

**PARENT GROUPS INFO**

By Debbie Ball-Odeh

Did you know that parents have a significant effect on their children's education? It's true. Good education isn't just about teachers and schools-what parents do really counts. All research indicates that children who have families actively involved in their school will get higher grades, are more likely to graduate and go on to college and will earn more money once they begin their career. Aren't those wonderful ideals for our children? Kalkaska Public Schools has many active volunteer parent groups in its schools, serving all grade levels.

At Rapid City Elementary, the PTA has been a presence for almost twenty years. This group sponsors an annual Spaghetti Dinner with a live auction as its main fundraiser. Parent volunteers help in the classroom and throughout the school. Each February, the PTA holds a Winter Carnival with games and activities to help chase away those winter blues.

Also at Rapid City is a new group called F.O.R.C.E.S., Friends of Rapid City Elementary School. This group of parents and community members provide summer programs for children to continue learning all year.

At Birch Street Elementary and Cherry Street Intermediate, the Kalkaska Elementary PTO serves to supplement funding for supplies, equipment and activities.

Entering its sixth full year, this group has increased parent involvement at both schools to average 500 volunteer hours each month. They hold family events throughout the year such as a Free Movie Night, Free Swim Night at the Kaliseum and Donuts with Dads.

The Parent Teacher Student Association at Kalkaska Middle School holds a Spaghetti Dinner and Auction each spring to help them fund Drug Awareness Week, a childcare course for babysitting and to fill teacher's wish lists for their classrooms. This group also built an outdoor volleyball court at the middle school.

At both the middle and high school levels, there are Booster Clubs for bands and athletics. Kalkaska Athletics Boosters are a presence at every home sporting event. They are in charge of the concessions stands at the Thomas J. Close Athletic Complex and at the Middle School gym. Popcorn is usually provided by the music boosters.

The Senior Parents Association is a group that wants to give each year's graduating class a party to remember for a lifetime.

This all-night event includes fun, games and food, along with every senior winning a prize from their raffle. At least one car is given away each year.

All of these groups can only be successful when caring parents and community members are involved. Commitment times vary to whatever you are able to contribute. You will always be welcomed. For more information about the volunteer parent groups, please contact your student's school office.

**Class of 79**

**Is Planning A Reunion.**

If you are a member of the KHS Class of 1979, plan for a big reunion next summer!

Contact Helen Chew-Artress at [khs-1979@hotmail.com](mailto:khs-1979@hotmail.com) for more information.

**Reading First in Kalkaska:**

- Funding and Focus
- Increase K-3 Student
- Reading Achievement

**CARES**  
Children Acquiring Reading Essential Skills

You can raise money for our school district by using [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) powered by Yahoo!, as your search engine. Enter Kalkaska Public Schools as your charity of choice and each search you do gives our school district a penny. Not much by itself but it only takes a hundred to make a dollar.

**Kalkaska CARES provides more preschool opportunity...**

Remember that old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure?" The value of reading cannot be measured, and if students are given the tools to acquire reading skills before they enter kindergarten, they are on their way to mastering this skill.

Kalkaska CARES (Children Acquiring Reading Essential Skills) is a preschool program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The program is housed at Birch Street Elementary School. The Goal of the program is to prevent reading difficulties by developing preschoolers' oral language skills, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge and print concepts.

This early Reading First program is a complement to the Reading First program offered at Kalkaska Public Schools for later grades.

If you are interested in the Kalkaska CARES program, call 231-258-7988 or email [kalkaskacares@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kalkaskacares@sbcglobal.net).

**HATS...**

**Off To You!**

**GRADUATES DO IT AGAIN!**

The class of 2008 earned over a half million dollars in scholarships, as did the class of 2007.

Here are some other things about KPS you may not know:

- ◆ French, Spanish, art, drama, "career cruising," computer technology, marching, concert and jazz band are some of the electives offered at Kalkaska Middle School. Physical education is offered every day.
- ◆ "Study Island" is a project that allows highly motivated middle school students to accelerate learning in the core subjects. This program is accessible on line and even can be used while on vacation!
- ◆ Nova Net allows students to work on line to make up credits and has been very helpful at the high school level.
- ◆ More and more students are taking college classes while in high school, thanks to "dual enrollment" opportunities. Some classes can be taken right on our campus through interactive technology.

Kalkaska Public Transit Authority operates student bus runs throughout the KPS district, and this map shows the stops. If you would like your child to be on the roster for KPTA busing, call 231-258-6808. Students ride free of charge if they are daily riders. The school pays a fee to KPTA for providing this valuable service.

The school district also provides four buses for general education transportation. These routes are in areas of high student need. To learn more about these routes, please call Mr. Drew Bontrager at 231-564-1518.

**"IS THERE SCHOOL TODAY?"**

Calling a snow day is one of the more difficult decisions a superintendent has to make. Decisions about school cancellations because of the weather are usually made very early in the morning. We call several radio stations and the local television stations to let them know of 'snow days.'

People on our staff check roads in outlying areas, and we also rely on weather forecasts and advisories. Safety of the students is of utmost importance.

Once children are at school, our district keeps them there until school is dismissed. We try to consider the schedules of working families in that we do not delay school and we typically do not send children home once they are here. Of course, parents always have the right to pick up their children if they feel they must.

**Bus Info**

