



A message from Mrs. Wentworth, Palmer's Principal

April 5, 2013

Dear Palmer Family,

I want you to be aware that there will be activity at Palmer on the Thursday of spring break. The Cobb County Police Department Special Operations Unit will be conducting a training exercise at Palmer Middle School on Thursday April 11. This exercise will assist officers with their responses to all schools in the case of an emergency situation. The training will be entirely contained on the school property and will not affect any traffic in the area. No staff or students will be present.

The CCPD purposely selected Palmer for this training because it is one of several Cobb middle schools built from the same blueprint. We feel fortunate that the Police Department will be familiar with our building and believe that this training will benefit both the Police Department and Cobb County School District.

Congratulations to all of Palmer's musicians and their directors, Ms. Baldwin, Ms. Bulock, Mr. Dietrich, and Ms. Goudreau. Palmer choruses, bands, and orchestras all received admirable scores from the judges of their Large Group Performance Evaluations. Thank you to the students for their hard work and maturity under pressure, the directors for their expert guidance and preparation, and the parent chaperones and audience members for their support. You make us proud!

Palmer's staff recently selected custodian Michael Hartman as the Classified Employee of the Year for 2013-2014. Mr. Hartman is serving his twelfth year at Palmer. We appreciate his strong work ethic, upbeat personality, and "can do" attitude. Please congratulate Mr. Hartman when you see him.

The Eighth Grade Writing Assessment was administered in January. The table below outlines this year's scores as they compare to the previous four years.

Year	# Tested	% Does Not Meet	% Meet Standards	% Exceeds Standards	% Meets and Exceeds
2009	377	16	79	5	84
2010	353	14	78	8	86
2011	337	14	79	7	86
2012	337	11	83	6	89
2013	316	12	85	3	88

The staff is analyzing students' strengths and weaknesses on this assessment in order to select appropriate instructional strategies for upcoming classes.

Criterion Referenced Competency Tests will be administered April 22-26. Please see the article in this issue for online resources your student could use to prepare and review for the tests. Please mark your calendars and ensure that your student is well-rested and present on those days.

Newsletter Spotlight

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Mrs. Wentworth's Message

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As I will be retiring, my last day at Palmer will be May 31. Thank you for entrusting your children to me these past three years. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as Palmer's principal and to spend my days interacting with Palmer's remarkable student body, dedicated professional staff, and caring and involved parents.

The search for Palmer's next principal has begun and is being facilitated by Area Assistant Superintendent Ed Thayer. The process and proposed timeline for recommending the top candidate to the Board of Education will hopefully provide us transition time together.

Proud to be a Panther!
Cathy Wentworth

8th Graders going to Magnet Schools—CONGRATULATIONS!

Palmer Middle School would like to congratulate all 8th graders who have been accepted to Magnet schools next year. Your commitment to excellence has helped pave your road to success, and we know your futures will be that much brighter for it. Stay in touch with your teachers, and let us know how you are doing. Best of luck to each and every one of you!

Clinic News

Reminder to parents who have students with medications in the clinic:

Please have your student's medications picked up by the
last day of school, May 23rd.

Any medications not picked up on the last day of school will be destroyed.

7th and 8th Chorus LGPE's

Congratulations to the Palmer Chorus students for their outstanding performances at LGPE on March 18th and 19th.

At Georgia Music Educators Association's Large Group Performance Evaluation, the choirs were judged on their performance and sight reading skills. Palmer's chorus students showed advanced skill in each of the categories of tone, pitch, rhythm, diction, ensemble and interpretation. They were given the opportunity to hear several talented choirs from other middle schools and to hear feedback on their own performances by choral conductors known throughout the state.

See photos from the [LGPE's by clicking here](#).

Palmer Chorus performs next at the Big Shanty Festival on April 20th and at Palmer on May 7th and May 14th.

Cobb County Relay for Life
 Friday, May 17th at Jim R. Miller Park in Marietta
www.Relayforlife.org



Palmer Middle School is a proud sponsor of Relay for Life. This year, we are walking in the memory of our beloved art teacher, Sharlene Foster. Staff and students will arrive at the end of the school day, stay until late at night, take turns walking the track, and enjoy the festivities and refreshments – all benefitting the American Cancer Society. If you have not attended this event before, it is something to experience. If you have, you know how emotionally powerful it is – for anyone who has ever been touched by any form of cancer.

We encourage you to support Relay in any way you can. If possible, plan to purchase a \$10 luminary. It is a white bag that you can decorate to honor those you cherish who have battled cancer. At 10:00 pm, all of the luminaries will be lit in front of the Palmer campsite on the track. It is truly a sight to behold when all of the luminaries are lit and the bagpipes begin to play. Luminaries are available in the front office, but they will also be sold at all of the music department concerts in the month of May. Be sure to bring money or your checkbook!

Additionally, we will be having other fundraising opportunities – bake sales, change wars, etc. Change wars will be on May 6, 8, and 10, and our goal is to raise \$3,000. We appreciate the assistance from our Sources of Strength (SOS) students who are involved in the fundraising.

Ask your child how you can best support the cause! Or, feel free to email the co-chairs: Jennier.Karpenko@cobbk12.org or Cathy.Fearing@cobbk12.org.

We appreciate your support for such a worthy cause!

FCS Celebration Info

The Fellowship of Christian Students will host a Celebration on Thursday, April 18th at Palmer until 6:00 PM. This event is open to all Palmer students and their families. The Celebration will include a live band, dynamic speaker, many prizes and snacks for everyone! Make plans now to attend the FCS Celebration on Thursday, April 18th. Return the permission form to the box by the Chorus room on or before April 17th.

Print the [Event permission form](#) here.



Aviation Engineering Camp

The School of Engineering at Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU) is holding Aerospace Engineering Summer Camps for 12-18 year old middle and high school students.

The camps will be held at SPSU campus on the following dates:

Camp#1: May 28-May 31, 2013

Camp#2: June 17-21, 2013

Camp#3: July 8-12, 2013 (For Girls)

Camp#4: July 22-26, 2013

All camps are similar. Total fee for the camp is \$225 per student per camp. Students will get a chance to learn the basics of flight, types of aircraft, introduction to helicopters, spaceships, balloons, blimps, sail planes etc. The camp also includes RC flight demos, flight simulator demos, introduction to computer aided design, and paper aircraft flight competitions.

Attached is [a flyer for the camp](#).

Visit our website for more information. <http://www.spsu.edu/aerospace/>

To register please email the following student information to the camp director,
Dr. Adeel Khalid (aerocamp@spsu.edu)

(Name, School, Age, Grade, Email, Phone, Emergency Contact, and Camp#)

Feel free to email with any questions.

Toastmasters Youth Leadership 2012-13

Toastmasters Youth Leadership has enjoyed a productive school year.

Students who participate in this club practice:

- * Planning and conducting business meetings.
- * Organizing, delivering and evaluating four-to-six minute prepared speeches.
- * Responding extemporaneously for one-to-two minutes to short prompts or questions affectionately known as "Table Topics".

Second semester: The bar has been raised a bit! Students compete against one another! Weekly winners of prepared speeches and Table Topics are selected by all attendees. Winners are presented with Toastmasters ribbons.

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 have benefitted from the sponsorship of Ms. Jeanell Osakwe, parent volunteer, Mrs. Pavlak, School Counselor, and Ms. Schlipf, Business teacher. Sponsors also participate in Table Topics.

Mentorship from Mr. Jan Youngers, Regional Division Governor for Toastmasters International, has been valuable! His knowledge and expertise in evaluating speeches and meetings has helped club members refine and mature their leadership skills.

Student leaders who served in offices of President and Sergeant-at-Arms were Caroline L, Ashley W, Alex C, and Sarah W. Through their experience in Toastmasters, students have gained self-confidence and pride as they improved public speaking and leadership skills.

TIPS FOR CRCT ONLINE REVIEW

Skills Tutor

<http://www.myskillstutor.com/>

Skills Tutor Student Login

Username: Cobb ID (Lunch #)

Password: cobb

Site: palmer01

Important features of Skills Tutor

- Test students' skills with pretests and posttests to make initial assessments and to gauge student progress
- Prescribe activities based on students' pretest results
- Monitor student scores and completion of activities
- Produce reports for individual students, classes, schools and regions
- Provide online and print documentation, including printable activity sheets which extend the computer lessons to classroom or home activities
- View activities linked to specific state and national standards

Online Assessment System (OAS)

<https://www.georgiaoas.org>

OAS Student Login

Username: Student Georgia Test Identification Number (GTID)

Password: education

Important Features of OAS

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is pleased to continue providing the 2012-2013 release of the Georgia Online Assessment System (OAS). The OAS represents a dedicated resource for schools, districts, classroom teachers, students and parents that allows for ongoing classroom instruction and student learning. This site allows educators to have access to test items aligned to the state mandated curriculum to develop assessments that inform teaching and learning. It allows students and parents transparency on the expectations placed on students relative to improving student achievement. This system is another resource available and designed to help all Georgia educators, students and parents as part of our common goal to lead the nation in improving student achievement.

This newest release of the system provides the following highlights for the 2012-2013 school year include the following additional content:

- Items have been added for Mathematics I and Mathematics II
- Items for English Language Arts and Mathematics have been aligned to the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS)



Getting Active in Math!

Earlier this month students enjoyed getting active in Mrs. Holder's 6th grade math class to gather data to learn about statistics. Students worked with partners and took turns counting each other's jumps while jump roping, timing how long each other was able to hula hoop, timing how fast each could run a particular distance, and measuring how far each could jump from a standing position. Students' data was gathered for each class and returned to them to find statistical measures such as Mean, Median, Mode, and Mean Absolute Deviation. Students then created different graphs for the data.

The graphs students learned about during this unit included: Stem and Leaf Plots, Dot Plots, Histograms, and Box and Whisker Plots. Students enjoyed being able to learn and practice creating these graphs with actual data they helped to generate. Students then analyzed the graphs by comparing three different class periods for a particular event. Students did a wonderful job working with their partners, collaborating and learning about statistics.

[Click here to see photos](#) of the students at work.

What Do Fast Food and Shoes Have in Common?

6th grade Business students, that's what! AND, SPREADSHEETS WITH A VARIETY OF CHARTS AND GRAPHS!

3rd quarter and 4th quarter Business students had loads of fun with the Fast Food Nutritional Analysis spreadsheet project! Teams researched categories of fast food products from coffees to burgers to salads and sub sandwiches. Then they compiled and calculated their nutritional data for fats and proteins. This included converting grams to calories and then percent of fats and proteins of the total calories.

Students said the most fun part was creating their bar graphs to share their findings visually. The best part is the take-away: enduring understandings about making better food choices whenever they visit fast food businesses!

Shoes you say? Yes, shoes! Students' homework was to inventory all their shoes by categories, bring their shoe data to class, and create spreadsheets. Next they learned 6 new formatting features and calculated totals. How funny it was to see what kinds of shoes people have in their closets! Some had no slippers but lots of boots or sports shoes!

Lastly, the entire class calculated their categories of shoes. Then they created pie charts with titles and labels....they really enjoyed seeing all of their shoes in this format! Since Business is the real world, they create real-world projects!



Sources of Strength Peer Leaders Impact School Culture

Palmer “Sources of Strength Peer Leaders” is a representative group of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. These students are recognized both by their peers and their teachers as empathetic and caring students willing to take a stand in favor of positive and healthy decision making, showing kindness and consideration to each other, and living a drug-free and alcohol-free lifestyle. These students meet twice monthly for training, encouragement, and service.

These students are the workforce behind events at Palmer including:

- Relay for Life Team
- White-Out for Voice Today Against Child Sexual Abuse
- Mix-it-up at Lunch
- Thanksgiving and Winter Holiday food and gift distribution
- Bullying Prevention efforts, including helping prepare content for the monthly class meetings

Their support includes activities such as:

1. making and hanging posters for each event
2. writing PNN announcements for each event
3. producing role-playing videos for use during monthly class meetings

Sources of Strength faculty advisors are Mrs. Barnes, Ms. Fearing, Mr. Nash, and Mrs. Pavlak. The Palmer community is proud of the commitment and dedication of these peer leaders as well as faculty advisors. The SOS Peer Leaders, with the guidance from faculty advisors, promote an ongoing, positive school culture at Palmer!

We wish our Peer Leaders great success in future school projects and community involvement!

Palmer Seventh & Eighth Grade Bands Perform at District XII LGPE

Large Group Performance Evaluation is the annual assessment of student achievement by each school music ensemble. Directors choose music literature that will demonstrate the various fundamental performance standards and concepts in the curriculum. The degree of literature difficulty ranges from Grade Level I for a novice performer to Grade Level VI for the advanced college-level performer. Most Cobb County middle school music groups perform Level II & III literature that matches the expectation for the middle school curriculum.

This evaluation is similar to the standardized tests or end of course exams given in other school courses. Students demonstrate their musical understanding and skill development through applied performance and sight-reading, both individually and as an ensemble. This evaluation is done by comparison to a national standard of performance achievement. The sight-reading requirement is the most authentic assessment of each group’s level of achievement.

This year the Palmer Band Program took three ensembles to Festival. The 7th & 8th Grade Concert Band performed Level II literature and received an overall Superior Rating in performance and sight-reading. The 7th Grade Symphonic Band performed Level II/III literature and received straight Superior Ratings in performance and sight-reading. The 8th Grade Symphonic Band performed Level III literature and received straight Superior ratings in performance and sight-reading. The Bands also received wonderful clinics from Mr. Jeff Harper, McEachern High School Director, and Mr. Gary Gribble, the Pope High School Director, as well as great comments from judges and clinicians!

Ms. Bullock and Mr. Dietrich are incredibly proud of the Palmer students, their work ethic, and overall behavior at this event. We wish to thank the parents for their amazing support for our program! We are very fortunate to have such wonderful students with which to work on a daily basis!!