



5100 John R.
Detroit, MI 48202

www.uprepsm.com

(313) 832-8400 (office)

(313) 833-4816 (fax)

Principal's/Superintendent's Message

February can be a dreary and difficult month if you focus on what's going on outside. Dark skies. Snowy days. Bitter cold.

This month will be anything but dreary on the inside at UPSM. We have planned many fun and exciting events.

First, it's Black History Month and our students will be learning about the great contributions African Americans have made to our society. They will learn through guest speakers, reading and writing projects and films like "Eyes on the Prize."

While UPSM draws special attention to Black History during this celebratory month, you need to know that our real goal is to make sure that we recognize and reinforce UPSM's—and our community's—diversity all year long.

Second, on Feb. 10 we are launching the new round of Wednesday enrichment courses. PLEASE make sure you look closely at the very exciting offerings and sign your child up for ones that interest and excite him/her. We promise this round will be fun, rigorous and ORGANIZED. The deadline is:

Third, next week is Spirit Week. I will allow students **who do not have any dress code violations** to dress in fun, silly and spirited ways to show that we have school spirit and we're not afraid to show it. Student will pay a fee to participate each day and the money will be dedicated to several fundraisers. Look for the flier coming home this week.

Fourth, we are hosting the first ever UPSM dance on Feb. 12. UPSM's student leadership group GRAVY (Great Responsible Activists Vitalizing Youth) is sponsoring the event, which will be held here from 3:45 to 6. It is a fundraiser for special school events and field trips.

Finally, while March may be Reading Month, EVERY month will be reading month from now on at UPSM. Literacy—and stepping up the reading levels of our students—is our school's greatest challenge.

Even though we are a math and science focused school, we believe reading is the single most important skill our students need to perform well on standardized tests—and in life. The connection between literacy levels and our students' performance in math and science is clear.

Reading—especially the Great Books—the ones on the college reading list we sent home with your child over Winter Break—is also a key area where UPSM will also be providing enrichment and challenge to students who are performing at and above grade level.

We will have a **READING ROCKS** poster in the lobby. Please take a moment to write on it and share what you are reading now, or recommend a book you love. I'll start with my favorite book: The Homewood Bible—by Barbara Kingsolver.

Educationally Yours,

Margaret Trimer-Hartley

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Welcome to February!

There have been a lot of changes this month in the Parent Power Center. Ms. Trimer-Hartley has moved downstairs and the room is now officially ours. We have set the room up to satisfy the many needs of our parents and parent-led activities.

We have a conference table for meetings, a PC workstation for those who need computer access to Power School and the advisor web pages, storage space for committee and club materials and information center for up to the minute details of our many in-school and after-school activities.

We are planning a lounge area for parents to come and get to know one another and a small kitchen area where coffee will always be available. To help enhance our lounge we are looking for a small refrigerator, a small sofa or love seat, an end table and a lamp. If you have any of these items to donate please let us know. Thank you to Mrs. Alma Frazier who has generously donated a microwave to our kitchen space.

Another change we have is the new Parents as Partners Facebook page. We will make UPSM information available as often as possible. This page has limited access and is restricted to UPSM parents and staff. Invitation is by request and no students will be able to gain access to the page. Please visit us on Facebook at UPSM Parents as Partners.

We will continue to bring more new programs to you. After the President's Day break please look for a workshop packet. This packet will be an offering of different classes and workshops to help enhance our children's education including a computer class, speakers about special needs students in the general education classroom and a lecture series about how to plan financially for college. Even though our students are in middle school it is never too late to think ahead for college.

Thank you for your dedication to UPSM. It has been wonderful getting to work with you to help bring our children the best education possible. Please feel free to contact me at any time to volunteer or offer your suggestions at ccampbell@uprepsm.com.

Thank you,

Carol Campbell

Volunteer Coordinator

LUNCH MONEY REMINDER

UPSM will not serve lunch to students who owe \$6 or more to the lunch program. We will send your child home with a stamp on his/her hand when they are down to their last meal so that you can pay before they're in jeopardy. Please keep current in your payments so that we can successfully manage this program and our budget. You will be receiving a letter next week telling you of your balance, or you may call Mrs. Moon or Ms. Ruffin to check or go into PowerSchool at <http://upsm-mi.powerschool.com> for an update. We will only accept **cash** or **money order**.

Thank you for your cooperation--and your understanding.

UPDATES—Progress on UPSM’s top priorities

Culture/School Climate—Discipline. Order. Civility.

UPSM staff and our pack of Watch Dogs have been vigilant about patrolling hallways before and after school and during passing times. Our students’ behavior has improved. They’re calmer, less disrespectful, engaging in less horse play and doing a better job coming to school in full uniform.

BUT, we’re not where we need to be...yet. Please remind your children that we –and you– expect discipline, order and civility at UPSM.

THIS WEEK we are rolling out our much-anticipated REVISED Discipline Plan. While it is a new document, it really is just a reinforcement of and a reintroduction to the rules, regulations and consequences already contained within UPSM’s Student Code of Conduct, which you and your child signed at the beginning of the school year.

We are rolling it out so that you know what to school discipline to expect and so that we have consistent application of our school’s rules across all advisories.

We will have a ***THREE STRIKES*** approach:

- On the third strike in class—detention or the equivalent—a disruptive student will land in Mr. Tucker’s (Dean of Success) realm. He/she will be allowed three opportunities there to improve—including our new ISS (In School Suspension) or out of school suspension, both of which include programming and behavioral plans geared toward resolution.
- On the third strike with Mr. Tucker, the student and his/her parents will land in the principal’s office to discuss their future at UPSM.

We have only a handful of students who consistently disrupt the learning environment at UPSM, and we MUST guide them to make better choices. I do NOT believe in punishing the whole for the misdeeds of a few.

Thank you for your support and diligence.

I wish to thank the members of the Discipline Committee for working through the holiday break and January to bring their recommendations to me:

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Phillip & Alicia Hall | Cheryl Tomlinson | Greg Henery |
| Daria Neal | Carol Campbell | Greg Dombro |
| Roderick Owens | Julia Lesley | Edwynn Bell |
| Anthony Barnes | Angela Sherman | Monica Smylor |
| Willie Tucker | Sandy Jackson | |

Content—Eye on rigor.

I'm very proud to say that our students have turned in some fabulous science fair projects! They will be on display at our March Parents as Partners meeting this Thursday. Students and staff will vote and take the top 40 projects to the Science & Engineering Fair of Metro Detroit at Cobo Center March 16-18.

Eighth grade Language Arts and Social Studies students are immersed in *The Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding. They're looking at the roots of society, why there are rules/laws, what is the nature of human nature? These are BIG themes brought out through the reading of a Great Book.

Many students in seventh and eighth grade are taking on Algebra I content in class and through online curriculum options.

Five students are piloting high school courses such as Epidemiology, Microeconomics, SAT Prep, Advanced Chinese and Advanced Spanish through Edison Learning. If these courses work well, we will integrate them into UPSM's Online Learning Academy next year.

Communication—Can you hear us now?

Getting information to you in a timely, cost effective and powerful way is something we're constantly working on.

New to help us smooth communications with you is our mass email list (354 addresses) that I can use to send newsletters and other CRITICAL school information to you. I pledge I will NOT Spam you, but it is one more way to reach you with information that too often gets lost in transit when we pack it with your child. ***Please let us know if you do NOT have an email address registered with us; we will give you a Gmail address to use.***

You should also be receiving updates from your child's advisors at least every other week and PowerSchool should be updated at least up once a week so that you can check on your child's grades. Please take advantage of these tools so that you may praise your child's successes and/or address any gaps the same week they happen.

Don't forget that good old-fashioned face-to-face conversations are also happening all over UPSM. I hope you feel comfortable finding me during Tuesday afternoon 3:45 to 5 p.m. Open Door—or otherwise through my cell phone 313-269-5627 and my email [- hartley@uprepsm.com](mailto:hartley@uprepsm.com).

If you struggle to keep track of advisors' Web site, I suggest you find them on [.uprepsm.com](http://uprepsm.com). From the Home Page, click on "about" and scroll down to "faculty/staff" and click on the active links.

HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

The **grapevine** can be a wonderful or an insidious thing. I'm so glad so many of you have run rumors by me before running to others fearing them or adding to them.

To keep you fully informed about the things that our staff are discussing, I'll put out there what we're wrestling with as we plan our future:

1. It is TRUE that UPSM High School will operate on a year round calendar. The calendar allows for a month off at the Holiday break, a month off in the Spring and a month off in the summer-- most likely the month of August. UPSM Middle School staff have just begun to discuss the viability of such a calendar here. We would love to form a parent committee around this issue as well. PLEASE let us know if you are interested.
2. It is NOT true that we have decided to loop only for sixth and seventh grades. We expect looping to continue THROUGH all three years of middle school, which means your child will stay with the same advisory for their entire career here. It is TRUE that we are considering the quad configuration for eighth grade because it gives us a better launching pad for the rigors of high school. Please do not hesitate to ask for more information if you hear things that alarm or confuse you. Thanks

Three Cheers for UPSM Teamwork

- Academic Games—
- Girls Volleyball—
- Boys JV Basketball—
- Boys Varsity Basketball—

Thanks to our stellar volunteers:

- Phyllip Hall—JV Basketball coach
- Lawrence Hemingway—JV Basketball coach
- Orna Jones – Cheerleading Coach
- Julia Lesley- Volleyball
- Willie Tucker- Varsity Basketball
- Brenda Wilkins-Gaines- Academic Games
- Shawn Hill- Academic Games
- Mr. and Mrs. Quirles.- Academic Games

UPSM teams are competitive thanks to all our volunteer support.

Office hours for MTH

In keeping with our push for more and more effective communication, please feel welcome to stop by my office any Tuesday from 3:30-5 p.m. to share your ideas, concerns and questions. It's a great time to get to know one another better and make sure we are all operating on the same page.

I have enjoyed the many, many conversations I've had with parents so far and look forward to many more. Strong, honest relationships make the difficult conversations we sometimes must have much smoother and more productive.

And they just make every day a lot more fun and rewarding!