

Our Summer Activities Fair is coming up soon, and this year there's a new format, time, place, and target audience. There's even a new theme: "The Heat Is Off; The Summer Fun Is On!"

In the past this event was a combined activities and jobs fair, held on a weekend at the high school for students from sixth grade and up.

This year the activities fair is a separate event. It will be on Thursday, Feb. 12, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., at the Middle School, on Nilles Road. It's for all students in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades. These are children for whom planned summer activities are especially important. They're in that in-between age...generally too old for traditional daycare, but too young to be working at a summer job somewhere.

It's important to note that the Summer Activities Fair is not just for Fairfield students. All children in that age group, and their parents, are welcome to attend and participate no matter what school they may attend.

There will be representatives at the fair from summer camps, educational programs, libraries, athletic programs, and more. It will provide a wonderful opportunity to walk around one room and explore many options, without having to drive all over town. And given the economy, we're working hard to make sure there are low-cost and no-cost activities included.

We are still working to invite organizations oriented toward youth to the activities fair. Any groups that would like to participate should call our Community Relations office at 829-6300. Some of the groups who are already scheduled to be there include the American Heritage Girls, Boy Scouts of America, Cincinnati Weightlifting, Civitan Club, Fairfield Parks & Recreation Dept., Lane Library, Fairfield Schools Summer School, Fairfield Volunteer Program (FAVOR), Mercy HealthPlex, Miami University-Hamilton, Respect For Law Camp, and the YMCA (Fairfield, East Butler and Camp Cambell Gard).

The Summer Activities Fair was scheduled for Feb. 12 to coincide with the Middle School parent-teacher conference night. Normally students aren't in the classroom during a conference. The idea is that while parents are in the classroom meeting with teachers, students can be in the cafeteria, with their friends, seeing what's on display at the activity fair. Of course, we realize students that age may not be thinking about their summer plans in mid-February, so to help get their attention, there will also be some games to play, a raffle of a Wii set, and food and drink.

It's an unusual combination of individuals and organizations that are working on the Summer Activity Fair, and I am grateful for all of them and they work they do. One of our most active parents, Mandy Katz, has helped lead the effort since it first started several years ago. She's joined by Fred Valerius from the Rotary Club of Fairfield, and the club provides financial support as well. The third member of the team is Jean Wesseler, the juvenile diversion counselor for the Fairfield Police Department, who knows firsthand the value of having young people busy with productive, positive

activities. And some of our own students are involved, with the Middle School Student Council designing the posters and fliers for the event and planning to be there on Feb. 12 to help groups set up and to welcome all the visitors to our school.

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