 4, 8, & 12) 01/25-03/05

ACT: 9/12, 10/24, 12/12, 2/6, 4/10, 6/12

SAT: 10/10&18, 11/7&8, 12/5&6, 1/23&24, 3/6&7, 5/1&2, 6/5&6; PSAT, Oct 14&17

## — Odds 'N' Ends —

➤ **It's W-2 Season:** The Finance Office reminds all county school personnel that their 2009 W-2 forms will be distributed with their January 28th paychecks.

➤ **Driving for Discounts:** Did you know that you can save 10% on your auto parts purchases? All Barbour County school employees are eligible for the discount at any area *Advance Auto* location, including the Philippi store. Simply display your photo ID at the time of purchase and request the deduction!

➤ **Adult & Community Education Teachers Sought:** Do you have a special skill or talent that would benefit the adult population of Barbour County? If so, the Career and Technical Education Center may be looking for you. The CTEC is interested in offering evening or Saturday classes on special enrichment topics such as computer basics, dance, cooking, woodworking, basketry, knitting or mechanics. If interested, staff members are invited to contact Lisa Heinbaugh at 457-4807 for more information on how to earn a few extra dollars while serving the public at the same time!

## 21st Century Lesson



According to a radio report, a middle school in Oregon was faced with a unique problem. A number of girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirrors, leaving dozens of little lip prints.

Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. She called the girls into the bathroom and met them there with the janitor, Mr. Jackson. She explained that all these kiss marks were causing a major problem for the custodian, who had to clean the mirrors every night. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, she asked Mr. Jackson to scrub one of them. He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped and swirled it in the nearest toilet and then cleaned one of the mirrors. Magically, since then, there have been no lip prints on the mirrors.

## ParentLink System Improves Communication Between Schools and Homes

Like most organizations, Barbour County Schools is constantly looking for ways to improve and standardize communication, both within the system and with parents and other stakeholders. One such notable effort is the addition of the new ParentLink service, a national product that is gaining in popularity across the nation.

ParentLink became fully operational in the district during the fall of 2009 as part of a collaborative effort with interested parties in RESA VII, which made the service more affordable for the participating counties. The technological system essentially creates a telephone web or chain by which important information can be shared with all parents and staff members in Barbour County within just six minutes.

Messages can be personalized and sorted to reach everyone or just those on established lists. In cases where the program does not receive a personal or answering machine response, it will automatically make call backs, according to its programming, until the message is successfully transmitted.



Examples of ParentLink's value are reflected in recent county communications regarding such topics as school delays and closures, early dismissals and other urgent announcements. At the school level, principals may tailor messages to their specific parent population on matters such as parent-teacher conferences, report card distribution, immunization clinics, and special event scheduling and cancellations. The system is not designed to be used for fundraising or solicitations.

Barbour County's technology manager, Glenn Sweet, reports that the general response from staff and the community has been positive to date. Any concerns related to misrouted calls can be addressed by contacting him at the BOE office or the individual school principal.