

# Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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## From the Desk of the Principal



### What's New This Year?

#### RTI – Response to Intervention

#### A.K.A. Reaching Towards Improvement

I hope everyone had a restful summer vacation and that we are all geared up for the new school year. Here at Hastings Middle School, we are always looking for ways to improve student performance. Teachers, guidance and administration have logged many hours doing research and as a result, we have devised a plan to restructure the way that we operate. The plan is based on a state approved plan called Response To Intervention (RTI).

RTI is an assessment intervention model that allows schools to deliver sound instructional methods to all students. Students are selected to participate in English

Language Arts and Mathematics interventions based on MCAS scores, DIBELS data, benchmark assessments, and teacher recommendations. Interventions are designed to last between 3 – 5 weeks.

RTI is divided into three tiers of instruction. Tier 1 is where the classroom teacher provides instruction to all students utilizing best teaching practices. Tier 2 is where students who have demonstrated some degree of learning difficulties receive targeted instruction during the intervention period. Tier 3 is utilized for a small percentage of students who are still struggling after the Tier 2 intervention period.

To assist teachers in providing strategies for intervention in mathematics, we have hired Mr. Hugh O'Mara as our Math Coach. He is coordinating the math data, working with teachers, and helping to provide Tier 2 and 3 instruction.

In a similar capacity, we have Ms. Joann Pereira, District Intervention Coordinator, and Mrs. Desiree Vin-

cent, Assistant Principal for Student Services, who are working to coordinate all ELA interventions.

In our scheduling for this year, we have provided an intervention block equivalent to a class period in both ELA and math. Math intervention takes place every ACE day, while ELA takes place every BDF day. Students who are selected for intervention are taken from their enrichment classes with the understanding that the enrichment teachers will be assessing them only for the time the students are in their classes.

The enthusiasm level of staff and students is quite high as we all anticipate improvements in student academic achievement. Here at Hastings Middle School, we are all reaching towards improvement.

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## Honor Roll



The “High Honor” recognition requires that you have “A’s” in all your subjects. The “Honor” recognition requires that you have “A’s & B’s” or all “B’s” in all your subjects.



## Progress Reports/Report Cards

It is always important for you to know when to expect progress reports and report cards. Our schedule for this school year is listed below.

	<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
Term 1	Sept. 30, 2011	Nov. 4, 2011
Term 2	Dec. 9, 2011	Jan. 20, 2012
Term 3	Feb. 17, 2012	March 30, 2012
Term 4	May 11, 2012	Will Be Mailed

## Promotion / Retention Guidelines

All *Hastings Middle School* students must meet the following guidelines to be promoted to the next grade:

- All students will pass three of four core academic subjects.
- Enrichments classes are considered in promotion as follows:
  1. Students who fail two enrichment courses in addition to one academic course, will not be considered for promotion.



- Students who fail the same core academic subject for two consecutive years will not be considered for promotion.
- In certain circumstances, a Promotion Review Committee may recommend approval of alternative learning experiences when deemed in the best interest of the student. The committee will submit its recommendations to the Principal who may at his/her discretion, approve or disapprove.

## Early Release Schedule

Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. **No lunches** will be served on the dates listed below:  
October 20, November 23, January 19,  
March 15, and last Day of School



## Student of the Month



Each month teachers nominate students for *Student of the Month* recognition. The students are placed on a ballot and teachers vote for one student from each team. Students are nominated for demonstrating the core values of our school. Those core values are ***Politeness, Responsibility, Involvement, Discipline, and Excellence.***

Congratulations to the winners for September. They are: ***Laurie Furtado, William Serpa, Sean Downey, Savannah Roth, Alexis Duarte, Colby Serpa, Andrew DeMello, Leah Major, Sean Smith, Heather Welty, Abigail Pires, Ryan Winderlick.***

## Physical Education Student of the Month

Mr. Galvam and Mrs. Nunes would like to recognize and congratulate the following students for being selected **Physical Education Students of the Month for September.** These students have demonstrated good sportsmanship and always participate with excellent effort. ***Keep up the good work!***

- Grade 6:** Jacob O'Hara      Madeleine Douglas  
**Grade 7:** Matthew Barboza      Linda NGuyen  
**Grade 8:** Christopher DaLuz      Peyton Dufresne

## School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Kerrie Edwards Tel: 508 979-4064

Email Address: kedwards@fairhavenps.org



If your child has a physical exam done, please send a copy of that exam with an updated vaccine record to the nurse's office as soon as it is completed. All students are required to have a current physical (within the past 3-4 years) on file.

**6th grade parents:** As your children go for physicals this year, please make a note that the Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis) vaccine and second dose of the Varicella vaccine are requirements for entry to 7th grade.

Please be familiar with the Health Records/Prescription Medication section of the student hand book. Absolutely no students should bring medication to school (with the exception of a rescue inhaler, epi pen, or cough drops). If your child needs medication at school, the parent or guardian must bring it in the original prescription bottle with a signed order from a doctor. If your child has an extra shirt and/or pair of jeans/sweatpants, please consider sending them in for your child to store in the health office or their locker as an emergency change of clothes. If any families have extra tee shirts or sweatpants around the house, the health office would be happy to accept them!

## Comments from the Assistant Principal



I thought it would be a good idea to go over some items from the handbook for our sixth grade students and parents. It will also serve as a reminder for our seventh and eighth graders.

**ATTENDANCE:** Parents are reminded that they need to call in a student absence by 9 AM the day of the absence. The number to call is 508-979-4066. If a phone call is not received, the student will be considered truant. This is a safety issue. We need to know that all our students are here in school or safe at home. If you have taken your child to the doctor, please remember to send in the doctor's note so that we can document the illness. This also applies when a student is either tardy or dismissed for an appointment. This is extremely important for seventh and eighth graders who are seriously considering attending Voke.

We want to remind parents that you may ask for make up work for your

child if your child is absent three days. Call 508-979-4066 the morning of the third day to make the request.

**RETURN OF SCHOOL FORMS:** Please remember that students have 2 days to return anything sent home from school that requires a signature. Students will be assigned after-school sessions and detentions if papers are not returned in a timely fashion. If you lose the form, progress report, or report card, have the student come to the main office to request a copy. If you saw the progress report or report card, you can write a note stating that and send that in with your child.

**MORNING DROPOFF:** The traffic flow in the morning is moving quite well! Just a reminder to say your goodbyes and make all plans for the day as you drive up Ash Street. Students should be ready to exit the car quickly. Three to four cars should be able to exit when the line of traffic stops. Please be

patient! It is imperative that all cars stay in a single line and follow the flow of traffic.

**CROSSING GUARD:** We are fortunate to have a crossing guard at the intersection of School Street and Adams Street and at the lights at Route 6 crossing from CVS to Cumberland's. Please encourage your child to cross at these locations before and after school.



**LATE BUS:** There will be a late bus available every Tuesday and Wednesday for students who normally ride the bus. The bus leaves here at 3:15 PM. Hopefully students will take advantage of this opportunity to make up work, get extra help, and participate in some after school clubs and activities.

Please feel free to call my office at 508-979-4066 if you have any questions or concerns.

## Giving the Devil its Due By Mr. Gardner



Hastings Middle School is changing its mascot back to the “Blue Devils”. The move back to the traditional Blue Devils was made to make the transition from the middle school to high school smoother. In addition many eighth graders are now playing on freshmen or JV teams in several sports. It is important to keep Fairhaven students in the Fairhaven school system. They need to be aware of all the great traditions at Fairhaven High School. The Hastings Middle School PTO will be introducing the new “Blue Devil” clothing line at the school store, and the Blue Devil mascot was at our September 27 open house to commemorate this change in mascots.

## School Savings Plan By Ms. Ferreira

### *Southern Mass Credit Union*



**Welcome Back!**  
**I hope you enjoyed your summer!**

Once again the School Savings Program will shortly be under way.

I look forward to seeing everyone once again starting Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't joined our program yet, remember to come by the Credit Union on October 12<sup>th</sup> afterschool and join us for the School Savings Day Celebration!

We will be having entertainment, balloons and special gifts for anyone who opens a new School Savings Account.

**SO DON'T FORGET TO STOP BY!**

## Student Council By Ms. Richard



The new student council had their election on Wednesday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>. Each homeroom will have one student representative and an alternate. At our first meeting we will begin to plan out our activities for the year. We will meet monthly and hold various events throughout the school year. One of the first major events is our **annual Food Drive in October**. Please stay tune for details in the next newsletter. For more information about the Student Council please contact Ann Richard, Student Council Advisor.

## Tech Ed By Mr. Riseborough

The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade is finishing up their first project, creating a Prosthetic arm and are in the process of summarizing. They will be starting the Ancient Technologies and Simple Machines project next week.



The 7<sup>th</sup> Grade has finished the Energy in Toys Project and grades should be in X2 shortly. They have begun building the Delta Dart project which entails building a balsa wood, elastic powered plane and calculating the energy in it.

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade is finishing the Weighty Pastaibilities Project where they build a structure out of 100grams of spaghetti and hot glue. Their structure is to support as much weight as possible. Summaries will be due at the end of the week.

As always, if you have any old Lego that you don't need, it is welcome in Tech. Ed.

## 8 Blue Math Group By Ms. Phelan



Ms. Phelan's math classes are well on their way exploring the wonderful world of Algebra. We are getting ready for our Math MCAS by doing an open response question every week along with multiple choice and short answer questions most days. Journal assignments have been distributed and are due no later than October 14. These may be shared via Google docs or uploaded via X-2. Students are working on IXL.com daily to practice new skills and refresh previous ones.

As we are working very hard, I want to recognize the excellent effort put forth by my students, so I have started Ms. Phelan's Effort Extravaganza! Students are recognized for their strong effort with a raffle ticket and drawings will be held throughout the week. I am looking for donations for the prize pool. A survey of the students revealed the following prize requests (other than candy which was the number one request but is not allowed): fun pencils, glitter stickers, different colored pens, fun or large erasers, stickers, snack shop gift cards, iTunes gift cards, notebooks, animal stickers, fun magnets. Also, given the allergies and cold season, we are greatly in need of tissues in class. If anyone is interested in donating to the prize pool or tissues for the classroom, please feel free to send in the donation with your child or drop it off at the main office.

## Family School Partnership Team Update By Mrs. Drouin



Last year a group of parents, teachers and administrators at Hastings Middle School formed a book club to read and discuss *Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family School Partnerships* by Anne T. Henderson. As a district, one of our goals is to increase opportunities for additional family and community partnerships. We chose three areas of focus: to identify ways that we can assist families with their child's education, to determine school and community volunteer resources that can be shared, and to strengthen the transition of fifth grade students and their families to the middle school.

In order to identify the ways that we can assist families with their child's education, a needs assessment survey was conducted in the spring of 2011. The results of the survey were as follows: 42% of parents wanted assistance in helping their child do well on the

MCAS, 42% wanted to help their child manage their time, 37% wanted to help their child with math, and 35% wanted to help their child with social skills and peer pressure.

As a result of this survey, we asked Mr. Hugh O'Mara, our math coach, to offer a Math Night that will be designed to help parents learn new ways to help their children in math and ways to support their child's best performance on the Math MCAS.

Other needs high on the needs assessment survey, such as helping their child manage their time and help with social skills and peer pressure, will be addressed in future parent workshops.

In addition to understanding the needs of our parents and their families, we wanted to find out how families and the community might want to be connected and involved with our students and our school. A volunteer survey was handed out at Open House. There are many ways to be involved with your middle school child, even though they may

not want you in their classroom. In the past we have had many after school activities, such as homework club and a girl's walking group, that would welcome adults from the community to share their experience and mentoring. Although this is a work in progress, our intent is to improve your child's and your family's educational experience.

Finally, thank you to all of those who helped to strengthen the transition of fifth grade students and their families to the middle school. Mr. Miller offered his advice and enthusiasm at the fifth grade graduation ceremonies. Mrs. Rego and Mrs. Tracey, our guidance counselors, brought locks to the fifth grade classrooms to help students practice and know what to expect at their lockers. Also, the field trip to HMS in the spring and the orientation in the fall were especially helpful in welcoming and reassuring our sixth graders.

Thank you to all of you who make a difference in the lives of our students! We look forward to continuing our shared commitment to the education of your children.

## PTO News

Welcome Back! While everyone settles back into the school routine, the PTO is newly formed and ready to make this year exciting and fun!!

**A BIG THANK YOU** to the 2010-2011 PTO for their outstanding contributions and incredible footprint of work that they completed!!!! We will work to continue with their energy, enthusiasm and success. *Sharon Dufresne, Linda Fredette, Kim Welty, Wendi Lees, Michelle Bergeron, Christine Cebula, and Andrea Costa.*

Your new 2011- 2012 HMS PTO Board members are:  
Karen Mayer (kfmayer@comcast.net)  
Vice President – Mrs. O'Brien (otendertime@aol.com)  
Secretary – Mrs. Duarte (mduarte@fairhavenps.org)  
Treasurer – Mr. Beaulieu (kbeaulieu@fairhavenps.org)

**Meetings:** All parents are invited and encouraged to attend the PTO meetings – **YOUR PARTICIPATION and**



**VOICE is important!!** Join us the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria. The next meeting is set for **October 11, 2011.**

**CALL TO ACTION!!** There is no better way to celebrate, honor and recognize your child, class or school than through the creative events and important work that a PTO provides. Every year is a new and exciting opportunity to get involved, share an idea, or simply help create a connection or offer to volunteer in events.

### WE NEED YOUR HELP!!

You decide how: your time, your offer, your decision!!!!

**Voting in a new PTO Board:** Exciting!

**Planning Events and Fundraising Ideas:** Endless!

**Having Volunteers to Get It Done:** Priceless!

**PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!!!**