

# COUNTRYSIDE ACADEMY

MAIN CAMPUS – MAILING ADDRESS

4800 Meadowbrook Road, Benton Harbor, Michigan 49022

[www.countrysideacademy.org](http://www.countrysideacademy.org)



PHONE: (269) 944-3319



FAX: (269) 944-3724

*The Most Important Resource We Develop Is Children*

February 9, 2017

Dear Countryside Academy Parents and Guardians,

We are now over halfway through the 2016-17 school year, our 20th year of providing a quality education to area children! The year is flying by, so we must be having fun! In any case, students are learning and getting ready for the next grade level, or for seniors, the next big step in life! I have a few announcements and reminders for you today.

To help celebrate our 20th year we are going to have a **Penny Carnival** on Friday, February 24th from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the main campus. There will be food and games for all ages! Everything only costs a penny! All of the proceeds will benefit the Benton Harbor Promise Zone!

**Benton Harbor Promise Zone** - Countryside Academy is a Promise Zone school. To take advantage of two years of tuition-free community college, your student must LIVE in the Promise Zone boundaries of the 49022 zip code area, and ATTEND and GRADUATE from a Promise Zone school - Countryside! For more information, call the high school office or check out [bentonharborpromise.com](http://bentonharborpromise.com).

**2016 Mackinac Center CAP Report** - Countryside Academy High School was again awarded an “A” grade on the Context and Performance Report - **in the top 5 percent of all Michigan high schools!** We placed 10th for charter high schools, 32nd for all public high schools (out of 639), and the top scoring high school in Berrien County. This accomplishment is a testimony to our dedicated staff, hard working students, and supportive families. You can check out the details at [www.mackinac.org](http://www.mackinac.org) Click on “The Michigan Context and Performance Report Card - High Schools.”

**School Weather Related Closures** - (Knocking on wood as I write this...) We have had a relatively mild winter, I am happy to say. But I'm sure that old man winter is not through with us yet. We live in Michigan, for goodness sake! Just a reminder that Countryside is our own district. We do not cancel school simply because other districts may close. Weather conditions can vary greatly in different parts of the county. Weather forecasts have gotten very detailed even before a weather event, but are not always accurate for how conditions actually are the morning of a school day. If Countryside does not cancel classes, and you, as the parent or guardian, feel conditions are unsafe, you may always choose to keep your child home. The day would be an unexcused absence, however, students are allowed 16 unexcused absences for the school year (grades K-5), or 8 unexcused absences per semester (6th - 12th).

Students should always come to school dressed appropriately for the weather conditions of the day.

**School Calendar** - The state of Michigan determines the number of school days required for all districts. The school calendar is set accordingly. The requirement for 2016-17 is 180 days of instruction - the highest it has been in quite awhile. Just a reminder that our school year ends on June 15th (if there are no make up days for canceling school more than the state allowed, 6 “forgiven” days). Just four and a half months away!

**Attendance** - Please be sure your child is in school, on time, every single day possible. If you can, schedule medical and dental visits for your children after school or during holiday breaks. If not, schedule so that they miss the least amount of time possible. When a student misses class instruction and learning activities, it might be easy to make up the work, but almost impossible to “make up” the experience. Being in class is so important to your student’s success. Thank you for your support in this!

**Volunteer** - Consider becoming a volunteer at Countryside Academy! From our school’s web page at [www.countrysideacademy.org](http://www.countrysideacademy.org) click on “SecureVolunteer” on the right hand side of the main page. The quick and easy, online background screening helps us ensure that adults in our schools are cleared to work around our students, and will not cost the volunteer anything. If you would like an idea of how you may be of help, contact the principal of the building in which you would like to volunteer.

The administration and staff at Countryside Academy are looking forward to a successful second semester. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact your child’s teacher, the principal, or myself. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to provide your child/children with a high-quality educational experience. We do not take that responsibility lightly.

Sincerely,

Lyn Sperry, Administrator

*“We will inspire students academically and socially to become productive citizens by providing a high-quality educational experience utilizing FARE based activities.”  
Food, Agriculture, Renewable Resources and Environment*