

# Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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## From the Desk of the Principal



Whether you're a principal, superintendent, football coach, or teacher,

September marks the time when you kick it into second gear and get ready for the season ahead. Together, you develop a game plan, assign roles, establish goals, and dive head first into leading your team to the championship. In schools, we know that while we may have the right team, an awesome game plan, and outstanding goals, achieving success can be a formidable task. Anyone who is involved in education knows the challenges we face are numerous. Paperwork, budget constraints, testing mandates, broken copy machines, flu concerns, maintaining a soccer field, or a leaking roof can impede our ability to "do school" if we let our guard down. While these issues need to be addressed, we can not allow them to distract us from our real work; ensuring all students achieve at high levels, collaborating to define measurable goals, develop an action plan, examine student work, or explore best practices, and modifying our plan and strategies based on results. Our team attacks these challenges

with fortitude based on the belief that every one of our children deserves every ounce of energy and passion we have to help them achieve their potential.

Unfortunately this sentiment is not felt everywhere. I recently read an article by Gary Burton, superintendent of the Wayland, MA school district. The title of the article, *Today's Children: Asset or Liability*, took me aback; however I realize there is a certain reality that towns and cities question and grapple with during every budget season. The author describes several communities that have solved their dilemma by metamorphosing into retirement communities, banning children and eliminating the need for public schools. Burton's experiences prompt him to question whether some towns view children as an asset or liability. He states, "I wonder whether the value communities collectively place on children is changing. Of late, it seems as if more and more citizens from cities and towns large and small are publicly challenging the expenses associated with young people and portraying these costs as unwelcome community burdens." Having witnessed budget battles as well as not so pleasant public sentiment toward our schools over the years, I can understand what Mr. Burton is describing. However, I remain confident that we do believe in our children and think of them

as our country's greatest asset.

This became crystal clear this weekend. I attended the Spirit of America show in Providence on Saturday. It was fantastic. The combination of story and song, the precision steps of the U.S. Army Drill Team, the music of The Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, and the moving medleys performed by the U.S Army Band "Pershing's Own" was an awesome tribute to the U.S. Army as well as all those who serve in other branches of our military. Over the course of 2 ½ hours the audience learned the history of our Army and the sacrifices that our armed services have made to protect our freedom. The performance was thrilling and served to remind all in attendance what it means to live in this great country. And then came the moment that moved the entire audience to rise to its feet and applaud; with thousands looking on, forty new recruits took the oath of office and joined the U.S. Army. As these young people eagerly pledged themselves to do their duty and protect our constitution and our liberty, I couldn't help but reflect upon the words of Mr. Burton: "asset or

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liability"? The answer makes the paperwork, budget issues, broken copy machines, scheduling basketball games, maintaining a website, or replacing light bulbs worthwhile.

## Honor Roll



The "A" Honor Roll requires that you have "A's" in all your subjects. The "B" Honor Roll 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	Oct. 2, 2009	Nov. 6, 2009
Term 2	Dec. 11, 2009	Jan. 29, 2010
Term 3	March 5, 2010	April 9, 2010
Term 4	May 21, 2010	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 15, December 18, January 21, March 18, 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: *Colton Barao, Olivia McDonald, Elizabeth Cadieux, Dante Vuolo, Hannah Pothier, David Joseph, Paige Borges, Andrew Pereira, Reagen, Docca, David Santos.*

## Pride Cards

Pride cards are issued to a student who has done some type of school service for a student or a staff member. At the end of each month, one pride card is chosen from each grade from the boxes in the Guidance Office. These lucky students receive a prize.

<b>Grade 6</b>	Cassidy Correia
<b>Grade 7</b>	Zachary Nickerson
<b>Grade 8</b>	Kyle Bueno



## School Nurse Notes

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Spring has sprung and with it are all the symptoms of seasonal allergies. Runny noses, scratchy throats, itchy eyes and cough are prevalent everywhere. Always remind your children to practice good personal hygiene to protect themselves and others from infectious disease. Good hand washing technique is the number one method of protecting ourselves and others from illness. Cover your coughs and sneezes into a tissue or the inside of your elbow, not into your bare hands. This practice halts the spread of organisms. Wash hands thoroughly and frequently. These are general practices known to ward off all types of infectious germs including the present popular virus known as the Swine Influenza A. Be sure your family is following a nutritious diet, getting enough rest and exercise and practicing good personal hygiene. These are the best methods of protection from any flu.

We are upon the flu season once again. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is recommending

all children be vaccinated against seasonal influenza as well as the Novel H1N1 (swine) influenza. The school department will be offering a vaccination clinic to students for the H1N1 influenza. Those dates are to be announced. However, we are not offering the seasonal influenza vaccinations. These immunizations are offered through local pharmacies as well as available through your primary care provider. As always please remind your children to practice good personal hygiene to protect themselves and others from infectious disease. Good hand washing technique is the number one method of protection. Cover your cough and sneeze into a tissue or the inside of your elbow, not into your bare hands. This practice halts the spread of organisms. Wash hands thoroughly and frequently. Encourage a nutritious diet, getting enough rest and exercise and practicing good personal hygiene. These are the best methods of protection from any flu.



## Comments from the Assistant Principal

I would like to thank everyone for a great start to the school year. 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 is extremely important for seventh and eighth graders who are seriously considering attending Voke.** This also applies when a student is either tardy or dismissed for an appointment.

**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 aftersessions 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 my office to request a copy or write a note stating you have seen the form.

**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.**

Officer Riggs and I have noticed a few sixth grade parents driving at the bottom of the parking lot, dropping sixth graders off at the top of School Street near the cones at the end of the rotary. This is becoming more and more of a safety issue! We have noticed a back up of cars there. Also parents doing this are blocking off that section from students walking or riding their bikes up the street. Again it is a matter of safety. **We ask that all parents stay in the line and drop their students off at the top of the parking lot along with everyone else.** If we all follow this, students will be able to walk safely to their appropriate entrances. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

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

## Millicent Library Summer Reading



The following students participated in the 2009 Millicent Library Summer Reading Program. Kids were encouraged to read for fun.

Kids could read, listen to audiobooks, or be read to as part of the program. In all, kids in Fairhaven read **over 4000 hours!**

\* = kids who read more than 20 hours

### Students who read 5 hours

Richard Andre  
Kacie Carvalho  
Logan Scott  
Brooke Seguin  
Samantha Stoddard

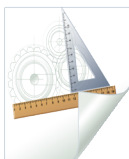
### Students who read 10 hours

Lauren Conlon  
Adam daCosta  
Madeline McLaughlin  
Kailee Nadeau

### Students who read 20 hours

\*Kyleigh Cabral  
\*Elizabeth Cadieux  
\*Emily Dorian  
\*Kevin Furtado  
\*Katie Gilmore

## Construction Challenge By Mrs. Freeman



*Attention Construction Challenge Alumni!*

We will be having our first meeting for the 2009-2010 Construction Challenge on **Wednesday, October 7th at 2:30 in Room 44.** This meeting is **ONLY** for students who were on a team last year and want to participate again this year.

## HMS Guidance By Joan Tracey

We would like to welcome all of our sixth grade students and those in seventh and eighth grade who are new to the Hastings community. Guidance has been holding small groups with all sixth graders to discuss their transition to middle school life and thus far, the feedback has been very positive! Lexi, Courtney Rae, Brett, Ian and Tristan are enjoying middle school especially because they are more mobile through the day. "I like moving from class to class"... "I like having more teachers"... "I like learning about Lucy and hurricanes and that we have history and science every day". Hayleigh and Alexa feel Middle school is "more fun"... and like the others, enjoy making new friends as our three Elementary schools come together for the first time. All agree "the food is great!"



Coming soon...our seventh and eighth graders will be meeting with representatives from **GNBRVTHS on October 20.** The purpose of this assembly is to provide students with important information regarding the application process and the vocational programs available to them. Because applications are submitted early in the eighth grade year, students' seventh grade records are included in the application therefore, it is very important that seventh graders interested in attending Voke be well aware of this. Eighth graders will receive an invitation to their open house and an application package sometime in November via US mail. **Bristol County Agricultural High School** will have a presentation on **October 27.** Students who are interested in learning more about this high school, will be able to sign up in Guidance for this presentation. All application questions should be directed to the HMS Guidance office at (508) 979-4147.

## HMS Boys' Soccer Team By Mrs. Pegg



The Hastings boys' soccer team is up and running for 2009. The following students make up our team: **Kyle Bueno, Quinn Cardoso, Max Charette, Jacob Costa, Benjamin Elliott, Andrew Glover, Nathan Jones, Ethan Kellaway, Kyle Kozcera, Andrew Pereira, Jared Przybysewski, James Rossi, Alexander Silva, Tyler Souza, Lance Stevens, Matthew Sylvia, Mason Tonnessen, and Zachary Viera.** We have fourteen games scheduled for the season and are currently 1-1, with a loss

to Somerset at home on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and shutout win at Bourne on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. So far, in the still early season, the boys have shown a level of pride, hustle, and spirit that the school and the community can be proud. Check out the boys' team in one of their home games on the following dates: **October 19<sup>th</sup> vs. Taunton, October 21<sup>st</sup> vs. Bourne, October 27<sup>th</sup> vs. Wareham, or October 29<sup>th</sup> vs. Seekonk.** All homes games start at 4:30. I hope to see you there!!!! Go HMS Eagles!!!!

## Student Council By Ms. Richard



HMS Student Council had its first introductory meeting on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Students interested in becoming candidates for Student Council should see Ms. Richard for the paperwork needed. There is a SC representative and an alternate from every homeroom in grades 6-8. All nomination papers and essays need to be completed and returned to homeroom teachers by Wednesday, October 7, 2009.

## Positive Behavior Support By Dr. Gifford



A team that includes teachers, guidance, and administration attended a 2-day workshop to learn about School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS). SWPBS is considered universal prevention, with procedures intended for all students, staff, and settings. The elements of SWPBS that help to achieve the goal of establishing effective behavioral support are data to guide decision-making, practices that support student behavior, and systems that support staff behavior. Implementing SWPBS requires schools to examine their current disciplinary practices and building needs and strengthen those practices.

The team will meet again in October to gain necessary knowledge and skills to fully implement SWPBS at HMS. Our goal is to continue to find ways to enhance the educational environment and decrease incidences that interfere with learning.

## From the Stacks Ms. Richard



The Hastings Library is off to a busy start this year. With all the Silent Sustained Reading that is going on in the school we have been circulating lots of wonderful books. If anyone has young adult books that they would like to donate to the library please let Ms. Richard know. We will gladly accept slightly used titles that are appropriate for our students to be shared in the classroom and library.

## The Green Team By Ms. Richard

The new Hastings “Green Team” has started already and had two successful meetings this year. The members of this group are very excited about helping our school community be green and environmentally sustainable. We are brainstorming ideas that we can implement during the year in the classrooms and in the cafeteria. Members have picked produce for the past two weeks from our school garden that we hope to eat and share in the cafeteria. We plan to meet weekly and have many successful projects throughout the school year. Any parent who wishes to help with this group or be involved in our activities please speak to Ms. Richard or email at [arichard@fairhavenps.org](mailto:arichard@fairhavenps.org)



## Physical Education Student of the Month

Mr. Galvam and Mrs. Nunes would like to recognize the following students for their sportsmanship, skill, and effort in Physical Education for the month of September.

**Grade 6:** Kari Berche                      Jonathan LeBlanc Unger  
**Grade 7:** Jessica Joseph                Grant Gadbois  
**Grade 8:** Alexandra Charette        Max Charette

## Drama Club News Mr. Brejcha

It is the beginning of a new school year and the Drama Club is preparing for its December performance of *High School Musical, Junior*. The club currently has over 80 students involved in the production.



In Disney’s High School Musical, a group of teenagers struggle to discover their true identities while building relationships, exploring new interests, and dealing with others’ expectations of them. The musical combines a timeless story with today’s music, updated technology, and contemporary themes and situations.

Under the direction of Mr. Brejcha, assistant director Mrs. Duarte, and choreographer Hanna Christ, the show will be staged on **Thursday December 10<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00**. We look forward to seeing you there!

## PTO News



Hastings PTO meetings will be held at 6:30pm in the cafeteria on **Oct. 22, Nov. 19, Dec 17, Jan. 28, Mar. 25, Apr. 15, and May 20.** You should have received a "reminder" magnet for the fridge with the PTO dates on it. If not, please ask for one!

Don't forget to send in your Fall Fundraiser forms! This fundraiser can mean big money for HMS and big money for YOU! We have several \$100 raffles that you can win just by selling a few items!! Check it out!

If you didn't already, PLEASE send in that "21st Century Communication" form so that we can send you email and/or phone reminders of upcoming events! Don't miss out on anything because you didn't hear about it!

You can check out BD TV for updates, and also notice the new banner out in front of the school! Below the blue HMS banner is a smaller white banner with info on upcoming events! Take a look! We are working on a new website as well. We'll get you more info on that soon!

**Upcoming events** include: November: Cookie Dough Fundraiser kicks off on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and the cookie dough WILL arrive in time for the holidays!

Also in **November** "HMS Got Talent"--watch for more info on this coming up!!

**December:** Sweet competition between the Blue and White teams when they each get a "Sweet Ginger" fundraiser night in December.



Please feel free to contact any member of the PTO board with suggestions, ideas, fundraiser questions, etc. As you can see, there are quite a few members on the board this year. With so many of us working together, we hope to be able to do more without getting burned out. It's the same thing with PTO meetings. If we get enough people to show up and volunteer for events and fundraisers, then the burden won't be placed on just a few people!

### PLEASE...GET INVOLVED!

We are very excited about working together with ALL the parents and staff to make this year a fun and profitable one!

## National Spanish Examinations Mrs. Duarte



### Buenas Noticias (good news) from Mr. Beaulieu and Mrs. Duarte

The Hastings Middle School PTO has agreed to sponsor Hastings students for the *National Spanish Exam*, for the second year in a row. In the coming weeks, Mrs. Duarte and Mr. Beaulieu will sign up their students, and they will begin to practice for the contest which will take place in *March 2010*. Stay on the lookout for the names of this year's contestants, and be sure to wish them luck during the practice season leading up to the spring competition. Last year HMS students earned many medals and recognition awards for their efforts; we are optimistic this year as well.

## Spirit Wear By Dr. Gifford

A safe and disciplined learning environment is the first requirement of a good school. Young people who are safe and secure and feel good about themselves and their environment equals better students and improved learning. At Hastings, we are serious about taking steps to excel and move from good to great. Our mission is to challenge our students to be excellent and prepared to compete in a global economy. One component of our plan for excellence is spirit wear. We believe that the adoption of spirit wear will enhance school safety, discipline, and school spirit, resulting in an improved learning environment and overall student achievement.

As we embark on this journey, our committee will be holding informational meetings during PTO meetings. Please join us on **October 22nd at 6:30** in the cafeteria to hear about this plan and provide us with your ideas. Together we can encourage our students to be the best that they can be.



## Going Green By Dr. Gifford

Part of going green means cutting down on paper consumption. To help in this area, we are planning on implementing a Green Progress Report program. Starting in term 2, all future progress reports will be online. Parents will be able to view and document that they have seen the progress report in the parent portal. Stay tuned for more information.